

**Loss, Memory and Nostalgia in Popular Song: Thematic
Aspects and Theoretical Approaches**

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For Maria

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Abstract

The aim of this thesis is to study the ways loss is reflected in popular music and in the discourse surrounding popular music. The project attempts to create a dialogue between theorists of loss and memory working in various disciplines and those working in and around popular music (musicians, critics, academics). It also recognises the vital role of loss in revolution (and vice versa) and attends to revolutionary moments, or events, not least the 'event' of rock 'n' roll. It proceeds from the idea that, while creativity is a crucial aspect of the production and reception (or receptive production) of popular music, creativity often takes the form of a response, or set of responses, to loss.

While rooted in popular music studies, the project reflects a desire to look outside the Anglophone tradition and includes case studies of a few music genres – Portuguese fado, Cuban *nueva trova*, Chilean *nueva canción* – that exist in a place between popular music studies and ethnomusicology. It also studies three areas more familiar to Anglophone popular music studies: rock 'n' roll, black protest music in America and punk/post-punk in Britain.

Methodologically, the thesis draws on popular music studies, philosophy and cultural theory in an attempt to suggest ways that these disciplines can inform each other.

List of tracks on accompanying CDs

Full details of the albums these tracks are taken from can be found in the discography at the end of the thesis. Various Artist compilations are marked 'VA' here and listed after the A-Z list in the discography.

CD 1

01. Garth Brooks, 'The Dance', *Garth Brooks*.
02. George Jones, 'He Stopped Loving Her Today', *The Essential George Jones – The Spirit of Country*.
03. Violeta Parra, 'Santiago penando éstas', *Canciones reencontradas en París*.
04. Ricardo Villalobos, excerpt from live set in Bucharest, March 2006, featuring Violeta Parra, 'Santiago penando estás' (private recording – not in discography).
05. John Trudell, 'Baby Boom Ché', *AKA Grafitti Man*.
06. Merle Haggard, 'House of Memories', *I'm a Lonesome Fugitive / Branded Man*
07. Merle Haggard & Willie Nelson, 'When Times Were Good', *Seashores of Old Mexico*.
08. Chuck Berry, 'School Days', *The Chess Box*.
09. Amália Rodrigues, 'Tudo isto é fado', *Tudo isto é fado: O melhor de Amália Volume II*.
10. Lucilia do Carmo, 'Maria Madalena', VA, *O Fado do Público Vol 1: 100 anos de fado*.
11. Carlos do Carmo, 'Por morrer uma andorinha', *Mais do que amor é amar*.
12. Maria Teresa de Noronha, 'Corrido em cinco estilos', VA, *O Fado do Público Vol. 15: Fados tradicionais*.
13. Alfredo Marceneiro, 'Há festa na Mouraria', *O melhor de Alfredo Marceneiro*.
14. Amália Rodrigues, 'Gaivota', *Estranha forma de vida: o melhor de Amália*.
15. Amália Rodrigues, 'Estranha forma de vida', *Estranha forma de vida: O melhor de Amália*.
16. Amália Rodrigues, 'Povo que lavas no rio', *Estranha forma de vida: O melhor de Amália*.
17. José Afonso, 'Saudades de Coimbra', *Fados de Coimbra*.
18. Unknown singers, 'Bandeira Portuguesa', VA, *Musiques Traditionnelles de l'Alentejo*.
19. José Afonso, 'Grândola Vila Morena', *Cantigas do Maio*.
20. Mariza, 'Ó gente da minha terra', *Fado em mim*.
21. Mariza, 'Ó gente da minha terra (Piano)' (excerpt), *Fado em mim*.

CD 2

01. Katia Guerreiro 'Vodka e Valium 10', *Nas mãos do fado*.
02. Lula Pena, 'Gaivota', [*phados*].
03. Joel Xavier & Carlos do Carmo, 'Gaivota', VA, *O Fado do Público Vol. 5: O outro lado do fado*.
04. António Zambujo, 'Trago Alentejo na voz', *O mesmo fado*.

05. JC Loops feat. Ana Láíns, 'Povo que lavas no rio', VA, *Amália Revisited*.
06. António Variações, 'Povo que lavas no rio', *Anjo da guarda*.
07. António Variações, 'Visões-ficções (Nostradamus)', *Anjo da guarda*.
08. Amália Rodrigues, 'Lágrima', *Tudo isto é fado: o melhor de Amália Volume II*.
09. Jorge Fernando & Argentina Santos, 'Lágrima', *Velho fado*.
10. Dulce Pontes, 'Lágrima', *Lágrimas*.
11. Violeta Parra, 'Arauco tiene una pena', *Canciones reencontradas en París*.
12. Quilapayún, 'Por Vietnam', *X Vietnam*.
13. Quilapayún, 'El pueblo unido jamás será vencido', *El pueblo unido jamás será vencido*.
14. Inti-Illimani, 'Inti-Illimani', *Inti-Illimani*.
15. Inti-Illimani, 'Cueca de la C.U.T.', *Inti-Illimani*.
16. Víctor Jara, 'Te recuerdo Amanda', *Pongo en tus manos abiertas*.
17. Silvio Rodríguez, 'Unicornio', *Unicornio*.
18. Silvio Rodríguez, 'Unicornio' (live), *En Chile*.
19. Carlos Puebla y Sus Tradicionals, 'Y en eso llegó Fidel', *Hasta Siempre*.

CD 3

01. Kissing Spell, 'Valle del tiempo', *Los pajaros*.
02. Víctor Jara & Los Blops, 'El derecho de vivir en paz', *El derecho de vivir en paz*.
03. Los Jaivas, 'Todos juntos', *Todos juntos*.
04. Los Jaivas, 'Arauco tiene una pena' (excerpt), *Obras de Violeta Parra*.
05. Los Miserables, 'Siempre vivirás', *Date cuenta!*
06. Los Miserables, 'O te quedas o te vas', *Gritos de la calle*.
07. Víctor Jara, 'El aparecido', *1959-1969*.
08. Los Miserables, 'El aparecido', *Gritos de la calle*.
09. Silvio Rodríguez, 'Te recuerdo Amanda', *Tributo a Víctor Jara*.
10. Boom Boom Kid, 'Te recuerdo Amanda', *Víctor Jara: Tributo rock*.
11. Nina Simone, 'Mississippi Goddam' (1964), *Four Women: The Nina Simone Philips Recordings*.
12. Nina Simone, 'Mississippi Goddam' (1987), *Let It Be Me*.
13. Sweet Honey In The Rock, 'Chile Your Waters Run Red Through Soweto', *Good News*.
14. Maria Bethânia & Nina Simone, 'Pronto pra cantar', *Canto do Pajé*.
15. Leonard Cohen, 'Suzanne', *Songs of Leonard Cohen*.
16. Judy Collins, 'Suzanne', *In My Life*.
17. Nina Simone, 'Suzanne' (early version), *Sugar In My Bowl: The Very Best of Nina Simone 1967-1972*.
18. Nina Simone, 'Suzanne' ('final' version), *To Love Somebody/Here Comes The Sun*.
19. Roberta Flack, 'Suzanne', *Killing Me Softly*.

CD 4

01. Claude François, 'Comme d'habitude', *Claude François*.
02. Frank Sinatra, 'My Way', *My Way*.

03. Nina Simone, 'My Way', *To Love Somebody/Here Comes The Sun*.
04. Fairport Convention, 'Who Knows Where The Time Goes', *Unhalfbricking*.
05. Nina Simone, 'Who Knows Where The Time Goes', *Emergency Ward/It Is Finished/Black Gold*.
06. Judy Collins, 'My Father', *Who Knows Where The Time Goes*.
07. Nina Simone, 'My Father/Dialog', *Sugar In My Bowl: The Very Best of Nina Simone 1967-1972*.
08. Nina Simone, 'My Father', *Baltimore*.
09. Frank Sinatra, 'For A While', *Watertown*.
10. Nina Simone, 'For A While', *Nina's Back*.
11. Frank Sinatra, 'The Single Man', *A Man Alone*.
12. Nina Simone, 'A Single Woman', *A Single Woman*.
13. Talib Kweli, 'Memories Live', *Reflection Eternal: Train of Thought*.
14. Nina Simone, 'Four Women', *Four Women: The Nina Simone Philips Recordings*.
15. Nina Simone, 'Four Women' (live), *The Tomato Collection*.
16. Talib Kweli, 'For Women', *Reflection Eternal: Train of Thought*.

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I have presented work based on this research at a number of conferences of which I wish to mention the following due to the constructive responses of fellow delegates: CongressCATH V (University of Leeds, July 2006); ‘Popular Musics of the Hispanic and Lusophone Worlds’ International Conference (Newcastle, July 2006); ‘Music and Consciousness’ Conference, (University of Sheffield, 2006); British Forum for Ethnomusicology Annual Conference, (ICMuS, April 2007). An article based on material from Chapter Three was published as ‘Reconstructing the Event: Spectres of Terror in Chilean Performance’ in *British Postgraduate Musicology*, Vol. 8 (June 2006); my thanks are due to the anonymous readers and to the editor.

My parents Peter and Angela and my sister Liz have been a constant source of moral and intellectual support throughout and I thank them for that and much more. My partner Maria has aided me in incalculable ways. On the academic side, she helped with all the Portuguese translations used in Chapter Two, listened to or read through most sections of the thesis in one shape or another and advised on all kinds of matters great and small, all this while managing her own very different and busy career. In addition, she has shown endless patience when I have been ‘lost’ in and to the project and has provided the moral and practical support that allowed me to work. This thesis could not have been written without her and I dedicate it to her.

Chapter One

Translating Loss: From Theory to Music and Back Again

I asked myself whether, in bygone days, men had longed for bygone days as I, this summer morning, longed for certain ways of life that man had lost for ever.

– Alejo Carpentier, *The Lost Steps*¹

To remember is also to acknowledge and to lose once again what will not recur.

– Roland Barthes, 'Deliberation'²

Memory, after all, can be no substitute for justice, and justice itself will inevitably be entangled in the unreliability of memory.

– Andreas Huyssen, *Present Pasts*³

The constant danger of confusing remembering and imagining, resulting from memories becoming images in this way, affects the goal of faithfulness corresponding to the truth claim of memory. And yet...

And yet, we have nothing better than memory to guarantee that something has taken place before we call to mind a memory of it. Historiography itself, let us already say, will not succeed in setting aside the continually derided and continually reasserted conviction that the final referent of memory remains the past, whatever the pastness of the past may signify.

– Paul Ricoeur, *Memory, History, Forgetting*⁴

Like Robinson Crusoe on the shore of his island, before 'the vestige of a naked foot imprinted upon the sand', the historian travels along the borders of his present; he visits those beaches where the other appears only as a *trace* of what has *passed*. Here he sets up his industry. On the basis of imprints which are now definitively mute (that which has passed will return no more, and its voice is lost forever), a literature is fabricated.

– Michel de Certeau, *L'Absent de l'histoire*⁵

Can the beautiful be sad? Is beauty inseparable from the ephemeral and hence from mourning? Or else is the beautiful object the one that tirelessly returns following destructions and wars in order to bear witness that there is survival after death, that immortality is possible?

– Julia Kristeva, *Black Sun*⁶

The beautiful object replaces something that no longer exists. Therefore the anthem of this subculture had to be 'Caroline No': the song as act of mourning, a grief never to be resolved. A wound was made to sound permanently beautiful.

– Geoffrey O'Brien, *Sonata for Jukebox*⁷

Introduction: Loss/Memory/Mourning

The aim of this thesis is to study the ways loss is reflected in popular music and in the discourse surrounding popular music. The project attempts to create a dialogue between theorists of loss and memory working in various disciplines and those working in and around popular music (musicians, critics, academics). It also recognises the vital role of loss in revolution (and vice versa) and attends to revolutionary moments, or events, not least the 'event' of rock 'n' roll. It proceeds from the idea that, while creativity is a crucial aspect of the production and reception (or receptive production) of popular music, creativity often takes the form of a response, or set of responses, to loss. 'Loss' is a rather vague term to wave at popular music and it is worth briefly outlining the four aspects I feel most relevant to further exploration. The first two can be described as theoretical in that they reflect on part of the process of musical production and reception. The second two are more thematic and deal with the subjects of musical texts.

1) *Loss of language*. Here I identify loss as a theoretical way of describing the potential of language to 'disappear' even as it is produced. It can be argued that language is never really 'lost', merely 'used'; we select the language items necessary for successful discourse from a mental store which is constantly stocked and ready to be exploited. But, on a practical everyday level, this only applies to the most often used elements of language. Once complex (unique) structures are produced the possibility of retention fades. Popular music texts, as complex structures, inherently contain this threat of loss. Only through repetition, notation or recording can they be maintained. Further, to have any true 'meaning' requires the presence of an addressee, who is also subject to the threat of similar loss unless, again, the ability to replay that which is uttered is available. Receivers of musical texts therefore act as witnesses, conserving the meaning(s) of texts from the potential of loss. There is also the sense of self-protection on the part of the receiver; as Michel de Certeau writes, 'the reader cannot protect himself from the erosion of time [...] unless he buys the object (book, image) which is no more than a substitute (the spoor or promise) of moments "lost" in reading.'⁸ Or, as I will suggest, in listening.

2) *Loss of meaning*. The existence of the witness to the text's production and meaning does not reduce the risk of a loss of meaning during the process of transmission: both

on the journey from producer to receiver and throughout the subsequent journey through time (assuming the text exists in a survivable form) an evolution, or even a complete transformation, of meaning takes place. This can happen to a greater or lesser extent, in large part due to certain textual features (lyrical or vocal signifiers, for example).

3) *Loss of identity*. While the notions of loss and absence can theoretically be mapped across the spectra of musical production and consumption I am particularly interested in how they overlap with those of identity, memory and place. These last themes are particularly important inasmuch as they shed light on one of the primary dialectics brought into play by globalisation, that between local and global. Certain views on both globalisation and postmodernity centre themselves around the idea of loss: for the former this entails the loss of individual, local or national identity, while for the latter the loss refers to depth of knowledge, itself supported historically by a certain, now questioned, metanarrative. My concern is that it is not enough to analyse separately the importance of place, memory, or identity in a given arena (in this case, popular music); rather, we need to illustrate how the intersection of these areas appears in the light of the global postmodern. By focussing on loss (of identity, sense of place, etc.), I intend to highlight the ways popular music articulates the struggle to create, recreate and perpetuate (catalogue) that which is seen as being under threat from being lost.

4) *Human loss*. This is perhaps the most obvious expression of loss in terms of a theme within popular music. It can incorporate a number of types of songs, from those detailing lost love to those mourning lost life, the loss of an individual or the loss of a large number of people. Then there are the countless lost objects, from tangible physical things to ideas, promises and causes, for which popular music serves as a vital soundtrack. For the listener, music can act as a source of comfort following the experience of similar loss; it can also function as a call to arms or a call to subjectivity. I am therefore interested in both how popular musicians respond to loss and how audiences use music to perform a similar function.

To attempt to connect the various theoretical and thematic aspects listed above may appear arbitrary. That is, however, what I propose to do. For if it is the case that music is lost as soon as it is produced – if, in other words, music is always already engaging us in the workings of loss before we even start to take in its ‘message’ – then the theme of loss is an apt one for it to tackle and for us to study. Michel de

Certeau suggested that, through the everyday practice of productive reading (a production that is, importantly, also ‘an “invention” of the memory’) the text becomes ‘habitable’.⁹ In making it habitable we find a way to ‘keep’ it just as the text itself finds a way to ‘keep’ its endangered subject (identity, place, memory, cause). By extension we also attempt to ‘keep’ that endangered subject through our habitation of the text. Seen in this light, the loss of the text and the loss expressed in the text (the enunciation and the enunciated) become inseparable.

The first part of the thesis consists of an introductory chapter (the present one) outlining the theory sketched above in more detail and attempting to connect it to a ‘thematics of loss’. In places the introduction will rely as much on examples drawn from literature and the visual arts as from music, highlighting an interdisciplinarity that I have wanted to maintain throughout the thesis. From the outset there will be a strong emphasis on history and historicising practices and on the historic specificity of loss. This will develop through the remaining chapters via a series of case studies rooted in (and routed through) specific historical moments. Rather than attempt to recognise a unifying theory of loss in music (an impossibility anyway), these chapters will look at ways in which music and loss have appeared in particular genres in particular times and places. All the case studies will be drawn from types of popular song and there will be a strong emphasis on voice and vocalisation, in particular on the ways voices attempt to go ‘beyond the words’ when dealing with extreme emotional states such as loss.

There is still in popular music studies, and more markedly in popular music journalism, a tendency to reflect the hegemony of Anglo-American pop and rock at the expense of music from other places and genres. This tendency no doubt arises in part from an ideology grounded in the music itself, namely a belief, albeit unvoiced, that the Anglo-American canon represents the ‘real’ pop or rock, and that music in other languages must be classed as ‘world music’, a kind of grey area between popular music and music of ethnographic interest, an area often equally neglected by ethnomusicologists for not adhering to another and quite distinct definition of authenticity. I intend to deal here with a few music genres – Portuguese fado, Cuban *nueva trova*, Chilean *nueva canción* – that often seem to be stuck in this space between popular music studies and ethnomusicology. While making what I see as a politically necessary challenge to the Anglo-American hegemony of popular music

(and its study), my main focus is on the thematics of loss in popular song and I do not wish to suggest that this topic be necessarily associated with countries sidelined by this hegemony. Therefore, I also intend to look at the much-studied areas of black protest music in America and, briefly, punk and post-punk in Britain. Despite what I have just said about wishing to challenge tendencies in popular music and its attendant discourse, I have also had to accept – from my own experience as much as from any ‘objective’ study – that rock music has become a universal language through its own desirability as much as its desire.¹⁰ A central problem in the way I have designed this thesis is that I attend to both these aspects; I criticise rock (discourse) for its solipsism but yield to its vitality as a liberatory language. While there is one set of stories to be told about the ‘call’ of rock – a call to which peripheral, non-rock musics are forced to respond – there is another set of stories that suggest that rock is called away from itself, lured by the Siren song of the Other. I have not been able to resolve this ‘problem’ – I do not believe there is ‘a’ solution – but trust that, in each turn of the argument and each case study, the reason for emphasising one side or the other of this debate will be clear from the context. More details of the other chapters can be found at the end of this one; the rest of this chapter will consist of a working-through of the literature relating to my project. I have organised the chapter to progress through a number of topics, drawing on the literature as appropriate. Much of this literature will be returned to in subsequent chapters, where it is placed in dialogue with material more focussed on the specific case study of each chapter.

In recognition of the project’s desire to interweave theme and theory, this chapter moves, first, from a consideration of the themes of loss, memory and nostalgia, including how they have been theorised, to an account of what I shall call ‘fixing’, which we might understand as the ways in which we attempt to deal with loss via methods of transcription and recording. This is followed by a discussion of the creation of listening subjects, after which there is a return to the concept of fixing. The difficulty I wish to reflect in this structure is that it is not possible to say that loss and the memory processes it calls into being come before attempts to recollect and should therefore be dealt with first. Both the process of loss and the attempt to fix it are happening simultaneously, forcing us to weave back and forth from one to the other.

Loss

The general scope of this study can be usefully highlighted by reference to a number of works that have appeared in recent years concerning loss and memory – and, indeed, the related terms ‘loss of memory’ and ‘memory loss’ (not necessarily synonymous). Such has been the interest in memory, loss, nostalgia and history in the period surrounding the new millennium that it is difficult to know where to begin listing – let alone assessing – the voluminous literature produced over this period. I will begin by briefly listing a number of works that have been influential with regard to my project and will desist from discussing them further until an appropriate point in my narrative has been reached.¹¹

In historical studies a great deal of recent work has attempted to take account and make sense of the previous century. Much of this work has studied periods of great loss and trauma brought about by conflicts. History, trauma, loss and memory have arguably found their greatest focal point in the ‘memory work’ carried out around the Holocaust. I barely draw on this work although a number of my sources have clearly been influenced by it and it did provide an arena of strategies and thematics that was influential to this project. Of more immediate influence in historiographical approaches have been: Pierre Nora’s monumental work *Les Lieux de Mémoire* (1986-1992), a collection of investigations into specific French ‘memory places’ (and the more general ‘realm of memory’) that paradoxically manages to be both highly selective and encyclopaedic; Raphael Samuel’s two volumes entitled *Theatres of Memory* (1994 and 1998, the second volume published posthumously), accounts of the myths, memories and conservation culture of Britain and influenced, like Nora’s project, by Frances Yates’s work on the ‘art of memory’ and the classical ‘memory theatre’; Andreas Huyssen’s work, in particular *Twilight Memories* (1995) and *Present Pasts* (2003), both of which attend to the politics of remembering and forgetting in the late twentieth century and bring a historian’s and a cultural critic’s eye to issues relating to trauma, mourning and memorialising in post-war Germany, post-dictatorship Argentina and post-Twin Towers New York amongst other sites; and the continually engrossing and influential work of Michel de Certeau, which attempts to marry cultural theory, historiography, anthropology and a fascination with the causes and consequences of writing that links all of de Certeau’s profuse interests.

Like Huyssen, a number of writers have dealt with the connections between urbanisation, emigration, memory, loss and nostalgia: M. Christine Boyer’s *The City*

of *Collective Memory* (1994) deals with the consequences arising from the attempts by city planners and architects to entertain, discipline and instil memory in citizens; Svetlana Boym's *The Future of Nostalgia* (2001) offers a fascinating cultural history of that condition, a useful categorisation of 'types' of nostalgia and a grounded study of the way 'nostalgia work' is carried out by Russian immigrants in the USA; Sylviane Agacinski's *Time Passing: Modernity and Nostalgia* (2000) provides a philosophical reflection on the obsession with memory and the necessity to forget and uses the figure of Walter Benjamin as an example of the urban walker, or stroller, who gets himself deliberately lost; Benjamin is also a point of reference for Rebecca Solnit, whose *A Field Guide to Getting Lost* (2005), like her earlier *Wanderlust* (2000), emphasises the connections between loss and the situation of being lost.

In philosophy, Edward S. Casey's *Remembering: A Phenomenological Study* (a second edition of which was published in 2000) has been a useful resource both for thinking about the ways that memory denies some losses while straining to retrieve others and for thinking about phenomenological method and the chronology of presentation and re-presentation. Casey also explores what he sees as the disappearance of memory in modern life and examines the connections between memory and place. With regard to the latter, his *Getting Back into Place: Toward a Renewed Understanding of the Place-World* (1993) has also been useful in highlighting the loss of place alongside that of memory. Paul Ricoeur's *Memory, History, Forgetting* (2004), as well as serving as a fitting monument to its late author, makes invaluable connections between these three subjects and offers readings of thinkers who have dealt with them, from the Greeks to the twentieth century.

Recent years in Britain have seen the publication of a number of books dealing with issues of loss specifically relating to English or British culture and aimed at a general readership. I have been influenced by or wanted to react against: Peter Hitchens's *The Abolition of Britain* (1999) and Roger Scruton's *England: An Elegy* (2000), both of which offer critiques from the right of what these writers see as the dangers of European integration, multiculturalism and political correctness that have led to a situation in which 'we' are 'not allowed' (by 'them', presumably) to be English; Michael Bywater's *Lost Worlds*, which offers an attempted taxonomy of lost objects – supposedly general but predominantly English – that is both humorous and elegiac at the same time; and Gilbert Adair's *Myths & Memories* (1986) and *The Postmodernist Always Rings Twice* (1992), both of which offer cultural readings of

the modern 'mythologies' (in the sense inherited from Roland Barthes) associated with Britain – again, predominantly England.

Amongst a range of titles more specifically focussed on music, Evan Eisenberg's *The Recording Angel* (1987) has been of immense value. It provides a still-definitive philosophical account of many of the issues with which this thesis is preoccupied, in particular the desire to capture sound and the consequences arising from this such as collecting, remembering and listening practices. Jonathan Sterne's *The Audible Past* (2003) offers a cultural history of sound recording that is particularly useful when thinking about the relationship between the technologies of bodies and machines in the phonographic era. Geoffrey O'Brien's *Sonata for Jukebox* (2004) is a poetic meditation on what records have come to mean for people in their 'imagined lives' and on the role of popular music in providing memory places, lost objects and chance encounters. David Toop's *Haunted Weather* (2004) is an exploration of the role of memory in contemporary alternative music. Toop offers observations on silence, mourning, recording and the use of pre-recorded sounds in the creative practices of composition and improvisation.

While a number of other works, which are listed in the bibliography, have been invaluable, they have mainly been so as answers to research or methodological problems rather than as direct influences. Of note here would be the work of Alain Badiou, which provided numerous such answers as well as some new problems; there will be more about Badiou below and in subsequent chapters. As a leading cultural theorist dealing with issues of trauma, loss and the politics of memory, Slavoj Žižek has cast a considerable shadow over much of this project and the occasional use of Lacanian psychoanalysis in what follows can in large part be traced to Žižek. That said, a project such as this could not very well ignore the work of Freud, fascinated as he was with memory, trauma, haunting and ways of dealing (or not) with the past.

Yet if Freud was predominantly interested in the ways these issues played out in the individual psyche, a number of his contemporaries were equally fascinated by the capacity of humans to feel connected by collective losses, memories and nostalgias. Prominent amongst these were Freud's erstwhile colleague Carl Jung and Maurice Halbwachs, whose work on collective memory not only influenced the burgeoning discipline of sociology but also, more generally, stressed the importance of a collective imagination always influenced by the consciousness of its collectivity, a formulation that would be completed in the era of mass mediation by

communications technology. In the century that Freud and Halbwachs helped inaugurate, a number of events have become attached to narratives of collective loss and memory. Below is a selective list of events that form some of the background to this project:

- The two World Wars and the remembrance ceremonies they have generated (Armistice Day, the Normandy landings, Holocaust remembrance, etc.).
- Genocide remembrance and truth & reconciliation processes (Armenia, Argentina, Chile, South Africa, Rwanda). Allied to these processes is the notion of amnesty – from the Greek *amnēstia* (oblivion) – suggesting an active forgetting, or pardon, indebted to a post-Freudian concept of ‘working-through’.
- Mass mediated events of violence such as the Kennedy assassination, the Vietnam War and the destruction of the Twin Towers, the American derivation of which point towards another sense of loss rooted in the process known as Americanisation (in this case, the Americanisation of mass-mediated history and remembrance).
- The process described by some as ‘detraditionalization’, by which is meant the loss of belief in religion, faith, family and certainty. This process is recognised as taking place even as fundamentalist religious practices increase dramatically.¹²
- Globalisation and the accompanying loss (or radical reconfiguration) of the local.
- A general tendency towards commemoration, a process constantly undertaken by the broadcast, print and online media in which viewers, listeners and readers are reminded that it is *x* number of years since the invention of the television, the Miners’ Strike, the release of *Sgt Pepper*, the death of Elgar or Elvis, the first Eurovision song contest, etc.
- Something less tangible that is aimed for in the contents of books such as Adair’s *Myths & Memories* or Bywater’s *Lost Worlds* (the subtitle of which is ‘What have we lost and where did it go?’ – i.e., we all *know* we share a sense of loss but we need someone like Bywater to tell us why).
- On the intellectual plane, notions of trauma derived from psychoanalysis and psychoanalysis’s own accounts of personal loss.

How to begin to discuss all of this? We might start by recognising the difficulties inherent in opening the floodgates of loss. Indeed, this is precisely how Michael

Bywater begins *Lost Worlds*, pointing out that ‘despite the obsession of our species with organizing, categorizing and making lists [...] we have not managed to organize our thinking about loss. It still just ... happens.’¹³ Accompanying this inevitability is a sense of infinitude – loss is never-ending: ‘And the fact that the most difficult thing about writing on loss is knowing when to stop might also be the reason we have never managed to come up with a taxonomy of loss.’¹⁴ Attempting to create any kind of definition of loss is always likely to result in both losing ‘loss’ itself and getting lost oneself. Indeed, one way into thinking about loss is to think about the related notion of *being* lost. Rebecca Solnit has explored the connections between loss, losing and getting lost in her *A Field Guide to Getting Lost*, and Sylviane Agacinski, to whom I will return below, has similarly explored the implications of allowing oneself to be lost. But it is also worth attending to various antonyms of loss: finding, regaining, recovering, recalling. For something to be lost is for it to not be (able to be) found. Bywater’s first entry proper in his ‘taxonomy’ is, accordingly, derived from a very contemporary notion of not being found: ‘404’, the number shown when an internet browser attempts to open a page that no longer exists – ‘404. Page not found’:

For this most documented of ages, 404 is the Warhol number: the sign that your moment of fame (or at least of your existence’s being made available to others outside your immediate circle) is over. You typed out your story, your thoughts [...] your tales of triumph or defeat, laboriously, perhaps. You scanned in your photographs. You checked your links. You worked out how the hell to get the stuff into ... cyberspace. For a while, you were, if not known, knowable.

Then something changed. Your account expired. You remarried, moved away, died; your Internet company went bust; a hyperlink broke; something. [...] So you became 404: Not found.¹⁵

This notion of loss coming about through an inability to make connections – to ‘get through’ – is arguably one of the defining metaphors of late modernity, as illustrated by so many of the absurd talking heads in the plays of Samuel Beckett, a major poet of modernity as loss. Beckett describes the setting of his short piece ‘The Lost Ones’ as: ‘Abode where lost bodies roam each searching for its lost one. Vast enough for

search to be in vain. Narrow enough for flight to be in vain.’¹⁶ There is no escaping the search, in Beckett’s formulation, but neither is there any hope for closure.

Yet while these initial thoughts about the enormity of such an undertaking are invariably found in those who write about loss, these writers nevertheless, in true Sisyphean style, embark upon what the French writer Jacques Roubard calls ‘an endeavor of memory’.¹⁷ The logs of these journeys through loss, not surprisingly, often consist of lists of lost objects. They may not necessarily be A-Z lists like Bywater’s but the accumulated data result in a similarly elegiac, or ‘litanistic’, form. Scruton’s elegy for England is a combination of memoir and litany of lost objects, of people and institutions one no longer finds but which were good identity-forming events for Scruton and, by extension, the country. What is mostly mourned here, as in Peter Hitchens’s *The Abolition of Britain*, is a feeling of certainty in one’s place and one’s country’s place. This is a factor present in numerous other cultural contexts, as evidenced by Lawrence Kritzman when he recognises in the work undertaken by Pierre Nora ‘the symptomology of a certain French *fin de siècle* melancholia’. Kritzman continues:

[F]or now, what remains of the idea of nationhood is engendered by a nostalgic reflection, articulated through the disjunctive remembrance of things past. In a way, one might argue that the quest for memory in the contemporary world is nothing more than an attempt to master the perceived loss of one’s history.¹⁸

As we will see later in the distinction made by Svetlana Boym between ‘restorative’ and ‘reflective’ nostalgia and, to a certain extent, by Freud between mourning and melancholy, the ways of dealing with such lost objects can vary considerably. This is a point made also by Billy Bragg in his reflection on Hitchens’s and Scruton’s books, where he questions who these writers believe is not allowing them to be who they want to be. Bragg himself is fascinated with Englishness, a topic he has often returned to in his songwriting alongside more ‘personal’ identity politics. The book in which he critiques Scruton and Hitchens offers in place of their conservatism a ‘progressive patriotism’.¹⁹ This notion of a progressive use of memory and nostalgia – both of which are crucial to the patriotic project as well as to numerous other political undertakings – is one that will be taken up throughout the thesis, especially in the use

of work by Svetlana Boym, Sylviane Agacinski and Slavoj Žižek. Connected to this will be the question of whether one can be, as Susan Sontag claims for the German writer W.G. Sebald, ‘a militant elegist’.²⁰

Memory

If the impossibility of dealing with loss comprehensively has led to a sense of a ‘task’ to be achieved – as above, in my ‘Sisyphean’ metaphor and Roubard’s ‘endeavor’ – then it is perhaps no surprise to find the term ‘memory work’ increasingly used in contemporary cultural theory. And if, as I have already suggested, one method of going about this work is to employ a ritualistic, or repetitive, process for ‘listing’ loss, then it is worthwhile beginning our account of remembering with an example of just such memory work, from what I am going to call the ‘I remember’ school of writers inspired by Joe Brainard’s book of the same title. *I Remember* was first published in 1975 and consisted of a series of entries, all beginning with the words ‘I remember’, in which Brainard recollects moments from his past, some of them highly individual and others doubtless shared by an enormous number of his contemporaries. To take a typical trio of consecutive entries:

I remember the first time I saw television. Lucille Ball was taking ballet lessons.

I remember the day John Kennedy was shot.

I remember that for my fifth birthday all I wanted was an off-one-shoulder black satin evening gown. I got it. And I wore it to my birthday party.²¹

The originality in Brainard’s technique lies in the intermingling of personal and collective memories and in the recognition that the catalogue of human life as compiled by memory is made up equally of intense personal experiences, public events, fads, fashions and myths. Brainard’s work shows how each person simultaneously carries within them official and unofficial histories, the contents of which are always at varying stages of being recalled or forgotten. The Kennedy assassination, for example, is an event unlikely to be forgotten in either official

history or the unofficial history of a certain group of people alive at a particular time and in at least some level of connection via mass media with the rest of the world (Brainard's generation, in other words). Indeed, for the latter group, whose hegemony over such matters is only recently beginning to wane, this event has become *the* classic example of such individualised-yet-shared memory, with people being said to know exactly where they were when they heard the news of the president's murder. In the new millennium this event has been succeeded for many by the events of September 11 2001. Yet if these events are subject to both official and unofficial memory, highly personal recollections such as those collated by Brainard still have within them a quality that is transferable to others who have experienced something comparable or who can connect to them simply through the fact that *they too have remembered (things)*. Indeed it might well be said that it is in the highly personal, idiosyncratic details (Brainard's evening gown) that the possibility for a universal recognition resides.

That is not to say, however, that such memory work is necessarily translatable to other cultural contexts. Although Brainard's book was translated into French by Marie Chaix, the French 'version' of *I Remember* which found most success and which has itself come to be regarded as a classic of the genre, is Georges Perec's *Je me souviens* (1978).²² Perec reduces the autobiographical elements of Brainard's work to a certain extent, although these are still a prominent feature of his version alongside a higher proportion of memories likely to be shared with others. In producing a more pronounced cultural bias to the book, Perec is forced away from literal translation and towards the creation of a new work steeped in the resonance of the French imaginary. Perec's intention was to seek out, via his own recollection, moments of memory that could be 'deconsecrated' and returned to their 'collectivity'; speaking about the book he claimed, 'what came out most clearly for me was that I wasn't the only one to be remembering. It's a book I might call "sympathetic", I mean that it's in sympathy with its readers, that readers are perfectly at home in it.'²³ The fact that Perec's work increased the ratio of culturally shared to personal memories from Brainard's original was recognised in 1986 by the British writer Gilbert Adair when he decided to publish his own version of the 'I remember' template in his book *Myths & Memories*. The book was devised partly as a homage to two French writers he admired, Roland Barthes and Georges Perec, and partly as an attempt to apply the techniques of Barthes's *Mythologies* and Perec's *Je me souviens* to a British context. In Adair's

opinion, Perec's version of Brainard's work was distinct enough to warrant its own 'translation' but a literal rendering of the French words would be pointless: 'the fact of its being anchored in a French experience has rendered [*Je me souviens*] definitively untranslatable; or, rather, translatable only by way of the metamorphosis, the kind of total Anglicizing, which it undergoes here.'²⁴ I will have more to say later about the challenges thrown up by the notion of translating memory; this will especially form part of a discussion of the Portuguese concept of *saudade* in Chapter Two.

Adair's conflation of the work of Barthes and Perec serves as an intriguing invitation to think about the concept of mythology alongside that of memory. This has been a strategy taken up by a number of historians in recent years, especially those concerned with memory's associations with place. Prominent amongst these have been Raphael Samuel, whose thoughts on the tangled nature of myth and history I will take up briefly in my discussion of fado music in the next chapter, and Pierre Nora, whose work on 'memory places' I will reference at a number of points throughout the thesis. Samuel's 'theatres of memory' and Nora's *lieux de mémoire* are both influenced by the work of Frances Yates, whose exploration of 'the art of memory' relies crucially on notions of myth and place, yet there is an equally important role played by repetition – indeed, memory thought of as an art is born of the desire to be able to repeat. In this sense, it is interesting to note a connection between these historians and the work of the 'memorians' of the 'I remember' school. In the latter we find a recourse to a ritualistic process (anamnesis, recollection) grounded in the repeated act; this repetition is continued in the representation of memory as these writers follow the unchanging mantra of 'I remember...'. This is a device often used in popular songs, where memories are listed over various verses. Country music has more than its fair share of these, of which three notable examples are: Steve Earle's 'Goodbye', in which a narrator plagued by memories cannot remember if he said goodbye to the woman he is missing; Merle Haggard's 'My Favorite Memory' with its mention of 'a million good times I could dwell on'; and Iris DeMent's recollections of learning about life in 'Childhood Memories'.

The potential infinitude of this memory work suggests that there is little that is not worth remembering. Noting the 'acceleration of history', Pierre Nora writes, 'Everything is historical, everything is worth remembering, and everything belongs to our memory.'²⁵ And this seems to be the message we find in Brainard, Perec, Adair

and Bywater. Accompanying history's acceleration we find an acceleration of chroniclers and rememberers, both amateur and professional, a process that has been immeasurably widened by the invention and development of the internet. To take a couple of recent web-based developments in the growing ubiquity of chronicling and remembering, there has been an explosion in the amount of 'encyclopaedic' information available (most notable in the phenomenon of Wikipedia) and of personal archives (weblogs, or 'blogs'), many of which contain both autobiographical information and theoretical explication or discussion of wider issues. It was perhaps inevitable that the project initiated by Brainard and developed by Perec and Adair would find its *modus operandi* continued via the medium of the internet with 'I remember' blogs.²⁶

But, as with endless loss, if we follow the logic of 'everything is worth remembering' to its extreme, we quickly realise the impossibility of such an undertaking. Hence, Jorge Luis Borges's hapless character 'Funes the memorious', unable to forget the detail of anything he has perceived. Forgetting, as Borges reminds us, is essential to our ability to function in other spheres: 'With no effort, [Funes] had learned English, French, Portuguese and Latin. I suspect, however, that he was not very capable of thought. To think is to forget differences, generalize, make abstractions. In the teeming world of Funes, there were only details, almost immediate in their presence.'²⁷ And it is not only the potential for mental overload that too much remembering can bring; there is also the connected danger of being haunted or trapped by the past, as in Johnny Cash's 'I Forgot to Remember to Forget' or Merle Haggard's 'House of Memories'. Andreas Huyssen provides a critique of what he sees as the conservative aspects of memory obsession. He points out that the obsession with discourses of loss does no justice to the 'politics of memory'. In the introduction to *Present Pasts* he writes, 'At stake in the current history/memory debate is not only a disturbance of our notions of the past, but a fundamental crisis in our imagination of alternative futures.'²⁸ Huyssen recalls Nietzsche's call for 'creative forgetting' in the latter's *Untimely Meditations*, a text also discussed by Paul Ricoeur and Sylviane Agacinski. As Agacinski points out, Nietzsche and Freud are unusual in that 'they taught the value of oblivion', Freud in his insistence on working-through and Nietzsche with his creative forgetting: 'Life has always needed forgetfulness more than memory and even the desire for commemorative monuments satisfies the desire to entrust memory to material reminders – to better free us from the past.'²⁹

While it is necessary to recognise these points, they do not make the obsession with memory and loss disappear; in this sense, at least, loss cannot be lost, for forgetting, like remembering, is only ever partial (making it both partial and endless). This is what brings about haunting, the spectral permanence of the past in the present. While the various thinkers we are looking at have different notions of the politics of memory, they all share an obsession with remembering and all, we might add, have strong ideas about what *they* want memory work to be. I do not wish to stake such a claim myself just yet, not because I wish to avoid the politics of memory – indeed they reappear throughout this thesis – but because I wish to concentrate on showing how these debates are reflected in popular music.

If Huyssen's critique of obsession with the past is launched from a concern with the forgetting of alternative futures, it is also aimed at the distinction between personal and collective pasts. Yet we would do a disservice to the memorians and the elegists discussed above if we were to suggest that they proposed a memory art solely concerned with the individual's loss. In the work of the memorians, we find an interweaving of individual and shared memories while in that of the elegists there is a notion of some kind of ideal object that can only really be defined through shared acceptance of the ideal. Georges Perec's fellow Oulipian³⁰ Jacques Roubard provides an exquisite example of both strands in *The Great Fire of London* when he attempts to 'work through' his foregoing of croissants for breakfast (he has given them up so that he does not have to spend time going out every day to buy them and can thus concentrate on writing) by writing a two page eulogy to the perfect croissant. In the midst of his precisely detailed description (what he calls '*Roubard's Law of Butter Croissants*'), he states: 'It is, of course, impossible nowadays to find a definitive croissant composed in accordance with this axiom and fulfilling my dream. Perhaps the ideal croissant only ever existed as a best-case scenario, a formal essence that could only find its remote approximation in actually existing croissants.'³¹ If that last phrase puts us in mind of 'actually existing socialism', it is no coincidence to find in the latter phrase a similar 'glitch' occurring between the (now eulogised) ideal and the actual. Here, and throughout this thesis, I want to argue that it is not farfetched to leap from croissants to communism, for struggles between utopian desires and compromised presents, and the losses generated by these struggles, are simultaneously sited at the level of the individual and the collective.

Yearning is a process that relies on the notion of *some* form of community in that it derives from prior experience. As M. Christine Boyer notes, drawing on the work of Maurice Halbwachs, ‘memories [are] recalled by time periods, by recollecting places visited and by situating ideas or images in patterns of thought belonging to specific social groups.’³² It follows from this that memory is always social. In Halbwachs’s words, ‘the individual remembers by placing himself in the perspective of the group, but one may also affirm that the memory of the group realizes and manifests itself in individual memories.’³³ Furthermore:

[T]he collective frameworks of memory are not constructed after the fact by the combination of individual recollections; nor are they empty forms where recollections coming from elsewhere would insert themselves. Collective frameworks are, to the contrary, precisely the instruments used by the collective memory to reconstruct an image of the past which is in accord, in each epoch, with the predominant thoughts of the society.³⁴

However, for Pierre Nora, whose work draws on Halbwachs, it is no longer clear that the collective memory knows what to do with itself. It may not even recognise its own existence:

Things tumble with increasing rapidity into an irretrievable past. They vanish from sight, or so it is generally believed. The equilibrium between the present and the past is disrupted. What was left of experience, still lived in the warmth of tradition, in the silence of custom, in the repetition of the ancestral, has been swept away by a surge of deeply historical sensibility. Our consciousness is shaped by a sense that everything is over and done with, that something long since begun is now complete. Memory is constantly on our lips because it no longer exists.³⁵

Because there are no longer *milieux de mémoire*, defined as ‘settings in which memory is a real part of everyday experience’, there has arisen a need for *lieux de mémoire*, ‘sights [...] in which a residual sense of continuity remains’.³⁶ As for the relationship between memory, often associated with individuals despite the work of Halbwachs and others, and the collective autobiography that goes by the name of

'history', Nora sees clear differences: 'Memory [...] thrives on vague, telescoping reminiscences, on hazy general impressions or specific symbolic details. It is vulnerable to transferences, screen memories, censorings, and projections of all kinds.' History, on the other hand, 'calls for analysis and critical discourse'. In short, 'memory is an absolute, while history is always relative'. Due to its relativity, and of the multitude of ways of telling its stories, history requires its own history, bringing about the practice of historiography, which 'begins when history sets itself the task of uncovering that in itself which is not history, of showing itself to be the victim of memory and seeking to free itself from memory's grip.'³⁷ For Nora, there has been a renunciation of ritual, leading to an ignorance around what to make of the ever-increasing archives that have taken the place of memory: 'Museums, archives, cemeteries, collections, festivals, anniversaries, treaties, depositions, monuments, sanctuaries, private associations – these are relics of another era, illusions of eternity. That is what makes these pious undertakings seem like exercises in nostalgia, sad and lifeless.'³⁸

Nora imagines a society so obsessed with the present that it spent all its time recording itself while postponing any self-analysis. He claims this is not the case with our society, which has become obsessed instead with history. But Agacinski offers a point of view more closely allied to the situation Nora denies. While agreeing that responsibility for remembering is handed over to the archive she claims that we *are* more interested in recording than analysing. Indeed the act of recording has become a part of the experience of the present – any significant present moment cannot go unrecorded. But, once recorded, it is seldom looked back on. For his part, Andreas Huyssen distinguishes memory from the archive precisely by the former's location in the present; 'it is this tenuous fissure between past and present that constitutes memory, making it powerfully alive and distinct from the archive or any other mere system of storage and retrieval.'³⁹

Mourning

At this stage it is worth saying something about mourning, the standard account of which remains, for many, Freud's 'Mourning and Melancholia' (1917). The concept of loss that I sketched out at the beginning of this chapter could well have come from Freud's essay, for he immediately makes clear that mourning, as well as being associated with 'the loss of a loved person' can also be a reaction to 'the loss of some

abstraction [...] such as one's country, liberty, an ideal, and so on.'⁴⁰ As with the notion of memory work or 'endeavour' discussed above, Freud speaks of mourning as a kind of work. This work involves, of course, the painful coming to terms with the loss one has suffered, a process which can be seen as a working towards normality and away from inhibition: 'when the work of mourning is completed the ego becomes free and uninhibited again.'⁴¹ Melancholia differs from mourning in that, while it too arises as a reaction to a loss, it is a 'loss of a more ideal kind'. Death may not be involved; it may be the loss of an 'object of love'. It may be that 'one cannot see clearly what it is that has been lost', or it is possible that 'the subject knows *whom* he has lost but not *what* he has lost in him', making the recovery process lengthier and more incomprehensible. There *is* work going on in the melancholic, Freud suggests, but the reason for the melancholia is unseen and therefore this 'work' remains puzzling. In a neat formula, Freud writes: 'In mourning it is the world which has become poor and empty; in melancholia it is the ego itself.'⁴²

In a discussion of Freud's essay, Paul Ricoeur highlights this point of melancholy as work by comparing the essay to one Freud had published three years earlier, 'Remembering, Repeating, and Working-Through' (1914).⁴³ The main thrust of that essay had been the difference between remembering (*Erinnern*) and repeating (*Wiederholen*) and the notion of 'work' undertaken by both the analyst and the analysand in order to defeat the illness caused by repression. As Ricoeur puts it, 'Belonging to this work are both the patience of the analyst with respect to the repetition channeled by the transference and the courage required on the part of the analysand to recognize himself as ill, in search of a truthful relation to his past.'⁴⁴ Remembering, in this formulation, is a healthy, if sometimes painful, process (work, *Erinnerungsarbeit*), while repeating is a handing-over of remembering to an act of unhealthy compulsion. Ricoeur then bases his comparison of mourning/melancholia and remembering/repeating on this notion of healthy/unhealthy:

If the work of melancholia occupies a strategic position in ['Mourning and Melancholia'] parallel to that occupied by the compulsion to repeat in ['Remembering, Repeating, and Working Through'], this suggests that it is as a work of remembering that the work of mourning proves to be liberating, although at a certain cost, and that this relation is reciprocal. The work of

mourning is the cost of the work of remembering, but the work of remembering is the benefit of the work of mourning.⁴⁵

It still remains to note what the ‘work of mourning’ might entail for our purposes. Two processes, at least, seem to be of importance to this project: firstly, what Jacques Derrida calls ‘the ontologizing of remains’, the process whereby some fixity is put on the loss of the object by attempting to fix a place for the object itself; and secondly, what is generally referred to after Freud as ‘sublimation’, here understood as a process by which investment in a lost object is converted into investment in creative acts. I will stay with the first of these processes briefly by quoting from Derrida’s late work *Specters of Marx*:

Mourning [...] consists always in attempting to ontologize remains, to make them present, in the first place by *identifying* the bodily remains and by *localizing* the dead [...] One has to know [...] Now, to know is to know *who* and *where*, to know whose body it really is and what place it occupies – for it must stay in its place. In a safe place. Hamlet does not ask merely to whom the skull belonged [...]. He demands to know to whom the grave belongs (‘Whose grave’s this, sir?’). Nothing could be worse, for the work of mourning, than confusion or doubt: one *has to know* who is buried where – and *it is necessary* (to know – to make certain) that, in what remains of him, *he remains there*. Let him stay there and move no more!⁴⁶

We can see in Derrida’s words, as we would expect, a continuation of Freud’s definition of mourning as ‘work’ and we can remember that Freud contrasted the mourner and the melancholic by the former’s knowledge of what was being mourned. In order to help that work, as Derrida points out, the knowledge that a specific object is fixed in a known and delineated place is vital. This is an issue I will return to in Chapter Three of this thesis, where I explore the potential differences between death and disappearance. There I use the example of the thousands of *desaparecidos* resulting from the dictatorial regimes of Chile and Argentina in the 1970s and 1980s and contrast the inability of the families of the victims to mourn with the notion of fixity that Derrida describes. The idea of ‘fixing’ is taken up by Mark Ç. Taylor in his and Christian Lammerts’s book *Grave Matters*, a pictorial account of graves of

famous artists, writers and philosophers. Reading Taylor's accompanying essay we are reminded of the necessity to fix lives via writing and reciting (biographies, epitaphs, funeral services) and to fix bodies via some form of 'burial' (which may, of course, not include the placing of a body in the ground). Taylor traces the history of 'the privatization of the grave and individualization of death' that developed in nineteenth century Europe and that marked (quite literally) a change in attitude from an earlier period of anonymous mass burial.⁴⁷ Taylor contrasts this process of individualisation with his reflections on the seeming return to anonymity brought about by mass urbanisation:

What will happen to the eight million people in New York City when they die? Will they be cremated and their ashes scattered? Will they be buried and, if so, where? The cemeteries, which once were on the outskirts of the city, are, like the landfills, full. Where do remains now remain? Does it matter any longer?⁴⁸

Taylor's concern here with the transformation of place into space – the 'space of anonymous flows' – is echoed by W.G. Sebald in his reflections on the connection between death, burial and place in *Campo Santo*:

Where will they go, the dead of Buenos Aires and São Paulo, of Mexico City, Lagos and Cairo, Tokyo, Shanghai and Bombay? Very few of them, probably, into a cool grave. And who has remembered them, who remembers them at all? To remember, to retain and to preserve, Pierre Bertaux wrote of the mutation of mankind even thirty years ago, was vitally important when population density was low, we manufactured few items, and nothing but space was present in abundance. You could not do without anyone then, even after death. In the urban societies of the late twentieth century, on the other hand, where everyone is instantly replaceable and is really superfluous from birth, we have to keep throwing ballast overboard, forgetting everything that we might otherwise remember: youth, childhood, our origins, our forebears and ancestors.⁴⁹

The second process I referred to above was that of sublimation and I would like to begin to think about its relevance to the current project by returning briefly to Georges Perec. In an issue of *Yale Language Studies* devoted to remembering Perec, Warren Motte provides a fascinating account of the writer's *oeuvre* as a prolonged work of mourning. Via a reading of Freud's 'Mourning and Melancholia', Motte brings together the notions of remembering, repeating and working, reminding us of the ways writing itself is a process of 'working through', something that Perec was well aware of and foregrounded in his work. As Motte notes, Perec undertook analysis for significant periods with prominent French analysts and was well aware of the benefits of channelling and transferring anxieties. In his book *W, or, The Memory of Childhood* (1975), Perec writes, 'My mother has no grave', a line that brings us back to the point made above by Derrida. Perec lost both parents during the Second World War, his father to complications arising from shrapnel wounds and his mother to one of the Nazi camps, probably Auschwitz. It is both the ignorance over his mother's fate and the knowledge that, even were there records, she had escaped any kind of familial burial, that prompts both the line quoted and the book as a whole; as Motte suggests one of the projects of *W* is to provide the space denied Perec's mother in death.⁵⁰

This notion of the use of art to provide a place for loved and lost objects and people via forms of representative framing, staging or fencing-off is one that I will pursue in Chapter Two. Here I will restrict myself to noting some observations made by Julia Kristeva which seem to apply to this form of sublimation, if such it is. In *Black Sun*, Kristeva discusses how loss and bereavement act as motors to the work of imagination and feed creative responses:

Naming suffering, exalting it, dissecting it into its smallest components – that is doubtless a way to curb mourning. To revel in it at times, but also to go beyond it, moving on to another form, not so scorching, more perfunctory [...] Nevertheless, art seems to point to a few devices that bypass complacency and, without simply turning mourning into mania, secure for the artist and the connoisseur a sublimatory hold over the lost Thing.⁵¹

The 'Thing' posited by Kristeva is 'the real that does not lend itself to signification', meaning that the work of art, as a form of signification, can only ever be a working-towards any 'hold' over the Thing. She continues: 'Messengers of Thanatos,

melancholy people are witnesses/accomplices of the signifier's flimsiness, the living being's precariousness'.⁵² This notion of precariousness is one touched upon by Freud in his brief essay 'On Transience' (1916), where he describes taking a walk in the countryside 'in the company of a taciturn friend and of a young but already famous poet.' The latter is dejected because of his awareness of the transient beauty of the nature surrounding them. Freud notes:

The proneness to decay of all that is beautiful and perfect can, as we know, give rise to two different impulses in the mind. The one leads to the aching despondency felt by the young poet, while the other leads to rebellion against the fact asserted. No! It is impossible that all this loveliness of Nature and Art, of the world of our sensations and of the world outside, will really fade away into nothing. It would be too senseless and too presumptuous to believe it. Somehow or other this loveliness must be able to persist and to escape all the powers of destruction.⁵³

Freud attempts to dissuade the poet and the 'taciturn friend' from their pessimism by suggesting that there is an increase rather than a loss in the worth of things precisely because of their transience: 'Transience value is scarcity value in time. Limitation in the possibility of an enjoyment raises the value of enjoyment.' He also points out that nature, when measured against the length of a human life, is eternal even though the seasons wreak temporary changes. As his companions fail to see his version of events, Freud surmises that they were experiencing 'a foretaste of mourning', the pain of which has 'interfered' with 'their enjoyment of beauty'. As in 'Mourning and Melancholia' Freud admits that it is 'a great riddle' for psychologists to explain mourning but that it is possible to connect the pain felt in the mourning process to the pain associated with the transference of libido from the ego to objects and back again: 'We only see that libido clings to its objects and will not renounce those that are lost even when a substitute lies ready to hand. Such then is mourning.'⁵⁴

Sylviane Agacinski takes up Freud's observations of the pain of mourning and its foretaste in *Time Passing*, suggesting that loss is just something we have to put up with:

There is nothing that can promise to eradicate the trial of loss, or its pain, except the assertion that it would be absurd to anticipate the time of mourning, to suffer in advance, and to deprive oneself of the pleasure of the present. Better to say goodbye to what no longer is, to resist the melancholy distaste that the ruin of things can inspire, and to ignore the – illusory – consolation found in the denial of death. Whether one abandons oneself to melancholy sadness and the foretaste of mourning or seeks refuge in the vain hope of eternity, in each case one turns from the real: what is there, in the process of (coming to pass and) passing. The anticipation of death, which we cannot help thinking about, has two possible effects: melancholy, which withdraws any present from us in advance and, conversely, love for finite things or beings, all the more intense since it is hopeless.⁵⁵

Agacinski appears to be repeating the distinction made by Freud between a healthy and unhealthy attitude towards loss and, as we saw earlier, she wishes to stress the value of forgetting. Quite where we draw the distinction between forgetting and mourning-as-fixing is difficult to say. It does not seem appropriate to suggest that mourning is a process that is ever really over, at least in regard to the remembering part of mourning. Another way to put this is to say that, while mourning is, as Freud pointed out, the work of dealing with the immediate pain brought on by the lost person or object, there is an ongoing process for most people who have lost – one that is seemingly not only healthy but ‘normal’ and even expected – of remembering, commemorating and marking the loss: mourning, in this light, is an always unfinished process. This is not to deny that there are gradations to the work of lessening pain and gaining acceptance, but rather to suggest that the binary oppositions brought about by Freud’s comparison of mourning and melancholia, and Agacinski’s of ‘melancholy sadness’ and the ‘vain hope of eternity’, are perhaps a little overdrawn. This is a point raised, with regard to Freud, by Paul Ricoeur, who provides a reading of the book *Saturn and Melancholy* by Raymond Klibansky, Erwin Panofsky and Fritz Saxl that reminds us that melancholy has not always been associated with illness. In the era of pre-Freudian humoral theory, melancholy as often connoted genius, or exceptionality of some ‘positive’ kind, as it did illness. Ricoeur then extends his analysis to consider ‘poeticized figures of melancholia’ such as Baudelaire, who ‘restore[s] to melancholia its enigmatic profoundness, which no nosology could ever exhaust.’⁵⁶ Ricoeur also

mentions Beethoven's final quartets as examples of what he finally brings himself to call 'sublimation', suggesting the latter term as the 'missing piece in the panoply of Freud's Metapsychology [which] might perhaps have provided him with the secret of the reversal from complaisance toward sadness to sadness sublimated – into joy.'⁵⁷

Before moving on to the next section, which is concerned with witnessing and the fixing of the witness's account, I would like to consider how some of the notions discussed so far play out in two very brief case studies from popular music. The first is drawn from Barbara Ching's work on what she calls 'hard country', a term I do not have time to explore here but which can be understood to refer to a certain strand of American country music that resists the compromises of 'commercial' country by its insistence on, amongst other things, the projection of 'abjection', a term Ching borrows from the work of Julia Kristeva. Country music is an area that tends to be associated with an exaggerated interest in the voicing of melancholy and therefore seems ideal to be considered alongside the themes dealt with here. And Ching provides a comparison in her first chapter between two recordings that seem to encapsulate the distinction between an ability to work through trauma and a chronic inability to do so. The songs she chooses are 'The Dance' by Garth Brooks and 'He Stopped Loving Her Today' by George Jones.⁵⁸ Both songs tell stories of lost love and of male 'victims' who have adopted differing ways of dealing with their trauma. In Brooks's song, the narrator gets over the pain and is able to be, in the demotic sense of the term, 'philosophical' about his situation, recognising that life is just a 'dance' that involves trials and changes. In Jones's song, the narrator tells the story of a friend who was unable to get over his loss and only gave up on his compulsive melancholia at the moment of his death (the 'today' of the song title, hence why 'he stopped loving her today'). While I do not have space to do justice to Ching's analysis of the way these stories are told in words and music, the crux of the distinction she initially proposes lies in Brooks's presentation of working-through and Jones's fetishisation of 'male misery' and 'abject devotion to a lost cause'.⁵⁹ Yet, following this comparison, Ching is quick to get to one of the main points of her book, which is a critique of the kind of binary oppositional responses to country music she finds endemic in much writing on the subject. Reacting to a suggestion that Brooks *as an artist* is able to overcome the 'problem' of fatalism in country music by musically doing what his character does in the song – adapting himself to a sonic 'normality' here pitched as 'the mainstream' – Ching recognises that the process of working-

through, of mourning and getting on with 'the dance' may only lead to a swift papering over of any real issues. 'While "The Dance" voices the popular promise of pain followed by gain, "He Stopped Loving Her Today" asks a hard, permanently uneasy, question: what, exactly is gained by a choreographed rush out of hard country?'⁶⁰

The other brief case study relates to a very different realm of popular music, electronic dance music. Often associated with decadence and hedonism, dance music seems to embody a central tenet of much popular music, where the music itself and the act of listening provide endlessly for what Agacinski calls the 'love of finite things'. Yet, as much as pop may seem to accept the inevitability of transience, to which it responds with its own transient rhythms, there remain strands of popular music that do not wish to forget and that do not always allow for the easy losing of the self. An interesting example of this is offered in an article in *The Wire* by Philip Sherberne in which the author describes watching Chilean techno artist Ricardo Villalobos DJing at the 2005 MUTEK festival in Chile. The effectiveness of the story Sherberne tells relies on some knowledge of the Chilean folk singer Violeta Parra, mainly active in the 1950s and 1960s and an embodiment of the aspirations of the country in the period prior to the 1973 coup that brought General Augusto Pinochet to power and seventeen years of brutal dictatorship to Chile:

A few hundred rather messy-looking ravers danced and cavorted while a few dozen Chileans and their families looked down on us from the promenade with a mixture of curiosity and middle-class disdain. And then it happened: out of the matrix of pulses, a voice unfurled like some exotic flower. It was Violeta Parra's song, gently remixed by Villalobos to nestle comfortably with the rest of the mix. As the music fell away, we were left only with her unmistakable voice, which traversed an eerie modal scale that seemed, at least to a foreigner, not Chilean, not Latin American, but simply and terrifyingly otherworldly. Up on the promenade, though, the song's provenance dawned on the passers-by, and their expressions changed. Jaws dropped. Time stopped. A wormhole had appeared – both for the ravers dancing in suspended animation but also, more importantly, for the uninitiated spectators who found themselves transported to a year before the dictatorship, before economic restructuring, before the Internet. Villalobos was working his magic, cheating the clock at 128 bpm.⁶¹

Sherberne neglects to mention the song that Villalobos uses. It is 'Santiago penando estás' and is notable among other reasons for the instrument that Parra generally chose to accompany herself on this song, an Andean bass drum called the *bombo* (she accompanied most of her songs with guitar). The *bombo* provides a dull thudding beat and is the only instrument other than Parra's voice on her recording of the song.⁶² In a recording of Villalobos's set from another occasion on which he uses the song, all sounds are removed at the point where he inserts 'Santiago penando estás' *except* for Parra's voice and a beat which, while sounding like the generic bass beat of contemporary dance music, echoes the sound of the *bombo* to such an extent that it is impossible to tell how much (if any) of the beat has been sampled from the original, how much has been added at the mixing stage and whether the purpose was to cover the original sound, evoke Andean tradition or just keep the beat going at this late stage in the four hour set.⁶³ This ambiguity provides another level of connection between the original song and its present incarnation, thus furthering the 'timelessness' that Sherberne finds in this sonic event. I will have more to say about Parra and other similar Chilean acts of musical commemoration in Chapter Three. For now I wish only to bring to the fore the seeming strangeness of the event Sherberne describes, this voice from another world arising like a revenant in the most unlikely of venues. Villalobos, it appears, is attempting a strategy of estrangement in which he dislocates his auditors both spatially and temporally while dancing is displaced by remembering. The point here may not even be the historical specificity of Parra's music, important as that is, and this would seem to be borne out by Villalobos's continued use of Parra's voice in the sets he produces in other parts of the world where his listener-dancers may have no knowledge about the voice's provenance. Here we find ourselves back at the point made earlier about Joe Brainard's memories: the specifics of the memory may not be translatable but the pointer towards an act of remembrance is recognised because the strategy of estrangement has brought about *an* act of remembering, albeit that remembering here is an attempt to figure out just what is going on (when confused, it is to our memory as much as any other 'sense' that we turn). As Pierre Nora writes in regard to official silences, 'the observance of a commemorative minute of silence, which might seem to be a strictly symbolic act, disrupts time, thus concentrating memory.'⁶⁴

There is no certainty that those observing the silence are remembering the same thing. It seems clear that such a position outside of time – its ‘out-of-jointness’ – cannot be thought of as ‘melancholic time’, intriguing though such a concept might be. This is due to the fact that in both Villalobos’s time-‘cheating’ and officially-endorsed public silences, we can be fairly certain that ‘normal’ time will resume. The idea of a minute of silence, after all, is its delimitation – it is clearly not eternal silence, which would be to reflect the loss too exactly, to let ‘the shadow of the object [fall] upon the ego’, as Freud might say.⁶⁵ Similarly, in Villalobos’s set, the beat kicks back in, the dancing resumes and a sort of ‘normality’ is returned to. For, while the point of Sherberne’s article seems to be that, by keeping the music at 128 beats per minute throughout his sets, Villalobos is attempting to sustain a ‘time out of joint’ for as long as possible (his sets are famously long, from four to eight hours), it does not take too much imagination to see how this time becomes a new kind of normality once the DJ’s listeners have ‘adjusted’ their mental clocks. To finish his set with the Parra tribute would be to leave these listeners stranded; it is the ‘silence’ and uncanniness surrounding Parra’s voice emerging from the mix that is the really ‘out of joint’ aspect of time at work here, not the ‘homely’ (‘housely’?) music Villalobos frames it with.⁶⁶

We might argue that mourning is always already factored into transience, decadence and hedonism. This is a quality that has often been noted in the music of the Beach Boys and its role as a record of the moment and an object of memory.⁶⁷ To move our discussion on here, let us note how the idea of an ‘Endless Summer’ highlights the hope in fixing the moment ‘against nature’. We know that the seasons turn and that the summer goes; what makes it ‘endless’ is the possibility to repeat it via recording technology. As Evan Eisenberg writes: ‘Records [...] shattered the public architecture of time. They have replaced it with a kind of modular interior design. The individual supplies himself with sculpted blocks of time and proceeds to pave his day with them. Each block is infinitely repeatable.’⁶⁸ Can summer be endless after all?

Writing vs. Transcribing

Witnessing/Fixing

The discussion has brought us, inevitably, to the question of recording, whether thought of in its connection to modern popular music as sound recording or in its earlier sense of writing. I will stay for the moment with the latter, although it is not my intention to explore the implications of the post-Derridean 'reading' of writing at any great length. My first interest is with writing as a form of fixing, for, as we have already seen, in order to do the work of remembering, be it a 'melancholy' elegising or a post-traumatic 'working-through', there has been a clear desire to 'get it down' somehow. This is a theme I wish to stay with briefly by thinking of the ways that writing functions as a form of witnessing. The following extract from a short piece by Jorge Luis Borges entitled 'The Witness' gets to the heart of the matter:

He is awakened by the bells tolling the Angelus. In the kingdoms of England the ringing of bells is now one of the customs of the evening, but this man, as a child, has seen the face of Woden, the divine horror and exultation, the crude wooden idol hung with Roman coins and heavy clothing, the sacrificing of horses, dogs and prisoners. Before dawn he will die and with him will die, and never return, the last immediate images of these pagan rites; the world will be a little poorer when this Saxon has died.⁶⁹

Borges is here exploring one of his favourite themes, oblivion. He goes on to note that with every death 'one thing, or an infinite number of things, dies'. And he finishes, not surprisingly, by reflecting on his own transient world: 'What will die with me when I die, what pathetic or fragile form will the world lose? The voice of Macedonio Fernández, the image of a red horse in the vacant lot at Serrano and Charcas, a bar of sulphur in the drawer of a mahogany desk?'⁷⁰

What is notable here is the recourse to the 'pathetic or fragile form', the suggestion that history and biography be thought of as fragments, seemingly unimportant details that have stubbornly persisted in memory. In this sense they resemble the memories of the 'I remember' school, those random fragments, personal or shared, that are placed together to form a life. In terms of biography they accord

with Roland Barthes's use of the 'biographeme', the detail that escapes the remembering of an individual in terms of chronology. As Seán Burke notes of Barthes's use of the device in the latter's *Sade, Fourier, Loyola*:

These details – Fourier's cats and flowers, Sade's dislike of the sea – are crystalline moments in lives whose motion and totality are necessarily irrecoverable. While the conventional biographer will seek to mimic the impetus of a life, to register it according to certain representative proportions, the biographeme breaks with the teleology implicit in this lambent narrative movement. Events are not connected to imply any destiny or purpose in the course of a life, rather the biographemes are the shards of any such forward movement, those velleities that are passed over in the more frenetic, directed movement of the footprint-following biographer.⁷¹

In doing so, the biographeme partakes of a process similar to the 'flash' of history that Walter Benjamin proposes, and which I shall return to below. This notion of history is similar to the kind of collective memory that Gilbert Adair evokes when he describes his versioning of Barthes and Perec as 'tiny shards of a common nostalgia'.⁷² The shards suggest a series of broken-off memories that, while difficult to locate, may prick the conscience at any given time. As Burke says:

The biographeme suspends narrative time and the *telos* that only such time can insure. Its ethos has affinities with the Proustian concept of 'involuntary memory' as it has too with the repertoires of ordinary memory. Those who have lost their nearest and dearest do not recall their departed in the manner of the monumental biographer, but through discreet images, a love of cats and flowers, a liking for particular cakes, watery eyes like Ignatius of Loyola.⁷³

The lost shards become found through this involuntary process, bringing the lost past to the present: 'For Barthes, never far from Proust, the biographeme reverberates with the pathos of lost time, and yet participates in its recovery.'⁷⁴

There is still no certainty of any kind of permanence to these shards. Yet Borges and Barthes are already attempting a solution to the problem precisely by

writing it down. As Barthes struggles with the dilemma of whether or not to keep a diary, he records the following:

Death, real death, is when the witness himself dies. Chateaubriand says of his grandmother and his great-aunt: 'I may be the only man in the world who knows that such persons have existed': yes, but since he has written this, and written it well, we know it too, insofar, at least, as we still read Chateaubriand.⁷⁵

The importance of the writer, the written word and the reader as witnesses to what has passed away is echoed in Michel de Certeau's observations about the writing of history. Comparing writing to oral storytelling, de Certeau claims: 'In combining the power to keep the past (while the primitive "fable" forgets and loses its origin) with that of indefinitely conquering distance (while the primitive "voice" is limited to the vanishing circle of its auditors), writing *produces history*.'⁷⁶ And, in a manner similar to Borges and Barthes, Michael Bywater, describing his father's love of public transport, and in particular a certain tram that ran from Nottingham to Ripley, asks, 'Who will remember it for him, after he's gone?'⁷⁷ The answer, again, is in the writing but there is a sense that Bywater knows this is not enough; we read in his entry not only his fear of his father's mortality, but also his fear of his own mortality and that of his book. Meanwhile, Paul Auster finds himself at his writing desk following the loss of his father:

I knew that I would have to write about my father. I had no plan, had no precise idea what this meant. I cannot even remember making a decision about it. It was simply there, a certainty, an obligation that began to impose itself on me the moment I was given the news. I thought: my father is gone. If I do not act quickly, his entire life will vanish along with him.⁷⁸

There is clearly an importance being placed here on biography, and it is worth noting that biography, which features heavily throughout this thesis, is strongly associated with the types of remembering associated with death rites (the witness, the epitaph, the obituary, the gravestone). Furthermore, biography serves both to distinguish individuals from each other and to bring them together in community through

similarity and shared qualities, intimately connecting personal and collective memory and identity while attempting to fix the messy fluidity of lived life. Mark C. Taylor, in his fascinating survey of final resting places, discusses the rise of biography following Augustine (whose *Confessions* may remind us that autobiography is not so much telling the truth of oneself as deciding what, how much and to whom to confess). Taylor suggests that the rise of cemeteries and marked graves ‘invented’ death, a point that relates to the notion that writing invents speech and that scores, transcriptions, instruments and ultimately recording invent music.⁷⁹

From transcribing to writing

When talking about witnessing we must be clear what we are describing. In his poem ‘Elegy’, Borges writes:

to have seen the things that men see,
death, the sluggish dawn, the plains,
and the delicate stars,
and to have seen nothing, or almost nothing
except the face of a girl from Buenos Aires
a face that does not want you to remember it.⁸⁰

The conflict between what the witness cannot forget and what the witnessed wants to be forgotten highlights three basic processes of witnessing: firstly, a reception of something (an image, a sound, a smell) that has left some form of imprint in the mind; secondly, a presentation (a making-present) to the self of the impression (memory); and finally, a re-presentation of that memory to an other (here, the reader). Of these, only the last might be said to be voluntary; Borges has not only remembered the face that did not want to be remembered but he has told his readers about it. Or has he? We still know nothing about that face, only his remembering it. We might compare this ‘witness report’ with that of Borges’s fellow Argentine, the novelist Juan José Saer, whose novel *The Witness* (1983) plays with the standard accounts of the colonisation of the New World by having a sixteenth century Spaniard caught and kept prisoner by an Indian tribe solely so that he can be released and act as witness to the tribe’s existence and destruction, to tell their story to the world.⁸¹

This allows us to reduce the main aspects of witnessing to two: seeing and saying. In this sense we might call to mind the witness as used in law courts, where a witness who has seen but will not say what they have seen is of little use. The witness,

then, is carrying something that is wanted by the other; we might define the ‘active’ witness precisely by saying that it is the desirability of their information that makes of them a witness. For our purposes we also need to expand the notion of witnessing from merely ‘seeing’ to include the other senses. Borges has already provided guidance for this in his use of fragments that go beyond the visual in ‘The Witness’: the tolling of bells, the voice of Macedonio Fernández, the smell of sulphur. Listening, here, can be thought of as a carrying which may be borne but which may also be unburdened by passing on. In the latter process this carrying becomes a carrying-out – the completion of a task – and witnessing moves from a passive to an active role, as in the witness before the Law.

Witnessing, then, can be a *productive* force in that it results in the transference of a thing presented to a thing re-presented (this use of the word ‘transference’ serves to remind us that psychoanalysis is a form of witnessing: a kind of double witnessing, where the analyst witnesses the analysand witnessing themselves). Writing is an example of this, the transference from the witnessed to the represented. Something is inevitably lost in the process, as Roland Barthes observes in ‘From Speech to Writing’, an essay prefacing a series of interviews with him that have been transcribed: ‘This inscription, what does it cost us? What do we lose? What do we win?’⁸² Jacques Roubard, in trying to weigh the benefits and dangers of writing, also stresses the notion of transference from one place or state to another:

Once set down on paper, each *fragment of memory* [...] becomes, in fact, inaccessible to me. This probably doesn’t mean that the record of memory, located under my skull, in the neurons, has disappeared, but everything happens as if a transference had occurred, something in the nature of a translation, with the result that ever since, the words composing the black lines of my transcription interpose themselves between the record of memory and myself, and in the long run completely supplant it.⁸³

Roubard’s friend Georges Perec concurs: ‘The work of writing is always done in relation to something that no longer exists, which may be fixed for a moment in writing, like a trace, but which has vanished.’⁸⁴ We are back to the notion of forgetting and we can see here how writing, along with other methods of recording, is

a vital tool in allowing us the possibility to forget.⁸⁵ Let us move now towards a notion of recording closer to our desired goal of dealing with sound.

Photo/Phono Take One: Recording

Borges provides us with the written report of his Saxon's witnessing but, in doing so, he reminds us that we have neither the Saxon's *own* written account nor the sonic record of those bells (nor, presumably, of Macedonio Fernández's voice): those sounds are lost. I want to start this first brief entry on phonography – to use Evan Eisenberg's term – by staying with the notion of destruction. I am interested in both the destruction of the past and of the self, for there is a sense in which autobiography and the work of remembering can be seen as a self-witnessing and a destruction of the self's past. Self-witnessing is dramatically exemplified in Edgar Allan Poe's story 'MS. Found in a Bottle' (1833, rev. 1845), where the narrator attempts to record his fate on a 'doomed' ship: 'I shall from time to time continue this journal [...] At the last moment I will enclose the MS. in a bottle, and cast it within the sea.'⁸⁶ The close of the tale, which we assume to be the found manuscript itself, attempts to stay true to this promise as the ship goes down in a whirlpool:

But little time will be left me to ponder upon my destiny – the circles rapidly grow small – we are plunging madly within the grasp of the whirlpool – and amid a roaring, and bellowing, and thundering of ocean and of tempest, the ship is quivering, oh God! And – going down.⁸⁷

If Poe's tale still bears a sense of horror nearly two centuries after its first publication, it is surely because we recognise that, even in an era where the black boxes of aeroplanes provide records of doomed journeys far more accurate than the writing and dispatching of the manuscript allowed Poe's narrator, there is still a point beyond which nothing more can be recorded that would be of relevance to the person marked for death. As Poe's epigraph to the tale translates: 'He who has but a moment to live/No longer has anything to dissimulate'.⁸⁸ But what has been dissimulated up to that moment lives on, in a manner of speaking.

Can we be witnesses to our own destruction? In the sense of Poe's narrator, the answer must be no: we are always stuck in a 'working-towards' such a witnessing via a process of 'getting down' what we can get down before we 'go down'. From

another view, however, we might say that remembering is precisely about witnessing our own destruction. Both of these possibilities seem to be played out (literally) in Samuel Beckett's monologue *Krapp's Last Tape* (1958), in which we witness a man, Krapp, witnessing his own life as he records memories onto his tape recorder in 'celebration' of his birthday and plays back old recordings from previous similar occasions. The 39-year-old Krapp – the 'middle voice' of the three (re)presented – is 'played' by the actor manipulating a tape machine on which is heard his 'younger' voice; the 'actual' Krapp being played by the actor is thirty years older. 'Middle Krapp' recounts his thoughts on listening to an earlier tape (which we do not get to hear) made when he was younger. He is furious with the romantic idealist he used to be and mocks his younger self, allowing 'Old Krapp' to join in as he listens. But the 39-year-old still holds to certain ideals, the recording of which is now treated with contempt by the old man, who then records his own critique. The process we catch Krapp in, then, is similar to the perfecting process, or 'working-toward' mentioned above. Each successive attempt to fix life and thought somehow gets it wrong and must be updated, though for how much longer we cannot be sure due to Old Krapp's admonishments to himself to cease this endless torture and to the 'last tape' alluded to in the title. Do we *know* this is the last (final) tape that we are witnessing being made in the same way that we know we are reading the message in the bottle in Poe's tale? Or is 'last' only supposed to refer to 'preceding', as in the way Krapp continues to listen to preceding attempts to come to terms with his life?

Krapp's Last Tape provides a good example of how nostalgia/loss interlocks with technological attempts to prevent loss, and how those attempts are both a damming of the reservoir of memories and the means by which that reservoir can be tapped. Krapp is caught in a cyclical process of remembering and memorialising, of recapturing the past and planning for the future (a future where the importance of remembering the past now being recaptured *and* the moment of recapturing it will prove both fascinating and repellent. In other words *the past of the now* and *the now* are the raw materials to be mined in *the future of the now*. The *now*, at the same time, is the repository of the sum of experience of *the past of the now* – the latter has no substance outside of the former – just as *the now* will become a part of the repository that constructs *the future of the now*. In the words of film director Atom Egoyan, who filmed Beckett's monologue in 2001 (thus providing another kind of 'last tape', albeit a videotape), 'With [the play], a man listening to his younger self commenting on his

even younger self – Beckett is able to express the central paradox of personal archiving technology; its ability simultaneously to enhance and trivialise experience.’⁸⁹ David Toop, who discusses Egoyan’s work, has his own ‘take’ on this: ‘a strip of tape passing through the playback head of a tape recorder, threatening to unspool as it comes to the end of its reel, is analogous to the memory of a life threading through the space and time of the world, then unspooling into nothingness.’⁹⁰

It is possible to bring together the Beckett of *Krapp’s Last Tape*, the Barthes of *Camera Lucida* and the Walter Benjamin of ‘The Work of Art in the Era of Mechanical Reproduction’ in considering the implications that mechanical reproduction has for the process of witnessing. In all there seems to be a division between the faithful witnessing offered by the mechanical process of recording and that element that breaks through (punctures) the ‘merely’ mechanical. This element is the fetishised object, the aura regained. It is this regaining of the aura that is connected to Egoyan’s point about technology enhancing even as it trivialises. It is useful here to consider the ways in which recording has followed writing in embracing a dialectic of transcription and creation. Just as writing is both a creative and transcriptive act in that it not only records but invents (is inventive), so mechanical reproduction is, as is already apparent in its name, a form of production as much as mimesis. As has often been noted, composition in western classical music developed to such a degree that it reached a point where music no longer preceded text – the complexity of the orchestral score was such that the realisation of it in music was inconceivable without the finished ‘text’. In considering *Krapp’s Last Tape*, we must not only dwell on the use of recording technology to ‘memorise’ the protagonist’s life and experiences but must bear in mind the use of the same technology to allow Beckett to create his dramatic monologue.⁹¹ In this sense, recording has a creative as well as transcriptive role ‘to play’. This is a point that Toop takes up in connection with his own work as a musician and composer. Refusing the ‘pessimism’ of Jean Luc Godard – who has one of his characters suggest that ‘technology has replaced memory’ – Toop claims:

Other than those times when I’m sorting back through boxes of tape, like wearish old man Krapp, delving into the archives for the purpose of resuscitating past music for a new audience, I record on minidisk, onto CD, or

directly onto the hard disk of my computer. Then I work on the sound files, burrowing into their imaginary space microscopically, transforming them from raw material into a sketch, a fragment moving towards a composition, even a finished composition.

In one sense this is comparable to the practice of composing music by writing notation on staves, building a composition by remembering or imagining sounds and their organisation, then documenting by purely visual method the information needed to bring that remarkable feat of imagination to life at some time in the future.⁹²

The use of recorded sound to reconfigure the sonic past has, of course, been central to sample-based musics such as hip hop and its numerous offshoots, leading to a revolution in the way popular music is produced, performed and heard (albeit one that has numerous precursors in twentieth century avant-garde music). I will not be dealing with this issue at much length in this thesis, although I will be noting the role of memory work in rap music's sonic matrix in Chapter Four. I will, however, frequently be looking at ways of 'resuscitating past music for a new audience' through discussions of the memorialisation of musicians via influence, tributes and cover versions. There is more to say about the role of recording but for now I will restrict myself to noting the necessity for recording as a process of 'fixing' here and will go into more detail below once some other concepts – particularly fidelity – have been woven into the matrix of my discussion.

Revolution, Event, Fidelity

While writing as transcribing may prove sufficient for the fixing of the fragmentary, writing as production – as style – demands a grander sense of event. As Jacques Le Goff writes in *History and Memory* (1977):

Our habits concerning historical periodization thus lead us to privilege revolutions, wars, and changes in government – in other words, the history of *events*. This problem comes up again in the new relations between past and present that the so-called new history seeks to establish today. In addition, the official (i.e., academic) definition of *contemporary* history in countries such as

France now requires us to speak of a *history of the present* in order to discuss the very recent past or the historical present.’⁹³

Le Goff’s colleague Pierre Nora connects this definition of event with his notions of memory places, asking ‘is not every great event – indeed the very notion of event – by definition a *lieu de mémoire*?’ His answer is negative, for ‘it is the exclusion of the event *qua* event that defines the *lieu de mémoire*. Memory fastens upon sites, whereas history fastens upon events.’⁹⁴ However, I have not been as sure as Nora about the distinction between memory and history and have, at points in what follows, defined the eventness of certain events precisely through their existence as *lieux de mémoire*. My question here concerns the usefulness of attaching a philosophy of the event to popular music studies, a discipline often characterised by a desire to celebrate the transitory and the fragmentary in popular music. I am attempting to think about the ways that rock ‘n’ roll functions as a musical revolution that becomes subjected to a narrative of loss accompanying the belief that the revolution has floundered, or even disappeared completely. In order to think about what this narrative of loss might entail I have found myself going back to the emergence of rock ‘n’ roll, to what we might term its ‘event’. My question here has been to ask whether the conceptualisation of event offered by Alain Badiou may be of any use to me in this context.⁹⁵

Badiou’s notion of event is connected to unpredictability. For Badiou, an event is something that can – but will not necessarily – occur at an evental site and that occurs as a complete break with the continuum of being. For Badiou the fields of human interaction where such events can emerge are those of science, art, politics and love. An event is a creative, assertive act that breaks with what has gone before and sets in motion a new truth that in turn creates subjects who show fidelity to it. Examples used by Badiou include the French Revolution, Galilean physics, Schoenberg’s twelve-tone scale and the event of any amorous encounter that entails a change for the subjects constituted by that encounter. The event itself cannot be verified, but fidelity to its truth can be maintained after it has been recognised. For Badiou, fidelity to the event is a process that exceeds the event itself, a truth process by which subjects are created. In the case of the Cuban Revolution, for example, we can talk about the *event* of the Revolution – commonly identified as the victory of 1959 – to reflect the singular nature of this irruption into the established order of a

completely new situation. And we can talk about *fidelity* to this event as being the ongoing project of the Cuban Revolution.

But can we, by a deft leap, take a contemporaneous musical example, the emergence of rock 'n' roll, and speak of the *event* of this 'Revolution' – commonly identified as the 'victory' of 1955 – and of a singular irruption into the established order of a completely new situation? And can we talk about *fidelity* to this event as being the ongoing project of the rock 'n' roll 'Revolution'?⁹⁶ The track 'Baby Boom Ché' by the Native American poet and activist John Trudell suggests we can. The bulk of Trudell's narrative is reproduced below:

'Baby Boom Ché'
Words: John Trudell
Music: Jesse Ed Davis⁹⁷

[Guitar intro – 'I Want You I Need You I Love You' intro; segues into: organ
'Love Me Tender' background]

You wanna know what happened to Elvis?
I'll tell ya what happened
I oughta know, man, I was one of his army
I mean man I was on his side
He made us feel all right

We were the first wave in the post war baby boom
The generation before had just come out of the great depression
and World War Two
You know, heavy vibes for people to wear
So much heaviness
Like some kind of voiding of the emotions

Their music
You know, the songs life always carries
You know, every culture has songs?
Well, anyway, their music was restrained emotion
You know, like you didn't wanna dance
If you didn't know how
Which says something strange

Well, anyway, Elvis came along about ten years after the nuke
When the only generals America had and the only army she had
Were Ike and Mac
And stupor hung over the land
A plague where everyone tried to materially free themselves

Still too shell-shocked to understand
To feel what was happening

[...]

[instrumental break – organ: ‘Love me Tender’; lead guitar:
‘I Want You I Need You I Love You’ variation]

The first wave rebelled
I mean, we danced even if we didn’t know how
I mean Elvis made us move
Instead of standing mute he raised our voice
And when we heard ourselves something was changing
You know, like for the first time we made a collective decision
About choices

America hurriedly made Pat Boone a general
In the army they wanted us to join
But most of us held fast to Elvis and the commandants around him
Chuck Berry, Buddy Holly
Little Richard, Bo Diddley, Gene Vincent
You know, like a different Civil War all over again

I mean, you take ‘Don’t Be Cruel’, ‘I Want You I Need You I Love You’
And ‘Jailhouse Rock’
Or you take Pat and his white bucks singing love letters in the sand
Hell, man, what’s real here?
I mean, Pat at the beach in his white bucks
His ears getting sunburned
Told us something about old wave delusion

[...]

It’s like we were the baby boom because life needed a fresher start
I mean, two world wars in a row is really crazy man
And Elvis, even though he didn’t know he said it,
He showed it to us anyway
And even though we didn’t know we heard it
We heard it anyway

Man, like he woke us up
And now they’re trying to put us back to sleep
So we’ll see how it goes
Anyway, look at the record, man
Rock ‘n’ roll is based on revolutions
Going way past 33½
You gotta understand, man,
He was America’s baby Boom Ché
I oughta know man
I was in his army

[guitar outro: 'I Want I Need You I Love You' variation]

'Baby Boom Ché' is a description of Elvis as freedom fighter surrounded by commandants – Little Richard, Buddy Holly, Bo Diddley – in what Trudell calls 'another Civil War all over again'.⁹⁸ These warriors are fighting the drabness of post-war America, the threat of nuclear destruction, straight line dancing and the music of Pat Boone. Trudell provides an exposition of an event site, an account of the nature and consequences of an event which exceeds this site, and a highly charged metaphor (the figure of Che Guevara) to suggest fidelity to the possibilities allowed by the Elvis event, possibilities that extend beyond music (or show that music is something itself more extensive than musical materials). As Trudell says, 'Rock 'n' roll is based on revolutions going way past 33½'.⁹⁹

Trudell's stance is echoed in a strand of popular music history that, since the late 1960s, has been a major force in creating and maintaining a set of myths about popular music. I will cite just one exemplary party, Nik Cohn, and specifically his 1969 book *Awopbopalooobop Alopbamboom: Pop from the Beginning*.¹⁰⁰ Cohn's book makes no claim for accuracy, as he makes clear in a preface written in 2004 for the book's republication:

My purpose was simple: to catch the feel, the *pulse* of rock, as I had lived through it. Nobody, to my knowledge, had ever written a serious book on the subject, so I had no exemplars to inhibit me. Nor did I have any reference books or research to hand. I simply wrote off the top of my head, whatever and however the spirit moved me. Accuracy didn't seem of prime importance (and the book, as a result, is rife with factual errors). What I was after was guts, and flash, and energy, and speed. Those were the things I'd treasured in the rock I'd loved.¹⁰¹

It is worth taking note of the use of 'love' here and the reference to the 'flash', reminding us perhaps of Walter Benjamin's account of history as a 'seiz[ing] hold of a memory as it flashes up at a moment of danger'.¹⁰² The flash represents the attempt to fix, as in flash photography, as well as the moment where something freezes long

enough for us to glimpse some kind of ‘truth’ – the moment often referred to as an ‘epiphany’ (from the Greek *epiphainō*, reveal). The ‘moment of danger’, meanwhile, reminds us of the subversive potential of rock ‘n’ roll.¹⁰³

For Cohn, then, the very evental nature of the pop revolution calls for act rather than accuracy. Not surprisingly, accounts such as this have found a number of detractors eager to wield the strict baton of historical accuracy in defence of ‘the facts’. Again, I will select just one classic example, Richard Peterson’s article ‘Why 1955?’ Peterson’s ‘production of culture’ perspective allows him to emphasise various important factors leading to the ‘advent of rock ‘n’ roll’: law, technology, industry structure, organisation structure, occupational career, market. Although Peterson is keen not to lose sight of the notion of the event of Elvis and his contemporaries, he needs to downplay its importance in order to present his argument:

It is easy to characterise eras in terms of the leaders of the time. The ‘Napoleonic’ era is an obvious case in point. It is no less tempting to identify an aesthetic revolution with its most celebrated exponents – Vivaldi, Shakespeare, Beethoven, Picasso. In this vein, it is possible to point to specific individuals like Chuck Berry, Little Richard, Elvis Presley and Jerry Lee Lewis and say that rock and say that rock emerged in the late 1950s because [...] they began their creative efforts at this specific moment. In bringing into question this ‘supply side’ explanation, I do not, for a moment belittle their accomplishments [sic]. Rather, I suggest that in any era there is a much larger number of creative individuals than ever reach notoriety, and if some specific periods of time see the emergence of more notables, it is because these are times when the usual routinising inhibitions to innovation do not operate as systematically, allowing opportunities for innovators to emerge.¹⁰⁴

In Peterson’s article we find the evental site elaborated in all its detail but missing Cohn’s ‘pulse’ or ‘flash’: missing, in other words, the crucial magic of the event. An event, as Badiou would have it, always depends on something that is not accounted for in the complexity of the situation. In Peterson, we read the infinite complexity of the situation but the excess (be it named ‘Elvis’ or ‘Chuck Berry’ or ‘rock ‘n’ roll’), that which transcends this infinite complexity, is lost.¹⁰⁵ Another way of thinking about this is via the conflict between history and fiction, a conflict traced out carefully

in Paul Ricoeur's work. As Ricoeur suggests in his account of the attack launched by Fernand Braudel on the event in historiography, to which Peterson's work could be usefully compared, we are not only dealing with differing accounts seen from different perspectives.¹⁰⁶

The kind of approach taken by Peterson is, of course, in keeping with much academic work, which in Badiou's schema is the work – or rather the result of what he terms 'enquiries' – associated with 'constructivist thought'. It is through such thought that we are able to acquire an archive of knowledge and to account for our situation. While Badiou is clearly excited about the possibilities of what lies outside this situation – what, in other words, may become an event – he is keen to note the necessity of constructivist thought to human endeavour:

Rather than being a distinct and aggressive agenda, constructivist thought is the latent philosophy of all human sedimentation; the cumulative strata into which the forgetting of being is poured to the profit of language and the consensus of recognition it supports.

Knowledge calms the passion of being: measure taken of excess, it tames the state, and unfolds the infinity of the situation within the horizon of a constructive procedure shored up on the already-known.

No-one would wish this adventure to be permanent in which improbable names emerge from the void. Besides, it is on the basis of the exercise of knowledge that the surprise and the subjective motivation of their improbability emerges.

Even for those who wander on the borders of evental sites, staking their lives upon the occurrence and the swiftness of intervention, it is, after all, appropriate to be knowledgeable.¹⁰⁷

Peterson's argument resides in what Badiou would call the 'veridical': governed by the ideology of encyclopaedic knowledge, it 'tames the state'. Cohn's book is more of an act of 'excessive' truth – the truth it contains is not veridical, it is truth formed in the process of fidelity to a truth event. It is what Žižek will call 'belief before belief', an always already *engrained* voice, the voice of one of the faithful (it is also, we should remember, the voice of the witness who desires to 'bear' the object of his witnessing rather than leave that job to the archive, even as he is archiving his

passion).¹⁰⁸ As Badiou writes in *Being and Event*, ‘Amongst the Christians, the Church – the first institution in human history to pretend to universality – organizes fidelity to the Christ-event, and explicitly designates those who support it in this task as “the faithful”.’¹⁰⁹ To which we might add: Amongst the rock fans, the Rock Media – one of the more recent institutions in human history to pretend to universality – organises fidelity to the Elvis-event, and explicitly designates those who support it in this task as ‘the faithful’. Or, as the quasi-religious rhetoric of Don McLean’s ‘American Pie’ has it: ‘Do you believe in rock ‘n’ roll/Can music save your mortal soul?’¹¹⁰ But how to account for these faithful subjects *as* subjects? Is a subject called into being by music also a subject lost to music, or, as we more frequently think of this, lost *in* music? And how are we to account for those academics who count themselves part of the faithful? I will return to this question below in my discussion of listening; for now, I must stay with the ‘danger’ of revolution.

Revolution, Memory, Fidelity, Nostalgia

In order to work back towards my main topic, it is necessary to think about the ways that revolution and event are connected to loss and memory. At a basic level we can understand revolution to mean a break with the present, one that relegates the present to the past and connects it with loss. For the revolutionary, this loss is a necessary factor in order to make room for the ‘gain’ of the revolutionary project. For the non-revolutionary, the threat of this loss is traumatic and may even lead to counter-revolution. In another sense we can say that revolution is itself built on an awareness of loss. Badiou’s early work, for example, deals with the role of the revolutionary party as the catalyst by which the subjective potential of the proletariat can be realised, a potential that is otherwise subject to loss and dissipation. Peter Hallward summarises Badiou’s position thus: ‘Through the party, pure subjective catalyst, the all-powerful but ephemeral power of the masses becomes conscious of itself, becomes the actual rather than simply the effective subject of history. The masses make history, but as vanishing or ephemeral; the party makes this very vanishing *consist* and endure.’ The October Revolution brings a consistency to the ‘the ephemeral “cause” that was the Paris Commune’.¹¹¹ Revolution, we could say, shifting into a psychoanalytic register not so far from Badiou’s political theorisation, is constituted around a lack – constituted too, of course, around desire.

Although often associated with inaugurating new projects, revolutions play an equally important role in providing closure for preceding projects, retrospectively ‘creating’ them both as regimes to be overturned and objects of a history it will only be possible to write after the revolutionary event, a history that ‘will have been’. Noting how nostalgia ‘is not necessarily opposed to modernity and individual responsibility’, but rather ‘coeval with modernity itself’, Svetlana Boym highlights this retroactively creative role of revolutions:

Outbreaks of nostalgia often follow revolutions; the French Revolution of 1789, the Russian Revolution and recent ‘velvet’ revolutions in Eastern Europe were accompanied by political and cultural manifestations of longing. In France it is not only the ancien regime that produced revolution, but in some respect the revolution produced the ancien regime, giving it a shape, a sense of closure and a gilded aura.¹¹²

A good example of this in popular music, and one that fits with the example of the Cuban Revolution, is the Buena Vista Social Club, whose self-titled 1997 album has been among the most popular ‘world music’ releases of the last decade in the United Kingdom in terms of sales.¹¹³ The music of the Club harks back to the pre-revolutionary period of the 1940s and 1950s and offers a nostalgic take on a defining moment in Cuban cultural history, a moment that is arguably defined precisely by its cessation as a result of the Revolution’s clampdown on night clubs and ‘hedonistic’ entertainment. That the music is so successful now has less to do with any supposed attachment to, or reaction against, the ongoing revolutionary project – indeed, the popularity of the island’s music has been of great benefit to Cuba as it has been forced to open its doors once again to tourism – than it has to do with its association with the ‘gilded aura’ of a ‘closed’ past.

We could summarise the above by positing two positions: on the one hand, a making-concrete of the hitherto ephemeral cause via the revolutionary act; on the other, a creation of the old regime via a memorial-cum-historical act of closure. These might be roughly equivalent to what Andreas Huyssen calls the ‘present futures’ of modernism and the ‘present pasts’ of the postmodern era, although this might equally provide these positions with historical referents that are too divisive.¹¹⁴ By allying Boym’s work on nostalgia with Badiou’s notion of fidelity, moreover, we should also

remain alert for what could be termed 'nostalgia for fidelity'; in other words, for the lost cause. Nostalgia, as Boym points out, is 'not always for the ancien regime or fallen empire but also for the unrealized dreams of the past and visions of the future that became obsolete.'¹¹⁵

Here, it is worth outlining two possible ways of looking at this return to the past. One is that associated with the melancholic who is trapped in the past and unable to move forward: Kristeva describes this figure thus:

Riveted to the past, regressing to the paradise or inferno of an unsurpassable experience, melancholy persons manifest a strange memory: everything has gone by, they seem to say, but I am faithful to those bygone days, I am nailed down to them, no revolution is possible, there is no future...¹¹⁶

These 'strange memories' are not ones that a revolutionary subject could act on as they seem to deny any sense of agency. If, as some critics have maintained, one of the problems with Badiou's notion of the subject is a suggestion of a lack of agency, then, following Kristeva, Badiou would seem to be theorising the creation of what we might term 'the melancholy subject'.¹¹⁷ Does being 'faithful to those bygone days' – being 'nailed down to them' – have to parallel the act of fidelity? Or is there, as Badiou's political theory seems to suggest, still a role for the active(ist) subject? Žižek is interested in this second, activist (non-melancholic) return to the past and he uses it to suggest the possibilities for the left to (re)find its place:

Today more than ever, in the midst of the scoundrel time we live in, the duty of the Left is to keep alive the memory of all lost causes, of all shattered and perverted dreams and hopes attached to leftist projects. The ethics which we have in mind here, apropos of this duty, is the ethics of Causes qua Thing, the ethics of the Real which, as Lacan puts it, 'always returns to its place'.¹¹⁸

Žižek is insistent that this position does not involve the kind of infatuation that seems to define the subject described by Kristeva. Although, through a psychoanalysing of 'the Left', he evokes a history of trauma, he is keen to stress that this 'subject' must simultaneously not give in to nor forget the trauma:

This, then, is the point where the Left must not ‘give way’: it must preserve the traces of all historical traumas, dreams and catastrophes which the ruling ideology of the ‘End of History’ would prefer to obliterate – it must become itself their living monument, so that as long as the Left is here, these traumas will remain marked. Such an attitude, far from confining the Left within a nostalgic infatuation with the past, is the only possibility for attaining a distance on the present, a distance which will enable us to discern signs of the New.¹¹⁹

Utopia

The lost cause has clear parallels with the imagination of utopia. Although utopia and its companion dystopia are often thought of in terms of the future, as figures of the imagination they have no fixed time. As places reached for by the mind they are equally the results of the voyages undertaken by dreams and memories; what defines them above all is that they do not (seem to) occupy the present site or time. Andreas Huyssen sketches the importance of utopia in the modern revolutionary mind, albeit in a reading that contradicts what others have claimed for the connection between revolution and memory:

For it was really the future that captured the imagination of post-Enlightenment Europe and the United States after independence. In the wake of the eighteenth-century revolutions and the secular imagination they unleashed, the spaces of utopia, rather static and confined since Thomas Moore, were increasingly temporalized and set in motion, and the road to utopia became fair game for a worldly historical imagination.¹²⁰

Huyssen highlights the ensuing Romantic sense of loss that followed the rapid industrialisation of these post-Enlightenment spaces, suggesting that the failure of the utopian project was an early step towards an increasing obsession with memory. Romantic accounts of experience and its loss such as Wordsworth’s *Prelude* or, later, Proust’s *A la recherche du temps perdu* provided the narrative to the failure of utopia to materialise: ‘But neither Wordsworth nor Proust was compelled to think about memory and forgetting as social and political issues of global proportions, as we are today.’¹²¹ It is the social and political nature of these processes that, for Huyssen,

relegates utopias to the position of lost causes. Like Žižek, Huyssen, for all his suspicion over memory obsession, argues for a productive return to the utopias of the past as a necessary antidote to a willed forgetting of them:

The neoconservative attack on all utopias as inherently and insidiously totalitarian and terroristic [...] has as its obvious goal the rewriting, if not erasure of the effects of the 1960s, that decade of the recent past which most emphatically rekindled the utopian spirit, from Martin Luther King's 'I have a dream' to Herbert Marcuse's call for the realization of utopia to the May '68 graffiti proclaiming *l'imagination au pouvoir* (power to the imagination).¹²²

Žižek, for his part, suggests the connection between the (re)finding of the utopian imagination and a project of estranging the present:

Herein lies one of the tasks of the 'postmodern' critique of ideology: to designate the elements within an existing social order which – in the guise of 'fiction', that is, of 'Utopian' narratives of possible but failed alternative histories – point towards the system's antagonistic character, and thus 'estrangle' us to the self-evidence of its established identity.¹²³

I will return to this notion of estranging in Chapter Two, where I discuss the 'songs of disquiet' found in Portuguese fado music. Fado songs could rarely be described as 'revolutionary', especially when compared to the 'nova canção' ('new song') movement that preceded and literally inaugurated the 1974 'Carnation' Revolution in Portugal, just as the songs of the Buena Vista Social Club seem positively counter-revolutionary when placed alongside the *nueva trova* (new song) of Silvio Rodríguez, Pablo Milanés and others in Cuba. Nevertheless, the sense of disquiet is strong in both cases and there is a strong emphasis on a refusal of the present that seems to exceed 'mere' melancholia or nostalgia.

In an article on music and 'hauntology' – a concept he takes from Jacques Derrida – Simon Reynolds discusses the British record label Ghost Box, which specialises in a series of audio-visual projects that use elements of the recent past that have not been deemed important enough to be retained in the collective memory but which have not been entirely forgotten either. Examples of these uncanny objects

residing in the hinterlands of memory include old public service announcements, obsolete educational programmes and library recordings. Contrasting these projects with what he sees as an obsession with the past in pop culture that has led to ‘the black hole of retro without end’, Reynolds writes, in a passage that bears some similarities to Žižek and Boym,

Ghost Box and their allies merge two opposed yet connected responses to this predicament. One is a ‘nostalgia for looking forwards’ (as [Ghost Box co-founder Julian] House puts it), for that bright, clear-eyed spirit of post-World War Two modernism. The other strategy involves a reinvention, or rewriting, of history. When the Future goes AWOL, those with radical instincts are forced to investigate the past. Renegade archivists, they seek to uncover alternative pasts secreted inside the official narrative.¹²⁴

As Reynolds makes clear, this project takes its place amongst a number of other instances of ‘haunted audio’ at the turn of the millennium, from the proliferation of band names and song titles referencing ghosts, haunting and absence to the ‘dubstep’ phenomenon which updated the uncanny sonic explorations of 1970s dub (such as Burning Spear’s *Garvey’s Ghost* – a dub of their *Marcus Garvey* album by Jack Ruby – and Joe Gibb’s ‘Ghost Capturer’) into a contemporary ‘post-jungle’ imaginary.

The fact that a discussion of revolution and utopia has here brought us to the presence of ghosts is perhaps not such an unusual one, given the prominence of the spectral in many revolutionary texts. Marx and Engels, of course, opened the *Communist Manifesto* with a declaration that ‘A spectre is haunting Europe’. Derrida later utilised this image in his *Specters of Marx*, a text that Reynolds draws on in his ‘Society of the Spectral’ article, while Žižek has returned on numerous occasions to the ‘spectre of ideology’. Haunting is a useful concept in that, like remembering and imagining, it refers to both time and space (it also requires witnesses in order to be effective, of course). With this in mind, I would like to turn to a consideration of place, with particular reference to the city.

‘There’s a Place I Can Go in My Memory’: The City as Palimpsest

Raphael Samuel’s *Theatres of Memory* and Pierre Nora’s *Lieux de mémoire* both take their spatial concepts from Frances Yates’s *The Art of Memory*.¹²⁵ Yates describes the classical techniques of ‘mnemotechnics’ that relied on the fixing of memories in particular places (as described in Cicero and Quintilian) and the medieval ‘memory theatre’. The sense of memories occupying space leads to the notion of inscribing as described by Yates and this is also a topic discussed by Ricoeur in his account of Plato’s writings on memory. For Plato, memories were inscribed or imprinted in the mind, ready to be recalled and ‘read’ at a later date.¹²⁶ This also suggests that memory is a palimpsest, a notion that fits the idea of place as location of memory in the city and Huyssen’s discussion of the politics of memory in *Present Pasts* is connected to what he calls ‘urban palimpsests’. As Yates notes with relation to the passing on of the art of memory from the Greeks and Romans to the European tradition, ‘an art which uses contemporary architecture for its memory places and contemporary imagery for its images will have its classical, Gothic, and Renaissance periods, like the other arts.’¹²⁷ This is a notion taken up in Chapter Two, where I discuss the city as both unfinished project and memory place.

In *The City of Collective Memory*, M. Christine Boyer notes the desire accompanying modernity for a disciplinarity in city planning that would double as a disciplinarity over the citizen:

If the masses, housed and fed by meager allowances and expanding in number within the working-class districts of nineteenth-century industrial cities, presented a dangerous threat to social stability, then how better to discipline their behavior and instill democratic sentiments and a morality of self-control than through exemplary architectural expression and city planning improvements?¹²⁸

Boyer also discusses Foucault’s work on architecture as discipline. Foucault was fascinated with the ways in which space was used to exert power, whether through the surveillance allowed by the panopticon or by the disciplinary possibilities of modernist urban planning. Yet, while the association between the Enlightenment project of ‘totalising’ experience and the twentieth century experiences of

authoritarianism has remained popular, others have suggested that we have moved into a new 'post-disciplinary' era. Zygmunt Bauman, for example, in his account of globalisation, has claimed that we have moved on from the panopticism described by Foucault to a 'synopticism' in which the many watch the few rather than vice versa. Globalisation shows world affairs as indeterminate, unruly and self-propelled, in marked contrast to the Enlightenment project of universalisation which contained the hope for order-making and was utopian. Capital has become 'emancipated from space' and with it industry, jobs and people.¹²⁹ Migratory flows create two classes of people that Bauman describes as 'tourists and vagabonds': tourists 'become wanderers and put the bitter-sweet dreams of homesickness above the comforts of home – because they want to', while vagabonds 'have been pushed from behind – having first been spiritually uprooted from the place that holds no promise, by a force of seduction or propulsion too powerful, and often too mysterious, to resist.'¹³⁰

Mark C. Taylor describes the flows in terms of the changes wrought upon the metropolis:

In the city, *place* is transformed into the *space* of anonymous flows. As technologies change first from steam and electricity and then to information, currents shift, but patterns tend to remain the same. Mobility, fluidity and speed intersect to effect repeated displacements in which everything becomes ephemeral, and nothing remains solid or stable.¹³¹

Taylor points out the centrality of Baudelaire's work on modernity here and its combination of the ephemeral with the permanent. Baudelaire, of course, acts as exemplar for many theorists of modernity and its trappings (texts and palimpsests of various sorts: written, architectural, audio-visual), most notably perhaps Walter Benjamin, who takes Baudelaire's poetics of losing oneself in the urban crowd and updates them into his own philosophical mediations of getting lost in the city. Taylor notes how this fluidity in modernity is associated with the emphasis in philosophy on becoming over being:

The infatuation with becoming issues in the cult of the new, which defines both modernity and modernism. The cultivation of the new simultaneously reflects and reinforces the economic imperative of planned obsolescence. In

the modern world, what is not of the moment, up to date, *au courant* is as useless as yesterday's newspaper.¹³²

Anthony Vidler, like Taylor, notes the centrality of Heidegger's work on becoming and dwelling, forging connections between the 'homelessness' that Heidegger spoke of, Freud's *unheimlich* and the work of Julia Kristeva and Tzvetan Todorov on 'real homelessness' and the figure of the stranger, a connection that sits in harmony with Bauman's observations on tourists and vagabonds.¹³³

Bauman's account of the effects of postindustrial migratory flows emphasises the distinctions between the comfort of the tourist, for whom this experience is 'lived through as postmodern freedom', and the discomfort of the migrant, for whom the experience 'may feel rather uncannily like the postmodern version of slavery'.¹³⁴ It is also worth considering the role of anxiety here, for it is not always as clear as Bauman makes out which side one may find oneself on. As Vidler and others have pointed out, it is normally from a position of comfort that one experiences anxiety. It is the creeping-in to the 'homely' and comfortable of the strange and sinister which defines the uncanny, which starts off as a bourgeois interest in the reading of uncanny tales from the comfort of an armchair but becomes something related more to an 'anxiety of time' and an 'impossibility of "living comfortably" in the world.' More recently, there has been a different sense of instability that has brought about a return of the uncanny:

For Lacan, the uncanny formed the starting point for his examination of anxiety, the very 'image of lack'; for Derrida, the uncanny lurks behind the unstable links between signifier and signified, the author and the text; for Baudrillard, its propensity for the double, for the elision between reality and fiction, its insistent *trompe l'oeil*, gives it a central role in the explication of the simulacrum.¹³⁵

Vidler identifies a 'contemporary sensibility that sees the uncanny erupt in empty parking lots around abandoned or run-down shopping malls, in the screened *trompe l'oeil* of simulated space, in, that is, the wasted margins and surface appearances of postindustrial culture'. These are exactly the kind of spatial references made by the groups Simon Reynolds discusses in his article on haunted audio. Place in

contemporary thinking occupies many 'sites', among them the postindustrial wasteland, the high-rises and 'concrete islands' described in the fictions of J.G. Ballard, the abandoned high street, the migratory routes of tourists and vagabonds and the 'placeless places' of cyberculture described by Mark C. Taylor:

The placeless place and timeless time of cyberculture form the shifty margin of neither/nor [...] In this 'netherzone', 'reality' is neither living nor dead, material nor immaterial, here nor there, present nor absent, but somewhere in between. Understood in this way, cyberspace is undeniably spectral. The virtual realities with which we increasingly deal are ghostly shades that double but do not repeat the selves we are becoming.¹³⁶

The notion of a netherzone is echoed in Beatriz Sarlo's discussion of the 'decentered city'. Sarlo discusses the out-of-town shopping mall as the quintessential example of a site for the contemporary consumer-subject to get lost. As Sarlo points out, displacement is happening here on more than just the physical level: 'the mall is part and parcel of an evacuation of urban memory.'¹³⁷ Zygmunt Bauman, meanwhile, points to the slipperiness of any sense of space within 'liquid modernity'.¹³⁸

Common to a number of these writers is an assumption that the city operates as an ideological pressure upon the subjected citizen. As will be discussed below in regard to listening, such thinking resembles the Althusserian state apparatus (repressive and ideological) that is always already at work upon its subjects (we are born into our time and place: both precede us). This immediately raises questions of agency: just what can the citizen *do* about all this? Jonathan Raban's *Soft City* (1974) attempts to deal with this question by presenting the city as something which becomes gradually 'legible' to the citizen. For Raban, the city is an 'emporium of styles' from which the initially confused 'greenhorn' (the newcomer to the city) learns to select. This notion of choice is expanded to include the playing of roles – city life for Raban is always performative and the city is as much a collection of stages as an emporium.¹³⁹ If the city does impose its ideology, it has to be recognised in this formulation that, while the city is always at work on us we are always at work on the city too: this 'work' involving both the constant rebuilding of the city and the effort put into the performance of identity. This involves a physical and a mental building,

the latter represented by Raban's suggestion that, as we reinvent ourselves, the city rebuilds itself around us.

David Harvey opens his *The Condition of Postmodernity* (1990) with a discussion of Raban's book in which he suggests that we should read it 'not as an anti-modernist argument but as a vital affirmation that the postmodernist moment has arrived.'¹⁴⁰ He then attempts to locate some of the differences between the modernist and postmodernist conceptions of the city as well as other cultural manifestations and 'structures of feeling'.¹⁴¹ His discussion of the 'creative destruction' of modernism suggests that modernism held true to seemingly paradoxical drives towards transience and eternity; he quotes Baudelaire's famous definition of modernity in 'The Painter of Modern Life' as 'the transient, the fleeting, the contingent; it is the one half of art, the other being the eternal and immutable.'¹⁴² One of modernity's tasks is to take note of the inevitability of transience and to value it, as Freud had suggested. Indeed, Freud closed his essay 'On Transience' with a meditation on the destruction caused by the First World War (an event which was also to contribute significantly to his thoughts in 'Mourning and Melancholia'). Although interested in his clinical work on war neuroses with mental destruction, Freud speaks here too of the physical destruction of cities and monuments, emphasising the necessity of rebuilding rather than mourning what was lost. This connection between psyche and city is an intriguing one, leading us to wonder to what extent cities display 'symptoms' of the common past. A related task would then be to address the extent to which modernism is an attempt at working-through those symptoms. This is something addressed by Anthony Vidler's account of the ways that 'the uncanny finally became public in metropolis' and of how 'the metropolitan uncanny was increasingly conflated with metropolitan illness', leading to the 'spatial fear' of agoraphobia and claustrophobia.¹⁴³ It is also an element in Harvey's discussion of postmodernist architecture, which 'takes bits and pieces of the past quite eclectically and mixes them together at will'. Harvey links this eclecticism to a lack of any sense of historical continuity:

Given the evaporation of any sense of historical continuity and memory, and the rejection of meta-narratives, the only role left for the historian, for example, is to become, as Foucault insisted, an archaeologist of the past, digging up its remnants as Borges does in his fiction, and assembling them side by side, in the museum of modern knowledge.¹⁴⁴

We might well ask if the city itself can ever be anything more than a 'museum of modern knowledge'. This certainly seems to be how it is viewed by those who have come in the twentieth century to be known as 'psychogeographers', from figures related to surrealism and situationism such as André Breton, Louis Aragon and Guy Debord to contemporary writers like J.G. Ballard, Iain Sinclair and Paul Auster. Of these, Iain Sinclair's work has perhaps come closest to the exploration of a 'museum of modern knowledge', with various books dedicated to physical and psychical explorations of forgotten areas of London.¹⁴⁵ Psychogeography has come to be associated with taking control of one's place and agency in the controlling city, a project in which the act of walking is crucial, as Merlin Coverley highlights:

The wanderer, the stroller, the flâneur and the stalker – the names may change but, from the nocturnal expeditions of De Quincey to the surrealist wanderings of Breton and Aragon, from the situationist *dérive* to the heroic treks of Iain Sinclair, the act of walking is ever present in this account. This act of walking is an urban affair and, in cities that are increasingly hostile to the pedestrian, it inevitably becomes an act of subversion. Walking is seen as contrary to the spirit of the modern city with its promotion of swift circulation and the street-level gaze that walking requires allows one to challenge the official representation of the city by cutting across established routes and exploring those marginal and forgotten areas often overlooked by the city's inhabitants. In this way the act of walking becomes bound up with psychogeography's characteristic political opposition to authority, a radicalism that is confined not only to the protests of 1960s Paris but also to the spirit of dissent that animated both Defoe and Blake as well as the vocal criticism of London governance to be found in the work of contemporary London psychogeographers such as Stewart Home and Iain Sinclair.¹⁴⁶

A classic text to draw on here is Michel de Certeau's 'Walking in the City', from *The Practice of Everyday Life*. Like Raban, de Certeau presents the city as a text, suggesting there is a legibility to it. However, this legibility changes with perspective. De Certeau famously opens his essay with a meditation on New York City as seen from the 110th floor of the World Trade Centre (a view which is, of course, now lost).

But, as de Certeau points out, this view was always a false one; while the ‘God’s eye’ view of the high-rise, the aerial or satellite photo or the map may present the city as a kind of ‘printed’ text, this is not the way that citizens encounter the city on a day-to-day basis, even if they can access such views with increasing ease. The citizen as ‘walker’ writes the text without being able to see what they have written:

These practitioners make use of spaces that cannot be seen; their knowledge of them is as blind as that of lovers in each other’s arms. The paths that correspond in this intertwining, unrecognized poems in which each body is an element signed by many others, elude legibility. It is as though the practices organizing a bustling city were characterized by their blindness.¹⁴⁷

Yet there is a process somewhere between writing and reading, a kind of negotiation with the text that they are producing, that enables the citizens to use the city productively, and not only passively. Though caught in a story which has ‘neither author nor spectator’, a way of mastering space is nevertheless fashioned via ‘another spatiality’ (de Certeau takes this term from Maurice Merleau-Ponty), with the result that ‘a *migrational*, or metaphorical, city [...] slips into the clear text of the planned and readable city.’¹⁴⁸ To a certain extent, this use of linguistic notions to describe physical space could be placed alongside Jean-François Lyotard’s discussion of language games in *The Postmodern Condition*, not least in his use of Wittgenstein’s metaphor for describing language games:

Our language can be seen as an ancient city: a maze of little streets and squares, of old and new houses, and of houses with additions from different periods; and this is surrounded by a multitude of new boroughs with straight regular streets and uniform houses.¹⁴⁹

This sense of a ‘building-up’ of the linguistic and civic space is one suggested in a description of postmodernism by Iain Chambers that allows us to move our discussion towards music’s role in the ongoing process of the city:

Post modernism, whatever form its intellectualizing might take, has been fundamentally anticipated in the metropolitan cultures of the last twenty years:

among the electronic signifiers of cinema, television and video, in recording studios and record players, in fashion and youth styles, in all these sounds, images and diverse histories that are daily mixed, recycled and 'scratched' together on that giant screen which is the contemporary city.¹⁵⁰

It is worth, then, considering some of the ways place has been associated with music. This connection has been explored by a number of writers, from those writing on scenes, such as Sara Cohen, Ruth Finnegan and Barry Shank, to those, like George Lipsitz, more interested in the 'poetics of place'.¹⁵¹ The writers on scenes have tended to concentrate on urban centres – Cohen on Liverpool, Finnegan on Milton Keynes, Shank on Austin – and have attempted to show how musicians and fans have used this locatedness to explore issues of identity formation, community and career development. Other writers have discussed popular music as the 'sound of the city' or stressed the ways in which the music reflects the 'metropolitan experience', even in music that is often associated with non-metropolitan experience, such as country or folk, but which has required the city to act as both a differential foil and a site for recording, performing and broadcasting.¹⁵²

Perhaps the most obvious association between music and place is that associated with memory. As George Lipsitz writes:

Through music we learn about place and about displacement. Laments for lost places and narratives of exile and return often inform, inspire, and incite the production of popular music. Songs build engagement among audiences at least in part through references that tap memories and hopes about particular places. Intentionally and unintentionally, musicians use lyrics, musical forms, and specific styles of performance that evoke attachment to or alienation from particular places.¹⁵³

Lipsitz's mention of intentionality allows us to consider the distinctions that Proust makes between, on the one hand, the involuntary memory associated with the evocative power of the *petite madeleine*, and on the other the conscious act of recollection of time and place that is *A la recherche du temps perdu*. Both forms of memory are present in the numerous references to music throughout the novel, including the famous account of Vinteuil's sonata. Proust's character M. Swann is

initially affected by the music a year before the events being narrated but does not recognise it and has no way of finding out what it is. The following year, at a *soiree*, Swann rediscovers the music and is this time affected not by the immediate perception of it, but by the memory of it. Yet, even on the first listen, memory was at work. As Proust describes the impossibility of capturing music due to its fleetingness, he describes memory, in a manner that utilises an understanding of memory as place, as ‘a labourer working to put down lasting foundations in the midst of the waves, by fabricating for us facsimiles of these fleeting phrases’.¹⁵⁴ On Swann’s rediscovery of the music, however, he is furnished with a better way of keeping hold of it: ‘now he could ask the name of his stranger [...] he possessed it, he could have it in his house as often as he liked, try to learn its language and its secret.’¹⁵⁵ Proust here combines music, place and memory in a number of ways: firstly, Swann’s initial exposure to the music is described in terms of the fleetingness of spatial perception; secondly, his mind attempts to hold onto the music via the swift erection of memory places; thirdly, he is now able have the music ‘in his house’ where he can guard it and visit it as often as he likes.

The contemporary equivalent of Swann’s experience would probably be the hearing of a piece of music on some form of broadcast media, a subsequent search for the source of the music and a final ‘capturing’ of it via the purchase of a CD or download of an MP3 file. Yet certain features of the experience remain unchanged, not least the necessity of distance between the initial experience and the position from which that experience can be ‘fixed’. A similar observation can be found in the autobiography of the Brazilian singer-songwriter Caetano Veloso, who describes his experience of listening to Ray Charles’s ‘Georgia On My Mind’ in Salvador and missing his hometown of Santo Amaro. Veloso writes: ‘These were transcendental nostalgias, the beauty of the singing infusing memory with a life more intense than the moments as they were actually lived, allowing them to be relived more truthfully the second time.’ He then relates how he later found ‘this effect luminously described in Proust’.¹⁵⁶ There is another aspect to place here, or rather to displacement, as Georgia comes to stand in for Santo Amaro in Veloso’s hearing of the song. An analogous process is discussed by Kaja Silverman in her account of the use of Vinteuil’s sonata in Proust’s novel, where she emphasises the importance of displacement and metonymy as the music stands in for Odette and both stand in for Swann’s desire.¹⁵⁷

Displacement, as Edward Casey explains, is a condition of humanity that can affect us even when we have not left home:

We can feel out of place even *in* the home, where *Unheimlichkeit* [...] may afflict us. Separation anxiety sets in early, by most accounts before twenty-four months of life. Thereafter, for the rest of our life we suffer from a series of separations, all of which involve aspects of place: separations from caring parents, from siblings and childhood friends, from a native region and its characteristic beliefs and dialect, from things we have done or witnessed. As Freud, Bachelard, and Proust all suggest, to refind place – a place we have always already been losing – we may need to return, if not in actual fact then in memory or imagination, to the very earliest places we have known.¹⁵⁸

The conflation of memory, place, home and journey is effectively hymned in two songs associated with country singer Merle Haggard. In ‘House of Memories’ (1967), Haggard narrates a tale of loss following the break-up of a relationship. He is constantly reminded of the past and describes his house as ‘a prison’ in which ‘there’s no place to hide/where your memory won’t find me’.¹⁵⁹ Subjected to the tortuous repetition of involuntary memories, Haggard cannot help but sound abject, not least in the pleasure he seems to find in relating this tale. The spatial metaphor is one of stasis here, with agency displaced by melancholia. In contrast, ‘When Times Were Good’, on which Haggard duets with Willie Nelson, presents a narrator (if two singers can be said to constitute ‘a’ narrator: I believe here they can) who has similarly messed up in a relationship and for whom the past is a desirable place (‘good’, as against the presumably ‘bad’ present) but who seems to be able to enact more agency than the protagonist of the former song. In the opening lines Nelson sings:

There’s a place I can go in my memory
Back to a life I chose to leave behind
And sometimes I still need to remember
When times were good and you were mine.¹⁶⁰

There is choice, then, in both the physical leaving and the virtual revisiting (I *can* go there, but I don’t have to). As the song progresses over a leisurely six and a half minutes (epic by country music standards) we realise that the reasons for the break-up

were to do with the narrator being a musician with ‘a weakness for the wine’. Inevitably, perhaps, he finds another way to revisit that place via music: ‘tonight I thought I’d write one for the memory’, he sings. And, having written it, of course, ‘he’ must sing it and, in doing so, form a new relationship between singer(s), players and listeners. For all involved the song journeys through a number of ‘places’, the space opened up by the contrasting vocals, the interaction with the evocative steel guitar and fiddle, and the place mapped by the lyrics. On revisiting the song, it is easier to note how this emphasis is built into the sonic structure of the piece right from the beginning when Nelson’s voice stresses the words ‘place’ and ‘go’. If, as Caetano Veloso sings in ‘Jenipapo absoluto’, ‘To sing is more than to remember [...] It’s to have the heart of back then’, then here Nelson seems to be vocally marking both the memory places and getting to ‘the heart of back then’.¹⁶¹ For Nelson’s fans – his listeners – it is the spots in each song where his voice enters its distinctive nasal register that, alongside the equally distinctive manner in which his voice falls either side of the beat, marks the points in the songs where meaning and emotion (which are sometimes the same thing) are ‘quilted’, to use a Lacanian concept. If, as Casey suggests, memory and imagination are shackled to place, it is useful to consider the ways in which listening is too. As Diane Ackerman writes: ‘Sounds have to be located in space, identified by type, intensity, and other features. There is a geographical quality to listening.’¹⁶²

Hail, Hail Rock ‘n’ Roll: Interpellation, Identification and Ideological Transference in Popular Music

Rock Schooling

In this part of the chapter I wish to talk about listening and the losses associated with it, not least the concept of being lost in and to music and its association with agency (or lack of it). This consideration touches upon a number of issues, including musical affect, loyalty to a group of musicians or a musical style (fandom) and the use of popular music for specific memory work. When Julia Kristeva speaks of the melancholic being faithful to bygone days, how might we connect this fidelity to that discussed earlier in relation to the ‘rock faithful’ (see above, p. 44)? Is the person lost in music always a melancholy subject? To attempt to answer these questions is to bring together a number of aspects discussed so far: popular music as revolutionary

event; fidelity; and what was posited above as the negotiation of the 'ideology of the city' via walking but will here be thought of as a negotiation of the 'noise' of ideology – what we might think of, after Billy Bragg, as 'the sound of ideologies clashing' – via the development of listening strategies.¹⁶³ I will begin by returning to a question left on hold earlier in the chapter (see p. 44) when I asked what role academics might play as part of 'the rock faithful'.

Robert Fink, in his article 'Elvis Everywhere', jokes about academics 'doing Elvis' and makes an analogy between such academics and Elvis impersonators.¹⁶⁴ Two points arise from this. Firstly, to even acknowledge the joke, funny as it is, is to take part in legitimising a persistent discourse about the usefulness (or lack thereof) of mixing academia with popular culture. Similarly, Bruce Tucker, in an article on postmodernism and the emergence of rock 'n' roll, worries about 'risking the absurdity of bringing all this critical apparatus to bear' on the music.¹⁶⁵ This is a point to which I will return; for now I will merely note it as a defensive strategy erected at the start of Fink's and Tucker's texts. The second point I want to make with regard to Fink's joke is that it is not enough to talk only of 'doing Elvis'; one has also to speak of *being done* by Elvis too.¹⁶⁶ Taking a cue from Louis Althusser we should remember that we are subjects both in the grammatical active sense – agents who do – and in the passive sense – individuals who are subjected. In the UK, of course, we must speak of being subjects of the Crown¹⁶⁷, and in this light it is worth remembering the regal and religious sobriquets bestowed upon popular musicians – Elvis the King of Rock n Roll, Bessie Smith the Empress of the Blues, Nina Simone the High Priestess of Soul, James Brown its Godfather. To what extent are we, as listeners, their subjects? Chuck Berry's 'School Days' provides a further example of this as rock 'n' roll itself is hailed as we might hail a monarch. 'Long live rock n roll', sings Berry: long to reign over us, we might add.¹⁶⁸ Rock 'n' roll is something we can hail but, crucially, it is also something that hails us. We should perhaps turn, then, to Chuck Berry and Louis Althusser. In doing so – turning, that is – we are connecting ourselves to an operation highlighted by both 'School Days' and 'Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses'. Let us begin with the former, the lyrics of which are familiar but bear repeating:

'School Days'
Words & music: Chuck Berry¹⁶⁹

Up in the mornin' and out to school
The teacher is teachin' the golden rule
American history and practical math
You studyin' hard and hopin' to pass
Workin' your fingers right down to the bone
And the guy behind you won't leave you alone

Ring, ring goes the bell
The cook in the lunch rooms ready to sell
You're lucky if you can find a seat
You're fortunate if you have time to eat
Back in the classroom, open your books
Keep up the teacher don't know how mean she looks

Soon as three o'clock rolls around
You finally lay your burden down
Close up your books, get out of your seat
Down the halls and into the street
Up to the corner and round the bend
Right to the juke joint, you go in

Drop the coin right into the slot
You're gotta hear somethin' that's really hot
With the one you love, you're makin romance
All day long you been wantin' to dance,
Feeling the music from head to toe
Round and round and round you go

Hail, hail rock and roll
Deliver me from the days of old
Long live rock and roll
The beat of the drums, loud and bold
Rock, rock, rock and roll
The feelin' is there, body and soul.

As Berry is aware, and Althusser makes clear, the 'golden rule' applies to more than just the correct way to learn 'history and practical math', for the school exists as one of what Althusser calls 'Ideological State Apparatuses' (ISAs). ISAs provide the sites for individuals to learn 'know-how', in other words how to do the jobs necessary for production to continue, how to treat or manage others and how to submit to one's place in the ruling ideology. The ISAs operate by ideology predominantly, Althusser says, and by repression and violence secondarily, in contrast to the Repressive State Apparatus (RSA) which functions by (the threat of) violence and repression

predominantly and ideology secondarily. The RSA is a singular entity made up of a number of branches, usually unified, while the ISAs are plural in nature. The RSA consists of the government and its administrative bodies, the army, the police, the courts and prisons. The ISAs include educational and religious establishments, the family, political systems and parties, legal bodies, cultural organisations and the media. Binding everything together is the Law, which operates as both RSA and ISA.

To a certain extent, of course, when listening to rock music we do not need Althusser to tell us all this: rock seems to *know* this already. One only has to consider the number of 'rock' songs relating the persuasive or repressive powers of the ISAs or RSA, a random sampling of which might include: Eddie Cochran's 'Summertime Blues', the Beastie Boys' 'Fight For Your Right' and Lucinda Williams's 'Sweet Side' (family); Alice Cooper's 'School's Out', Pink Floyd's 'Another Brick In The Wall' and Peter Tosh's 'You Can't Blame The Youth' (school); Jethro Tull's 'My God', Patti Smith's 'Gloria' and XTC's 'Dear God' (religion); the Rolling Stones' 'Satisfaction', John Fogerty's 'I Saw It On TV' and the Disposable Heroes of Hiphoprisy's 'Television, Drug Of A Nation' (media); Phil Ochs's 'I Ain't Marching Anymore', Neil Young's 'Ohio' and The Clash's 'The Call-Up' (army); Junior Murvin's 'Police and Thieves', Linton Kwesi Johnson's 'Sonny's Lettah' and Sinead O'Connor's 'Black Boys On Mopeds' (police); the Sex Pistols' 'Anarchy in the UK', The The's 'The Beat(en) Generation' and Asian Dub Foundation's 'Fortress Europe' (government); Johnny Cash's 'Folsom Prison Blues', Nina Simone's 'Mississippi Goddam' and Billy Bragg's 'Rotting on Remand' (law, court, prison). Others songs seem to hymn the whole panoply of ISAs: John Lennon's 'Working Class Hero', much of Bruce Springsteen's work and, in minimalist but effective fashion, Rage Against the Machine's 'Killing In The Name Of' with its crowd-pleasing multiple repetition of the line 'Fuck you, I won't do what you tell me'.

I am going to stay with those songs relating to education for now because they constitute a body of work that has been consistent through rock's history. Indeed, one way to define 'rock' music might be to point to the countless songs that evoke the promise of freedom once school is out, enact resistance to education, or suggest the idea of rock 'n' roll as a kind of alternative education. There is an accompanying history of popular music which has not sought to distance itself from 'traditional' education, from the Beach Boys' 'Be True To Your School' through an array of pop musicians who have come to music via art college to those genres known as 'college

rock' and 'math rock'. Yet, the Beach Boys were hardly removed from the alternative culture preached by rock and both their hymning of the 'alternative education' of the surfing life and the dedication shown by Brian Wilson to taking pop music to new sonic frontiers suggested ambitions at odds with the continuation of state ideology. We might even read 'Be True To Your School' as being not about the college life its lyrics endorse but about fidelity to the countercultural school of rock.

I do not mean to suggest in the foregoing that rock 'n' roll is somehow immune from ideology. In fact the contrary is true, as Adorno's famous observations of popular music make clear. Going surfing, dancing, driving or rocking out is not going to do away with either the RSA or its support via the ISAs. In such a reading, rock is just another ISA, a pleasurable way of ignoring the real problems at large in society.¹⁷⁰ However, I think it is worth paying attention to the ways in which rock music operates as one of the sites in which ideological transference is made possible. A good example of this can be found in Richard Linklater's film *School of Rock* (2003), in which ideological transference and the learning of lore both play major roles. The film relates the story of failed rock guitarist Dewey Finn (played by Jack Black), who masquerades as a supply teacher at an expensive private elementary school. Finn finds that the class he is supposed to be tutoring on a variety of subjects (including, it seems, 'practical math') includes a number of highly talented musicians. The only problem, for Finn, is that the children's knowledge of music – in both listening and playing – is focussed on art music and they have little knowledge of popular music, especially rock. Finn devises a plan to 'educate' the children by putting together a 'project' which involves creating a rock band and entering a 'battle of the bands' competition. The majority of the film consists of Finn 'teaching' rock history, attitude and style to the children and interpellating them (successfully as it turns out) into the world of popular music. Finn himself, who is shown to be a hopeless member of society at the outset of the film due to his childish obsession with rock and his refusal to grow up and take responsibility for his own life, is redeemed at the conclusion by having found his vocation; the closing credits play over footage of his newly established 'School of Rock', where youngsters are seen getting to grips with AC/DC's 'It's A Long Way To The Top (If You Wanna Rock 'n' Roll)'. There are numerous references throughout the film to the Symbolic Order, here referred to as 'the Man', and to the need to rebel against it ('sticking it to the Man'), while the song the band play in the competition is all about having their heads turned from

‘making straight As’ and ‘memorising your lies’ to learning how to rock. Among the more obvious of the various ‘knowing’ references throughout the film (known, that is, to graduates of the rock school) is Jack Black’s appropriation of the schoolboy uniform which has been used by guitarist Angus Young of AC/DC since the beginning of the band’s career.¹⁷¹

An Adornian account might well see in Linklater’s film a narrative whereby the ‘false consciousness’ of the over-identifying rock fan is shown to be incompatible with the society in which he lives, only to be reinstated at the conclusion via a ‘Hollywood’ happy ending. But such an ‘objective’ account would downplay the importance of fantasy and faith. In doing so, it would operate in a similar manner to ‘objectivist’ scientific denunciations of faith such as Richard Dawkins’s *The God Delusion* (2006). While Dawkins is able to ‘prove’ the instability of the foundations upon which various religions rely, he cannot account for the need in people to seek out solutions to problems that life brings upon them (this is not to say that Dawkins is unaware of these problems or of people’s responses to them, rather that science cannot show from where in the human the need arises). Slavoj Žižek has discussed the problem that cognitive science has with the question of consciousness in an analogous manner. For Žižek, although cognitive science is a useful tool for proving the role of judgement in perception amongst other things, it cannot explain awareness. Žižek suggests that, if we are to think of consciousness in evolutionary terms, we should think of it as a kind of ‘mistake’ in which ‘consciousness developed as an unintended by-product that acquired a kind of second-degree survivalist function’ and that it ‘originates with something going terribly wrong’. We experience consciousness as a result of trauma.¹⁷² If we were to filter the ‘problem’ of *School of Rock* through the psychoanalysts who have influenced Žižek, we might read the film with Freud as a tale of a subject who is caught in the cyclical trap of repetition and with Lacan as an account of a subject who, following a period of analysis, has happily learnt to live with and enjoy his symptom.¹⁷³

‘Hail, hail’

With this question of belief arising, it is time to ‘turn’ to Althusser’s other influential concept from the ISAs essay: interpellation, or ‘hailing’. Althusser uses the example of a man being hailed in the street by a police officer. ‘The hailed individual will turn round’, writes Althusser. ‘By this mere one-hundred-and-eighty-degree physical

conversion, he becomes a *subject*. Why? Because he has recognized that the hail was “really” addressed to him, and that “it was *really him* who was hailed.”¹⁷⁴ Many commentators on this text, among them John Mowitt and Mladen Dolar, have emphasised the use of sound in Althusser’s example.¹⁷⁵ In thinking about this sound, it is also worth looking at a comparable situation described by singer Bruce Dickinson of the heavy metal group Iron Maiden. In an interview for the documentary *Metal: A Headbanger’s Journey*, Dickinson (who, early in his singing career, earned the nickname ‘Air Raid Siren’) provides a perfect example of the hail in rock:

My intention as a frontman is to try and find the guy who’s right at the back of the 30,000 [capacity] festival and sort of go, ‘Yeah, you...Yeah, you. You!’ And the guy goes, ‘Me? Me!’ Like that. And you can do that, you can actually do that [...] You’re warming up the crowd and on a good night, when it works, it shrinks whatever arena you’re in and it should [...] feel like you’ve shrunk the place to the size of your thumb where you can go, ‘Yep. All together’.¹⁷⁶

This togetherness suggests desire. Judith Butler and Mladen Dolar both make much of the turning in Althusser’s example of the hail. What is the desire in this turning? Do we perhaps want to turn, want to be recognised, in the hope that it is us, after all, from the multitude of addressers and addressees who are being spoken (to)?¹⁷⁷

Yet it is not just the listener we should pay attention to here. Dickinson’s example highlights the extent to which the hailer is also aware of the power of the hail. This is an important aspect to note because most interpretations of Althusser’s text – my own included – place the emphasis on the listening/hearing subject – it is *this* subject who is seen in most accounts to be subjectivised. But we must also recognise a process of subjectivisation happening in the hailer too. After all, the police officer of Althusser’s example is, as we might note by thinking of the ‘off duty’ police officer, ‘only’ a normal person, an ordinary embodiment of an extraordinary force. ‘The police’, in this sense, is (and I use the singular deliberately) as distinct from ‘the police officer’ as ‘business’ is from any particular business one might wish to name. The hailer, then, as individual subject, is also being hailed and subjectivised by his own action, becoming a channel through which the hail of the big Other passes in a kind of ideological ventriloquism. Thus, when thrash metal band Anthrax perform

their song 'I Am The Law', they are indeed the law while on stage, yet simultaneously agents of a power beyond their control.

This is not to rob the hailer of agency – Dickinson, after all, is perfectly aware of the power of his hail – but to note that he is the agent for a process larger than himself. Dickinson, though aware, is both a little surprised and awestruck by the power that he gains when backed up by the rock machine. Were the machine not to function properly, it would become impossible for him to enact his role. We only have to imagine what would happen if the enormous backup necessary for an effective stadium rock concert were to break down. This is nicely illustrated on numerous occasions in the film *This is Spinal Tap* (1984) about the fictional band of the same name. At the start of their live performance of the song 'Rock 'n' Roll Creation', the band members are supposed to emerge from onstage 'pods', into which they return at the song's end. However, the bassist, Derek Smalls, finds that his pod is malfunctioning and he spends the entire song trapped there, only to stagger out just as the other band members are returning to their pods. In another scene a breakdown in communication leads to a life-size replica of a set of standing stones being built in miniature so that, when they are lowered onto stage during the song 'Stonehenge', the effect is farcical rather than dramatic. In the scene that is perhaps closest to the concept of a failed hailing, the band is seen wandering around the labyrinthine backstage area of the venue they are supposed to be playing. As they approach what they think is the door leading to the stage, Derek Smalls shouts 'Hello Cleveland! Hello Cleveland!', only for the band to find they have circled back to their starting point and are still lost. Meanwhile the audience keep calling 'Tap! Tap! Tap!' In a classic moment of communication breakdown, the crowd presumably see the band as 'teasing them', deliberately delaying their entrance to make it more climactic; in reality, the band are not in this position of power but instead are prey to their own incompetence and impotence.¹⁷⁸

'...round and round and round...'

Chuck Berry reminds us, in 'School Days', of the liberation enjoyed by the dancing subject. But, with Althusser in mind, I want to also think of the self-consciousness that sometimes accompanies dancing, of how dancing sets up a dialectic between mastery (over body) and submission (to music and body). The 'automatic' act of dancing is also crucially tied up with the 'automatism' of listening. Round and round

and round goes the record in the jukebox to which Berry refers and so does the record on which he relates this tale to us. Round and round and round go the rhythms and the riffs of Berry's music and we are lost in and to this persistent circling. Richard Middleton raises similar points in his discussion of 'groove', noting that:

The contemporary deployment of the term [... summons] up a host of images, not only, perhaps, of dancing bodies but also of circling discs and even the never-ending routines typical of both everyday life and popular culture under modernity. Here, where the stylus and with it the listener faithfully follow the spiral groove cut in the disc, is His Master's Groove, drawing the listening subject inexorably towards that central disappearing-point [...] in a movement that irresistibly suggests both an auditory equivalent to the invisible but all-seeing gaze of Foucault's panopticism, and a Lacanian mirror function.¹⁷⁹

The following of the groove, or the beat, leads us to wonder again about agency and choice, which are not here synonymous. We might say that there is agency but no choice. The 'choice' here is similar to that described by Lacan in his use of the phrase 'Your money or your life': no choice, in other words, for life is nothing without money and money nothing without life, making a mockery of the 'or'. Lacan also links the phrase, via Hegel, to a choice between life and freedom for the slave, for whom life without freedom is not life and freedom without life is, similarly, death.¹⁸⁰ Can we rephrase Lacan's example with the dancing subject in mind and demand of her: 'Your mastery or your enjoyment'? What is mastery without enjoyment? And enjoyment without mastery must be some form of slavery, the point at which we become, as the song has it, 'Slave to the Rhythm'.¹⁸¹

'Deliver me from the days of old': From Law to Lore

Similarly, we must reflect on the non-dancing subject, the individual who maintains control while seated at a rock concert, at home or on the bus but who is still slave to the voice. Mladen Dolar's work on the authority of the voice is useful here. Dolar suggests that 'there is something in the very nature of the voice that endows it with master-like authority' and that 'listening is "always-already" incipient obedience'.¹⁸² We simultaneously attempt to master our own voices even as we submit to the mastery of others' voices. The voice is always a site for potential loss of control or for

discovering a power in ourselves we did not know we possessed. As the Argentinian singer Mercedes Sosa puts it in her rendition of Milton Nascimento & Fernando Brant's 'Canciones y momentos':

Hay canciones y momentos
yo no sé como explicar
que mi voz es instrumento
que no puedo controlar

There are songs and moments
I don't know how to explain
That my voice is an instrument
That I can't control¹⁸³

Sosa herself is a fine example of the power of the voice, having been a 'voice of conscience' and spokesperson for Latin American issues over the course of nearly five decades. Hers has also been a voice that, crucially, others have not been able to control either, suggesting the possibilities of what a voice can do (this is something that will be discussed in more detail in Chapter Three).

We also need to attend to the ways in which voices and languages take control of each other. Many of the vocal moments I discuss in this thesis are 'moments of danger', moments when the voice moves away from linguistic sense to other less definable qualities (Amália Rodrigues's melisma, Silvio Rodríguez's non-linguistic refrains, Nina Simone's grains). As Mladen Dolar says in regard to this indefinability, 'It is not that our vocabulary is scanty and its deficiency should be remedied: faced with the voice, words structurally fail.'¹⁸⁴ Dolar relates the history of distrust in philosophy and theology over the voice moving away from sense-making activity: 'Up to a point, music is sublime and elevates the spirit; beyond a certain limit, however, it brings about decay, the decline of all spiritual faculties, their disintegration in enjoyment.'¹⁸⁵ And as with the mostly religious and classical music that Dolar discusses, so too with popular music, where issues to do with the power of voices serve as crucial ways in which subjects are always already implicated in what Richard Middleton calls the 'voicing' of the popular. The self-restraint of the speaking-listening subject could be read as a sign of subjectivised civilisation. To really let oneself be lost in music is to let oneself become disruptive, a bad subject (in both legal and psychoanalytic registers), to 'lose it', go mad to the music, etc.¹⁸⁶ And mastery and submission are also crucial aspects of the anxiety inherent in the narratives we weave around music. The differing accounts of 1955 earlier in this chapter, for example, present different registers of certainty. The fear of the loss of certainty is profound, whether manifested in the anxiety over the loss of academic

rigor (Peterson) or in the recognition of the loss of the real, the radical (Cohn). These fears circle one another, constituting the riven subjects of popular music.

Whether considering Badiou's faithful subject, Althusser's subjected subject or the split subject of psychoanalysis, music seems to work, in the examples I have been using, as a channel through which agency passes. I want to think, then, of a dialectic of agency moving between the musical subject and the listening subject, of times when, lost in music, the subject gives himself up to music's guiding force; of other times when, driven by her own agency, that same subject assumes the guiding role, relegating the musical object to its 'mere' use value; of other times, perhaps the most numerous of the 'committed' listener, when the shifting boundaries between the subject's agency and that of the music cannot even be recognised, let alone rationalised. Here the listener's agency lies in the very act of wishing to transfer agency to the musical object. Perhaps, then, to mix Peter Sloterdijk with Louis Althusser, the listening subject is that subject who knows very well what they are doing: they are giving themselves up willingly to a hailing that will render them subject to music's ideology.¹⁸⁷

If one is choosing to lose oneself in music, one is, we could say, choosing to enact a transference of ideology from the school to (the school of) rock. There are still rules and ideologies in the School of Rock but they can be – or can be seen to be – oppositional to the dominant order. There is, of course, an argument that this transference merely involves moving from one ISA to another, that rock music is merely providing a safe place to work out and come to terms with one's place in the ideological order. Against this we can place the idealism of rock's narratives of liberation, rock as the freedom and the promise that will 'deliver me from the days of old'. Music hails us away from the hail of the law with the promise of its lore, the guarantee of a freedom that exists outside of the situation governed by constructivist thought. As Paul Ricoeur notes in his discussion of ideology and manipulated memory, memorised lore (myth in his account) enables ideology to be effective.¹⁸⁸

If Badiou can encompass in his theory both political revolution and the amorous relationship (for both are world-changing), can we, in an analogous move, attempt to encompass both the Elvis event and the acts of love involved in listening to and being fans of music (for both, again, are world-changing)? In popular music listening and lore there is a seemingly ubiquitous sense in which individuals have been waiting to be interpellated. Here we enter an arena of popular music discourse

that overlaps with religious lore, not least in the notion of the epiphany. Some random but seemingly typical examples:

- Daniel Goldmark writes of the jazz bagpiper Rufus Harley's moment of conversion: 'Harley had an epiphany – this was the sound that he'd been hearing but unable to realize on his saxophone.'¹⁸⁹
- Composer-arranger Paul Buckmaster says of Miles Davis's move to electric music: 'It was everything I had imagined some kind of future music to be. Everything that I hoped to hear was revealed in *Bitches Brew*'.¹⁹⁰
- Lester Bangs, in an article on The Clash, writes: 'don't ask me why I obsessively look to rock 'n' roll bands for some kind of model for a better society...I guess it's just that I glimpsed something beautiful in a flashbulb moment once, and perhaps mistaking it for a prophecy have been seeking its fulfilment ever since.'¹⁹¹
- Roger Nupie, president of the International Dr Nina Simone Fan Club, says that 'when [Nina Simone's] music came into my life [...] I felt like I had already heard it, as if I recognised and knew it in some way or another.'¹⁹²
- Billy Bragg writes of his youth: 'I knew little about [Simon and Garfunkel] apart from the fact that that their music was a route to some kind of ecstasy, a catalyst for emotions more intense than I had ever known before. I felt as if I had stumbled onto a different reality, in which the sound of a certain song could transport me to another place.'¹⁹³ Bragg's next step is to lie in wait for the song to appear on the radio so that he can record it.
- Merle Haggard, as ever, gets straight to the heart of the matter in 'Someone Told My Story' (1967):

I played a brand new record on the jukebox
I scarcely could believe the song I heard
It told of how you left me for another
It was almost like I'd written every word

While Moe Bandy makes an analogous observation in 'Hank Williams You Wrote My Life' (1976).¹⁹⁴

- Scott Walker includes a quote from Albert Camus on the sleeve of his album *Scott 4*, which reads: 'A man's work is nothing but this slow trek to discover,

through the detours of his art, those two or three great and simple images in whose presence his heart first opened.’¹⁹⁵

Judith Butler, *not* writing about rock epiphanies, nevertheless summarises the issues at stake in the moment: ‘Something takes hold of you: where does it come from? What sense does it make? What claims us at such moments, such that we are not the masters of ourselves? To what are we tied? And by what are we seized?’¹⁹⁶ Butler is here writing about loss and it is worth considering how the moment of epiphany is both a moment of gain (we find something new in that paradoxical moment of learning what we already seemed to know) and a moment of loss (we feel we will never confront that sudden flash of insight again, although we will go on searching for what it seemed to illuminate). It is possible, then, to connect being seized by a truth event (such as the rock event) and being seized by a loss. As Butler observes: ‘Perhaps [...] one mourns when one accepts that by the loss one undergoes one will be changed, possibly for ever. Perhaps mourning has to do with agreeing to undergo a transformation (perhaps one should say *submitting* to a transformation) the result of which one cannot know in advance.’¹⁹⁷ Or, as the folk singer and bard Robin Williamson puts it in ‘There Is A Music’, we allow ourselves to become ‘lost in the pursuit of that which has already snared us’.¹⁹⁸ Epiphanies compel us to continue searching for greater epiphanies – this is the shape fidelity to the listening event takes. In being promised a truth outside of constructivist thought we become enamoured of a possibility that such a situation-evading possibility can be repeated. To capture it we start to repeat the actions that gave rise to that first calling, as suggested in the quote from Camus that Scott Walker uses. In doing so we slowly join the situation via our own constructivist thought, laying behind us a sedimentation of encyclopaedic knowledge (just as Nik Cohn left such a trail in archiving his passion to escape the archive). We become subject to a radical loss as we come to realise the pastness of the event and the impossibility of its repetition. This process is one recognised by the Marxian concept of commodity fetishism and it is with this in mind that we turn from music’s subjects to a consideration of some of its objects.

Music's Things (or, from Thang to Thing)

As Judith Butler makes clear, there is a process of 'claiming' and 'taking-hold' that we become subject to in the epiphanic moment. The English language permits us to immediately make connections between the subjects and the objects of popular music via the notion of *possession*. Evan Eisenberg puts it nicely:

With tempting dialectic, funk suggests the following: music, having started out as ritual, having then become a thing, now becomes a *thang*. The difference is profound. A thing is what you possess, a thang is what possesses you. A thing occupies space, a thang occupies time and preoccupies people. A thing, above all, is private, a thang can be shared. As thang, music is again communal and celebratory.¹⁹⁹

We have already followed a discussion of music's 'thang' to a certain extent, arriving at what Eisenberg sees as the 'synthesis' of the dialectic before giving due attention to music's 'thing'. But is it always so clear in which order to follow the process? Or is it just as likely that, as in the attempt to repeat the subjectivising epiphanic moment, we return to music's things after having discovered the potential of its thang? Whichever it is, our discussion of the subjects of popular music should not let us forget music's myriad objects for these are also important to the narratives of loss explored in this thesis. I do not have space to go into the many implications for music brought about by sound recording, the sonic archive, phonography and collecting, issues that have been examined in depth by others.²⁰⁰ Instead I want to focus on the issues of fetishisation, anxiety and fidelity. What is it that makes us want to associate music with objects? What is the anxiety that accompanies the loss of these objects? In what ways do we demand that these objects be true to our sonic fantasies?

Photo/Phono: Take Two

The relationship between loss, memory, and technologies can be traced back to classical times, as Paul Ricoeur shows in *Memory, History, Forgetting*.²⁰¹ Plato, for example, has Socrates railing against the evils of writing, which, while easing the task of recollection and recitation, will render the art of memory redundant. Plato's *pharmakon* – both cure and poison – will also prove a touchstone for Jacques Derrida

in the latter's discussion of speech and writing.²⁰² But for others, the development of technologies of recording is an extension of human ability. Sigmund Freud, for example, writes:

With every tool man is perfecting his own organs, whether motor or sensory, or is removing the limits to their functioning [...] In the photographic camera he has created an instrument which retains the fleeting visual impressions, just as the gramophone disc retains the equally fleeting auditory ones; both are at bottom materializations of the power he possesses of recollection, his memory.²⁰³

For Freud, then, man is fully aware of the power of recollection and not anxious that the transference of it onto a mechanised device will rob him of his power, for that power is still necessary to make use of the results of the recording devices. Allied to the anxiety over the substitutive role that technology plays is a concern over the extent to which the technology shows fidelity to the original. Numerous theorists of photography, from Walter Benjamin to Roland Barthes, Susan Sontag and Vilém Flusser, have discussed the extent to which the camera may or may not lie.²⁰⁴ Equally, theorists of recorded sound, such as Jonathan Sterne, Evan Eisenberg and Theodore Gracyk have examined the differences between what seems to be captured in recording and what we seem to hear when playing back recorded sounds. Many, like Eisenberg and Gracyk, find photography and film useful comparisons to recordings and both media certainly harbour similar deceptions. As Richard Middleton observes, 'like the photograph, the recording cannot lie – which means that it lies more convincingly; like the photograph, it is both lifelike and already dead and gone.'²⁰⁵ As this suggests, nowadays the recording and the photograph can very easily lie; indeed, in the era of digital manipulation it is easier than ever for them to do so.

Theodore Gracyk, in the preface to *Rhythm and Noise*, writes about Paul Williams's books on Bob Dylan, noting their inconsistency in dealing with songs, performances and recordings. He also notes how George Lipsitz confuses songs and performances in his book *Time Passages*. For his own purposes he sets up a ternary model of song-performance-recording that is very useful. Gracyk is interested in asking what can be thought of as a 'finished product' for rock musicians, critics and fans. Loss would seem to play a crucial role here, with the connection between loss of

experience and loss of (sonic) fidelity impossible to ignore. In developing a potential ‘aesthetics of rock’, Gracyk is keen to point out that: ‘Within popular music, rock is significantly dependent on a shift in ontological category, in *what* counts as a unit of significance or an object of critical attention.’²⁰⁶

This ‘what’, or object, has profound implications for the relationship between musician and fan. As Evan Eisenberg notes: ‘Music is now fully a commodity, exchangeable for the universal commodity, money [...] The listener need never see the working musician behind the vinyl. Each is, in a modified Marxist sense, a fetishist.’²⁰⁷ The very objectness, as any record-lover is aware, is a crucial semblance of fixity for both artist and listener. For Geoffrey O’Brien: ‘Records are perfect and self-contained. The events they memorialize are messy, unfinished, often not events at all but slivers of possibility salvaged from everyday chaos.’²⁰⁸ And, as O’Brien goes on to note, replaying a record now does not necessarily evoke the memory of the time the record was bought but the memory of the work the song it ‘fixes’ *was already doing* (quite possibly, even at the time, memory work).

The effect records have on listening processes is an area that seems to invite disagreement. John Mowitt, for example, writes: ‘[T]he contemporary structure of listening, with its dependency on memory, is given its social significance by the reproductive technologies that organize it.’²⁰⁹ But, for Jonathan Sterne: ‘all the *technologies* of listening that I discuss emerge out of *techniques* of listening.’²¹⁰ I would only intervene here to suggest, in response to Sterne, that techniques of listening – and, especially, *rituals* of listening – emerge from technologies too. There is either a cyclic or dialectic process at work here as there is with any practice located along the speaking/listening/writing/reading axes, which also accounts for why I can organise my account of listening subjects and objects in an order different from that of, say, Evan Eisenberg, who deals with the obsession of collecting and the process of music becoming a thing before discussing listening strategies.

The politics of listening and the fantasy of total control

Collecting and archiving are the processes that help connect the notions of ‘recording loss’ and ‘lost recordings’, both of which hinge upon the sense of anxiety brought about by loss. Eisenberg provides a ‘tentative list’ of five reasons for collecting: ‘The need to make beauty and pleasure permanent [...] The need to comprehend beauty [...] The need to distinguish oneself as a consumer [...] The need to belong [...] and] The

need to impress others, or oneself.’²¹¹ More recently, other writers have focussed on the identification of record collecting and masculinity, no doubt inspired by the kind of ‘common sense’ connection between men and record collecting chronicled so successfully in Nick Hornby’s novel *High Fidelity* (1995).²¹²

Simon Reynolds deals with masculinity, collecting and the anxiety of loss in his essay ‘Lost in Music’, suggesting: ‘If there’s a distinctively masculine “sickness” [in record collecting,] it’s perhaps related to the impulse to control, contain, master what actually masters, ravishes, disorganizes you: to erect bulwarks against the loss of self that is music’s greatest gift.’ But he quickly adds, ‘Or is it the other way around: collecting as a perverse consumerism, a literally consuming passion that eats up your life?’ Reynolds speaks also of collecting as a parallel life, not an alternative self-contained life: ‘On the one side, the life of loves lost and kept, family tribulations, “civilian” friendships; on the other, the world of music.’²¹³ Eisenberg, meanwhile, speaks of ‘heroes of consumption’ such as his friend Clarence, a truly obsessive record collector: ‘The true hero of consumption is a rebel of consumption. By taking acquisition to an ascetic extreme he repudiates it, and so transplants himself to an older and nobler world.’²¹⁴ This world is one that, for many, is sealed into the very grooves of the discs. There is a fragility here that always threatens only fragments of memory, as with those Borges imagines dying with him. For Geoffrey O’Brien, writing about 78s, the fragility of the object is connected to the fleetingness of the lost moment:

The disks themselves – at once heavy and fragile with an extra layer of surface noise – suggest a past surviving against heavy odds. It must be given special attention because its traces – carved into those thick grooves and extracted from them with a thick obsolete needle as crude as a barnyard nail – are so easily smashed. The past is retrieved, but just barely, and it is forever in danger of being smashed beyond recapturing: I learned that the day ‘The Viper’s Drag’ slipped from between my fingers.²¹⁵

These vessels, then, must be treated with the utmost respect. This includes the manner in which the collection is organised, as Walter Benjamin makes clear in ‘Unpacking My Library’ and Georges Perec in ‘Brief Notes on the Art and Manner of Arranging One’s Books’. This process sheds further light on the project of collecting inasmuch

as the latter is an impossible quest for some kind of totalisation of knowledge. Perec writes:

Like the librarians of Babel in Borges's story, who are looking for the book that will provide them with the key to all the others, we oscillate between the illusion of perfection and the vertigo of the unattainable. In the name of completeness, we would like to believe that a unique order exists that would enable us to accede to knowledge all in one go; in the name of the unattainable, we would like to think that order and disorder are in fact the same word, denoting pure chance.

It's possible that both are decoys, a *trompe l'oeil* intended to disguise the erosion of both book and systems. It is no bad thing in any case that between the two our bookshelves should serve from time to time as joggers of the memory, as cat-rests and as lumber-rooms.²¹⁶

The existence of the collection, however, means that, the past can be brought home. Nostalgia can be satisfied by a simple mechanical operation, as O'Brien notes:

But whatever might be lost or broken or forgotten is nothing compared to the miraculous rebirth that occurs every time the needle hits the groove. Here is Fats Waller himself, not dead but present, so present that he overwhelms the well-ordered precincts of the living room. The sound sprawls. What vibrates here has more life than any room. In ecstasy Fats slams the keys to lay down the unending groove of 'Lulu's Back in Town.'²¹⁷

As Evan Eisenberg's friend Clarence put it, 'records are inanimate until you put the needle in the groove, and then they come to life'.²¹⁸

It is not only recordings that promote anxiety even as they bring comfort. Accompanying the move to sound recording is the loss of sight of musical instruments (although see Eisenberg's discussion of the phonograph as instrument in Chapter Ten of *The Recording Angel*) and the shrinking of recording and playback devices. The iPod has generated a notable level of distrust due to its lack of objects (no records or other discs, cases, etc.), a distrust partly addressed by the attachment of numerous accessories to the player itself, such as cases, speakers, 'skins', etc. With

the development of telephony and phonography came an uncanniness brought about by not seeing the source of the sound, a feeling highlighted by Proust in his description of the sound of the voice on the telephone in *A la recherche du temps perdu*. With the current methods of accessing music, where the only object involved might be a computer or an iPod, this process has intensified, as Julian Dibbell discusses in 'Unpacking Our Hard Drives', an update of Benjamin's essay on libraries. Dibbell asks: 'Can the erotics of pop consumption [...] survive when records live unseen and untouched on our hard drives, and if so, how? Where is the love in the age of the download?'²¹⁹ It is worth noting here the appeal to sight and touch, reminding us that there is more to music than listening. Dibbell quotes Benjamin on mourning the collector but suggests that the 'eros' - better understood as a kind of obsession - has not gone away but has transmuted into different but comparable practices related to downloading and sharing music, such as the 'zero day' scene (involving the downloading of music before it has been officially released) which thrives on the obsession to be first (found also in internet forum threads), to have the music before anyone else and on the thrill of illegality. Though many have cautioned against the utopian narratives of consumer control that the internet suggested,²²⁰ Dibbell is correct to focus on the thrill of the process. What remains constant is the obsession based around the extra Thing, the part of music which is not music itself but which represents desire: the record, the MP3, the autograph.

If something scares us in the prospect of losing ourselves in music, then it may well be that this anxiety is only increased by the 'disappearance' of the music itself into the electronic labyrinths of computer hard drives. This could be one reason for the persistence of the listening ritual, a process often held dear by those most vociferously opposed to new media such as iPods. What is for these critics an 'agency of listening', a refusal of random elements, can be seen as a result of an anxiety around sound's authority and around one's 'incipient obedience'. Listening becomes an act of mastery, often gendered as a masculine reclamation of feminine space, connecting it to the male mastery of 'feminine' consumption that some see record collecting as being. Agency here means imposing order on a seemingly chaotic world (a world of computer-generated and -maintained favourites and wishlists, of shuffle functions on iPods or random modes on CD players). The existential question relating to this agency becomes 'To shuffle or not to shuffle?' The implicit suggestion in many such responses is that other people do not listen properly. This is connected to

authenticating accounts of popular music taste and cultural capital, as Anahid Kassabian points out in her work on ubiquitous music.²²¹ I would suggest that the need to enact mastery over the listening experience (or process) exhibits another submission, to the anxiety of loss. And while the criticisms of new media are often essentially a performance of such anxiety, the counterpoised notion of the listening ritual does recognise that there is importance in the music and wants to show respect (fidelity), wants to make of each listening experience an event.

Utopia, Festival, Concert

The Real (in the Lacanian use of the word) may not be that amongst which we live for the most part but it is a parallel life, not an alternative one. And, as Geoffrey O'Brien reminds us in discussing 'the imagined life' of pop consumption, it is an Imaginary as much as a Symbolic or Real life.²²² Simon Reynolds points out that collectors are not necessarily the arrested developers portrayed by writers like Nick Hornby, whose *High Fidelity* has come to be seen as the defining account of the repressed record collector-cum-trainspotter: 'most of the avid collectors I know are married or involved, hardly running scared from intimacy or commitment. If their collector selves represent a form of arrested adolescence, this is a protected zone of retardation [...] that runs in parallel with their "real," relatively emotionally mature lives', a living with their symptom we might say.²²³ Something similar can no doubt be claimed for the rock festival, which represents an exemplary utopian site, a promised event (or event-to come, to use messianic terminology) in the most hyperbolised of that word's meanings.

Julien Temple's 2006 film *Glastonbury* illustrates very well the idea of people escaping their symbolic lives to try to achieve, via the possibilities of utopian communitarianism and rock music, some blast of the Real. In connection to the foregoing account of being lost in listening, it is worth thinking about a kind of mass losing. Remembering the 'collective decision' referred to by John Trudell, we can perhaps speak here of a collective decision to get lost together.²²⁴ Ron Eyerman and Andrew Jamison talk about ritual in *Music and Social Movements*. Drawing on Victor Turner's work on 'liminality', they define the liminal aspects of music and social movements as 'states or periods of transition between ordered structures, in which actors "lose themselves" in ritualized performance'.²²⁵ Temple's *Glastonbury* also serves as a reminder that the festival is increasingly a capitalist exercise, that the

dream is always mediated by the ever-strengthening fence. How to keep what is out there separate from what is in here? Here we might think too of M. Night Shyamalan's film *The Village* (2004), in which a group of city dwellers have left the city and formed a community in the woods, where they bring their children up in ignorance of the city's reality. Fleeing from time as much as space, they construct their reality via recourse to myths of monsters and terror beyond the village limits. Inevitably, the outside can be kept at bay for only so long; eventually the need arises for something from Out/Over There and this need will threaten to bring down the Symbolic Order of the village (it is also interesting to note how, here, the glimpse of the Real for the character who ventures to the outside is only the glimpse of someone else's Symbolic). One interviewee in Temple's *Glastonbury* describes the festival as a bridge between worlds. Others describe attendance as an attempt to glimpse a vision of a possible alternative – others still as a chance to show their 'real selves'. This brings to light a paradox: the real self can only be attempted or realised at extraordinary events. Or, rather, the real self is different from the ordinary self, suggesting the relationship between the Symbolic and the Real. The Real, it turns out, is not that amongst which we live for the most part; in a similar way to Lacan's topology, the Real is not reality.

I Was There (The Rock Witness)

If the festival or concert is an important site of utopian possibility, it is also a theatre, or stadium, of memory, where remembered events are given their full retrospective power. An example of this can be found in the book *I Was There*, which charts a number of concerts deemed as major, 'world-changing' events within the Anglophone rock imaginary, including the Moondog Coronation Ball (1952), the Charlie Parker Quintet at Toronto's Massey Hall (1953), the Monterey (1967), Woodstock (1969) and Live Aid (1985) festivals, the Manic Street Preachers in Havana (2001) and Paul McCartney in Red Square (2003). Although erroneously claiming to '[lift] the lid on a century's worth of classic performances' (the first, Robert Johnson, dates from 1938) and seemingly uninterested in any acts from outside the easy audibility of the Anglo-American pop world, the book displays a keen interest in remembering these moments even as it pays attention to various aspects of 'obliteration' which are 'often a significant part of the concert experience': 'Lost in the crowd. Lost in music, preferably at ear-crunching volume. In liquor or some other mind-changing substance.

Lost in moments that have since become cornerstones of popular music history.²²⁶ The author, it turns out, was not actually there at the events described, relying on the accounts of other witnesses (mainly music journalists) and immediately calling into question whether these events are ‘cornerstones’ because of what actually happened or, as seems likely, because they fit easily into a coffee-table-book ‘historical’ account that essentially retells the familiar story of the rock canon. It is easy to critique a book such as this but *I Was There* finds its echoes in countless other examples of music journalism, which, as I will discuss in Chapter Five, rely on the ongoing belief in the eventness of events such as those listed here. In 2007, for example, *The Wire* magazine ran a cover story entitled ‘Seismic Performances’ on ‘60 concerts that shook the world’, while such features have long been a staple feature of monthly rock magazines such as *Q*, *Mojo* and *Uncut*.²²⁷

It is worth remembering that ‘I was there’, the witness’s classic statement, refers to both space and time: I was at that place at that time. Although this is often shortened to suggest ‘I was at that place’, it should equally be shortened to ‘I was at that time (in my life)’. Music, as we have seen, does not just pass time (is not just a pastime), but is often (always?) consciously associated with past time, whether it be the time of the adolescent who may or may not now have graduated from the School of Rock (or its equivalent), or the time associated with public and personal events. There is always the awareness of the impossibility of returning to that time save by the sonic fantasy of listening-as-remembering. ‘The Way We Were’, despite what Barbara Streisand might have us believe, is never really the way we were, just as history never really tells it ‘like it really was’, as Walter Benjamin makes clear.²²⁸ But we believe and, when belief falters, we experience what I earlier called nostalgia for fidelity, meaning the sense that one has lost one’s fidelity (one’s unconditional love of music) just as one might lose another person. Nostalgia for fidelity relates to the notion of the lost cause, bringing about a dilemma over whether loss always takes the shape of an unavoidable betrayal. In the concluding chapter, I will follow up on some of the ideas posited here and ask whether rock ‘n’ roll has become a lost cause. At that point it will also be possible to examine some of the problems with Badiou’s theory of event and fidelity. For there are other stories to tell, those of ageing fidelities and competing fidelities, and those of fidelity’s end, which came for some as early as February 3, 1959, the day of the plane crash that killed Buddy Holly, Richie Valens,

and the Big Bopper, subsequently mourned by Don McLean as ‘the day the music died’.

Chapters and Methodology

In this chapter I have attempted to set up a number of ideas around which the rest of the thesis will be circling. Chapter Two deals with Portuguese fado music and touches down in two historical moments – the 1960s and the 1990s – while providing a more general overview of the path taken in modern Portuguese popular music from the mid-twentieth century to the present. The historical moments chosen fall either side of the 1974 revolution that saw the end of authoritarian rule in Portugal and the emergence of the modern democratic state. During the period of the Estado Novo (New State, 1933-1974), both urban fado and rural folk music were appropriated by António Salazar’s programme of corporatist nationalism, the former being strictly policed via the censorship of lyrics and the issuing of compulsory performance permits, the latter through the cultivation of *ranchos folclóricos* and the setting up of rural folklore competitions. Subsequently, fado music came to be associated by many people with the authoritarian regime and to be viewed as a musical form unsuited to the needs of a young, revolutionary population. Rural folk music tended to fare much better and provided much of the stimulus for the young songwriters associated with *nova canção*, a kind of protest folk song that can be seen as the Portuguese equivalent of Latin American *nueva trova* and *nueva canción*. Many of the songs by the movement’s leading voice, José Afonso, took inspiration from and spoke to the demands of the rural population, despite Afonso’s roots in fado (in particular the academic strand of fado associated with the university town of Coimbra). The dialogue set up by the division of city and countryside is a productive one, particularly, for the purposes of this work, the ways that loss, the past and an entrapping regression are mapped onto the city in fado, while gain, future and a ‘progressive tradition’ are worked into the texts of *nova canção*.

The case studies for the chapter include a few songs associated with the most famous exponent of fado, Amália Rodrigues. These songs are read for the ways they evoke notions of individuality, urbanity and despair, and how such notions stood in opposition to the growing revolutionary fervour of the 1960s. Some of the songs are then examined in light of their re-appropriation by the performers of so-called *novo*

fado, who emerged in the 1990s and are still gaining popularity both domestically and internationally. For many, *novo fado* has proven to be a synthesis of pre-1974 *fado* (itself an amalgamation of ‘traditional’ *fado* and the more modern style of *fado-canção* popularised by innovators such as Amália) and *nova canção*, with key artists like Dulce Pontes, Mísia and Mariza performing material from both repertoires.

Chapter Three presents a synthesis of synchronic and diachronic historical analyses of two Latin American musical events. The synchronic element consists of an account of a concert given in Chile in 1990 by the Cuban *nueva trova* singer-songwriter Silvio Rodríguez. This event took place shortly after Chile’s return to democracy following the dictatorship of Augusto Pinochet that had dominated the previous two decades. The implications of the concert revolve around the histories of Chile and Cuba and a diachronic account of the period from c.1968 to 1990 is therefore included in order to explain the ways in which Rodríguez’s reception in Santiago can be read. In connecting these two strands, the chapter considers Jacques Derrida’s and Alain Badiou’s concepts of event and attempts to put forward a case for *nueva canción* as event.

Rodríguez is mostly known as a political songwriter whose anti-imperialist songs have found popularity with sympathetic listeners throughout the Spanish-speaking world and beyond. As well as performing explicitly political songs, however, Rodríguez has also produced a number of surreal texts whose meanings are implicitly subjective. One of these songs, ‘Unicornio’, is analysed in this chapter in light of its potential political meanings. The chapter asks why this tune became as popular as it did in Latin America, and in particular in Chile. Why did a song mourning the loss of a mythical beast, performed in a sentimental style, become as meaningful for many people as the more ‘revolutionary’, progressive fare of Rodríguez and other *nueva trova* and *nueva canción* performers? I focus on the notions of loss evoked by the song (the loss of the nameless, ineffable or unspoken), the universal and metaphorical imagery invoked, the voicing of loss and how the song itself came to act as a kind of time capsule and fetish object of loss. Reference is made to the very real human loss experienced during the dictatorship, including the loss of Víctor Jara, the Chilean songwriter who became a figurehead of Latin American *nueva canción* in the late 1960s and early 1970s and who was murdered following the military coup of 1973. Other dialogic elements referred to in this chapter involve cover versions of ‘Unicornio’ by the Argentinian political singer Mercedes Sosa and

the Portuguese *fadista* Mísia. Reference is made back to the previous chapter in discussing Mísia's performance of the song and in noting the influence of Latin American musicians on rock musicians and *nova canção* musicians in Portugal in the 1970s.

Chapter Four is mainly concerned with the dialogic work done by the American singer Nina Simone as a performer of her own work and an appropriator of other writers' songs and as someone whose work in turn has been performed in different ways, particularly by rap artists. Simone is often recognised as having brought a fusion of styles to her work, including classical and jazz music, country blues, French chanson, hymns, protest songs, pop and rock tunes. As such her work is almost always dialogic and provides an interesting point of departure for debates on fusion in popular music. Having discussed Simone's self-written protest material and its influence on subsequent developments in African American protest music, I turn my attention to Simone's appropriation of songwriters such as Leonard Cohen, Sandy Denny and Judy Collins and the connections between the personal and the political in Simone's choice of material. I also discuss her appropriation of material associated with Frank Sinatra in light of other theorists' accounts of male mastery and the theft of the voice. I will close with an account of Simone's song 'Four Women' that touches on many of the themes of change, stasis and recuperation already discussed in the previous chapters and will highlight the revision of the song by the rapper Talib Kweli.

The concluding chapter attempts to summarise a number of issues that have been set in motion throughout the thesis and, in a brief case study, poses the question: What has become of the event of rock 'n' roll? This question, which, as it turns out, has implications for all the musics discussed in the thesis, tours through the 'demise' of rock 'n' roll brought about by the 'exorcism' of its early innovators, the challenge thrown up by punk and post-punk and the dilemma facing new groups emerging into a field of popular music that appears to have no corner left uncultivated. Among the musical examples mentioned is a popular music event from 1979, the release of the *London Calling* album by the Clash. This moment acts as a midpoint in the History of Rock (as figured in music histories and via the media) between the mythical year of 1955 and the time of writing. From the iconic cover (aping Elvis's first album) to the musical styles and lyrical content of the songs, *London Calling* entered into a dialogue with that history that previous 'revolutions' in rock had ignored but which would

come to be the norm in the future. *London Calling* marks a crucial point in the shorter history of punk, which, though declared 'dead' two years earlier, could more truthfully be said to be waning at this point. This forced The Clash to make stylistic changes that for many meant a rejection of much of what punk stood for, making this a 'post-revolutionary' moment in which, the work of the 'revolution' (punk) being seen to be done, there was a process of recuperation of what had come before via a search for roots and identity and a looking back to the earlier revolution of rock 'n' roll.

There are a number of connections between the chapters but I hope that the links are sufficiently well indicated in the text to require little explication here. I will restrict myself for now to suggesting that each case study deals with a moment of crisis arising from lack. More specifically, each deals in some way with a crisis around the hegemony of mainstream Anglo-American rock music. Even when I am not writing explicitly about Anglophone popular music, the latter remains a spectre haunting the entire account. The same is true for the Anglo-American discourse that continues to dominate the historicisation of popular music. While musics such as fado (and, by extension, *novo canção*, 'translusophone' popular musics and Portuguese rock) and *nueva canción* (and, by extension, *canto nuevo*, Chilean progressive rock and postdictatorship rock) are studied, they tend to be studied in ways that maintain them at marginal points in the story of popular music. They are not included in more general accounts of popular music because such accounts largely favour Anglophone musics. To bring them into dialogue with Anglophone music is to attempt to create such an account, one that battles against another form of loss. Yet, as I said at the outset, I have not resolved the 'problem' of simultaneously attending to (implicitly Anglo-American) rock's domination over all kinds of listeners – the thrust of much of this chapter – while wanting rock and its discourse to listen more attentively to what is happening 'outside'. As I have already hinted, it is possible that the 'event' of rock 'n' roll has been over for some time and that rock has been looking elsewhere for inspiration. This 'elsewhere' may be temporal – its own past – or geographical – the 'worlds' of 'other' musics which are labelled so as to designate their 'non-rockness'. Rock and the 'other' musics for which rock is both threat and promise offer escape routes for each other. As fidelity to rock's event wavers, musics such as folk, world, jazz or classical offer themselves as attractive alternatives. In a process of mutual repulsion and attraction, these musics deal with each other's losses.

Having twice posed the question about academic work that attempts to show fidelity to the rock event (Fink's concern with 'doing Elvis'), I hope the following remarks concerning methodology go some way towards providing answers as far as I am concerned. An obvious place to start would seem to be to follow in the footsteps of Richard Middleton by quoting John Mowitt's justification, in his book *Percussion*, for mixing pop and cultural theory:

[W]hat is going on in music [...] must be granted the authority to provoke theorizing – that is, to provoke a reading of theory that challenges its integrity, that obliges theory to submit to the same, often violent scrutiny that its detractors claim is visited on those practices to which it has been applied. In this sense, theory 'responds' to the 'call' of music not by smothering it like a salve, but by discovering in this encounter other possibilities of elaboration, other orientations [...] By the same token, if what is going on in musical practice solicits the work of theorization, it is because music, too, is in need of the diversification of critical attention that theory can provoke as well as the conceptual rigor with which judgements about it can be debated.²²⁹

Elsewhere, in preparing to discuss Louis Althusser and the Rolling Stones, Mowitt boldly claims that he intends, by doing so, to change the way we read the former and hear the latter. While I would hesitate about making such a claim (despite putting Althusser alongside Chuck Berry earlier) I would want to say that, as a rock fan who has read Althusser, I want to reflect how *I* have been changed by the connecting of the two experiences. Reading Althusser has influenced the way I think about a film like *School of Rock* and reading Althusser I cannot help but think of my experience as a rock fan.²³⁰

The desire to keep up the conversation between theory and popular music means that there are as many non-musicological as musicological sources listed in the bibliography. I would not want this to be taken as an unwillingness to search the field of popular music studies in pursuit of my goal, but merely to initiate another set of dialogues that involved looking outside that field. I do consider the thesis a work of popular music studies in that I think the discipline *has* been interested in those inter- or extra-disciplinary conversations. Of the musical/musicological texts I have used, there is a mixture of academic and journalistic accounts. I trust that this does not

require too much justification. I am working within academia and naturally look towards academic work on (popular) music and cultural theory; at the same, however, I always wish to attend to the discourse surrounding popular music and have often found the non-academic work just as – sometimes more – useful for this purpose (the point I made earlier in this chapter about the need to listen to the ‘truth’ of a writer such as Nik Cohn and the ‘veracity’ of a scholar such as Richard Peterson will be a recurrent theme throughout the thesis). Having decided at an early stage not to make this an ethnographic study – for reasons mostly relating to my desire to set up a series of conversations between music and cultural theory – the thesis always faces the danger of not representing the voice of the audience. Using journalistic sources brings something of this voice to presence. That is not to say that we cannot find that voice in academic work on music – and, indeed, one always hopes to find traces of it there – but only to note that, in journalism and other non-academic work on popular culture, writers often feel able to be less restrained and to use that voice in a more uninhibited manner. I hope that, in my own writing, I have managed to find a balance between the fan I am – and I am a fan of all the musics I write about here – and the academic I am presenting myself as. My responses to the musics I analyse are drawn from my own feelings as a fan and those of numerous other unrecorded fans who have discussed the music with me, argued about it or somehow influenced the way I think about how we respond to music.

My discussion earlier in this chapter on the ideology of listening outlined problems that, to a certain extent, come down to an established argument about musical materials versus sociology, albeit filtered through a discussion of Badiou and Althusser. With this in mind it is worth mentioning another aspect of loss in this thesis, the danger for the music to get ‘lost’ in the discussion of it. At the same time I would suggest that there is no clear position *for* musical analysis against sociology or vice versa, and that the point is crucially *not* to suggest that, because of the tendency for music to get lost, we should give up on trying to keep it ‘in’ our discourse. On the contrary, this realisation can spur us on, via a range of dialectics such as musicology and sociology, to try and pin ‘music’ down, in however provisional a manner as a series of what Lacan calls *points de capiton*, or ‘quilting points’. Sometimes what we thought was ‘the music’ does get lost, even when ‘the music’ was the originary event that initiated the trajectory of our conversation. The process whereby specific musical materials provide an initiatory *event* that produces a (sometimes unrecognisable)

fidelity to that event, should not be undervalued, arguably even more so when the musical materials disappear and prove by their absence how crucially sutured into the rest of our life, thoughts and concerns they are. We live those sutured lives and follow these connections without feeling that we can only articulate them within the confines of the musical materials themselves.

A case in point would be the use of song lyrics to help ‘explain’ a song’s meaning. I do not have space here to rehearse the debate surrounding the usefulness or otherwise of lyrics and so will merely mention two sources that articulate why I believe lyrics to be useful. The first is Simon Frith’s now classic piece ‘Why do songs have words?’, from which I wish to draw on the insight – which fits with my own feeling – that: ‘In a culture in which few people make music but everyone makes conversation, access to songs is primarily through their words. If music gives lyrics their linguistic vitality, lyrics give songs their social *use*.’²³¹ Frith, of course, is vitally aware that songs are not poems and that sung and heard words are vitally different from written and read ones. Yet, even in his later, more lyric-critical chapter on ‘Songs as Texts’ in *Performing Rites*, he is keen to avoid a situation where words would be ignored, a marked difference from Theodore Gracyk, for example, who declares that ‘in rock music most lyrics don’t matter very much’.²³² The songs I discuss in this thesis all come from repertoires that place a lot of emphasis on words *and* on the discourse surrounding the music (more words); indeed, my definition of ‘music’ includes all the words that fly around the sounds we cannot always – yet constantly strive to – describe. In this, music fans are always analysts, which is one (perhaps simplistic) riposte to those who worry about getting intellectual about popular music. What music fan does not, on a regular basis, ‘organically’ intellectualise about the music they have recently experienced, whether in the bar after a gig, on the phone to a friend after hearing a new piece of music, or in a blog or internet forum dedicated to just such discussions? A second source which should be mentioned here is Dai Griffiths’s ‘From Lyric to Anti-Lyric: Analyzing the Words in Pop Song’, which is useful not just for the actual analysis it undertakes but also for the recognition that such analysis, though only one of many possible responses to popular music, is nonetheless a vital response and one not to be underestimated.²³³ Another way of putting this might be to say that we ought to be trying our best to abandon the kind of binary thinking that would suggest *either* that words were the most important aspect of popular songs *or* that the ‘music’ was; rather that, words

being *a* vital aspect of popular songs, let us do them justice. One need not pretend that he or she is providing the *whole* response to any given song; he or she should strive, rather, for a solid account of the aspect(s) of the song relevant to the discussion, fully cognisant that he or she is working within self-imposed parameters. If there is an emphasis on subjective interpretation here, I would want to fit such a process into what I am calling below a phenomenology of experience, otherwise understood as a series of encounters with songs and theories.

The eclecticism of my case studies, while attempting to engage with the politics of representation referred to above, should also be seen in light of the reflexive nature of the thesis as a whole in that these studies reflect my experience of popular music. I mention this in order to anticipate a possible paradox, which I would prefer anyway to frame as a dialectical process, whereby I rely on a given account of popular music when pursuing certain theoretical strands (my account of the rock event, for example, relies on a quite standard narrative of post-Elvis rock history and ‘finishes’ quite conventionally with punk) while at the same time suggesting the need for popular music studies to look outside of this narrative. I am interested, as I have tried to show in this chapter, in the formation of subjectivity through popular music and in the way that popular music attaches itself to people’s lives. In allowing for a dialectical process by which I move between ‘conventional’ Anglophone rock-based popular music and popular musics operating in other linguistic and cultural terrains, I am following the example of my own life. In doing so I am following a methodology used by a number of the scholars I have already mentioned in this chapter, especially those working in the areas of memory studies, consciousness studies and phenomenology. In setting down at different geographical and historical points, my chapters enact other aspects of encounter. I start and finish at ‘home’ because home is where the questions start. If, as L.P. Hartley famously suggested, ‘the past is a foreign country’, and if, as Paul Ricoeur points out, we always visit the past with questions, then we could say that we always visit a foreign country with questions, whether conscious or subconscious. My method for organising the chapters therefore reflects a phenomenology of experience. Rock, as both ‘school’ and ‘home’ is the starting point for a journey outside of the familiar to other adopted ‘homelands’ (the past, for me, *is* these foreign countries to a certain extent in the examples of Chile and Portugal, where I have spent time as student and teacher respectively; the USA remains a future

anterior experience – an imagination rather than a memory, although it is hard in a world dominated by US media to be sure what the difference is).²³⁴

In this my work is not so different from seemingly more ‘focussed’ or ‘specialised’ work. It is an attempt to place a frame around – to control, however briefly – the chaos of the world as it presents itself. These frames, like the ‘zoom’ features of electronic maps, can be adjusted for specificity as required. Like Benjamin’s account of history, such a methodology connects itself to a seizing hold of an instant in a flash (or, should we require a more sonically pleasing term, a blast). In doing so, it is always already concerned with loss. Related to this, and also concerned with loss, it could be said to highlight (blast, voice, make heard) the loss of specialisation. In this there is an attempt to be honest to the modern subject in our society who is less and less of a specialist, is unable to be so due to the liquid modernity in which she finds herself. If that sounds too pessimistic a note, however, suggesting a kind of impossibility to frame modern experience, I would also want to stress the need for frames of possibility. These might be thought of as the frames we find around the ‘hermeneutic windows’ that allow us to interpret the popular songs that attach themselves to us and, more often than we might notice, translate loss for us.²³⁵

Notes

¹ Alejo Carpentier, *The Lost Steps*, tr. Harriet de Onís (London: Victor Gollancz, 1956), p. 39.

² Roland Barthes, *The Rustle of Language*, tr. Richard Howard (Berkeley & Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1989), p. 360.

³ Andreas Huyssen, *Present Pasts: Urban Palimpsests and the Politics of Memory* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2003), p. 28.

⁴ Paul Ricoeur, *Memory, History, Forgetting*, tr. Kathleen Blamey & David Pellauer (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 2004), p. 7.

⁵ Quoted in Jeremy Ahearne, *Michel de Certeau: Interpretation and its Other* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1995), p. 10.

⁶ Julia Kristeva, *Black Sun: Depression and Melancholia* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1989), pp. 97-98.

⁷ Geoffrey O’Brien, *Sonata for Jukebox: Pop Music, Memory, and the Imagined Life* (New York: Counterpoint, 2004), p. 245.

⁸ Michel de Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life*, tr. Steven Rendall (Berkeley & Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1984), p. xxi.

⁹ de Certeau, *Practice*, p. xxi.

¹⁰ I am using ‘rock’ here as a general term for the wide variety of Anglo-American pop and rock that has dominated popular music internationally since at least the rock ‘n’ roll ‘event’. Later I will be talking about rock music with reference to electric guitar-based musics such as ‘indie’, heavy metal and punk. I trust the meaning will be clear within its context.

¹¹ I have not provided full references for the titles listed in the next few paragraphs, preferring to do so when I engage more fully with these texts at later points.

¹² Paul Heelas, Scott Lash & Paul Morris. *Detraditionalization: Critical Reflections on Authority and Identity* (Cambridge, MA, and Oxford: Blackwell, 1996).

¹³ Michael Bywater, *Lost Worlds: What Have We Lost and Where Did It Go?* (London: Granta, 2004), p. 3.

¹⁴ Bywater, *Lost Worlds*, p. 4.

¹⁵ Bywater, *Lost Worlds*, p. 16.

¹⁶ Samuel Beckett, *Collected Shorter Prose 1945-1980* (London: John Calder, 1984), p. 159.

¹⁷ Jacques Roubard, *The Great Fire of London: A Story with Interpolations and Bifurcations*, tr. Dominic Di Bernardi (Elmwood Park, IL: Dalkey Archive Press, 1992 [1989]), p. 6.

¹⁸ Lawrence D. Kritzman, 'Foreword: In remembrance of Things French', in Pierre Nora (dir.), *Realms of Memory: Rethinking the French Past Vol. 1: Conflicts and Divisions*, ed. Lawrence D. Kritzman, tr. Arthur Goldhammer (New York: Columbia University Press, 1996), p. xiii.

¹⁹ Billy Bragg, *The Progressive Patriot: A Search for Belonging* (London: Black Swan, 2007 [2006]).

²⁰ Susan Sontag, *Regarding the Pain of Others* (New York: Farrar, Strauss and Giroux, 2003), p. 89.

²¹ Joe Brainard, *I Remember* (New York: Granary Books, 2001 [1975]), p. 9.

²² Georges Perec, *Je me souviens* (Paris: Hachette, 1978).

²³ Georges Perec, *Species of Spaces and Other Pieces*, ed. & tr. John Sturrock, rev. edn. (London: Penguin, 1999), p. 128.

²⁴ Gilbert Adair, *Myths & Memories* (London: Fontana, 1986), pp. xv-xvi.

²⁵ Pierre Nora, 'General Introduction' (tr. Richard C. Holbrook), *Rethinking France: Les Lieux de Mémoire*, tr. Mary Trouille (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 2001), p. xviii.

²⁶ See, for example, the following weblogs: *I remember/je me souviens*, http://i_remember.blogspot.com (accessed 28 May 2007); *I remember*, <http://iremember.adetskas.net/> (accessed 28 May 2007); *I Remember*, <http://www.writenet.org/iremember/iremembers/index.html> (accessed 28 May 2007).

²⁷ Jorge Luis Borges, 'Funes the Memorious' (tr. James E. Irby), *Labyrinths*, ed. Donald A. Yates & James E. Irby (Penguin: Harmondsworth, 1985 [1964]), p. 94.

²⁸ Huyssen, *Present Pasts*, p. 2.

²⁹ Agacinski, p. 14. For Ricoeur's discussion of Freud and Nietzsche, see *Memory, History, Forgetting*, pp. 69-74, 287-292.

³⁰ 'Oulipian', from Oulipo, or Ouvroir de littérature potentielle, a group founded in 1960 by Raymond Queneau and François Le Lionnais and including Perec, Roubard and Italo Calvino among others.

³¹ Roubard, *Great Fire*, p. 201.

³² M. Christine Boyer, *The City of Collective Memory: Its Historical Legacy and Architectural Entertainments* (Cambridge, MA, and London: The MIT Press, 1996 [1994]), p. 26.

³³ Halbwachs, Maurice. *On Collective Memory*, ed. & tr. Lewis A. Coser (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 1992), p. 40.

³⁴ Maurice Halbwachs, *On Collective Memory*, ed. & tr. Lewis A. Coser (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 1992), p. 40.

³⁵ Pierre Nora, 'General Introduction: Between Memory and History', in *Realms of Memory Vol. 1*, p. 1.

³⁶ Nora, *Realms of Memory Vol. 1*, p. 1.

³⁷ Nora, *Realms of Memory Vol. 1*, pp. 3-4.

³⁸ Nora, *Realms of Memory Vol. 1*, pp. 6-7.

³⁹ Andreas Huyssen, *Twilight Memories: Marking Time in a Culture of Amnesia* (New York and London: Routledge, 1995), p. 3.

⁴⁰ Sigmund Freud, 'Mourning and Melancholia', *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud*, Vol. 14, tr. & ed. James Strachey (London: The Hogarth Press, 1957), p. 243.

⁴¹ Freud, 'Mourning', p. 245.

⁴² Freud, 'Mourning', pp. 245, 246.

⁴³ Sigmund Freud, 'Remembering, Repeating and Working-Through', *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud*, Vol. 12, tr. & ed. James Strachey (London: The Hogarth Press, 1958), pp. 145-156.

⁴⁴ Ricoeur, *Memory*, p. 71.

⁴⁵ Ricoeur, *Memory*, p. 72.

- ⁴⁶ Jacques Derrida, *Specters of Marx: The State of the Debt, the Work of Mourning, and the New International*, tr. Peggy Kamuf (New York and London: Routledge, 1994), p. 9.
- ⁴⁷ Mark C. Taylor & Dietrich Christian Lammerts, *Grave Matters* (London: Reaktion Books, 2002), p. 17.
- ⁴⁸ Taylor & Lammerts, *Grave*, p. 19.
- ⁴⁹ W.G. Sebald, *Campo Santo*, ed. Sven Meyer, tr. Anthea Bell (London: Hamish Hamilton, 2005), pp. 34-35.
- ⁵⁰ Warren Motte, 'The Work of Mourning', *Yale French Studies*, No. 105, *Pereckonings: Reading Georges Perec* (2004), pp. 56-71.
- ⁵¹ Kristeva, *Black Sun*, p. 97.
- ⁵² Kristeva, *Black Sun*, pp. 13, 20.
- ⁵³ Sigmund Freud, 'On Transience', *The Standard Edition*, Vol. 14, p. 305.
- ⁵⁴ Freud, 'On Transience', pp. 305-307.
- ⁵⁵ Agacinski, *Time*, pp. 13-14.
- ⁵⁶ Ricoeur, *Memory*, p. 77.
- ⁵⁷ Ricoeur, *Memory*, p. 77.
- ⁵⁸ Garth Brooks, 'The Dance', *Garth Brooks* (CD, Liberty, C2-90897, 1989) ; Goerge Jones, 'He Stopped Loving Her Today', *The Essential George Jones – The Spirit of Country* (2CD, Epic/Legacy 4915732, 1998). Although I am not analysing the songs myself here, I have included them on the accompanying CDs in order for the reader to follow Ching's essential points. From here on, songs which appear on the accompanying CDs will receive an additional reference to that identifying their source, consisting of a CD and Track number in bold. Brooks and Jones are **CD1, Tracks 1 & 2**, respectively.
- ⁵⁹ Barbara Ching, *Wrong's What I Do Best: Hard Country Music and Contemporary Culture* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2001), pp. 21-24.
- ⁶⁰ Ching, *Wrong*, p. 24. I will be posing a related question in Chapter Two when I examine the criticism aimed at the fatalism of fado songs in Portugal.
- ⁶¹ Philip Sherburne, 'Time Out of Joint', *The Wire* 282 (August 2007), p. 33.
- ⁶² Violeta Parra, 'Santiago penando estás', *Canciones reencontradas en París* (CD, Warner Music Chile 857380321-2, 1999). **CD1, Track 3**.
- ⁶³ I am basing these observations on available MP3 versions of Villalobos's sets posted to the internet. See, for example, http://www.foroswebgratis.com/mensaje-icardo_villalobos_live_@_sunrise_bucharest_25_03_2006-46503-304206-1-907200.htm (accessed 1 Aug 2007). I do not have a recording of the event Sherberne describes. An extract from his March 2006 Bucharest set is included as **CD1, Track 4**.
- ⁶⁴ Nora, *Realms of Memory Vol. 1*, p. 14.
- ⁶⁵ Freud, 'Mourning', p. 249.
- ⁶⁶ That said, Sherberne does mention another set – the 2006 Loveparade in Santiago – where Villalobos *did* finish with a Parra song (again, unfortunately, he does not record which song but it must be a different one as he mentions a guitar).
- ⁶⁷ See, for example, O'Brien, *Sonata*, pp 231-254, and David Toop, *Haunted Weather: Music, Silence and Memory* (London: Serpent's Tail, 2004), pp. 228-231.
- ⁶⁸ Eisenberg, *Recording*, p. 37.
- ⁶⁹ Jorge Luis Borges, 'The Witness' (tr. James E. Irby), *Labyrinths*, p. 279.
- ⁷⁰ Borges, 'The Witness', p. 279.
- ⁷¹ Seán Burke, *The Death and Return of the Author: Criticism and Subjectivity in Barthes, Foucault and Derrida*, 2nd edn. (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1998), pp. 38-9.
- ⁷² Adair, *Myths*, p. xiv.
- ⁷³ Burke, *Death*, p. 39.
- ⁷⁴ Burke, *Death*, p. 39.
- ⁷⁵ Barthes, *Rustle*, pp. 362-3.
- ⁷⁶ Michel de Certeau, *The Writing Of History*, trans. Tom Conley (New York: Columbia University Press, 1988), p. 215.
- ⁷⁷ Bywater, *Lost Worlds*, p. 51.
- ⁷⁸ Paul Auster, *The Invention of Solitude*, collected in *Collected Prose: Autobiographical Writings, True stories, Critical Essays, Prefaces and Collaborations with Artists* (London: Faber and Faber, 2003), p. 4. This practice of remembering fathers is one that I will return to in Chapter Four during a discussion of the song 'My Father' in versions by Judy Collins and Nina Simone.
- ⁷⁹ Taylor & Lammerts, *Grave*, p. 17.

⁸⁰ Jorge Luis Borges, 'Elegy' (tr. Donald A. Yates), *Labyrinths*, p. 287.

⁸¹ Juan José Saer, *The Witness*, tr. Margaret Jull Costa (London: Serpent's Tail, 1990).

⁸² Roland Barthes, *The Grain of the Voice : Interviews 1962-1980*, tr. Linda Coverdale (Berkeley and Los Angeles : University of California Press, 1985), p. 3.

⁸³ Roubard, *Great Fire*, pp. 197-198, emphasis in original.

⁸⁴ Perec, *Species*, p. 133.

⁸⁵ The story of remembering, reciting, forgetting and writing is told evocatively in Geoffrey O'Brien, *The Browser's Ecstasy: A Meditation on Reading* (Washington: Counterpoint, 2000).

⁸⁶ Edgar Allan Poe, 'MS. Found in a Bottle', *The Fall of the House of Usher and Other Writings*, ed. David Galloway (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1986), pp. 105-106.

⁸⁷ Poe, 'MS.', p. 109. See also Mark C. Taylor's use of this same quotation in *Grave Matters*, pp. 18-19.

⁸⁸ 'Qui n'a plus qu'un moment à vivre/N'a plus rien à dissimuler – Quinault, *Atys*', Poe, p. 99.

⁸⁹ Quoted in Toop, *Haunted*, p. 99. In connection with the work of Paul Auster and Michael Bywater quoted previously, it is worth noting that Toop begins his study with a consideration of his recently deceased father.

⁹⁰ Toop, *Haunted*, p. 99.

⁹¹ I have used the term 'monologue' a couple of times now (as Toop does). But *is* it a monologue? Certainly, it is a dramatic work voiced by one actor/character but he possesses numerous voices – the voices of his three ages compounded by the 'voices' of the recording and playback devices and the inevitable 'voice' of decay that is constantly at work on them.

⁹² Toop, *Haunted*, pp. 99-100. We should note that Toop does go on to say that 'in another sense, it's completely different' as his music is all stored in the computer and the computer can play it (no need for an ensemble).

⁹³ Jacques Le Goff, *History and Memory*, tr. Stephen Rendall & Elizabeth Claman (New York and Oxford: Columbia University Press, 1992), p. 2.

⁹⁴ Nora, *Realms of Memory Vol. 1*, pp. 17, 18.

⁹⁵ Alain Badiou, *Being and Event*, tr. Oliver Feltham (London and New York: Continuum, 2005 [1988]).

⁹⁶ To a certain extent, we do not need to make such a leap. As Bernardo Palombo has pointed out with regard to the emergence of *nueva trova* (a Cuban 'new song' movement that emerged in the 1960s and whose figureheads were Silvio Rodríguez and Pablo Milanés), 'The reasons for the Revolution of '59 were the reasons for the birth of *Nueva Trova*.' In other words there was as much need for a musical revolution as for a political one. Here, as elsewhere, the revolutionary moment sought to identify itself with a lost past moment: in *nueva trova*'s case the *trova* practice that existed before the domination of what Palombo calls 'the post-Hollywood dreck from Batista's Cuba'. Silvio Rodríguez and *nueva trova* are two of the subjects of Chapter Three of this thesis and a discussion of the rock 'n' roll event is more pertinent to my aims here. Palombo's comments come from an essay in the CD liner notes to *Cuba Classics 1: Silvio Rodríguez Greatest Hits* (Luaka Bop VVR1030032, 1991).

⁹⁷ From the album *AKA Grafitti Man* (CD, Rykodisc RCD 10223, 1992). This is the second version of the track released by Trudell. An earlier version can be found on John Trudell, *The Collection* (6CD, Effective Records, No Cat. No., 2003). The second version is used as CD1, Track 5.

⁹⁸ The imagery here is especially resonant given the centrality of race to both historical moments. In addition, 'Love Me Tender' is an adaptation of a Civil War song, 'Aura Lee', although I do not know if Trudell was aware of this. My thanks to Richard Middleton for bringing these connections to my attention.

⁹⁹ We should note, however, the way that the music accompanying Trudell's spoken narration seems, to a certain extent, to undermine the Elvis event. How effective is a comparison of Presley and Pat Boone, we might ask, when placed over a musical text comprising 'I Want You I Need You I Love You' and 'Love Me Tender', hardly the most explicit examples of Presley's 'eventness'? As Richard Middleton's comparison of the two singers has it, 'there is no clear division between the two performers. Presley's singing, for example, carries meanings as well as "grain", and this is in fact why in some performances it could move across into a position close to that occupied by Boone'. See Middleton's discussion of the two singers in *Studying Popular Music* (Milton Keynes: Open University Press, 1990), pp. 262-3.

¹⁰⁰ Nik Cohn, *Awopbopaloobop Alopbamboom: Pop from the Beginning* (London: Pimlico, 2004 [1969]).

¹⁰¹ Cohn, 'Preface to the Pimlico Edition', *Awopbopaloobop*, p. xiii.

¹⁰² Walter Benjamin, 'Theses on the Philosophy of History', *Illuminations*, ed. Hannah Arendt, tr. Harry Zorn (London: Pimlico, 1999), p. 247. Richard Middleton has made productive use of this image in *Voicing the Popular: On the Subjects of Popular Music* (New York and London: Routledge, 2006), pp. 88-9.

¹⁰³ The 'danger' of rock 'n' roll is another thing that is supposedly lost in the commercialisation of the music, leading to various attempts, such as Punk's, to reclaim the danger, or to 'endanger' rock (which may or may not be the same thing). Similar debates go on elsewhere too: we could trace them in debates surrounding fado, cleaned up from a dirty and dangerous music to the acceptable – even desired – face of authoritarian projections of the family and religion (a recognition of its interpellative powers and a re-transference of them to other Ideological State Apparatuses, of which more below); also in debates around country music such as Barbara Ching's book on hard country, a paean to danger if ever there was one. To a certain extent all my case studies in the following chapters deal with moments of danger and symptoms of illnesses. For an extended discussion of 'moments of danger' in popular music, see Middleton, *Voicing*.

¹⁰⁴ Richard A. Peterson, 'Why 1955? Explaining the Advent of Rock Music', *Popular Music*, Vol. 9 No. 1. (Jan., 1990), p. 97.

¹⁰⁵ For a useful summary of Badiou's notion of differing infinities, see Slavoj Žižek, *The Ticklish Subject: The Absent Centre of Political Ontology* (London and New York: Verso, 1999), pp. 133-4.

¹⁰⁶ Ricoeur, *Memory*, pp.238-48.

¹⁰⁷ Badiou, *Being and Event*, p. 294.

¹⁰⁸ Slavoj Žižek, *The Sublime Object of Ideology* (London and New York: Verso, 1989), pp. 36-43.

¹⁰⁹ Badiou, *Being and Event*, p. 214.

¹¹⁰ Don McLean, 'American Pie', *American Pie* (LP, United Artists UAS 29285, 1971). McLean's song should be heard alongside Trudell's 'Baby Boom Ché' as a lyrical intervention into the historicisation of rock.

¹¹¹ Peter Hallward, *Badiou: A Subject to Truth* (Minneapolis and London: University of Minnesota Press, 2003), p. 36.

¹¹² Svetlana Boym, *The Future of Nostalgia* (New York: Basic Books, 2001), p. xvi.

¹¹³ As attested by its continued appearance, at the time of writing (2007), near the top of the chart published every month by *Songlines* magazine and based on sales figures from the UK.

¹¹⁴ Huyssen, *Present Pasts*, p. 11

¹¹⁵ Boym, *Future*, p. xvi.

¹¹⁶ Kristeva, *Black Sun*, p. 60.

¹¹⁷ I should point out that Badiou has continued to develop his theory of the subjectivising potential of the event and to worry at this question of agency. The Badiouian position I am representing here is mostly based on his work up to and including *Being and Event* (1988), while *Ethics* (1993) presents a subject seized by a truth (at its mercy) that allows for an ongoing – and possibly changing – fidelity and hence suggests at least a partial agency for the subject.

¹¹⁸ Slavoj Žižek, *For They Know Not What They Do: Enjoyment as a Political Factor*, 2nd edn. (London and New York: Verso, 2002), p. 271.

¹¹⁹ Žižek, *For They Know Not*, p. 273.

¹²⁰ Huyssen, *Present Pasts*, p. 2.

¹²¹ Huyssen, *Present Pasts*, p. 3.

¹²² Huyssen, *Twilight Memories*, p. 86.

¹²³ Slavoj Žižek, 'The Spectre of Ideology', in Slavoj Žižek (ed.), *Mapping Ideology* (London and New York: Verso, 1994), p 7.

¹²⁴ Simon Reynolds, 'Society of the Spectral', *The Wire*, No. 273 (November 2006), p. 33.

¹²⁵ Frances A. Yates, *The Art of Memory* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1966).

¹²⁶ Ricoeur, *Memory*, pp. 7-15.

¹²⁷ Yates, *Art*, p. xi.

¹²⁸ Boyer, *City*, p. 12.

¹²⁹ Zygmunt Bauman, *Globalization: The Human Consequences* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1998), p. 93.

¹³⁰ Bauman, *Globalization*, p. 92.

¹³¹ Taylor & Lammerts, *Grave*, p. 19.

¹³² Taylor & Lammerts, *Grave*, p. 19.

¹³³ Anthony Vidler, *The Architectural Uncanny: Essays in the Modern Unhomely* (Cambridge, MA, and London: The MIT Press, 1992), pp. 8-11.

¹³⁴ Bauman, *Globalization*, p. 92.

¹³⁵ Vidler, *Architectural*, pp. 5, 9-10.

¹³⁶ Taylor & Lammerts, *Grave*, p. 20. The notion of the 'netherzone' comes from the artist Eve André Laramée.

¹³⁷ Beatriz Sarlo, *Scenes from Postmodern Life*, tr. Jon Beasley-Murray (Minneapolis & London: University of Minnesota Press, 2001), pp. 9, 13.

¹³⁸ Zygmunt Bauman, *Liquid Modernity* (Cambridge: Polity, 2000).

¹³⁹ Jonathan Raban, *Soft City* (London: Collins Harvill, 1988 [1974]), p. 67.

¹⁴⁰ David Harvey, *The Condition of Postmodernity* (Cambridge, MA, and Oxford: Blackwell, 1990), p. 6.

¹⁴¹ The term 'structure of feeling' comes from the work of Raymond Williams; see particularly his *The Long Revolution* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1961), pp. 48-71. Harvey uses the term and its plural throughout his book without explicitly referencing Williams; see, for example, *Condition*, p. 9.

¹⁴² Quoted in Harvey, *Condition*, p. 10.

¹⁴³ Vidler, *Architectural*, p. 6.

¹⁴⁴ Harvey, *Condition*, pp. 54, 55-6.

¹⁴⁵ See Iain Sinclair, *Lud Heat and Suicide Bridge* (London: Granta, 1998), *White Chappell, Scarlet Tracings* (London: Paladin, 1988), *Lights out for the Territory* (London: Granta, 1997), and Sinclair (ed.), *London: City of Disappearances* (London: Hamish Hamilton, 2006).

¹⁴⁶ Merlin Coverley, *Psychogeography* (Harpending: Pocket Essentials, 2006), p. 12.

¹⁴⁷ de Certeau, *Practice*, p. 93.

¹⁴⁸ de Certeau, *Practice*, p. 93.

¹⁴⁹ Quoted in Harvey, *Condition*, p. 46.

¹⁵⁰ Quoted in Harvey, *Condition*, pp. 60-61. For Lyotard's discussion of Wittgenstein's metaphor, see Jean-François Lyotard, *The Postmodern Condition: A Report on Knowledge*, tr. Geoff Bennington & Brian Massumi (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1999 [1979]), p. 40.

¹⁵¹ Sara Cohen, *Rock Culture in Liverpool* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1991); Ruth Finnegan, *The Hidden Musicians: Music-Making in an English Town* (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1989); Barry Shank, *Dissonant Identities: The Rock 'n' Roll Scene in Austin, Texas* (Hanover and London: Wesleyan University Press, 1994); George Lipsitz, *Dangerous Crossroads: Popular Music, Postmodernism and the Poetics of Place* (London and New York: Verso, 1994).

¹⁵² Charlie Gillett, *The Sound of the City: The Rise of Rock and Roll*, rev. edn. (London: Souvenir Press, 1991 [1983]); Iain Chambers, *Urban Rhythms: Pop Music and Popular Culture* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1985) and *Popular Culture: The Metropolitan Experience* (London: Routledge, 1988); Richard A. Peterson, *Creating Country Music: Fabricating Authenticity* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1997); Georgina Boyes, *The Imagined Village: Culture, Ideology and the English Folk Revival* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1993).

¹⁵³ Lipsitz, *Dangerous*, p. 4.

¹⁵⁴ Marcel Proust, *In Search of Lost Time Vol 1: The Way by Swann's*, ed. Christopher Prendergast, tr. Lydia Davis (London: Penguin, 2002), p. 212.

¹⁵⁵ Proust, *Way*, pp. 214-215.

¹⁵⁶ Caetano Veloso, *Tropical Truth: A Story of Music and Revolution in Brazil*, ed. Barbara Einzig, tr. Isabel de Sena (London: Bloomsbury, 2003), p. 41.

¹⁵⁷ Kaja Silverman, *The Subject of Semiotics* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1983), pp. 117-121. Silverman also discusses the way that Swann is 'hailed' into a new existence by the sonata, a point that relates to my discussion of listening below.

¹⁵⁸ Edward S. Casey, *Getting Back into Place: Toward a Renewed Understanding of the Place-World* (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1993), p. x.

¹⁵⁹ Merle Haggard, 'House Of Memories', *I'm a Lonesome Fugitive/Branded Man* (CD, Capitol/EMI 724349685420, 1998). CD1, Track 6.

¹⁶⁰ Merle Haggard & Willie Nelson, 'When Times Were Good', *Seashores of Old Mexico* (CD, Epic EK 40293, 1987). CD1, Track 7.

¹⁶¹ Quoted in Veloso, *Tropical*, p. 41.

¹⁶² Diane Ackerman, *A Natural History of the Senses* (London: Phoenix, 1996 [1990]), p. 178.

¹⁶³ Billy Bragg, 'Ideology', *Talking With the Taxman About Poetry* (LP, Go! Discs AGOLP 6, 1986).

¹⁶⁴ Robert Fink, 'Elvis Everywhere: Musicology and Popular Music Studies at the Twilight of the Canon', *American Music* Vol. 16 No. 2 (Summer, 1998), pp. 135-179].

¹⁶⁵ Bruce Tucker, "'Tell Tchaikovsky the News": Postmodernism, Popular Culture, and the Emergence of Rock 'N' Roll', *Black Music Research Journal*, Vol. 9, No. 2, Papers of the 1989 National Conference on Black Music Research (Autumn, 1989), p. 272.

¹⁶⁶ There is some evidence towards the end of the piece in the section that Fink paradoxically calls 'Doing Elvis'.

¹⁶⁷ We could take this further. As subjects of the Crown and of the State, we are subject to a Law that stipulates (via the Crown Court and other ideological/repressive state apparatuses) its ownership over our lives. In this sense we are always in a situation where it is possible for the State to take our lives from us, to 'kill' us. In the UK this 'killing' may no longer be a literal one. It is the 'soft killing' of life imprisonment that awaits us. In popular music, it is the song, as Roberta Flack reminds us, that kills us softly. See (hear) Roberta Flack, 'Killing me Softly With His Song', *Killing Me Softly* (CD, Atlantic 87793-2, 1995 [1973]). We mustn't overlook the connection to the Sirens' song here either or the fact that songs not only 'kill' us, they also save our lives. See Richard Middleton, "'Last Night a DJ Saved My Life": Avians, Cyborgs and Siren Bodies in the Era of Phonographic Technology', *Radical Musicology*, Vol. 1 (2006), <http://www.radical-musicology.org.uk> (accessed 17 May 2007), 31 pars.

¹⁶⁸ Thomas Pepper plays on this double meaning in an article on Althusser, hailing Althusser himself. Thomas Pepper, 'Kneel and You Will Believe', *Yale French Studies*, No. 88, *Depositions: Althusser, Balibar, Machery, and the Labor of Reading* (1995), p. 41.

¹⁶⁹ Chuck Berry, 'School Days', *The Chess Box* (6LP, Chess 80001, 1988). Originally released as a 78 rpm and 45 rpm single (7", Chess 1653, 1957). CD1, Track 8.

¹⁷⁰ From within popular music itself, there is also a critique which points out a different 'lie' to the story told above, namely its racial and sexual politics. I do not have space to discuss that here – although I do have something to say about the canonisation process of rock in the concluding chapter – but it would be worthwhile adding to the list of songs about ISAs above titles such as Mos Def's 'Rock 'n' Roll' (from his *Black on Both Sides* album), which relates the 'real' history of rock and soul, replacing Elvis Presley with Chuck Berry, etc. The track also musically develops into a thrash/hardcore style, deliberately playing on assumptions as to what 'white' or 'black' musical styles 'are'.

¹⁷¹ Young, as the permanent adolescent, is clearly the model for Black's character Dewey Finn.

¹⁷² Slavoj Žižek & Glyn Daly *Conversations with Žižek* (Cambridge: Polity, 2004), pp. 54-59.

¹⁷³ 'Living with one's symptom', a concept explored throughout Žižek's work, might be how we should read the 'happy endings' of any number of Hollywood films and those rock songs which stress how their subjects just 'can't help it'. It might also be productive to work into such an enquiry Paul Ricoeur's discussion of 'happy memory' in *Memory, History, Forgetting* (pp. 494-496).

¹⁷⁴ Louis Althusser, 'Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses (Notes towards an Investigation)', in *Lenin and Philosophy and Other Essays*, tr. Ben Brewster (London: NLB, 1971), p. 163.

¹⁷⁵ John Mowitt, *Percussion: Drumming, Beating, Striking* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2002), pp. 45-50. Mladen Dolar, *A Voice and Nothing More* (Cambridge, MA, and London: The MIT Press, 2006), pp. 122-123.

¹⁷⁶ Bruce Dickinson interviewed by Sam Dunn, *Metal: A Headbanger's Journey*, dir. Sam Dunn et al. (Canada, 2005).

¹⁷⁷ Judith Butler, "'Conscience Doth make Subjects of Us All'", *Yale French Studies*, No. 88, *Depositions: Althusser, Balibar, Machery, and the Labor of Reading* (1995), pp. 6-26; Mladen Dolar, 'Beyond Interpellation', *Qui Parle*, Vol. 6 No. 2 (Spring/Summer, 1993), pp. 75-96.

¹⁷⁸ This last scene is also notable for a hilarious exchange between the band and a backstage janitor who is offering them directions. The exchange plays on ideas of power that I explore both here and later in the thesis:

Janitor: ...go straight ahead, go straight ahead, turn right the next two corners, and the first door the sign "Authorized Personnel Only"...

David: Yeah.

Janitor: Open that door, that's the stage!

David: You think so?

Janitor: You're authorized. You're musicians aren't you?

David: We've got guitars yeah.

This is Spinal Tap, dir. Rob Reiner (DVD, MGM 16146DVD, 2004 [1984]).

¹⁷⁹ Middleton, *Voicing*, pp. 145-146.

¹⁸⁰ Jacques Lacan, *The Seminar of Jacques Lacan, Book XI: The Four Fundamentals of Psychoanalysis*, tr. Alan Sheridan (New York and London: Norton, 1981 [1977]), p. 212.

¹⁸¹ Analysing the role of the backbeat in Chuck Berry's music, John Mowitt refers to 'the object of a choice that then surrenders you to its powers.' Mowitt, *Percussion*, p. 31.

¹⁸² Mladen Dolar, *A Voice*, p. 76.

¹⁸³ Mercedes Sosa, 'Canciones y momentos', *De mí* (Philips 510 925-2, 1990).

¹⁸⁴ Dolar, *A Voice*, p. 13

¹⁸⁵ Dolar, *A Voice*, p. 47.

¹⁸⁶ It is worth recalling here the reconfiguration of Manchester as “Madchester” during the rave scene of the late 1980s and early 1990s and the subsequent crackdown by the RSA, represented by the police forces brought in to enforce changes in the law relating to such public events.

¹⁸⁷ See Peter Sloterdijk, *Critique of Cynical Reason* (London: Verso, 1988 [1987]). Slavoj Žižek discusses and extends Sloterdijk’s formulation – ‘they know very well what they are doing, but still they are doing it’ – in *The Sublime Object of Ideology*, pp. 29-33.

¹⁸⁸ Ricoeur, *Memory*, pp. 84-86. Raphael Samuel discusses the role of local lore in history in the first chapter of *Theatres of Memory*, prompting me to think about the ways that rock lore is a kind of local lore, where ‘local’ would refer to ‘restricted to’ (the rock faithful).

¹⁸⁹ Daniel Goldmark, liner notes to Rufus Harley, *Courage: The Atlantic Recordings* (CD, Atlantic/Rhino RHM2 7725, 2006).

¹⁹⁰ Interview in *Miles Electric: A Different Kind of Blue* (DVD, Eagle Rock, 2004).

¹⁹¹ Lester Bangs, *Psychotic Reactions and Carburettor Dung*, ed. Greil Marcus (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1987), pp. 233-234.

¹⁹² Quoted in Sylvia Hampton with David Nathan, *Nina Simone: Break Down & Let It All Out* (London: Sanctuary, 2004) Hampton, p. 175.

¹⁹³ Bragg, *Progressive*, pp. 120-121.

¹⁹⁴ Merle Haggard, ‘Someone Told My Story’, *I’m a Lonesome Fugitive/Branded Man* (CD, Capitol/EMI 7243 4 96854 2 0, 1998); Moe Bandy, ‘Hank Williams, You Wrote My Life’, *Hank Williams, You Wrote My Life/Cowboys Ain’t Supposed to Cry* (CD, Audium Entertainment 8181, 2003).

¹⁹⁵ Scott Walker, *Scott 4* (CD, Fontana 510 882-2, 1992 [LP, 1969]).

¹⁹⁶ Judith Butler, *Precarious Life: The Powers of Mourning and Violence* (London and New York: Verso, 2004), p. 21.

¹⁹⁷ Butler, *Precarious*, p. 21, emphasis in original.

¹⁹⁸ Robin Williamson, ‘There Is A Music’, *The Iron Stone* (ECM 1969/9876441, 2006).

¹⁹⁹ Eisenberg, *Recording*, p. 69.

²⁰⁰ See in particular the work of Evan Eisenberg, Jonathan Sterne, Mladen Dolar, Theodore Gracyk, Richard Middleton and John Mowitt, all cited elsewhere in this chapter.

²⁰¹ Ricoeur, *Memory*, pp. 7-21.

²⁰² See ‘Plato’s Pharmacy’ in Jacques Derrida, *Dissemination*, tr. Barbara Johnson (London and New York: Continuum, 2004 [1972]), pp. 67-186.

²⁰³ Sigmund Freud, ‘Civilization and its Discontents’, *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud*, Vol. 21, tr. & ed. James Strachey (London: Hogarth Press, 1961), pp. 90-91.

²⁰⁴ Walter Benjamin, ‘The Work of Art in the Era of Mechanical Reproduction’, in *Illuminations*, Roland Barthes, *Camera Lucida: Reflections on Photography*, tr. Richard Howard (London: Vintage, 2000); Susan Sontag, *On Photography* (London: Penguin, 1979 [1977]); Vilém Flusser, *Towards a Philosophy of Photography*, tr. Anthony Matthews (London: Reaktion Books, 2000 [1983]).

²⁰⁵ Middleton, *Voicing*, p. 95.

²⁰⁶ Theodore Gracyk, *Rhythm and Noise: An Aesthetics of Rock* (London and New York: I.B. Tauris, 1996), p. x.

²⁰⁷ Eisenberg, *Recording*, p. 20.

²⁰⁸ O’Brien, *Sonata*, p. 201.

²⁰⁹ John Mowitt, ‘The Sound of Music in the Era of its Electronic Reproducibility’, in Richard Leppert & Susan McClary (eds.), *Music and Society: The Politics of Composition, Performance and Reception* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), p. 183.

²¹⁰ Jonathan Sterne, *The Audible Past: Cultural Origins of Sound Reproduction* (Duke University Press, 2003), p. 92.

²¹¹ Eisenberg, *Recording*, pp. 14-16.

²¹² See, for example, Will Straw, ‘Sizing Up Record Collections: Gender and Connoisseurship in Rock Music Culture’, in Sheila Whiteley, (ed.), *Sexing the Groove: Popular Music and Gender* (London and New York: Routledge, 1997), pp. 3-16.

²¹³ Simon Reynolds, ‘Lost in Music: Obsessive Record Collecting’, in Eric Weisbard (ed.), *This is Pop: In Search of the Elusive at Experience Music Project* (Cambridge (MA) and London: Harvard University Press, 2004), pp. 294, 295.

²¹⁴ Eisenberg, *Recording*, p. 15.

²¹⁵ O’Brien, *Sonata*, pp. 54-55.

²¹⁶ Percec, *Species*, p. 155.

²¹⁷ O'Brien, *Sonata*, p. 55.

²¹⁸ Quoted in Eisenberg, *Recording*, p. 3. For more on this see Middleton, 'Last Night', which explores the connections between fixing, saving (life) and death.

²¹⁹ Julian Dibbell: 'Unpacking Our Hard Drives: Discophilia in the Age of Digital Reproduction', in Weisbard, p. 280.

²²⁰ See, for example, Gustavo S. Azenha, 'The Internet and the Decentralisation of the Popular Music Industry: Critical Reflections on Technology, Concentration and Diversification', *Radical Musicology*, Vol. 1 (2006), <http://www.radical-musicology.org.uk> (accessed 17 May 2007), 125 pars.

²²¹ Anahid Kassabian, *The Soundtracks of Our Lives: Ubiquitous Musics and Distributed Subjectivities* (University of California Press, forthcoming).

²²² Here, and elsewhere when I capitalise these words, I am referring to the Lacanian Orders of the Imaginary, Symbolic and Real. I am using 'Imaginary' to refer to those aspects of the subject's quest for a wholeness that is always unattainable but always desired, as in the 'Mirror Stage' of Lacanian theory. 'Symbolic' is mostly used to refer to the Order represented by society's attempts to impose logic, structure and consistency upon the inconstant nature of, exactly, nature, a process carried out first and foremost, as Lacan posited, through language. The 'Real' is that which cannot be symbolised and which exists beyond our attempts to explain inconstant nature. It is inconstant nature itself, which yet, paradoxically, always returns to the same place. The Real is that which irrupts into the Symbolic as trauma. Its connections with trauma, *jouissance* and death distinguish it from the more comforting Imaginary.

²²³ Reynolds, 'Lost in Music', p. 294.

²²⁴ Rave music – and, more pertinently, its use in the rave itself – would provide a useful comparison here.

²²⁵ Ron Eyerman & Andrew Jamison, *Music and Social Movements: Mobilizing Traditions in the Twentieth Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), p. 37.

²²⁶ Mark Paytress, *I Was There* (London: Cassell Illustrated, 2005), p. 9.

²²⁷ For the 'Seismic Performances', see *The Wire* No. 276 (February 2007), pp. 22-35..

²²⁸ Benjamin, 'Theses', p. 247.

²²⁹ Mowitt, *Percussion*, p. 38; Middleton, *Voicing*, p. 36.

²³⁰ If I word the sentence this way, it is to place more emphasis on the impossibility of my reading Althusser *without* somehow having popular music in my mind (if not, to be counterintuitive, actually 'in my head' at the time) rather than the other way around. Another way of putting this is to say that I am proposing a phenomenology of theory here where, for me, rock will always take first place having 'hailed' me before Althusser (having entered my consciousness first).

²³¹ Simon Frith, 'Why Do Songs Have Words?', Avron Levine White (ed.), *Lost in Music: Culture, Style and the Musical Event* (London and New York: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1987), p. 101.

²³² Simon Frith, *Performing Rites: On the Value of Popular Music* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996), pp. 158-182; Gracyk, p. 65.

²³³ Dai Griffiths, 'From Lyric to Anti-Lyric: Analyzing the Words in Pop Song', in Allan F. Moore (ed.), *Analyzing Popular Music* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), pp. 39-59. Also relevant to this thesis is another article by Griffiths: 'Cover Versions and the Sound of Identity in Motion', in David Hesmondhalgh & Keith Negus (eds.), *Popular Music Studies* (London: Arnold, 2002), pp. 51-64. Here, many of the comparisons between versions of particular songs rely on lyrical change and stasis and how these processes voice aspects of the singer's identity and/or reinvent the songs. I will be performing a similar exercise in Chapter Four in my discussion of Nina Simone's cover versions of various songs.

²³⁴ L.P. Hartley, *The Go-Between* (London: Penguin, 1997), p. 5; Ricoeur, *Memory*, p. 177. I will discuss a phenomenology relating to the theories I have applied to my musical examples in the concluding chapter.

²³⁵ Although the concept of hermeneutic windows in music comes from the work of Lawrence Kramer, I have been more influenced by Richard Middleton's use of the concept. See, in particular, *Voicing*, pp. 102, 109, 182, 210.

Chapter Two

Songs of Disquietude: Loss in Fado Music from the 1950s to the Present

Once more I see you again,
City of my childhood dreadfully lost...
– Fernando Pessoa, 'Lisbon Revisited (1926)'¹

The real, I have told you, is that which is always in the same place.
– Jacques Lacan, *The Ethics of Psychoanalysis*²

Introduction

A cheap café in the Mouraria district, at the entrance to the Rua do Capelão. An assortment of herdsmen, cattle traders, merchants and prostitutes. Stage left, a small staircase leading to the guest rooms, where the Count of Marialva is lodged. A balcony stage right. At the rear a doorway with three stone steps leading to the alley. On one of the tables lies a guitar.³

With these lines the scene is set for the first act of Júlio Dantas's 1901 play *A Severa*, the story of the Lisbon *fadista* Maria Severa (1820-1846) and her affair with the slumming Count of Marialva.⁴ The blurring of myth and history that is illustrated in their story – framed in novels, songs, films and history books – serves as an appropriate starting point for a chapter on the idea of, and the place of, Portuguese fado music. The character of Severa that Dantas presented – firstly as the heroine of a novel that made its appearance just prior to its theatrical dramatisation – was based on a real *fadista* of the mid-nineteenth century, whose affair with a count (Vimiosa, not Marialva) and whose tragic death passed into local and then national lore as the epitome of fado and the *fadista*'s world. From this point on Severa became a recurring figure in the cultural world of Lisbon, not least as the subject of numerous songs (some preceding, some derived from or influenced by Dantas's play). The play itself was performed on a number of occasions throughout the twentieth century, with many notable actresses taking the part of Severa, including, in 1955, fado's greatest star and the subject of much of this chapter, Amália Rodrigues. *A Severa* was also adapted by the filmmaker Leitão de Barros in 1931 to become the first Portuguese sound film. The film, scored by Frederico de Freitas, produced a handful of songs which, through performances by Amália ('Rua do Capelão', 'O Timpanas', 'Novo fado da Severa') and, more recently, by 'new *fadistas*' such as Dulce Pontes ('Novo fado da Severa') and Lula Pena ('Rua do Capelão'), which have served to keep the story of Severa alive.

The Dantas quotation above is also notable for the presence of a number of what might be termed 'fado mythemes', taking the notion of the mytheme from Claude Lévi-Strauss but divesting it of its universalist aspects. By fado mythemes, I am thinking of the elements of fado stories – those expressed via acts of speech and

song and via the written word (novel, play, lyric, history) rather than the musical expression of fado, which might better be defined as a set of ‘musemes’ deriving from and guiding the instrumental and vocal style of the genre, of which I will say more later⁵ – that, through constant repetition, come to represent, in however varied or mutated a fashion, a large part of the ‘fado-ness’ of fado (its ontology, as it were). From the short scene-setting paragraph quoted we can already detect a number of such mythemes:

1. The cheap café. The reference to a bohemian space and its concomitant possibility of transgression is of vital importance when considering the character of Marialva and how and why he has come to be lodging here. For the other characters present, the café provides an obvious meeting place for urban and rural types to mix with each other in a relaxed environment and to come together in appreciation of various pleasures, not the least among them fado music.

2. Mouraria. The Mouraria and Alfama districts of Lisbon are the clearest remnants of the Moorish occupation of the city, their maze-like alleyways and steep steps covering the hillsides below the Castelo de São Jorge. Known as the birthplace of fado, these areas have been associated with the genre ever since its emergence in the mid-nineteenth century. Rodney Gallop, writing in 1933, noted that

[fado’s] true home is Alfama and Mouraria, the poor quarters of the city, which flaunt their picturesque squalor on the slopes below St George’s Castle. A walk through these steep, narrow streets on a moonlit night is likely to be rewarded with the sound of a guitar and the mournful cadences of the *triste canção do sul* [sad song of the south]. But to hold it surely in one’s grasp it is best to go to one of the popular cafés such as the ‘Luso’ and the ‘Victoria’ where it is regularly performed by semi-professional *fadistas*.⁶

Gallop was writing shortly after the enforced professionalisation of fado introduced by the government of António Salazar, a move that encouraged the development of venues such as *O Luso* that took fado away from its ‘true home’ and placed it in the more respectable bourgeois environs of the grand Avenida da Liberdade. This move was crucial in forming the split between (clandestine) amateur fado performance and its professional counterpart, with the latter becoming more or less delimited as a new

song style (and therefore easier to ‘hold [...] surely in one’s grasp’). At the same time this move away from the Mouraria area only enhanced the romantic mythology that has sprung up around the latter’s ‘picturesque squalor’, a romanticisation that would increase with the literal disappearance of much of the lower Mouraria through urban renovation projects undertaken by the Estado Novo, the name given to the ‘New State’ ushered in by António Salazar in 1933.

3. The working classes. This plural phrase is used here not to denote a distinct working class but to signal the plurality of ‘low others’, perhaps better understood as a lumpen proletariat, often found in romantic-mythical accounts of fado history. Fado’s origins, as most writers on the subject have been keen to make clear, were very much bound up in the experiences of the working classes centred in the city of Lisbon. Whether born into the Lisbon underclass or newly arrived from the countryside, from nearby coastal villages or from Portugal’s colonial outposts, these people, living in the poor areas that had flourished in the shadow of the grandly designed post-earthquake city – the modern Lisbon conceived by the Marquês de Pombal in the eighteenth century – came together to form the crucible from which fado would emerge. As a mytheme – i.e., a single feature which can signify without recourse to further reduction – one would be hard pushed to better the symbolic character of the street vendor, who features in so many accounts of fado and Lisbon life through the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. A central mytheme – or, following Roland Barthes, ‘biographeme’ – of fado’s greatest star, Amália Rodrigues, is the image of her selling fruit on the streets of Lisbon in the years immediately preceding her discovery and subsequent fame.⁷

4. *Marialvismo*. This concept stems not from the fictionalised character of Dantas’s work but from the eighteenth century Marquês de Marialva, author of a treatise on horsemanship. Marialva’s son, a bullfighter whose death in the ring was famously avenged by the Marquês, was known, like Vimiosa, to frequent the bars and dark alleyways of the Mouraria district of Lisbon. *Marialvismo* became associated with a certain representation of masculinity that, as Miguel Vale de Almeida points out, was very much connected to processes of change within Portugal:

Marialvismo is a cultural text that was very important in the transition from *ancien régime* to modernity in Portugal...[It] establishes a close relationship between a vision of social hierarchy together with a vision of gender,

providing a grid for understanding constructs of masculinity, emotions, social hierarchy and national identity. It is recurrently called upon in situations of crisis and change in the social organisation of those aspects. It is the only coherent text in Southern Portuguese culture tying them together, but it can also be seen as marginal, in the sense that it is put down by modern bourgeois discourses. Still, even modern bourgeois visions of nation, morals, emotions and gender, occasionally call upon *Marialvismo* (and the arenas where it occurs: *Fado*, Bullfighting, and the messianic discourse of *Sebastianismo*) as epytomes [*sic*] of national identity, as the link between the ‘now’ (a modern country in the European Union) and the ‘always’ (‘Portugueseness’).⁸

5. The alleyway/shadows. The alleyway in fado works, as in many modernist narratives, as the location of urban secrecy. The roles of the dingy ill-lit bar and bustling public street become reversed at night-time – when so many of these narratives take place – and the alleyway, plunged into shadows though its contrast with other sources of light, becomes a place of otherness. Also, like the ‘dark end of the street’ of Dan Penn’s and Chips Moman’s classic soul song, the alleyway becomes a locus for transgression, for acting out a series of relationships not possible under the symbolic scriptural (daytime) law of the big Other. Added to this are a whole set of tropes regarding light and dark, public and private, safety and danger, life and death.

6. The guitar. One of the most notable features of fado music is its use of the *guitarra portuguesa*, an aspect of the music that has tended to lead to a virtual synonymy between fado and *guitarra*. From this brief reference in Dantas’s introduction we are left in little doubt that fado music has been, or is about to be, played. The imagery of the *guitarra* has proven irresistible to fadologists since the concretisation of the style, and much space has been given over to the history of the instrument and its possible origins, leading to often explicitly ideological positions of ownership and appropriation. The *guitarra* is a central feature of José Malhoa’s much-reproduced painting *O Fado*, which shows a man playing the instrument while a woman leans on a table gazing at him.⁹ Many early paintings, prints and publicity photos featured women singers playing *guitarras*, as Severa was supposed to do, something that is not reflected in most modern fado practice, however, where women players are as unusual as female guitarists in flamenco.

Another oft-quoted introduction to fado's ontology is a song made famous by Amália Rodrigues entitled 'Tudo isto é fado', the lyrics of which are as follows:

'Tudo isto é fado'

Words: Aníbal Nazaré

Music: Fernando de Carvalho¹⁰

Perguntaste-me outro dia
Se eu sabia o que era o fado,
Disse-te que não sabia
Tu ficaste admirado.

You asked me the other day
If I knew what fado was,
I told you I didn't know
You were surprised.

Sem saber o que dizia
Eu menti naquela hora,
Disse-te que não sabia
Mas vou-te dizer agora:

Without knowing what I was saying
I lied then
I told you I didn't know
But now I'll tell you:

Almas vencidas
Noites perdidas
Sombras bizarras
Na Mouraria
Canta um rufia
Choram guitarras.

Defeated souls
Lost nights
Bizarre shadows
In the Mouraria
A ruffian sings
Guitars weep.

Amor, ciúme,
Cinzas e lume,
Dor e pecado,
Tudo isto existe,
Tudo isto é triste,
Tudo isto é fado.

Love, jealousy,
Ashes and fire,
Sorrow and sin,
All of this exists,
All of this is sad,
All of this is fado.

Sonically, the song provides as good an introduction as any to fado too, opening with the distinctive tinkle of the *guitarra*, leading into the interplay between *guitarra* and *viola* and providing an excellent example of Amália's art as, within the space of the first short verse, she displays her famous melisma ('perguntaste-me') and hovers majestically on the word 'fado'. The song, originally recorded by Rodrigues at Abbey Road in 1952, became one of those on which her reputation as the 'queen of fado' would rest.

The desire of the empirical historian to disentangle 'truth' from myth can be a difficult one to fulfil. In the words of Raphael Samuel, 'It is a fact familiar to all those, like field anthropologists or ethnologists, who have studied the storyteller's arts that myth and history are not mutually incompatible, but coexist as complementary and sometimes intersecting modes of representing the past.' Myths change with

history, add new characters and mythemes, while ‘historians, however wedded to empirical enquiry, will take on, without knowing it, the deep structures of mythic thought’. Whether tempted by ‘lines of continuity’, ‘grand permanences of national life’, or ‘an unargued-for but pervasive teleology’, we find ourselves falling prey to the traps laid out for us by mythology.¹¹ This chapter and those which follow proceed with these observations very much in mind.

This chapter does not set out to provide another historical overview of fado and its origins, of which there are several extant in Portuguese, any one of which would benefit the English-speaking world were it to be translated.¹² Rather, its general purpose is twofold. Firstly, it seeks to explore the mythological territory of the fado world and how that world can be seen to express the themes of loss linking this chapter to those which follow. This exploration will take the form of a critique of the essentialising tendencies to be found in many of fado’s historians, an enquiry into the importance of place and belonging in fado songs, and an examination of the themes of loss, absence, estrangement and, following the great Portuguese modernist poet Fernando Pessoa, *disquietude* to be found in the genre. Secondly, in more classically historicist terms, the chapter looks at a period of roughly forty years – from the 1960s to the turn of the century – during which fado ostensibly faced its severest crisis as a surviving and durable musical genre. While the entire duration of this period is of interest – as is, inevitably, a certain amount of the previous period – the main focus will be on the 1960s work of Amália Rodrigues, the rejection of fado in the period leading up to and immediately following the 1974 Revolution that marked the end of the Estado Novo, and the emergence in the 1990s of what came to be known as *novo fado* (new fado) and which brought the genre a level of popularity (both nationally and internationally) that it had not known since Amália’s heyday.

Establishing Portugueseness

The story of Severa and its importance in the mythology of fado has already been noted, as has the preponderance of fado mythemes. Before expanding on the latter it is worth taking into account the ways in which Portugueseness has been written into the history of fado. For if it is the case that the fado bibliography is one in which, in Joaquim Pais de Brito’s words, ‘ideological discourse is the dominant key’, then it is equally true that the nature of that discourse has more often than not centred itself on

aspects of national identity.¹³ Pais de Brito, in his introduction to the 1982 republication of Pinto de Carvalho's *História do Fado* (originally published in 1903 and in many ways the founding text of fadology), divides the more notable studies into those which seek to draw a positive connection between fado and Portugueseness and those which attempt to distance the two. Of the former he includes Avelino de Sousa's *O Fado e os Seus Censores* (1912), an attempt to portray fado as an authentically socialist music under threat from antidemocratic cultural elitists, and Álvaro Ribeiro's view of fado as 'a crystallisation of the essence of the national soul', a view which is situated rather differently to de Sousa's.¹⁴ For Ribeiro, the Herderesque notion of the musical expression of a national soul is predicated on the desire to preserve a purity in danger of being lost through foreign influence; for de Sousa, who was perhaps more familiar with the bohemian themes of fado songs, it was precisely the lack of refinement and purity in the music that made it the expression of the oppressed *par excellence*. Yet whether the connection is made via an appeal to Romanticism or to Romantic Socialism, these writers are unequivocal in their claims for fado as a song worthy of the responsibility of representing a kind of Portugueseness.

Others saw fado rather as a negative reflection of the national character, both an unfortunate stain on the country's past and an unsuitable representation of its present. This response can be found in commentators of quite different political views. Luís Moita, broadcasting a series of lectures on national radio at the outset of the Salazar regime, spoke of fado as the 'song of the defeated' (a phrase which provided a title to the collected lectures, published in 1936 and dedicated to the fascist Portuguese Youth movement). This concern over the suggestion of defeat reflected the attitude of the Estado Novo ideologues who were seeking at this time to arrest what was perceived as a process of decline emanating from the defeatism of *saudosismo*, the nostalgic view that Portugal's days of glory were gone, never to be recovered. From the other end of the political spectrum and nearly forty years after the publication of Moita's lectures, in the crucial revolutionary year of 1974, António Osório published *A Mitologia Fadista*, in which he lambasted fado and its followers for, once again, submitting to defeatism. For Osório, this defeatism was tied to the recent regime and was not suitable to a newly democratic state where poverty should be eliminated rather than idealised and where women should be treated as equals and not as sexual objects. That fado could be seen as indicative of the previous regimes by

both Moita and Osório says much about the changes imposed on the genre during the period of the Estado Novo, such as the decisions to professionalise the fado industry and monitor song content, steps which for many meant a drawing together of the ideological worlds of the Estado Novo and of fado, of which more will be said later. For now it is enough to note the distaste both Moita and Osório clearly felt for fado and their desire to downplay its importance in representing the nation as an ideal.

One aspect of the focus on fado's connections to nation and nationality is the ongoing debate over the origins of the music. While many contemporary scholars such as Rui Vieira Nery seem more or less content with the conclusion reached by Rodney Gallop in 1933,¹⁵ that fado is a reflection of the cultural interchange inevitable in a port city such as Lisbon (a city, we should add, as crucial to the formation of a Black Atlantic as the Anglophone countries Paul Gilroy concentrates on in his work), there are still popular works of recent vintage that seek to essentialise certain national traces. Eduardo Sucena begins his 1992 book *Lisboa, o Fado e os Fadistas* with a summary of the most frequently suggested origins of fado. Of the suggestion made originally by Teófilo Braga (in 1885), that fado originated from Moorish influences, Sucena is dismissive, as was Gallop before him, for the reason that neither fado nor any plausible variant was to be found at an analogous time in areas subject to more prolonged Moorish occupation, such as the Algarve or Andalusia. Moving his focus to claims that fado traces its origins to Afro-Brazilian sources imported to Lisbon during the early nineteenth century – claims which are lent much credence in contemporary fadology – Sucena is equally unhappy. Yet, where his rebuttal of Arabic influence appeals to empiricism, such a process seems absent from his desire to prove wrongheaded such tightly-argued theses as José Ramos Tinhorão's *Fado: Dança do Brasil, Cantar de Lisboa* (1994), in which the latter author traces the initial musicological uses of the word 'fado' to Brazil. Tinhorão's work finds concurrence with Gallop's earlier (albeit less strident) conclusions and Vieira Nery's subsequent (2004) account of fado origins, which again points to the lack of sources using 'fado' in any other than its literal meaning ('fate') within Portugal prior to its Brazilian use. The 'Brazilian account' is that fado made its appearance in Lisbon with the return of the royal court from Brazil in 1821, following a period of exile in Rio de Janeiro dating from the Napoleonic invasion of 1807. At one point Sucena cites Frederico de Freitas's observation that, while fado may have been born in Brazil, it was 'legitimately Portuguese' by dint of having taken root in

Portugal and having been accepted and assimilated into Portuguese culture. Sucena follows up with the claim that fado 'was always Portuguese, given that Brazil had not yet become independent' at the time of the court's return, a comment which seems to suggest that Portugal and Brazil were therefore culturally identical.¹⁶

Sucena veers even further from serious, historically-informed debate when contemplating the suggestion that African slaves might have contributed to the formation of fado, whether in Brazil or Portugal:

However, if the relationship between fado and *cantos de São João* [popular songs performed during one of Lisbon's Saints' days] fails to excite major objections, given that that relationship, in Rodney Gallop's words, was no more than a 'synthesis, shaped by centuries of slow evolution, of all the musical influences that affected the people of Lisbon', the same does not necessarily follow for the hypothesis that the 'languorous song' of the freed blacks of Alfama was the genesis of the fado. Those blacks, by the sheer fact of having been freed, ought to have been singing happy songs, and if they were singing such a 'languorous song', it must have been from a different root, for obvious culturally-defined reasons, i.e. due to their indolent nature and to the ancestral influences of their race.¹⁷

Quite apart from the rather confusing clash of culture and nature that we find here, what is clearly at stake in such accounts is how one wishes to imagine the nation – one's own and that of the other – and its cultural products. Mascarenhas Barreto, author of a number of fado lyrics and the voluminous *Fado: Origens líricas e motivação*, falls into a similar trap when he writes:

It is not surprising that *Severa* and other gipsy singers became familiar in Portugal with the *Fado* of Moorish influence, just as they had made the acquaintance of bullfighting on foot. There is something atavistic in the blood which makes it easy for them to interpret this nostalgic song, and thief and cheat though they may throughout those Christian lands, Iberian tolerance has allowed them to camp indefinitely, ... because they dance and sing!¹⁸

Related to the above debates is another strand that runs through the published work on fado, namely the relationship between fado and folk music. Rodney Gallop remarked on the ‘resentment at the manner in which foreigners, and indeed many Portuguese, have accepted the *fado* as the only popular musical expression of the Portuguese nation’, and it is no doubt from such resentment that many writers have sought to distance themselves from fado while promoting the lesser-known folk musics of the remainder of the country.¹⁹ Notable among these was the composer and musicologist Fernando Lopes-Graça, who believed passionately in the value of Portuguese folk music and its need to be both archived as it existed and worked into the framework of a national art music. The politically-committed Lopes-Graça – who had been involved with the Popular Front in France and the Republicans in Spain and was later imprisoned in Portugal by the Salazar regime – never made any secret of his distaste for fado, describing it as ‘the cancer of the national culture’.²⁰ Another composer, Frederico de Freitas, was more tolerant of popular music, urban and rural, and composed in all genres, including scores for the films *A Severa* (1931) (which, as mentioned earlier, produced a number of popular fados based on Dantas’s words and de Freitas’s music) and *Fado, História d’uma Cantadeira* (1948), the latter starring Amália Rodrigues. This identification between fado and the cinema was no doubt another reason for the fear expressed by both Gallop and Lopes-Graça that mass culture would suffocate the more authentic culture of the rural regions. Such a view was, we should remember, being expressed elsewhere about many other mass cultural forms in many other cultural contexts at precisely the same time.

Fado, then, much like other popular or folk musics, has been subject to a rigorous battle of representation vis-à-vis its place as *the* song of Portugal, to the kind of debates on origins that tend to lead less careful commentators towards dangerous essentialisations of nation and race, and to a familiar battle waged around the notion of authenticity under the inconstant banners of ‘folk’ and ‘popular’. To say this is merely to situate the music within its most common set of discourses. The next part of this chapter seeks to move on from these debates and, assuming a common acceptance of fado in its contemporary incarnation as a music inextricably – though clearly not unproblematically – linked to Portugal (what Rui Vieira Nery calls ‘a Portuguese way of looking at the world, at others and at ourselves’²¹), to focus on the mythology of fado as it relates to the city of Lisbon. For, while the fado of the university city of

Coimbra has established itself as a quite distinct form and there is a strong need for further research into the role of fado in Porto (and vice versa), it is undoubtedly Lisbon fado that has proved the most dominant in terms of underscoring the debates alluded to above and in contributing to the key mythemes of fado throughout its history, from its early incarnation in the nineteenth century through its ‘classic’ period in the early decades of the twentieth century to its reinvention in the work of Amália Rodrigues and the more recent *fadistas* who have been influenced by that work.

From Portugueseness to Lisbonness: The Place of the City in Fado

Vielas de Alfama	Alleyways of Alfama
Ruas da Lisboa antiga	Streets of old Lisbon
Não há fado que não diga	There isn't a fado
Coisas do vosso pasado	That doesn't speak of your past
Vielas de Alfama	Alleyways of Alfama
Beijadas pelo luar	Kissed by the moonlight
Quem me dera lá morar	If only I could live there
P'ra viver junto do fado	To live close to the fado

– ‘Vielas de Alfama’ (Artur Ribeiro/Maximiano de Sousa)

While Artur Ribeiro’s refrain clearly exaggerates the connection between fado and Lisbon, it is nevertheless the case that a large proportion of fado lyrics do indeed speak implicitly or explicitly of the Portuguese capital. Whether referencing the city as a whole or, more commonly, one or more of the neighbourhoods most associated with fado – Alfama, Mouraria and, to a slightly lesser extent, the Bairro Alto – fado texts provide a topography of loss that places the city as either object of desire or lack (Carlos Conde’s ‘Bairros de Lisboa’, Ary dos Santos’s ‘A cidade’, José Galhardo and Amadeu do Vale’s ‘Lisboa antiga’) or appropriate backdrop to another lost, remembered or desired object (Guilherme Pereira da Rosa’s ‘A viela’, Alexandre O’Neill’s ‘Gaivota’, Jorge Fernando’s ‘Chuva’). In doing so, they allow a renegotiation of what the names of the city’s streets and neighbourhoods mean, one that is undertaken by the citizens of the *fadista* world against the dominant discourse of the city authorities. What Michel de Certeau writes with Paris and New York in mind might just as easily be said here for Lisbon:

[T]hese names [...] detach themselves from the places they were supposed to define and serve as imaginary meeting-points on itineraries which, as metaphors, they determine for reasons that are foreign to their original value but may be recognized or not by passers-by. A strange toponymy that is detached from actual places and flies high over the city like a foggy geography of “meanings” held in suspension, directing the physical deambulations below [...] They become liberated spaces that can be occupied. A rich indetermination gives them, by means of a semantic rarefaction, the function of articulating a second, poetic geography on top of the geography of the literal, forbidden or permitted meaning.²²

This section of the chapter will focus, then, on the city as both a character and as the stage on which the music is played out and it will do so by recourse to some key tropes of fado: decay/decadence, collapse, disquietude, estrangement, *saudade*, absence, exile and loss. While these tropes (and others) are to be found at work in many fados which do not feature the city as protagonist, it will save unnecessary repetition to deal with both themes together, especially in terms of the light such consideration can shed on music and loss.

Decadence and Renewal

Everything around me is either departing or crumbling.

– Fernando Pessoa, Letter to his Mother²³

Taking on the dual roles of character and stage, the city acts very much as it might in a photograph or film; the same shift of focus from the cityscape to the human life within the cityscape occurs in fados, photographs and films. With the numerous references to the old city – the lost city that was the victim of actual or virtual demolition and renovation – the fado text becomes a snapshot of the past, rendered in sepia and always in danger of fading from view, of failing to be fixed for posterity. Yet perhaps to posit such a claim is to make a mistake regarding both time and the nature of recording, for it could be claimed that it is impossible to have ‘a snapshot of the past’, only a snapshot of the present which can then be viewed as a representation of the past. As Roland Barthes insisted, the photograph exists to show that such a

thing happened at a particular time; as witness (seeing), it does not create but records.²⁴ If the analogy made above between fados and photographs is to hold, it can do so only in relation to recordings of fados. Here, then, the sepia-tinted snapshots of the city of Lisbon are to be found in the oldest-surviving recordings made, but how is it possible to tell if these recordings offer us a different 'view' of the city, or rather a view of a different city? What can be said for certain is that the texts of the fados can be seen to treat the disappearance of the city of the past in ever greater measure. Where many of the lyrics collected by Pinto de Carvalho focus more on individuals and their deeds and feature the city only implicitly, the role of the Alfama and Mouraria districts becomes more explicit as the twentieth century progresses. Furthermore, cultural works produced *about* fado (books, films, exhibitions) reinforce this sense of a pastness never to be recovered, through constant reproductions of old black and white photographs.

Decay, while it works on ancient photographs and primitive recordings, works equally on the face of the city itself. Buildings, streets and sidewalks erode and the least favoured, least profitable parts of the city are left by the authorities to rot. In Lisbon this process is noticeable in the faded plaster and cracked and missing tiles on many of the city's buildings, nowhere more so than in the oldest parts of town, the Mouraria and Alfama districts. In historical terms this *decadência* (both 'decay' and 'decadence') can be seen to mirror that of Portugal as a major world power and of Lisbon as a symbol of empire. Yet, like all cities, Lisbon has always also been a city of renewal and renovation. The buildings of the rich and powerful stand as firmly and finely-kept as those of any European capital and provide the light against which the shadows of the poorer neighbourhoods are cast. Renovation has also come to the poorer areas over the years but has tended to be of a far more destructive sort, leading to a situation where the remoulded city threatens constantly to eclipse the remembered city. It is to this remembered city that so many fados address themselves and to which they attempt to deliver their listeners.

Italo Calvino uses the imagery of the postcard to illustrate the role of the remembered city and the problems it forces upon both visitors and inhabitants, who find themselves contemplating it from the location of the remoulded city. Calvino describes Maurilia, one of his 'invisible cities', thus:

In Maurilia, the traveler is invited to visit the city and, at the same time, to examine some old post cards that show it as it used to be: the same identical square with a hen in the place of the bus station, a bandstand in the place of the overpass, two young ladies with white parasols in the place of the munitions factory. If the traveler does not wish to disappoint the inhabitants, he must praise the postcard city and prefer it to the present one, though he must be careful to contain his regret at the changes within definite limits: admitting that the magnificence and prosperity of the metropolis Maurilia, when compared to the old, provincial Maurilia, cannot compensate for a certain lost grace, which, however, can be appreciated only now in the old post cards, whereas before, when that provincial Maurilia was before one's eyes, one saw absolutely nothing graceful and would see it even less today, if Maurilia had remained unchanged; and in any case the metropolis has the added attraction that, through what it has become, one can look back with nostalgia at what it was.²⁵

One reason the city can be a source of nostalgia is that, despite the history of appeals to a rural Arcadia, the city of the past only ever survives as a fragment of the city of the present; loss is therefore always referenced.²⁶ The city is never static but is always rebuilding itself; the longing for stasis that has so often been connected to the (falsely remembered, idealised) countryside can as easily be transferred to the (falsely remembered, idealised) city of the past. The longing that is felt is the desire to see through the palimpsest that is the modern city. Svetlana Boym discusses this point, while also referencing Calvino:

The millennial prediction of the end of the city – of its dispersal in the electronic global village or the homogeneous suburbia, of its transformation into a museum center and an empty downtown – has not come true, like all other millennial predictions. The urban renewal taking place in the present is no longer futuristic but nostalgic; the city imagines its future by improvising on its past. The time of progress and modern efficiency embodied in clock towers and television towers is not the defining temporality of the contemporary city. Instead there is a pervasive longing for the visible and invisible cities of the past, cities of dreams and memories that influence both

the new projects of urban reconstruction and the informal grassroots urban rituals that help us to imagine a more humane public sphere. The city becomes an alternative cosmos for collective identification, recovery of other temporalities and reinvention of tradition.²⁷

The city becomes a stage upon which are performed the translations of the past into the present and the present into the past. It becomes both 'theatre of memory' (Raphael Samuel) *and* museum, though perhaps a different kind of museum than that referred to by Boym. It is not a museum that demands the silent contemplation of a preserved site but a modern museum, more akin to a performance space, where, as Kimberly DaCosta Holton points out, the 'ocularcentrism' of traditional anthropology has been converted into an appeal to all the senses.²⁸ Yet, while museums have developed methodologies to bring the object ever closer to a point of virtual reality, the Borgesian or Baudrillardian conquest of the signifier over the signified has yet to come about.²⁹ This is in large part due to the act of 'roping off' that provides the necessary borderline between viewer and viewed; this may entail literal ropes, or it may involve a border of some sort, be it the walls of the museum or the entrance gate to the theme park.³⁰

DaCosta Holton has provided an account of the exhibition 'Fado: Vozes e Sombras', which took place in Lisbon in 1994 (the year in which Lisbon was European Capital of Culture) and which subsequently travelled to Brazil and France. For DaCosta Holton the exhibition marked an effective break with the silent gaze of traditional museology by attempting a successful fusion of sight and sound within a museum space that could allow an 'embodied spectatorship'.³¹ Furthermore, with reference to the long decadence of the Portuguese empire, DaCosta Holton notes how the exhibition worked as an attempt to both break with the past by embracing its recently acquired position within a modern European Union *and* to lay claim to a national history; "becoming closer" to other European nations meant roping off and showcasing a *national* cultural heritage worthy of *international* celebration.³² She also notes the role played by visual and aural representations of the city in the exhibition: 'by combining the photographic images of Lisbon with auditory samples of its social life, the museumgoer is instructed that Lisbon is not only a space of sights but a space of sounds, and that the two sensory faculties must be combined to understand fado.'³³

To return to fados themselves, it may be useful to think of the songs as performing a dynamic combination of ‘roping off’, ‘framing’ and ‘staging’ that attempts to address the processes of decadence and renewal taking place in the city. If we compare the Maurilia of Calvino’s work with the Mouraria of fado songwriters we find a similar obsession with the city of the past, albeit articulated rather differently. Where Calvino’s narrator warns against praising the old at the expense of the new, most fados that have taken Mouraria as their subject matter have taken the opposite view. Michael Colvin argues that a number of fados dating from what he terms the ‘Fado Novo’ period, the 1940s, emerged as a response to and, in some cases, a thinly veiled criticism of the destruction of the lower Mouraria district during the urban renewal projects of the Estado Novo.³⁴

To conclude, it is worth considering the ways in which the medium becomes the message, suggesting that photography *does* create after all. For, as Barthes pointed out, perhaps with McLuhan in mind: ‘Photography, in order to surprise, photographs the notable; but soon, by a familiar reversal, it decrees notable whatever it photographs. The “anything whatever” then becomes the sophisticated acme of value.’³⁵ Fado, we might say, having once *found* Mouraria notable, now *makes* Mouraria notable. While this may seem a contradiction on Barthes’s part when compared to his point about photography freezing a moment, we can re-use the distinction made in Chapter One regarding witnessing, where it was suggested that witnessing only fulfils its objective when seeing is transformed into saying. The points made in that chapter about the interdependent acts of transcribing and creating (in both written text and musical notation) are also relevant.

Disquietude

When summoning the memory of the Portuguese poet Fernando Pessoa in a chapter on fado, it would perhaps seem most pertinent to concentrate on the references to fado and the *fadista* world in his work, or the numerous poems he wrote that were subsequently put to music as fados (‘Ao Gosto Popular’, ‘Dança de Mágoas’, ‘Avé Maria’, ‘Cavaleiro Monge’, and many more). However, here I want to ask whether it is possible to connect fado to the Pessoaan project of estranging the world, of locating its disquietude, never more brilliantly and fatalistically explored than in the posthumously-published prose work *O Livro do Desassossego* (*The Book of Disquiet[ude]*).³⁶ This line of thinking might stress the links to modernity that one

finds in both Pessoa and fado while also opening a dialogue with existentialism and/or phenomenology, stressing fado's links to perception and to lived experience, to space and place.

A good place to start is with the fragmented nature of Pessoa's prose work, for, as his translator Richard Zenith points out, *The Book of Disquiet* 'never existed, strictly speaking':

What we have here isn't a book but its subversion and negation: the ingredients for a book whose recipe is to keep sifting, the mutant germ of a book and its weirdly lush ramifications, the rooms and windows to build a book but no floor plan and no floor, a compendium of many potential books and many others already in ruins. What we have in these pages is an anti-literature, a kind of primitive, verbal CAT scan of one man's anguished soul.³⁷

These fragments seem crucial to the growth in the twentieth century of archived knowledge, written texts, museum exhibits and recorded sounds: at once fragments of a whole they can never fully catalogue and desperate attempts to salvage the present as it slips from view and earshot. They anticipate a whole range of fragmented experiences of the twentieth century: the fragments shored against the poet's ruin in Eliot's *The Waste Land*; the wealth of ethnomusicological collections made possible by advances in recording technology; the broadcast media and its love of the soundbite; the internet and its hyperlinked web of information.

The Book of Disquiet is also, crucially, a book about Lisbon and about the ways of living made possible by city life. The role of the observer and chronicler is crucial and Pessoa creates a special character, Bernardo Soares, to achieve this task for him. Soares interweaves his own existential confusions into his accounts of other city dwellers who walk past his place of work, his rooms or the cafes in which he spends much of his free time. A self-described dweller on the fringe of society, Soares represents what had by this time become a defining trope in western literature, from Poe's 'The Man of the Crowd' (1840, rev. 1845) through Baudelaire's 'The Painter of Modern Life' (1863) to Rilke's *The Notebooks of Malte Laurids Brigge* (1910). A strong sense of alienation amongst the crowd comes into play in Pessoa's work, leading to yearning for a past in which individuals were more noticeable. In this way, Pessoa's book speaks to earlier modern works on the city. The excitement that

Benjamin finds in the Baudelairean city, for example, is present, too, in Pessoa yet it is an excitement that mixes uneasily with a sense of estrangement.³⁸

From where does this disquiet emerge? Is it from what Italo Calvino, writing on Balzac, calls the ‘intuition of the city as language, as ideology, as the conditioning factor of every thought and word and gesture, the streets that “*impriment par leur physiognomie certaines idées contre lesquelles nous sommes sans défense*”, the city as monstrous as a giant crustacean, whose inhabitants are no more than motor articulations’?³⁹ The imposition of (the idea of) the city upon the citizen is alluded to by Svetlana Boym when she identifies the prevalence in the modern world of urban identity, an identity which, while not vanquishing national identity, has taken over some of nationalism’s most pertinent features, yet which ‘appeals to common memory and a common past but is rooted in a man-made place, not in the soil: in urban coexistence at once alienating and exhilarating, not in the exclusivity of blood’.⁴⁰ This mixture of communal and alienating aspects is crucial to fado, where the modern disquietude of the city dweller so well captured by Pessoa is always already entangled in the responsibilities of communal living that urban society demands. If this disquietude is to be seen as one symptom of late modernity, it is possible to link the longing for freedom from the trappings of the past as another, something Boym seems to have in mind when she writes that the city is ‘an ideal crossroads between longing and estrangement, memory and freedom, nostalgia and modernity’.⁴¹

Furthermore, there is a sense in *The Book of Disquiet* of the attempt of the individual to overcome the monstrous in the city, to imprint his or her own trace upon the structured, symbolic city plan. It is surely no coincidence that in José Saramago’s *The Year of the Death of Ricardo Reis*, a magical realist tale of the dead Pessoa returning to visit one of his surviving heteronyms, the figure of Ricardo Reis is constantly encountered walking the streets of Lisbon in a recurrent pattern that, spelled out (on the sidewalks and in Saramago’s wandering prose), symbolises his brief presence in the city.⁴² This, along with the fact that – in Saramago as in Pessoa – the city is as much a (living, breathing, yet fictional) character as its human inhabitants, is reminiscent of Michel de Certeau’s observation that, in citizens’ *uses* of their environment, there occurs a process whereby ‘a *migrational*, or metaphorical, city thus slips into the clear text of the planned and readable city’.⁴³ Citizens are, in such a way, able to take partial ownership of the city such as happens in the fado ‘Un homen na cidade’ (A man in the city) written by José Ary dos Santos and performed

by Carlos do Carmo. Yet that partiality only leads to a new type of symbolic ownership and, though the culturally-scripted city has been challenged by this new symbolic city, the new symbolic city becomes both familiar and fantastic. With its always-threatened loss it becomes an object of nostalgic desire, forever in danger of obliteration by the real city, which cannot be symbolised or familiarised. Into what we might term, following Barthes, the *studium* of the Symbolic irrupts the *punctum* of the Real, penetrating the studied and reliable, ostensibly 'known' city and lending an aura of disquietude to what was thought to be familiar.⁴⁴ This disquietude, in turn, nags at any comfortable sense of nostalgia that contemplation of the familiar, familial, home might otherwise suggest, for there is a danger present: precisely that the object of nostalgia might not, after all, be lost. Why is this dangerous? Mainly because the object of nostalgia seeks to find its greatest effect in the safety promised by its inability to return and contradict the nostalgic subject. The lost and mourned object does not reply and this is part of what comforts the loser and the mourner. Yet at the same time that the mourner takes comfort in this stable situation, the danger is never altogether absent that the tranquillity so longed for will not be pierced by a *punctum*, the arm reaching from the grave that drags the mourner back in(to) the horror story.

Loss, Absence, Saudade, Exile

Morriña, saudade, iñor,
 añoranza, señardá,
 soleares, ay, Señor,
 ¿cuándo el día llegará ?

– Miguel de Unamuno, Untitled Poem⁴⁵

In this curious fragment from September 1928, Miguel de Unamuno nestles the Portuguese word *saudade* among a selection of Spanish terms with which he wishes it to forge a poetic connection. The words all express a sense of longing for which the final line ('Lord, when will the day arrive?') provides a 'translation'. It was not the first time Unamuno had sought to find connections between Spanish and Portuguese terms of longing; a poem from earlier the same year, entitled 'Soidade + Saúde = Saudade', attempted a poetic etymology that made much of the relationship between the Portuguese words of the title and the Spanish words *soledad* (solitude) and *salud* (health). In doing so the poet was tapping into a debate that had long been underway

in Portugal about the correspondence, or lack of such, between *saudade* and words from other languages. Aniceto dos Reis Gonçalves Viana, writing a critique of Hugo Schuchardt's *Die Cantes Flamencos* in 1882, had the following to say on the relationship:

The Spanish word *soledad* is given [by Schuchardt] as corresponding perfectly in its sense to the Portuguese *saudade*.

[...] Looking at the *soleá*, the word *soledad* does not correspond to *saudade*, but rather to 'solitude', *solidão*.

Saudade is nothing like this. *Saudade* is 'the sorrow of not having enjoyed that which was there to be enjoyed; it is the vehement but resigned desire to enjoy a thing we were deeply attached to; and also the yearning to see, or be in the company of, someone from whom we have reluctantly been parted'.⁴⁶

Viana then goes on to liken *saudade* to the German *Sehnsucht*, the Icelandic *saknadr*, the Swedish *saknad* and the Danish *Savn*. As for an English equivalent, he can only settle for a phrase he finds in Fielding's *Tom Jones*: 'The remembrance of past pleasure affects us with a kind of *tender grief*, like what we suffer for departed friends; and the ideas of both may be said to haunt our imagination.'⁴⁷

Aubrey Bell, writing some twenty years later, states that 'the word cannot be translated exactly, but corresponds to the Greek *πόθος*, Latin *desiderium*, Catalan *anyoranza*, Galician *morriña*, German *Sehnsucht*, Russian *тоска* (pron. *taská*). It is the "passion for which I can find no name"⁴⁸. Interestingly, Bell, like Viana before him, does not attempt a single English term for *saudade*, relying on a list of words in other languages and a quotation from George Gissing's *The Private Papers of Henry Ryecroft*.⁴⁹ The assumption by Bell seems to be that the foreign words are translatable amongst themselves (or are, at least, in 'correspondence' with each other) but not into English and that an allusion to a literary work about memory and meditation on loss is the nearest that we, as English speakers, might come to an understanding of *saudade*. A chain of references is set up through which a contemporary reader coming upon Bell's footnote of 1922 (probably via references to Bell in later works) is led to Gissing's fictional pastoralist Ryecroft and a whole set of methods of dealing with the

past that in turn form a major defining aspect of modernity. Rodney Gallop provides us with yet more definitions:

In a word *saudade* is yearning: yearning for something so indefinite as to be indefinable: an unrestrained indulgence in yearning. It is a blend of German *Sehnsucht*, French *nostalgie*, and something else besides. It couples the vague longing of the Celt for the unattainable with a Latin sense of reality which induces realisation that it is indeed unattainable, and with the resultant discouragement and resignation. All this is implied in the lilting measures of the *fado*, in its languid triplets and, as it were, drooping cadences.⁵⁰

As these references increase, the need to negotiate a path through them – to find, perhaps, our own correspondence with the terms of reference – becomes ever more necessary; this is what Umberto Eco seems to drive at when he speaks of ‘translation as negotiation’.⁵¹ Svetlana Boym, for her part, likens *saudade* to the Czech *litost*, Russian *toska*, Polish *tesknota* and Romanian *dor*, and points out how each nation claims its term as untranslatable: ‘While each term preserves the specific rhythms of the language, one is struck by the fact that all these untranslatable words are in fact synonyms; and all share the desire for untranslatability, the longing for uniqueness. While the details and flavors differ, the grammar of romantic nostalgias all over the world is quite similar. “I long therefore I am” became the romantic motto.’⁵²

One might well wonder, given all this, especially after being informed that *saudade* is one of the essential ingredients of fado music, if there was a line of thought to be traversed whereby the ‘untranslatability’ of *saudade* would mean the impossibility of the conditions to describe an appreciation of fado by a non-Portuguese speaker (which would not necessarily entail going as far as to declare the impossibility of appreciating ‘the music itself’, though to do so would help to push at what we really mean by ‘the music’) – the logic being that, if fado must contain *saudade*, and *saudade* cannot be translated, then how do we translate, or negotiate, our appreciation of the music? Picking at this line of thought would inevitably lead us to further questions. Does, or can, *saudade* mean the same for all Portuguese (the implication, after all, in so many accounts)?⁵³ Does it mean the same for other Portuguese speakers, for Brazilians, Angolans, Cape Verdeans? How might *saudade*

be considered as another type of fencing-off? How, in the light of this thesis, do we understand loss and its expression as universal qualities?

Music

Now that I have sketched out the mythological world to which fado attaches itself, it will be necessary to give a very brief overview of the musical style that had become established by the early part of the twentieth century, creating a 'tradition' into which the artists discussed in the rest of this chapter were born into. In doing so, I hope to highlight some of the changes and continuations these artists brought to their practice.

Instrumentally, as mentioned at the outset, fado is distinguished by the *guitarra portuguesa*, a pear-shaped lute- or cittern-like instrument with twelve steel strings (tuned DDAABBEEAABB, from low to high, in the Lisbon style to which I will be mostly referring). The *guitarra* is played via a combination of strumming and plucking, using mostly the thumb and index finger, on which are worn *unhas* ('nails'). Although in the past the *guitarra* had provided only harmony, by the period covered in this chapter it had taken a more dominant role as provider of the melody in instrumental numbers or melodic counterpart to the voice in songs. The other constant accompaniment is provided by the *viola* (Spanish guitar), which provides harmony and rhythm predominantly but may occasionally lead. In addition, especially in contemporary practice, a *viola baixo* (double bass or acoustic bass guitar) is occasionally added. Additional percussion is rarely used.

The fado singer, often referred to as the *fadista*, tends to take the centre stage in a performance of gesture, phrasing and verbal improvisation that serves to heighten the drama of the lyric and lead the song to an appropriately momentous conclusion. Drama is often emphasised by alternating between registers and songs invariably close on a vocal climax that repeats the last part of the final verse or chorus and is punctuated by a two-chord full stop, or exclamation mark, from the guitars (generally, V-I). Lyrics are of vital importance in fado and, while some are improvised (especially in amateur settings), most are the work of fado lyricists who are not normally involved in the performing group. Adaptations of so-called 'erudite poetry' are common and mix with more down to earth variations of a range of lyrical themes such as love, jealousy, loss, despair, *saudade*, the city and its neighbourhoods, fado itself and *fadistas* of the past.⁵⁴

Stylistically, Lisbon fado can generally be divided into *fado castiço* ('authentic fado', also known as *fado fado*, *fado clássico* and *fado tradicional*) and *fado canção* ('song fado'). *Fado castiço* styles were concretised in mid-late eighteenth century and include *fado corrido* ('running fado'), *fado mouraria* (named after the Lisbon district discussed earlier) and *fado menor* ('minor fado') and numerous variations of these three basic styles often named after particular guitarists and composers. Salwa El-Shawan Castelo-Branco provides a useful and concise description of the *castiço* styles:

All three fados have fixed rhythmic and harmonic schemes (I–V) and a fixed accompaniment pattern consisting of a melodic motif that is constantly repeated, at times with slight variation. Using these patterns as a basis, the melody is either composed or improvised. Texts are usually set to one of the most common poetic structures, such as the quatrain or five-, six- and ten-verse stanzas. The accompaniment pattern, the I–V harmonic scheme and the regular 4/4 metre are the identifying elements of these fados and are basically fixed. All other elements are variable. *Fado corrido* and *mouraria*, in the major mode, are usually performed in a fast tempo and have similar accompaniment patterns. *Fado menor* is in the minor mode and is often performed in a slow tempo.⁵⁵

Fado canção was a development of the late nineteenth century and evolved through theatrical *revistas* (shows). It is distinguished by a stanza- and refrain-based song style and uses more complex harmonic structures. It is this style that came to be associated with Amália Rodrigues and those influenced by her, although both Amália and the 'new fadistas' continued to perform the more traditional styles.⁵⁶

Amália

Amália Rodrigues remains the single most paradigmatic performer in modern Portuguese musical culture for a number of reasons. Her career spanned a crucial period of change in Portugal and in the recording industry worldwide. Filipe La Féria puts it succinctly when he says 'Amália Rodrigues was born in the First Republic, lived with and for the Estado Novo and lived to see the 25 April Revolution. This can

be seen as a very rich period and one that had a strong emotional effect on people.’ La Féria, the creator of the enormously popular musical based on her life and times, attributes the success of the show to the combination of a celebrity with whom the audience are able to identify and her negotiation of a history they too have either lived through or recently inherited.⁵⁷ This identification is furthered in Rodrigues’s own work, which manages, from early on in her career, to define a star persona based on a number of fado mythemes. Her biographical details resound with references to poverty, to the Mouraria, to singing on the streets while selling fruit, to being discovered in the fado houses and wooed into the world of professional performance and recording, and, ultimately, to living her life in a fog of *saudade* and permanent unhappiness which no amount of success or fame could shift. The extent to which the development of this persona was deliberate or accidental seems to matter less than the place she came to occupy in the Portuguese imaginary.

By the time Amália Rodrigues took on the role of Maria Severa in a 1955 Lisbon production of Júlio Dantas’s play, she had already surpassed that early *fadista* in terms of myth and prominence, due mainly to the success she had achieved internationally. While fado had hardly been unknown outside Portugal previously, it had never reached the level of exposure given it by Amália. Now an international star, she found herself being offered ever increasing opportunities, from performances worldwide to cinema roles nationally and in France. She had also demonstrated a strong desire to explore beyond the limits of traditional fado. It had become increasingly popular for fado singers in the 1940s to move away from the rigidly structured verses of the earlier period towards a freer style based on the work of contemporary poets such as Frederico de Brito. In addition to these newer styles of *fado canção*, Amália recorded other non-fado and folk songs, as well as Spanish flamenco, Mexican rancheros, and French, English and Italian versions of Portuguese songs (most famously ‘Coimbra’, released in an Italian version under the same title and refashioned as ‘Avril au Portugal’ and ‘April in Portugal’ elsewhere). This explorative aspect of Amália’s approach to her music encouraged musicians and songwriters to approach her with new ideas and led to collaborations that were to have an enormous impact on the direction fado would take.

On the musical side it is generally agreed, and was frequently admitted by Amália herself, that it was the collaboration with the pianist and composer Alain Oulman which brought about the most far-reaching revolution in her fado style. What

Oulman brought to Amália's work was an ability to break free of established fado styles though a sophisticated musical language, while maintaining a strong link with the essential elements that kept the music recognisable as fado. Amália would rehearse with Oulman at the piano and he would occasionally accompany her on her recordings alongside the time-honoured *guitarra* and *viola*. Oulman's arrangements allowed a greater variety of poetic styles to be utilised for fado lyrics, a development first brought to the public's attention on the 1962 album *Asas Fechadas*, popularly known as *Busto* after the bust of Amália which adorned the cover. Of the nine tracks on the album seven have music written by Oulman. The lyrics are provided by Rodrigues herself (the famous 'Estranha Forma de Vida') and by the poets Luís de Macedo, Pedro Homem de Mello and, mostly, David Mourão-Ferreira, whose 1960 collection *À Guitarra e à Viola* had been dedicated to Amália and contained the verses for 'Aves Agoirentas' 'Madrugada de Alfama', 'Maria Lisboa' and the political fado 'Abandono', all included on *Busto*.⁵⁸ Rodrigues and Oulman also collaborated on the work of less contemporary poets; 1965 saw the release of the EP 'Amália canta Camões' and the album *Fado Português*, the former containing three adaptations of Portugal's national poet, the latter harbouring one of the Camões pieces, as well as a *cantiga de amigo* credited to the medieval troubadour Mendinho, and the title song based on José Régio's poem, alongside work by Mourão-Ferreira, Homem de Mello and Macédo.

The third track on *Busto*, 'Estranha forma de vida', was notable for having a lyric by Amália herself:

Coração independente	Independent heart
Coração que não comando	Heart that I don't command
Vive perdido entre a gente	Living lost among the people
Teimosamente sangrando	Stubbornly bleeding
Coração independente	Independent heart ⁵⁹

Fado's fatalism is easily found here in this song about an uncontrollable heart; there is also a sense of estrangement, or disquietude, in the line about living lost among people. The lyric was coupled with music by Alfredo Marceneiro, the leading *fadista* of the pre-Amália period and, as with most Marceneiro compositions, the melody is very simple. The significance of the track lies predominantly in the bringing together of these two major figures of twentieth century fado, an event whose importance is underlined by the song's appearance on *Busto* alongside the work of Mourão-Ferreira

and Oulman, and in the way that the song, alongside Alberto Janes' 'Foi Deus', became an autobiographical marker – what Barthes might call a 'biographeme' – of Amália herself.

As mentioned previously, Amália's music can be read alongside not only her biography but also the history of Portugal. During the period of the Estado Novo (1933-1974) both urban fado and rural folk music were appropriated by António Salazar's programme of nationalism, the former being strictly policed via the censorship of lyrics and the issuing of compulsory performance permits, the latter through the cultivation of *ranchos folclóricos* and the setting up of rural folklore competitions. Subsequently fado came to be associated by many people with the authoritarian regime. For Joaquim Pais de Brito, however, Amália was able to elide such an association:

During the Estado Novo fado survived in a rather ambiguous position; as it became stationed – through successive laws prohibiting it from being sung in public houses – within the *casas típicas* which, through their nature, had the bourgeoisie and tourists as their public, fado lived alongside the regime, which, while not adopting or promoting fado, did not distance itself from it either. This did not matter overly since the problem was resolved by Amália. The quality of Amália's voice and the moment in which it appeared allowed, to a certain extent, the definitive stylisation of fado, exporting it and bringing to bear upon it major 'erudite' poets, all of them now writing for a single voice.⁶⁰

Leonor Lains makes a related point when she writes of Amália's broad appeal: 'She crossed all barriers and cultural prejudices. Amália had the gift of reconciling the urban with the rural, the cultured with the popular, through her unique quality of voice, full of sensual and musical emotion.'⁶¹ Both de Brito's and Lains' points are relevant to another track from *Busto*, 'Povo que lavas no rio'. The lyric, written by the poet Pedro Homem de Mello, works as both an evocation of rural values by a narrator who we assume to be a city dweller, or at least a person who has accepted a subject position that allows them to address the rural population with the familiar 'tu':

'Povo que lavas no rio'
Words: Pedro Homem de Mello
Music: Joaquim Campos⁶²

Povo que lavas no rio,
Que talhas com teu machado
As tábuas do meu caixão,
Pode haver quem te defenda,
Quem compre o teu chão sagrado,
Mas a tua vida não.

You people who wash in the river
Who cut with your axe
The planks of my coffin
There should be someone to defend you
Someone to pay for your sacred ground
But not your life

Fui ter à mesa redonda,
Beber em malga que esconda
O beijo de mão em mão;
Era o vinho que me deste
Água pura, fruto agreste,
Mas a tua vida não.

I went to the round table
To drink from a cork cup which hid
A kiss from being handed on
You gave me wine
Pure water, wild fruit
But not your life

Aromas de urze e de lama
Dormi com eles na cama,
Tive a mesma condição;
Povo, povo, eu te pertenço,
Deste-me alturas de incenso,
Mas a tua vida não.

Scents of heather and mud
I slept with them in my bed
I lived like them
People, people, I belong to you
You gave me times of incense
But not your life

Though there is an appeal to familiarity through a sense of belonging in the second and third verses, the distance maintained by the relationship described in the first is the one that sets the underlying tone. Here the poet de Mello and the singer Rodrigues take on the responsibility of hymning the people while also observing them at a geographical and temporal distance.⁶³ The combination of romanticism and identification is one that aims for quite distinct audiences. Whether it is possible to find in Amália's performance of the song the voice that de Brito tells us can resolve the problem of fado's relationship to the Estado Novo is harder to gauge.

Another way in which Amália was able to bridge the divide between urban and rural populations was her tendency to mix traditional folk songs of Portugal and the Lusophone world into her repertory of fados. In 1967 Valentim de Carvalho released three EPs of folk songs: 'Amália canta Portugal', 'Malhão de Cinfães' and 'Folclore 3'. These were followed in 1971 by an LP, *Amália canta Portugal 2*. The songs associated with this aspect of Rodrigues's work, such as 'Caracóis' or 'Malhão de São Simão', often used fado instrumentation but the vocal tended to be rather different to that generally found in fado singing – a difference that would no doubt be even more noticeable had Rodrigues not been by vocation a fado singer. What

Timothy Mitchell says of flamenco singing in relation to Spanish folk singing is comparable to the different use of emotional expression in Fado and Portuguese folk singing: ‘the aesthetically differentiated moan of *cante jondo* can give the truth of the song style independent of the song lyrics, *which do not even need to be intelligible*; herein lies a crucial difference between deep song and Spanish folk song.’⁶⁴ It is worth remembering that lyrics are a crucial aspect of fado though it is also true, as in Mitchell’s point, that emotional melisma does much of the expressive work. In addition there are numerous examples of word fetishisation in fado that shift the focus away from where it would be in a more narrative style ballad.⁶⁵ Homem de Mello’s poeticised account of life in the countryside is quite removed from the narrative ballad style, stressing as it does the cork cup, the heather and the mud over any conventional storyline.

It is interesting to speculate on the characteristic of the solo voice in *fado canção*, articulating as it often does a single highly poeticised viewpoint, and to ask what it says about the relationship between the individual and the collective. Certainly this type of song was considered by many fado aficionados to have little to do with the earlier fado, now coming to be known as *fado castiço*. Joaquim Pais de Brito stresses the links between fado’s origins and ideas of collectivity when he says of the fado world of the late nineteenth century, ‘it was an area where the excluded lived together: people from the street, immigrants, people without a past, people of mixed race, others who lived from the patronage of a decadent nobility.’⁶⁶ Music, and the venues in which it was created, brought people together in a way that, if less ritualised than in the villages, was nonetheless crucial in maintaining the social bond. For many, then, it was the subsequent journey fado took from the taverns to the theatre reviews that was responsible for erecting the wall between performer and audience, the fencing-off that, as in the museum and on the record, destroyed the possibility of a collectivised musical practice. It is at this same point that fado took on the responsibility of being the professional, ‘official’ Portuguese music of loss (or, as several fadologists would seem to prefer, the music of Portuguese loss, which is saying a rather different thing). Salazar’s policies undoubtedly exacerbated this process of fencing-off but did not create it. As with the emergence of rock ‘n’ roll in the United States, there are a number of considerations to take into account in determining why *fado canção* emerged when it did and why Amália Rodrigues became its paradigmatic performer, ranging from changes in the law (here, the Novo

Estado policies were crucially determinant but previously extant copyright laws should not be forgotten, affecting as they do the role of the artist in the period of mass mediation); migration to the cities; changes in recording and media technology; shifts in the high/low divide in the arts.⁶⁷

Whatever the purists thought, and despite (or because of?) the emphasis on the individual, Amália's music remained popular throughout the 1960s. For three years running, from 1967 to 1969, she received the MIDEM award for the artist selling the most records in their country, a feat only equalled by the Beatles.⁶⁸ The emerging protest song movement, the *canções de intervenção*, can be seen as a reaction to this dominance of the popular musical scene as much as to a perceived ideological impurity in fado. Many of the songwriters of *canções de intervenção* were also, in a way, more individualistic than the fado performers they sought to challenge. As with contemporaneous folk music movements in other countries there was, despite a strong desire to identify with the common man and woman, a tendency towards solo singer-songwriters keen to put *their* message across *their* way. The singer-songwriter, like the preacher, requires a charismatic individuality in order to be effective; at the same time they require a compliant congregation willing and able to take their message up and echo it with the power of choral unison. It was in his ability to do so that José Afonso took on the mantle of *the* musician of the revolutionary era in Portugal.

The bringing together of the worlds of the learned and the rustic, as exemplified by figures such as Pedro Homem de Mello, is mirrored in the evolution of those scholars who, in the years preceding the Revolution, became most associated with the burgeoning democracy movements. Their self-association with the working class came not from the simplified and prettified national populism of the Salazar regime but from an awareness that change should be driven from below and that the needs of the poorest members of Portuguese society, especially the rural poor, must be addressed if such change were to be possible. It is through this process that we find the most famous figure in Portuguese folk music, José Afonso, moving away from the Coimbra fado tradition of his university career towards a performing and writing space that allowed for the inclusion of material from the diverse musical regions of Portugal. Although Coimbra students had always maintained a group element to their performance style, there had also been a strong emphasis on the romantic individual, often hymned as the subject of unrequited love and unquenchable *saudade*.⁶⁹ Afonso, in moving away from this tradition and the contemporary western tradition of the solo

singer-songwriter, became a well-known exponent of collectivised performance, writing songs that encouraged group participation, and performing with large groups of singers in a style reminiscent of Alentejan polyphonic traditions.⁷⁰

For Jorge Lima Barreto, the emerging democratic movement was echoed in the popular music of the late 1960s and early 1970s by a move away from notions of *música erudita* (art music) versus *música ligeira* (light music) to a new conception of democratic popular music as the site on which the challenge to the status quo should take place.⁷¹ Comparing Afonso's 'Grândola Vila Morena' – the song that was broadcast as the signal for the armed forces to commence the coup that ended the Estado Novo – to Fernando Lopes-Graça's *Requiem pelos Vítimas do Fascismo* and Jorge Peixinho's *A Aurora do Socialismo*, Barreto writes, "Grândola" places itself in another musical sphere; not only is it a reflection on the Revolution, it is a primary source of the Revolution itself – Portuguese Popular Music.⁷² He goes on to say:

MPP [Música Popular Portuguesa] was immediately infectious; this infection was triggered by political conscience, inspired activity and, in the case of "Grândola", drove us to march in the street and to construct a powerfully subversive imagination.

"Grândola" was not so much a place name as a set of topological references from commercial music wrapped in nostalgia and melodrama. "Grândola" was a Portuguese cultural myth, yet a myth [...] which triggered the most unshakeable humanistic and revolutionary conviction.

In a political situation in which everyone claimed to represent themselves free of contradictions, whichever element increased those contradictions or their process of degradation was excommunicated (as in Santiago, as in Cape Town, as in East Timor, as in Tiananmen).

"Grândola" was primarily a synchronic and permanent reverification of the belief in democracy, so mixed up amongst the dross of bourgeois political ideology [...].⁷³

In terms of breaking down boundaries, however, it must be recognised that Amália had already radically altered the musical soundscape in the two decades leading up to the Revolution. A glance through the part of her discography covering the latter half of this period reveals a bewildering array of material: fados (both *castiços* and

canções), Portuguese folk songs, popular Lisbon marches, medieval poetry, French *chansons*, Italian and Spanish songs, Brazilian *bossa nova*, American show tunes, Christmas songs, and more. Throughout this period Amália remained steadfastly apolitical, though a number of her collaborators did not remain so distant; David Mourão-Ferreira, Ary Dos Santos, Alexandre O'Neill and Manuel Alegre were all leftist poets who wrote works either specifically for her or which were requested by her or Alain Oulman to be sung in concerts and on recordings. It was Oulman who approached the exiled Manuel Alegre for permission to include his 'Trova do vento que passa', a piece associated with the anti-fascist movement, on the 1970 album *Com que voz*. The recordings put out under her name in 1974 are perhaps the most telling: a reissue of Mourão-Ferreira's 'Abandono', now openly referred to by its alternative title 'Fado Peniche' in reference to the prison that had held many of the regime's political prisoners (the song had been banned during Salazar's rule); a single of Alegre's 'Meu amor é marinheiro' which, with its cover photo of a navy recruit, played on the popularity of the armed forces following their role in the Revolution; a single of 'Trova do vento que passa' backed by Mourão-Ferreira's 'Libertação'; and a version of Afonso's 'Grândola Vila Morena'.

It was Amália's simultaneous ability to court these poets while remaining free from the persecutions of the Estado Novo that came to infuriate many people and that still divides opinion on the singer now. For her critics, Amália's political naivety smacked too much of the populism peddled by Salazar himself; this was hardly helped by the fact that fado and Amália had become synonymous and that, as fado now became tarred through association with the old regime, so, many felt, should its foremost proponent. This, allied to the sheer excitement of the new forms of music springing up in the wake of the *canção de intervenção* movement and imported Anglo-American rock music, helped to push fado out of the spotlight in the early days of democracy. Yet fado did not go away and neither did Amália, though her career took a definite downward turn within Portugal for a couple of years. It was during this period that Carlos do Carmo emerged as the new lantern bearer of fado. Less politically naive than Amália, do Carmo brought a commitment to the ideas of the Revolution together with love, deep knowledge and experience of fado gained from his mother, the famous *fadista* Lucilia do Carmo, and from the fado house he inherited from his father. Do Carmo worked frequently with the poet Ary dos Santos and attempted, like Rodrigues and Afonso before him, to bridge the music of the city

with that of the countryside. His most notable achievements in this respect were the albums *Um homem na cidade* (1977) and *Um homem no país* (1983).

When Amália did return it was in triumph, performing to packed houses and initiating a new series of recordings which, though they would often veer towards the gimmicky, nonetheless paved the way for her powerful albums of self-written material at the beginning of the 1980s. It is perhaps worth considering Geoffrey O'Brien's discussion of the return of Burt Bacharach in the 1990s when considering both Amália's post-Revolution comeback and her audience's willingness to re-embrace her. The songwriting process that Bacharach and his colleagues symbolise is comparable to the fado songwriting process, at least to that of *fado canção*, which, as the above hopefully makes clear, can be seen as the driving force behind the musical periods covered in this chapter. Like Rodrigues's 'classic' period, Bacharach's period was one of professionals – a Hollywood-style division of labour – as opposed to the singer-songwriter style that would come to dominate afterwards; O'Brien describes the process as 'a combination of perfectionism and commercialism'.⁷⁴ Eduardo Sucena's account of songwriters, musicians and singers provides a good overview of how this relationship worked itself out in the fado world. As with the professional songwriters that O'Brien writes about, the creators of the *fados canções* produce a situation where there can be 'no assumption [...] that the listeners could produce such a record themselves'.⁷⁵ This allows further for the adoption of star persona than would be the case with more amateur forms of music making, leading to a situation where the performer's career becomes mythologised and lived through by the performer's public. It is the identification of the parallel existence of star and public that ensures the possibility of return:

In such a process, the myth of the original career is amplified by the myth of the return. Each step of the comeback is charted as part of a legendary progression: years of glory, years in limbo, years of triumphant rebirth. The past is symbolically brought into the present, so that through the contemplation of Bacharach and his music [...] latter-day devotees can gain access to a realm of lost bliss.⁷⁶

Rodrigues hardly endured 'years in limbo' but it was very much the case that the spectacular nature of her past ensured her a place in the public consciousness that not

only outlasted the brief unpopularity she experienced in the mid 1970s but enabled her to be reborn in the ‘latter-day devotees’ who would pioneer the *novo fado* of the 1990s onwards.

The Road to *Novo Fado*

During the 1990s there was a notable trend back towards a commercially popular form of fado music, centred on a group of mostly young musicians from the post-revolutionary generation. A brief summary of the key artists involved in this regeneration of fado would probably need to start with the emergence in the late 1980s of the group Madredeus. Though far removed from fado proper, their combination of musical styles (described in *Billboard* as ‘an amalgam of fado, classical string quartets, Parisian chanson, and a strong hint of the melodramatic harmonium and vocal solo albums of the late Nico, of the Velvet Underground.’⁷⁷) established a sound quite unlike that being performed by other groups within or outside Portugal and moved them away from their own roots in rock music toward an arena where the possibility of a new native music could be played out. The hint of fado was never far away in this, hardly surprising given singer Teresa Salgueiro’s background as a performer of *fado vadio* (amateur fado, as practised in local neighbourhood *tavernas* or cafes rather than professional fado houses). The group became the most popular Portuguese group outside the country and their music was used to great effect in Wim Wenders’s film *Lisbon Story*, providing a link between music and place as crucial as that forged in the director’s other work.⁷⁸ Another boundary-crossing artist from this period was Dulce Pontes, who first came to national attention as a television star before going on to represent Portugal in the 1991 Eurovision Song Contest. The song she performed, and which subsequently became a hit in both Portuguese and English versions, was entitled ‘Lusitano paixão’ and was essentially a hymn to the time honoured emotions of sadness, grief and *saudade*. It was not, however, fado.⁷⁹ Her second album, discussed in more detail below, was a landmark fado album, combining famous fados of the past with folk songs and pop instrumentation to forge an album with genuine crossover appeal. Its ‘Canção do mar’ became known internationally when used in the film *Primal Fear* (1996).

1991 also saw the release of the first album by Mísia, a more ‘authentic’ *fadista* than Dulce Pontes if only in the sense that she sang strictly fados (no folk

songs) and was backed up by the traditional arrangement of *guitarra* and *viola*. Mísia brought to the genre a sense of visual style that had been absent for some time, appearing in concert and on her CD covers dressed in *haute couture* outfits that referenced both fado's past (its shawls, its dark colours, its poses) and its present in a world of high definition photography, light shows and contemporary fashion. Of great importance also was her choice of material, bringing to new life the work of some of Portugal's most notable poets – including, increasingly, many female poets who had been given far less attention than their male counterparts. By the middle of the 1990s Mísia had become a success outside of Portugal, touring Europe, Japan, Australia and the Middle East. She became, along with the other young female *fadistas* whom her success helped bring to the public's attention, a substitute for the ailing Amália Rodrigues, whose passing in 1999 once more brought fado to the attention of the nation and of the international community where Amália had made such an impact.⁸⁰ Mísia's 2001 album *Ritual* was a homage to Rodrigues, containing versions of songs associated with her, a track written in her memory and a new arrangement of Rodrigues's unrecorded poem 'Vivendo sem mim' ('Living without me'). Mísia's voice, like Teresa Salgueiro's and Dulce Pontes's, was also heard in the cinema when her songs 'Paixões diagonais' and 'Triste sina' provided the fados performed by the female lead in the film *Passionada* (2002).

The spectacular appearance of Mariza onto the Portuguese and world music scenes was the real success for fado in the new century. More extravagantly outfitted and hairstyled than Mísia, and with a powerful voice and dramatic stage presence, she became an instant television celebrity following her appearance on the popular *Herman SIC* show. With the release of her debut album, *Fado em mim* (2001), Mariza went on to enjoy sales and chart positions only previously achieved in Portugal by Amália and to international success on the world music circuit, where she made appearances at the major world music festivals and was the recipient of numerous awards. The major influence on *Fado em mim* was, once again, Amália; half of the album's songs were fados previously performed by Amália, another being an arrangement of an unrecorded Rodrigues poem.⁸¹ Her second album, *Fado curvo* (2003), experimented with the musical style by adding trumpet and piano and by utilising song structures that, even allowing for the now longstanding tendency toward *fado canção*, were still quite different from those of other fados.

Katia Guerreiro is another young *fadista* who emerged at the same time as Mariza and who has also built a strong national and international audience. Her albums *Fado maior* (2001) and *Nas mãos do fado* (2003) have set her voice against the traditional instrumental line-up, though her choice of material has been far from traditional. As Pedro Baptista-Bastos writes, ‘more than the arrangements, more than the addition of strange instrumentation to traditional fado, it is the poems that colour contemporary fado. The themes are no longer the Rua da Mariquinhas, the *fadistas gingões*, *tascas* and the *guitarradas*. But they continue to be the great human themes: love, solitude, jealousy, death. They are about divorces, drugs, social problems and personal dramas.’⁸² In Guerreiro’s case this has meant making fados from the work of António Lobes Antunes, Maria Luísa Baptista and Ana Vidal, alongside rather more established (if not quite *castiço*) work by Pessoa, Camões and Florbela Espanca. Guerreiro’s work is interesting in the ways it points toward the difficulties and contradictions of maintaining a position in a musical world imbued with tradition yet which has always, in its most spectacular forms, resisted tradition. In interviews Guerreiro has spoken of the need to avoid excessive experimentation and to keep fado ‘authentic’, while at the same time acknowledging that fado’s most famous exponent, Amália Rodrigues, was never one to do so.⁸³

Similar contradictions have been laid bare in the work of Cristina Branco. Her albums have set work by Camões, Pessoa, Homem de Mello and Mourão-Ferreira to music by the Portuguese guitarist Custodio Castelo. Yet she has also featured songs such as ‘Molinera’, a traditional dialect song from northern Portugal, and work by the Dutch poet Jan Jacob Slauerhoff. Branco, who began her career in the Netherlands has produced an entire album based on Slauerhoff’s work, emphasising the intercultural dialogue between the two nations and the popularity of fado in the Netherlands.⁸⁴ More recently she has produced a collection of songs based on erotic poetry that includes fados derived from the work of Maria Teresa Horta, one of the so-called ‘Three Marias’ who achieved notoriety in 1972 when they were arrested for obscenity following the publication of their book *Novas Cartas Portuguesas*, a landmark in feminist writing whose subsequent republication in 1974 became one of the major successes of that revolutionary year. On her album *Ulisses* (2005), Branco includes a cover of Joni Mitchell’s ‘A Case of You’, a nod to a quite different type of female writing from the early 1970s.

It will be clear from the above that the most successful *novo fado* artists have been female, a fact that cannot help but contribute to the association of fado with Amália Rodrigues. This association, which is also based on the repertoire the new singers share with Rodrigues and on the ability their position in the international music scene gives them to work outside the traditional structures of the genre, leads to an even greater generalisation that is always in danger of asserting itself: that, just as female *guitarristas* are not to be expected, so the quintessential fado singer must be female. This is something that the history of fado does not bear out but there have been relatively few male artists as successful as the women mentioned above in the period under discussion. A notable exception is Camané, who has built a solid reputation in Portugal since his emergence in the 1980s. Camané's approach, very much based on that of Carlos do Carmo (who also continued to be very popular within Portugal during this time), stresses links with the 1960s and 1970s via his renditions of work by David Mourão-Ferreira and Ary dos Santos and via his association with José Mário Branco.⁸⁵ These figures represent a continuing link with the revolutionary period and allow for a dialogue between fado and more explicitly committed material. Other notable male figures are Jorge Fernando, discussed below, and, more recently, António Zambujo, who has attempted his own style of crossover by bringing fado together with Alentejan polyphonic singing, suggesting an updating of José Afonso's project (although it could be argued that, in the absence of a political context equivalent to that in which Afonso operated, the 'collectivity' made resonant in Zambujo's work is a marker of what was once revolt turned into style – I will have more to say on this process in Chapter Five).⁸⁶

The presence of much of this music (Salgueiro's voice in *Lisbon Story*, Pontes's in *Primal Fear*, Mísia's in *Passionada*, Mariza's at Euro 2004) brought a level of international awareness of fado and the fado voice that had not been matched since the heyday of Amália Rodrigues – and perhaps not even then, given the frequent perception of Amália as an 'international' star rather than as a singer of fados. *Novo fado* has also found itself placed alongside other less traditional musical endeavours due to its inclusion in the series of Atlantic Waves concerts inaugurated in 2001. These annual events, subtitled 'Exploratory Music from Portugal', take place in London and are accompanied by extensive media coverage and by CDs compiling the featured artists. Fado has so far been represented by Mísia, Lula Pena, Mariza, Katia Guerreiro, Ana Sofia Varela and António Zambujo.⁸⁷

There are a number of factors which seem to point to the emergence in this period of what has come to be termed *novo fado*. Among these we must list the following:

- 1) The depolarisation of ideological positions surrounding the music following a time period that had allowed for a mellowing of cultural opinion and that reflected the gradual political softening, during the two decades following the Revolution, of the pro-Salazar right and pro-Warsaw Pact left into an increasingly stabilised political democracy.
- 2) The emergence of a potential conflict, as membership of the EEC finally became a reality for Portugal (as it did for Spain) in 1986, between national and European identity, a conflict whose possibility had been denied by the isolationist policies of the Estado Novo. As Kimberly DaCosta Holton noted, in the article cited earlier, the process of becoming more European was simultaneously a process of roping off what was most Portuguese.
- 3) The emergence in the 1980s of the increasingly popular genre of World Music, to which fado, as the music most associated with Portugal, was soon added, providing fado once again with an international audience. While fado had enjoyed international exposure during the previous half century due to the phenomenal success of Amália Rodrigues, the newly-coined 'world music' category gave a fresh image to any musics associated with it, as Timothy D. Taylor points out: 'In one gesture the old but not quite gone "international" label [...was] supplanted by a trendier, less musty, less your-grandparents'-music category'.⁸⁸ Interestingly, there has been an important role played by record labels from outside of Portugal in the distribution and popularisation of contemporary fado, especially in France and the Netherlands where labels such as L'Empreinte Digitale and World Connection have been the driving forces behind CDs by the likes of Cristina Branco and Mariza.
- 4) Developments in recording, playback and performance technology which have been used in very specific ways in world music. In Chapter One I discussed the change from the transcriptive role of technology (recording as the first part of witnessing, the 'seeing' – here, perhaps, the 'hearing') to a more creative role in producing atmosphere. Earlier in this chapter I suggested that what was found visually and sonically notable in Lisbon in the past has become what is made notable by visual and sonic recording equipment. But in the process of being made

notable in as clear a way as possible, much of the original detail (the background noise, as it were) disappears. To return to the analogy of the witness, we might say that the witness's second task – 'saying' what he or she saw – is one in which the original complexity of the situation must be stripped down to the essential message (which is why, in the court room, the witness will be thrown 'yes or no' questions or asked to focus only on 'relevant' details). The ethnomusicologist as witness faces a similar need to 'frame' the complexity of the situation and excerpt the most telling details. What is notable in the production techniques of much contemporary world music is the way in which background noise is eliminated to emphasise the fact that these are artistic recordings *by* professionals rather than field recordings *of* amateurs (the prepositional difference is crucial). *Novo fado*, then, like many other popular musics, might be defined as music that could only be made in a studio or performed live with state-of-the-art equipment. It has become quite common for performers like Mariza and Camané to include in their live sets one or two songs where they and their guitarists abandon the microphones to play 'naked' and evoke the pre-amplification days of fado, a process entailing a considerable reintroduction of background noise which only serves to highlight the paradoxical necessity of amplification to keep the rest of the set 'silent' and 'clean'.⁸⁹

Bearing all these points in mind it is worth briefly surveying some responses to the existence (or not, as some would have it) of *novo fado* before going on to discuss the contemporary scene in the light of our theme of loss.

Writing under the title 'O Novo Fado Não Existe', Pedro Baptista-Bastos makes the point that fado has never gone away and that its current practitioners are part of a tradition of adaptation that places them in a continuum rather than a vanguard. Although he does not use the words 'renovado' or 'renovar', Baptista-Bastos' contention seems to lie in an emphasis on renewal rather than on newness *per se*. Some of his observations, which formed the introductory notes to a CD of fados by young singers entitled *Novas Vozes, Novos Fados*, are worth bearing in mind when discussing the state of the music as it found itself at the turn of the century. Baptista-Bastos goes on to say:

The passing of time – the thirty years from 25 April, the European Union, the Internet, the coming of the twenty-first century – has forced us to stop identifying fado as a spent, reactionary and senile song style, and made us connect it, today, with the voices presented on this CD, which provide us with a picture of a different Portugal.⁹⁰

Numerous signs of continuation could be posited, such as the recurrent versions of songs connected to Amália, tribute albums featuring young singers performing material from predecessors like Amália (*Amália Revisited*, 2004) and Carlos do Carmo (*Novo homem na cidade*, 2004), the involvement of ‘old school’ arrangers such as Jorge Fernando (who worked with Amália) with the new generation and the emergence of new fadistas from the Grande Noite do Fado, an annual song contest that has been running for many years. Yet, while it is true that fado has never disappeared from the Portuguese music scene since it first became consolidated as a popular music form, it nevertheless remains the case that the song form enjoyed a distinct boost at the turn of the millennium due to a number of young performers who were able to adapt the form to contemporary tastes and market it to a new audience both nationally and internationally. These producers of what I will continue to call, for want of a better term, *novo fado*, were distinguished by the sheer fact of having come into musical maturity at a time when the polarisation that followed the Revolution had eased into a less strictly policed arena of democratic choice.⁹¹ Interest in national identity was far from slacking but now it was tempered with a desire to work that identity into the context of a modern Europe. Fado was arguably the most recognisably Portuguese of musics in the international community.

As for the response of the music audience to *novo fado*, it may well be worth bearing in mind the possibility that a certain staleness had befallen the once vital project of *Música Popular Portuguesa*. As a *Billboard* report on the state of the Portuguese music industry noted in 1994, the reliance on Anglo-American models of popular music tended to mean that sales for domestic bands were not terribly high, with only a couple of bands cited who had achieved success through stamping a Portuguese identity on the rock music they produced.⁹² This can be linked to the point made earlier about the need, on entering the EEC, to adopt a Europeanness that simultaneously allowed for a sense of Portugueseness, a desire, in this case, to produce popular music that would not be lost among all the competing popular musics

from Europe and beyond. A return to a music that was identifiably Portuguese could serve as a resistance to the Anglo-American popular music models that had become hegemonic over the previous few decades, a point that could subsume any worries that such a return might also be a return to the ‘bad old days’ of Salazarian corporatism. Many of the new generation of singers had grown up listening to Anglo-American pop music and were deeply influenced by it, yet could still appreciate the thrill of rediscovering a native treasure that made up for the absence the other music inevitably brought into play. With this in mind it may be worth considering what Geoffrey O’Brien, writing on the return of lounge music in the 1990s, has to say about identification with the Other:

Permissiveness is of the essence here. The listener is encouraged to surrender to music that not so long ago he might have defined as the Other, the enemy, the counter-counterculture. At the same time, however, he is left free to distort or reimagine it any way he pleases. History in this context amounts to little more than a crowded closet from which, with a bit of scrounging, useable bits of fabric or costume jewelry can be salvaged for an extended game of dress-up.⁹³

O’Brien’s point here seems to be to reference the kind of knowing, ironic use of history that we have grown accustomed to reading and hearing about in accounts of postmodernism. What listeners could appropriate from music that had hitherto seemed opposed to their sense of self-distinction (to use Pierre Bourdieu’s terminology) – a music that was old-fashioned, corny, ‘cheesy’, terminally un-hip – was that which, through conscious reference and redeployment, could come to determine a new paradigm of distinction, coolness, suavity. In addition to lounge music, where the original object is redeployed in an unaltered form that nevertheless comes to mean something entirely different in its new surroundings, there is the ubiquitous sampling of the past in numerous music genres. For fado the appearance in 2004 of the CDs *Chillfado V.01* and *Amália Revisited*, both containing techno-influenced reworkings of classic fado tracks and with numerous samples from the original source material, showcased certain ways in which it might be possible to (re)visit an older, more parochial Portuguese musical identity while still maintaining a subscription to a youth-oriented Portugal of the twenty-first century.⁹⁴ Where the original objects – the

fado recordings of Amália Rodrigues, Carlos Paredes, Fernando Farinha, etc. – were also sought out in their ‘unaltered’ state, it is entirely possible that this was done in a highly selective, revisionist, knowing or ironic way.⁹⁵ However, as Manuel Halperin’s account of the *novos fadistas* of the new millennium maintains, the sense of seriousness and responsibility with which a new generation of fado performers has shown in engaging with the genre’s history suggests a project that entails far more than ‘an extended game of dress-up’.⁹⁶

As Halperin also notes, the new generation were also inspired by earlier performers from the 1980s who had already managed to ‘dress up’ fado while taking it entirely seriously. Foremost among these was António Variações, a man responsible for ‘queering’ both fado and Portuguese pop by fusing elements of folk, fado, new wave and other contemporary pop forms in his music and by applying an openly homosexual appropriation of Portuguese musical tradition. Prior to his premature death in 1984, Variações (a pseudonym appropriately taken from the Portuguese for ‘variations’) released two revolutionary albums *Anjo de guarda* (1983) and *Dar & Receber* (1984), the former containing a version of ‘Povo que lavas no rio’ which removed the song from traditional fado accompaniment by adding synthesiser, drums and electric bass. Vocally, the song is not so far removed from Amália’s version, with Variações’s vocals often operating on a high, ‘feminine’ register, and this was something the singer seemed to recognise in another song on the album, ‘Voz-Amália-de-nós’, where he sings ‘We all have Amália in our voice’. At the same time, this register alternates with a deeper ‘blank croon’ (more noticeable on the album’s third track ‘Visões-ficções (Nostradamus)’, suggesting a hitherto unexplored connection between Rodrigues, Nico and Brian Ferry, another of the singer’s influences.⁹⁷ Variações’s albums were immensely popular in Portugal, suggesting the ways that the 1980s might sound and playing a dominant role in interpellating young people into the pop world, including those musicians (Camané among them) who came together in 2004 as the group Humanos to record a highly successful album of songs recorded by Variações but unreleased at the time of the singer’s death.⁹⁸

A River of Tears: Some Performances Considered

'Lágrima'

The song 'Lágrima', by Amália Rodrigues, appeared on the 1983 album of the same name, which featured lyrics exclusively written by Amália and set to music by the *guitarrista* Carlos Gonçalves. 'Lágrima' was the closing song on the album; its lyrics also appeared, alongside Rodrigues's other poems, in her book *Versos* (1997). They are as follows:

'Lágrima'

Words: Amália Rodrigues
Music: Carlos Gonçalves⁹⁹

Cheia de penas
Cheia de penas me deito
E com mais penas
Com mais penas me levanto
No meu peito
Já me ficou no meu peito
Este jeito
O jeito de te querer tanto

Full of suffering
Full of suffering, I sleep
And with more suffering
With more suffering I awake
In my breast
Already lodged in my breast
Is this habit
The habit of wanting you so

Desespero
Tenho por meu desespero
Dentro de mim
Dentro de mim um castigo
Não te quero
Eu digo que te não quero
E de noite
De noite sonho contigo

Despair
I have my despair
Inside me
A punishment inside me
I don't want you
I say that I don't want you
And at night
At night I dream about you

Se considero
Que um dia hei-de morrer
No desespero
Que tenho de te não ver
Estendo o meu xaile
Estendo o meu xaile no chão
Estendo o meu xaile
E deixo-me adormecer

If I consider
That one day I will die
In the desperation
That I have at not seeing you
I lay out my shawl
I lay out my shawl on the floor
I lay out my shawl
And let myself fall asleep

Se eu soubesse
Se eu soubesse que morrendo
Tu me havias
Tu me havias de chorar
Uma lágrima
Por uma lágrima tua

If I thought
If I thought that when I died
You would have to
You would have to cry
One tear
For one of your tears

Que alegria
Me deixaria matar

How happy
I would be to die

In considering the song I would like to draw upon certain ideas articulated by Jacques Lacan and upon those theories of Roland Barthes in which we find a breaking through of one (often ecstatic) mode of signifying into another, a rupture in the Symbolic Order that calls to mind the momentary glimpse of the Lacanian Real. The major examples of this type of Barthesian thinking are the concepts of *plaisir* and *jouissance*, of the *geno-* and *pheno-song*, and of the *studium* and *punctum* of the photographic image. What is notable about the lyric is what it has to say about absence, how, for the vocal subject, the object of desire does not exist because of a refusal to recognise her. The subject posits a possibility for the object of desire to exist by hypothesising a recognition – the recognition that the object of desire will mourn her after her passing – that will in turn betray a desire, the object's hitherto hidden desire for her. The price to be paid for this bringing-into-being of the object and the object's desire is, here, the subject's ceasing-to-be, her death.

What are the 'pleasures' suggested in the song? Or, rather, what are the signs of what Lacan calls 'the pleasure of desiring, or, more precisely, the pleasure of experiencing unpleasure'?¹⁰⁰ In short: despair, unrequited love, the dream-world and death. What is moving for us, and hence pleasurable, are the lengths to which this subject will go to achieve that *jouissance* which, Lacan reminds us, is in actuality suffering and pain. What is the significance, in Lacanian terms, of the subject's inability to perceive herself as fully constituted, or rather to see herself as constituted around a lack which she can only resolve by propelling herself from the Imaginary of fantasy to the Real of death? Or should one read the song less literally, as a song about the giving-up of oneself to the Other, an 'inevitable' love sacrifice or coming-into-symbolic-being?

We must also ask in what ways we can map musical meaning onto such a reading. One way might be to suggest that the lyrical structure of the poem has encouraged a musical arrangement which, in its simplicity, provides a drive towards emphasis on key lyrical moments. As Barthes notes of classical French *mélodie*:

What is engaged in these works is, much more than a musical style, a practical reflection (if one may put it like that) on the language; there is a progressive movement from the language to the poem, from the poem to the song and from the song to its performance. Which means that the *mélodie* has little to do with the history of music and much with the theory of the text.¹⁰¹

Applying Barthes's notions of *studium* and *punctum* to 'Lágrima', we can attempt to sonorise these occularcentric figurations in an attempt to construct a theory of listening. For Barthes the *studium* is the cultural 'participat[ion] in the figures, the faces, the gestures, the settings, the actions', while the *punctum* is the 'element which rises from the scene, shoots out of it like an arrow, and pierces me'.¹⁰² In a sonorised version the *studium* is the song text, the instrumental, vocal and lyrical setting which, within a few short bars, confirms this as a typical fado, albeit of the modernised *fado canção* style. Into this text are then studded a number of *puncta*, which can be identified as follows: the first syllable of 'penas' in the first line, echoed in the repetitions of the word in the subsequent three lines; the third syllable of 'desespero' in the first line of second verse, again echoed; the interplay between 'considero' and 'desespero' in the third verse. The fourth verse holds back from delivering its *punctum*, waiting, according to standard fado practice, for the repeat of the final phrase; when it comes (and we can detect in that word's double meaning an echo of Barthes's idea that the voice 'caresses, it grates, it cuts, it comes'¹⁰³), it does so as the entire phrase 'que alegria me deixaria matar'. I interpret these as *puncta* mainly due to the vocal articulation audible at these points and with the repetitive pathos to be found in these over-emphasised words and phrases. While it would be possible to describe this process merely as a succession of emphases without resorting to Barthesian terms, I am keen to continue the connection established earlier between photography and fado texts, believing that one of the things these texts do is to participate in an ongoing 'study' of Lisbon(ness), in which the oft-hymned city is both *studium* and stadium of memory. While 'Lágrima' makes no explicit mention of place, I would maintain it inherits a sense of place due to the connections between text and context discussed earlier; the 'Lisbonness' of fado, here, is a state of mind which may be cognitively inaccurate but is mythologically and psychologically vital.

Barthes has saved us the effort, to some extent, of converting his theory of seeing to a theory of listening by speaking elsewhere about the interplay of the *pheno-*

song and *geno-song* in vocal music. However, what is less stressed in ‘The Grain of the Voice’ than in ‘The Pleasure of the Text’ and *Camera Lucida* is the sense of the cut that the ‘invasive’ element (*punctum*, *jouissance*, grain) inflicts on culture.¹⁰⁴ Barthes writes of ‘the deep laceration the text of bliss inflicts upon language itself’¹⁰⁵ and, in a sentence that might equally be a definition of the Lacanian Real, of ‘the place where the death of language is glimpsed’.¹⁰⁶ This cut is also a cutting-off, or fencing-off, the creation of ‘a site of bliss’ that is simultaneously a site of loss. As Catherine Belsey puts it:

The beautiful satisfies, Lacan argues, to the degree that it does, not by representing the real, nor by avoiding the drive, but instead by pointing to the lost real, while at the same time fencing-off any possibility that we might come too close to the Thing. Made objects offer a kind of satisfaction when the signifier encloses absence and at the same time offers pleasure.¹⁰⁷

Lacan himself provides us with another metaphor of enclosure when he claims that ‘it is obviously because truth is not pretty to look at that beauty is, if not its splendor, then at least its envelope’.¹⁰⁸ Going further, he says that the beautiful ‘stops us, but it also points in the direction of the field of destruction’ and, later, that ‘the appearance of beauty intimidates and stops desire’.¹⁰⁹ Bearing this in mind, is it possible to think of fado as representing a safe (and beautiful) way of (re)encountering trauma, of encircling the Thing? Fado provides a place (street, alleyway, museum, theatre, text, envelope) to (re)visit the traumatic. It is one of those musics that subscribes to the Aristotelian principle of catharsis, purgation and abreaction to which Lacan also refers. The single tear that the singer of ‘Lágrima’ desires is both the tear that will cleanse or purge and the tear (cut) that will rend.¹¹⁰

‘Lágrima’ Revisited

In a more recent version of ‘Lágrima’ by Jorge Fernando and Argentina Santos there is an even clearer example of the move from *studium* to *punctum*.¹¹¹ Following a verse sung movingly but not dramatically by Fernando, a *studium* is set up of melancholic meditation on hurt and loss (fado’s bedrock, we might say). The entry of Argentina Santos’s vocal into this *studium* shatters (cuts) the ‘stillness’ of the preceding moments. Through her vocalising, from the anguished cry of ‘se considero’

to the almost whispered final 'uma lágrima', Santos creates these *puncta* via stark contrasts with the surrounding song text. Fernando's verse and the oboe/cello part create a 'safe' space of sadness. Santos's voice, in its urgency and extremity, destroys this place and reminds us of the 'real' pain at the heart of the lyric. This echoes the contrast implicit in the verse structure where a fragmented line is offset against a developed line, the former containing the fetishised object (the immediate thought, the attempt, however doomed, at freedom from language), the latter the interpreted (Symbolic) meaning of the thought. The emphases placed on the repeated words could be interpreted (in both Rodrigues's and Santos's versions) as symptoms of an unresolved mourning that threaten, as in Freud, to lead to the danger of repetitive melancholy. At the same time they could be elements of working-through, allying their deployment to a process of catharsis.

The fact that Fernando and Santos take ownership of 'Lágrima' in the way they do is important in terms of thinking about the fado 'family tree', a term which can be understood to relate both to the varieties of fado derived from the basic core of *fado corrido*, *fado mouraria* and *fado menor*, and to the symbolic lineage of fado performers through the years. In this case there is the association of Argentina Santos with a school of singers contemporaneous with Amália Rodrigues – though it should be noted that Santos, like many of her contemporaries, did not tend to be as adventurous as Rodrigues with the material she chose to sing, sticking to a far more 'traditional' repertoire.¹¹² Jorge Fernando was a guitarist for Amália Rodrigues during the final part of her career before going on to release albums made up of his own material alongside work by other fadistas and to produce and play on Mariza's first album. As such he has acted as a kind of bridge between the old generation and the new.

Prior to the Fernando/Santos recording of 'Lágrima', the song had appeared on other fado albums of the 1990s. Dulce Pontes recorded a version on *Lágrimas* (1993), an album that highlighted the sense of fusion that would come to determine much of *novo fado*. Emphasising the notion of a 'family tree', Pontes prominently placed a genealogy on the album cover that stated: 'Father – Zeca [José] Afonso; Mother – Amália Rodrigues; Grandparent – Portuguese folklore; Cousins – Bulgarian folklore, Arabic music'.¹¹³ The instrumentation on the album consisted of the classic fado accompaniment (*viola*, *guitarra*) but, with the addition of vocoder, Fairlight synthesiser, electric guitar, piano and orchestra, this was a clear departure from fado

norms. The song selection was evidence that, with the passing of time, the strands of folk and fado that had seemed so antithetical to each other in the post-revolutionary era could now be brought together in a useful synthesis: half of the album's songs were ones associated with Amália Rodrigues, the other half with José Afonso. The mixture proved successful and the album has remained a constant seller nationally and internationally since its release in late 1993, judging by its perennial availability in European record shops such as Fnac, Valentim de Carvalho, and HMV. The appeal of Pontes's voice seems to lie in its clarity and consistency and she has adopted a register that sits easily within a range of western popular musical styles, as is noticeable on her 2003 collaboration with Ennio Morricone, *Focus*, where she provides vocals in Portuguese, English, Spanish and Italian to the familiar tunes of various Morricone soundtracks. As a consequence her music is arguably less subcultural than that of, say, Argentina Santos, a difference that can be read into Pontes's rendition of 'Lágrima' on the 1993 album. This track, along with a version of Amália's 'Estranha Forma de Vida', were recorded live in the studio, presumably to catch the feel of an 'authentic' fado performance. Yet, without the 'grain' and anguish Santos brings to her rendition, the song emerges as 'merely' beautiful, somehow missing the cathartic elements of the older fadistas' versions. In Lacanian terms, there is less a fencing-off of the Thing than an unwillingness to go anywhere close to it; in Barthesian terms, there is an excess of *pheno-song* and a lack of *geno-song*, a *studium* with no *punctum*. The traumatic potential of 'Lágrima' is here elided in a move that maintains the performance firmly within the Symbolic Order, a kind of sanitised mourning that is also to be found ten years later in the song 'Amália por amor' on *Focus*.

Mísia, for her part, chose to revisit the song on her 2001 album *Ritual*, having already recorded a version for her second album in 1993. Where the earlier version, like Pontes's from the same year, was fairly understated, the second presentation of the song utilised a style not dissimilar to that of Argentina Santos, stressing extremities of vocalisation and putting particular emphasis on the key lyrical points discussed above. Mário Jorge Torres, in his liner notes to the CD, suggested this 'new intensity and intentionality' was due to the song's inclusion in what was clearly a project inspired by the recent death of Amália.¹¹⁴ The musical arrangements and *guitarra* accompaniment are provided by Carlos Gonçalves, who had been Amália's composer and accompanist during the last stage of her career and had composed the

music to 'Lágrima'. Like Jorge Fernando, Gonçalves here becomes a bridge between the old and new worlds of fado, providing new compositions for Mísia, such as that for 'Xaile de silêncio', a poem sent to Mísia on the occasion of Amália's death. In addition to these tracks, Amália is referenced by the inclusion of two songs that seek to extend the late singer's legacy through the addition of new elements. 'Mistério lunar' is a modern poem put to music written by the famous *guitarrista* Armandinho that Amália had sung with different words as 'Fado mayer' in the 1950s. 'Vivendo sem mim' is a poem written by Rodrigues, published in *Versos* but never recorded by her; here, it is put to music by Mário Pacheco and performed by Mísia and the pianist Christian Boissel in a move designed to evoke the way Amália rehearsed with Alain Oulman. By thus adding words to an 'Amália' tune and music to Amália's words, Mísia suggests the ways in which this dialogic 'ritual' might proceed.

Other Songs

A similar project to Mísia's *Ritual* can be found on Mariza's *Fado em mim*, from the same year. As mentioned previously, many of the songs included on the album are ones associated with Amália Rodrigues; also included is a poem by Rodrigues, 'Ó gente da minha terra', set to music by the pianist Tiago Machado,. The track appears on the album in both a traditional fado setting and as a piano and vocal arrangement, once again echoing Amália's practice of rehearsing at the piano.¹¹⁵ The song has featured as a centrepiece of Mariza's concert performances, occasionally, as in the show recorded in London for DVD release, with only piano accompaniment. A video shot for 'Ó gente da minha terra' highlights the ways Mariza has taken on a dramatic presence that echoes Amália's influence in bringing the vocalist out from behind the guitarists – where (s)he had been 'imprisoned' in traditional fado performance – and creating a performative style that could be used to great effect on stage, on the cinema screen and on television (the emergence of which was contemporaneous with Amália's initial rise to fame).

If, as has already been suggested, to tell the story of fado is also to tell the story of the myths of fado, then to tell the story of Amália is to enter a world no less mythological. Many of the new *fadistas* choose to stage their encounter with this world via explicit reference to Amália, as has been noted. Yet, there have been other important influences on fado as it is performed at the turn of the millennium. One major factor, as has been observed already in discussing Dulce Pontes's work, has

been the mixing of the folk music associated with performers of *canções de intervenção* such as José Afonso with pre-revolutionary fado. Another has been the popularity of covering Brazilian songs by writers such as Caetano Veloso, Chico Buarque and Vinicius de Moraes; Lula Pena's *Phados* (1998) and Maria Teresa's *O Mar...* (2002) both contain a mixture of fados, Portuguese folk songs and Brazilian songs, while Mariza collaborated with the Brazilian musician and arranger Jacques Morelenbaum for her third album *Transparente* (2005). Brazil has always been important in shaping fado, the debate over possible Brazilian origins of the music being just one often-cited example. Amália Rodrigues spent a formative part of her early career in Brazil, made her first recordings there, released a collaborative album with Vinicius de Moraes in 1970, and maintained links with the country through numerous tours. In turn, many Brazilians have been influenced by fado; Caetano Veloso has described the music as a formative part of his early listening and has often performed material associated with Amália Rodrigues – such as 'Coimbra', 'Foi Deus' and 'Estranha Forma de Vida' – in his concerts. Strong links were formed in the 1970s between politically-committed Portuguese musicians and their counterparts in various parts of Latin America – Hispanic and Lusophone – and the musical expression of an 'Iberian Atlantic' was a notable feature of the period and one that will be mentioned in the next chapter.

Conclusion

Hence it will not be necessary to ask ourselves whether what brings us together is a common passion for different exercises, or the common exercise of different passions. The only question we need ask ourselves is what form our exercise will take – nostalgia or revenge. Yes, it is doubtless quite true that nostalgia is a form of revenge, and revenge a form of nostalgia; in both cases we are searching for something that will not force us to retreat, for something that will keep us from destroying. Nonetheless, passion is still the motive force and its exercise is meaning.

- The Three Marias, *New Portuguese Letters*¹¹⁶

The images of collapse, resignation and decay in fado – homologically registered in falling vocal lines (Gallop's 'drooping cadences') – cannot help but associate fado with an absence of agency, the mirror image of a 'collapsed' and fatalistic people. But in placing fado against political ideology it is never altogether clear how the music

‘sizes up’. In hymning decay/decadence, could the music in fact have been a retort to an Estado Novo whose very *raison d’être* was to *arrest* further decay? What is the significance in the fact that the State was unable to completely adopt and assimilate fado, that it was unable to paper over the cracks that fado revealed? Is it conceivable that fado could be what Barthes called an *acritic* language in its refusal to be assimilated?¹¹⁷

António Osório, the aforementioned author of *A Mitologia Fadista*, would vehemently deny such a claim. For Osório fado, in addition to idealising poverty and objectifying women, hymned a defeatism bound up in ‘*saudosismo*, “the fumes of India”, *Sebastianismo*, the “spectres of the past”, the petulance of Marialva, a lachrymose predisposition, [...] narrow-mindedness [...and] a distaste for life’.¹¹⁸ Going on to parody the famous Amália Rodrigues song ‘Tudo Isto é Fado’ (‘All This is Fado’), Osório wrote:

Misery, prostitution, sickness, dishonour, debasement, all this is ‘fado’. It explains and, indirectly, absolves all ills. Before the ‘laws of destiny’, will power shows itself to be non-existent; the ‘philosophy’ of fado condenses into an inexorable fatalism, ultimately nothing more than the *fatum mahumetanum* defined by Leibniz: free will can never be because men and events are automatically governed by the ‘force of things’. The corollary can be instantly deduced – no one is responsible for anything.¹¹⁹

Such an opinion was very persuasive in 1974, when Osório was writing. Apathy in the face of authoritarianism had festered for too long; change was needed. Fado was discouraged but refused to crawl away and die in a pool of its own tears. Why? The suggestion in this chapter has been that the power of fado’s mythemes and the ease with which it can be connected to ideas of Portugueseness – however problematic such a concept remains – enforce its appropriateness and effectiveness as a staging of a traumatic *jouissance* that has meaning far beyond the world of fado music. It could be argued that Osório overstated his case and, effectively, centred fado and the ‘*fadista* mythology’ as a cause rather than a reflection, as a constitutive element in the formation of subjectivity rather than the recognition of a subjectivity already constituted around a radical loss. He does seem to recognise this possibility at certain

points, such as his consideration of how a similar experience is to be found in modern literature:

Besides, man's impotence in the face of circumstance, the central experience of fado, does not only permeate the work of contemporary Portuguese writers, because it is at the heart of Kafka, of Beckett, of all the representative writers of our time. The seeds of dejection proliferate in these times of oppression and individual paralysis.¹²⁰

Locating ideology within a Lacanian/Žižekian framework of Orders – Imaginary, Symbolic and Real – may help us here. Of these, it is the second pair that concern us most in that we can posit the Symbolic as the realm of language, or discourse, that attempts to 'explain' the Real but which never can, for the Real remains that which cannot be symbolised. Yet that very lack in the Symbolic Order constitutes a gap and it is because of this gap, if we follow Žižek, that ideology is needed. To use a metaphor not entirely inappropriate with Lisbon in mind, if the Symbolic acts as a wall to obscure the Real, a wall that has, however, seen better days and which threatens to allow the chill of the Real in through its cracked tiles and holed plaster (to be punctured, as it were, by the Real), then ideology is the sheen of new plaster needed to fill those fissures. A music more concerned with crumbling, decay, collapse and the wounds that rupture the sheen of everyday 'bearing up', a music, moreover, which dwells on melancholy and which actively seeks to remain unreconciled to the world can perhaps be a music closer to challenging ideology than might at first be imagined. Can it be that fado operates as a (necessary) sublimation of the forces operating on the modern subject, that, furthermore, it occupies the place of what Catherine Belsey calls an 'abolished particularity'? Belsey suggests that 'the abolished particularity returns as resistance, marking the speaking being's loss of the unnameable real, which is still there, but no longer there-for-a-subject. This resistance makes itself felt not only in individual experience, but also as incoherences in the apparent homogeneity of culture itself.'¹²¹ The stubbornness of fado's mythemes, the persistence in which the same elements of Lisbonness, shame, jealousy, collapse, flight, the seasons and *saudade* are endlessly recombined, suggests an unwillingness to move on from the objectification of loss, a process akin to Freud's definition of melancholy. But what does it mean to be 'cured' of this stubbornness except to be

taken once more into the Symbolic realm? Who defines the Symbolic realm? It is in thinking in terms of the Symbolic alongside cultural and political imperialist hegemony that we turn in the next chapter.

Notes

¹ Fernando Pessoa, 'Lisbon Revisited (1926)' (tr. Keith Bosley), *A Centenary Pessoa*, ed. Eugénio Lisboa & L.C. Taylor (Manchester: Carcanet, 1995), p. 91.

² Jacques Lacan, *The Seminar, Book VII: The Ethics of Psychoanalysis, 1959-1960*, tr. Dennis Porter (London: Routledge, 1992 [1986]), p. 70.

³ [Um café de lepes, na Mouraria, à entrada da rua do Capelão. Coito de balieiros, alquiladores, marchantes e marafonas. À esquerda alta, uma escadinha, dando para a sobre-loja onde o Conde de Marialva tem um quarto alujado. Balcão a direita. Porta ao fundo com três degraus de pedra, deitando para a viela. Sobre uma das mesas, uma guitarra.] Júlio Dantas, *A Severa (Peça em Quatro Actos)*, 4th edn. (Lisbon: Sociedade Editora Portugal-Brasil, c. 1920), p. 9. Note: unless otherwise stated, all translations from the Portuguese are my own.

⁴ The word *fadista* is used in a variety of ways in this chapter, as it is in fado discourse: it is used to describe the mixture of 'roughs' (an analogy made by Pinto de Carvalho, one of the first serious historians of fado, in 1903), criminals, prostitutes and aristocratic libertines who made up the bohemian fado *milieu* of the nineteenth century; in a later set of developments it comes to refer to performers and writers of fados, as well as to fans and aficionados of the music. The inferred meaning will, I trust, be clear from the context.

⁵ For more on musemes, see the work of Philip Tagg, in particular *Kojak: 50 Seconds of Television Music. Towards the Analysis of Affect in Popular Music*, 2nd ed. (New York: Mass Media Music Scholars' Press, 2000).

⁶ Rodney Gallop, 'The Fado: The Portuguese Song of Fate', *The Musical Quarterly*, Vol. 19 No. 2 (1933), p. 199.

⁷ An obvious correlative mytheme is the figure of the prostitute, included in Dantas's opening stage directions and embodied in the figure of Maria Severa. The prostitute, while providing essential colour to the stories of fado's bohemian beginnings and its accompanying world of *fadistas*, has not survived as a significant association with fado, however.

⁸ Miguel Vale de Almeida, 'Marialvismo: A Portuguese Moral Discourse on Masculinity, Social Hierarchy and Nationhood in the Transition to Modernity' (1995), Universidade de Brasília website, <http://www.unb.br/ics/dan/Serie184empdf.pdf> (accessed 2 December 2004), pp. 2-3. *Sebastianismo* refers to a belief that the slain King Sebastião (who fell at the notorious battle of Alcácer-Quibir in 1578, but whose body was reportedly never recovered) will one day return to lead Portugal to glory. There are clear links here with the legend of King Arthur and other messiah-king discourses.

⁹ Malhoa's painting was the inspiration, in its turn, for a fado recorded by Amália Rodrigues. José Galhardo's 'Fado Malhoa' describes the work as 'the most Portuguese of oil paintings' and the guitarist as 'a real local/a real Lisbon/a bohemian and a *fadista*'.

¹⁰ Amália Rodrigues, *Tudo isto é fado: O Melhor de Amália Vol.II* (CD, EMI/Valentim de Carvalho 724353007829, 2000). CD1, Track 9.

¹¹ Raphael Samuel, *Island Stories: Unravelling Britain (Theatres of Memory, Volume II)*, ed. Alison Light, Sally Alexander & Gareth Stedman Jones (London & New York: Verso, 1998), p. 14.

¹² A list of the most obvious candidates might include: Pinto de Carvalho's 1903 *História do Fado* (Lisbon: Publicações Dom Quixote, 2003); Alberto Pimentel's 1904 *A Triste Canção do Sul: Subsídios para a História do Fado* (Lisbon: Livraria Central de Gomes de Carvalho, n.d.); Avelino de Sousa's *O Fado e os Seus Censores* (Lisbon: self-published, 1912); Frederico de Freitas's 'O Fado, Canção da Cidade de Lisboa: Suas Origens e Evolução', *Língua e Cultura*, Vol. 3 No. 3 (1973), pp. 325-337; António Osório's *A Mitologia Fadista* (Lisbon: Livros Horizonte, 1974); José Ramos Tinhorão's *Fado: Dança do Brasil, Cantar de Lisboa* (Lisbon: Caminho, 1994); Eduardo Sucena's *Lisboa, o Fado e os Fadistas*, 2nd edn., (Lisbon: Vega, 2002); and Rui Vieira Nery's *Para uma História do Fado* (Lisbon: Corda Seca & Público, 2004). A comprehensive fado history in English has yet to be completed,

although Paul Vernon's *A History of the Portuguese Fado* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 1998) goes part of the way towards achieving this goal. Vernon's work leans heavily on Gallop's account of fado from the 1930s and does not provide translations of subsequent Portuguese scholarship.

¹³ [O discurso ideológica é a tônica dominante de grande parte da extensa bibliografia [...] que se ocupa do fado.] Joaquim Pais do Brito, introduction to Pinto de Carvalho, *História do Fado* (Lisbon: Publicações Dom Quixote, 2003), p. 10.

¹⁴ Pais do Brito in Carvalho, *História*, p. 11.

¹⁵ Gallop, 'The Fado'. This article, only very slightly revised, appeared three years later as a chapter in Gallop's *Portugal: A Book of Folk-Ways* (Cambridge University Press, 1961).

¹⁶ [Português seria sempre, uma vez que o Brasil não tinha ainda tornado independente.] Sucena, *Lisboa*, p. 20. The de Freitas quotation that Sucena uses is: 'Resta dizer que, tendo o fado nascido ou não no Brasil, ele se radicou na velha casa lusitana, tal como a *modinha*, nascida em Portugal, veio a radicar-se no Brasil, e por isso será de direito brasileira. O que legitima, justifica e define uma criação popular não será, porventura, a sua adaptação, a sua aceitação, a sua identificação com a idiosincrasia desse mesmo povo? Sendo assim, o fado é legitimamente português' [It remains to be said that, whether or not the fado was born in Brazil, it took root in the old country, just as the *modinha*, born in Portugal, took root in Brazil, and became by rights Brazilian. Is it not the case that what legitimises, justifies and defines a popular creation is its adaptation to, acceptance by and identification with the character of a particular people? If so, fado is legitimately Portuguese.], quoted on p. 19.

¹⁷ [No entanto, se o relacionamento do fado com os cantos de S. João não suscita grandes objecções, dado que aquele, no dizer de Rodney Gallop, não passará de uma "síntese, estilizada por séculos de lenta evolução, de todas influências musicais que afectaram o povo de Lisboa", já o mesmo não sucede com a hipótese de a "canção langorosa" dos pretos libertados, de Alfama, ter sido a génese do fado. Esses pretos, pelo facto de terem sido libertados, deveriam antes cantar canções alegres, mas se cantavam a tal "canção langorosa", ela não poderia ser senão de raiz diferente, por óbvias razões de ordem cultural, do seu temperamento indolente e de influências ancestrais da raça.] Sucena, *Lisboa*, p. 16.

¹⁸ Mascarenhas Barreto, *Fado: origens líricas e motivação poética/Fado: lyrical origins and poetic motivation*, il. José Pedro Sobreiro, parallel English text by George Dykes (Frankfurt am Main: TFM, 1994), p. 173.

¹⁹ Gallop, 'The Fado', p. 201.

²⁰ [o fado, cancro da vida e da cultura nacionais]. Fernando Lopes-Graça, *Disto e Daquilo* (Lisbon: Cosmos, 1973), p. 150.

²¹ [um olhar português sobre o mundo, sobre os outros e sobre nós próprios]. Rui Vieira Nery, liner notes to *Fado Maior* by Katia Guerreiro (Ocarina OCA 002, 2001).

²² Michel de Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life*, tr. Steven Rendall (Berkeley & Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1984), pp. 104-105.

²³ Fernando Pessoa, *The Book of Disquiet*, tr. Richard Zenith (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 2001), p. 467.

²⁴ See Roland Barthes, *Camera Lucida: Reflections on Photography*, tr. Richard Howard (London: Vintage, 2000). For a more recent account of the ways photography records and 'freezes' dramatic events, see Susan Sontag, *Regarding the Pain of Others* (New York: Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 2003).

²⁵ Italo Calvino, *Invisible Cities*, tr. William Weaver (London: Secker & Warburg, 1974), p. 30.

²⁶ Although it might well be argued that the rural aspect is still crucial, that the 'simpler' city of the past is somehow a closer equivalent of the village, an equivalence of aching importance for those newly arrived in the city.

²⁷ Svetlana Boym, *The Future of Nostalgia* (New York: Basic Books, 2001), pp. 75-76.

²⁸ Kimberly DaCosta Holton, 'Bearing Material Witness to Musical Sound: Fado's L94 Museum Debut', *Luso-Brazilian Review*, Vol. 39 No. 2 (2002), p. 108.

²⁹ See Jean Baudrillard, *Simulacra and Simulation*, tr. Sheila Faria Glaser (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 1994).

³⁰ This same roping off is to be found in Lacanian psychoanalysis as the inability to even fully comprehend, let alone surpass, the real by symbolic means. For a useful account of this, see Catherine Belsey, *Culture and the Real: Theorising Cultural Criticism* (London & New York: Routledge, 2005), esp. pp. 38-51, 71-99.

³¹ DaCosta Holton, 'Bearing', p. 108.

³² DaCosta Holton, 'Bearing', p. 112 (emphasis in original).

³³ DaCosta Holton, 'Bearing', p. 109. There is an obvious but necessary point to make here. While the introduction of sound marks this as an innovative ethnological exhibit for DaCosta Holton, her emphasis on the sensory aspect of the museum-going experience does underline how removed it is

from its real counterpart, for surely the smells, tastes and textures of Lisbon would also have to be experienced 'to understand fado'. This is a necessary point to make since it must be kept in mind that there are numerous ways in which to hear any form of music. Since the successful exportation of fado via the work of Amália Rodrigues and a handful of her contemporaries, the music has been available to a quite varied audience, from listeners with knowledge of Portuguese but not of Portugal to those with neither. Although the connection between fado and the city is being stressed in this chapter, it is being done so by an ex-resident of Lisbon with knowledge of the Portuguese language.

³⁴ See Michael Colvin, 'Gabriel de Oliveira's "Há Festa na Mouraria" and the *Fado Novo*'s Criticism of the Estado Novo's Demolition of the Baixa Mouraria', *Portuguese Studies*, Vol. 20 (2004), pp. 134-151. It should be pointed out that the period Colvin is writing about is a much earlier one than that covered by what I shall later be referring to, following its designation by others as such, as *Novo Fado*.

³⁵ Barthes, *Camera Lucida*, p. 34. At the same time, as Barthes stresses, and Susan Sontag after him, the photograph is unique in its combination of *verité* recording and its freezing of the moment. Sontag's meditations on the ethics of looking at photographs which depict pain, suffering and death are very much based on this sense of uniqueness and it must be with care that we attempt to make connections between media that encompass radically different relationships to movement and stasis.

³⁶ *O livro de desassossego* was not published until a long time after Pessoa's death in 1935. The first full Portuguese edition was published in 1982, after which numerous revised editions appeared. The lateness and variety of available editions mean that the work can bear no definitive date. English translations have varied over the years, even from the same translator; Richard Zenith provided a *Book of Disquietude* for Carcanet in 1991 and a reorganised *Book of Disquiet* for Penguin a decade later. The sheer bulk of material left by Pessoa that may or may not have been destined for the book is such that, as Zenith points out, potentially infinite possible combinations are available. The next logical step in presenting the work should be as a hyperlinked e-text.

³⁷ Richard Zenith, Introduction to Pessoa, *Disquiet* (Penguin), p. ix.

³⁸ See Walter Benjamin, 'On Some Motifs in Baudelaire', in *Illuminations*, ed. Hannah Arendt, tr. Harry Zorn (London: Pimlico, 1999), pp. 152-196.

³⁹ Italo Calvino, *The Literature Machine: Essays*, tr. Patrick Creagh (London: Secker & Warburg, 1987), p. 185.

⁴⁰ Boym, *Future*, p. 76.

⁴¹ Boym, *Future*, p. 76.

⁴² See José Saramago, *The Year of the Death of Ricardo Reis*, tr. Giovanni Pontiero (London: Harvill, 1992). Ricardo Reis was one of the many 'heteronyms' under which Pessoa produced his work. The technique of having protagonists 'spell out' their presence in the city can be found even more explicitly in works such as Paul Auster's *New York Trilogy* (in *Collected Novels Vol. 1* (London: Faber & Faber, 2004)) and Iain Sinclair's *Lights Out For The Territory* (London: Granta, 1997), which take their place amongst the psychogeographical literature mentioned in Chapter One.

⁴³ de Certeau, *Practice*, p. 93.

⁴⁴ For Barthes's notions of *studium* and *punctum* see *Camera Lucida*. These terms are taken up in more detail below.

⁴⁵ Included in Miguel de Unamuno, *Escritos de Unamuno sobre Portugal*, ed. Ángel Marcos de Dios (Paris: Fundação Calouste Gulbenkian, 1985), p. 96.

⁴⁶ [O vocábulo espanhol *soledad* é dado como correspondendo perfeitamente no sentido ao português *saudade*. [...] Busco soleá, o vocábulo *soledad* não corresponde a *saudade*, mas sim a *solidão*, *soidão*, *soledade* em português. *Saudade* não é nada disso. *Saudade* é <<a mágoa de já se não gozar o que em tempo se gozou; é o desejo veemente mas resignado de volver a disfrutar um bem, que nos era gratíssimo; é também o anseio por ver, por estar na companhia de alguém de quem a custo nos apartámos>>.] Quoted in Dalila L. Pereira da Costa & Pinharanda Gomes. *Introdução à Saudade: Antologia Teórica e Aproximação Crítica* (Porto, Lello & Irmão, 1976), p. 10.

⁴⁷ Quoted in Pereira da Costa & Gomes, *Saudade*, p. 11.

⁴⁸ Aubrey F.G. Bell, *Portuguese Literature* (Oxford University Press, 1970), p. 135, fn. 1.

⁴⁹ Actually a misquotation: the original reads 'a passion to which I can give no name'. The difference is immaterial yet it is worth remembering the original phrase within its context as it is most appropriate for a consideration of the relationship between loss and desire that *saudade* is supposed to evoke. The passage reads: 'I have been spending a week in Somerset. The right June weather put me in the mind for rambling, and my thoughts turned to the Severn Sea. I went to Glastonbury and Wells, and on to Cheddar, and so to the shore of the Channel at Clevedon, remembering my holiday of fifteen years ago, and too often losing myself in a contrast of the man I was then and what I am now. Beautiful beyond all words of description that nook of oldest England; but that I feared the moist and misty winter

climate, I should have chosen some spot below the Mendips for my home and resting-place. Unspeakable the charm to my ear of those old names; exquisite the quiet of those little towns, lost amid tith and pasture, untouched as yet by the fury of modern life, their ancient sanctuaries guarded, as it were, by noble trees and hedges overrun with flowers. In all England there is no sweeter and more varied prospect than that from the hill of the Holy Thorn at Glastonbury; in all England there is no lovelier musing place than the leafy walk beside the Palace Moat at Wells. As I think of the golden hours I spent there, a passion to which I can give no name takes hold upon me; my heart trembles with an indefinable ecstasy.' George Gissing, *The Private Papers of Henry Ryecroft* (London: Archibald Constable & Co., 1904), pp. 81-82.

⁵⁰ Gallop, 'The Fado', p. 211-212.

⁵¹ See Umberto Eco, *Mouse or Rat?: Translation as Negotiation* (London: Weidenfield & Nicolson, 2003).

⁵² Boym, *Future*, p. 13.

⁵³ As for the association of *saudade* with Portuguese people and fado, Miguel Vale de Almeida notes 'the emic notion that the Portuguese are characterized by the sentiment of Saudade and that Fado is its artistic expression'. Vale de Almeida, 'Marialvismo', p. 12, fn.10.

⁵⁴ For an overview of lyrical themes in fado, see the 'General Index' in Mascarenhas Barreto, *Fado*.

⁵⁵ Salwa El-Shawan Castelo-Branco, 'Fado', in L. Macy (ed.), *Grove Music Online*, <http://www.grovemusic.com> (accessed 1 June 2005). Examples of the three *castiço* styles can be found on CD1 as follows: Track 10, Lucilia do Carmo, 'Maria Madalena' (*fado mouraria*); Track 11, Carlos do Carmo, 'Por morrer uma andorinha' (*fado menor*); Track 12, Maria Teresa de Noronha, 'Corrido em cinco estilos' (*fado corrido*).

⁵⁶ Examples of *fado canção* can be found on CD1 as follows: Track 13, Alfredo Marceneiro, 'Há festa na Mouraria'; Track 14, Amália Rodrigues, 'Gaivota'.

⁵⁷ La Féria's full quotation is: 'Amália Rodrigues nasceu na Primeira República, viveu com e para o Estado Novo e assistiu ao 25 de Abril. Trata-se de uma época muito rica e que emociona as pessoas. Para além do reencontro com essa personagem extraordinária e única que é Amália Rodrigues, é também a capacidade de se identificar com coisas que o próprio público passou e que os jovens já ouviram falar. Por exemplo, os ingleses gostam muito de teatro porque gostam muito da sua História. O Teatro torna-se vivo quando um povo vê a sua História retratada' Quoted in Cláudia Rodrigues, 'Entrevista com Filipe La Féria', *Terranatal* website, http://www.terranatal.com/notic/entrev/e_filfer_10.htm (accessed 18 March 2005).

⁵⁸ 'Abandono', also known by the title 'Fado Peniche', concerns a political activist locked up because of their 'free will' in the notorious Peniche fortress. Amália always maintained she sang it only as a love song, though it was significantly re-released as a single in 1974 following the overthrow of the Estado Novo bearing the title 'Fado Peniche' and a cover that clearly referenced the prison.

⁵⁹ Amália Rodrigues, 'Estranha forma de vida', *Estranha forma de vida: O melhor de Amália* (2CD, Valentim de Carvalho/EMI 724383444229, 1995). CD1, Track 15.

⁶⁰ [Durante o Estado Novo, o fado viveu uma situação bastante ambígua: como se acantonou - por inibições sucessivas de ser cantado em casas públicas - nas casas típicas que, por mecanismos de selecção natural, tinham no seu público a burguesia e os turistas, o fado conviveu com o regime, que nunca o adoptou nem nunca o promoveu, mas também nunca o recusou. Não precisou disso porque teve o seu problema resolvido com Amália. A qualidade da voz de Amália e o momento em que surge permite, de certo modo, a fixação definitiva do fado, exportá-lo e pôr grandes poetas ditos eruditos, cultos, a escrever para uma voz.] Joaquim Pais do Brito, 'Tudo Isto é Fado (II)', *Elo Associativo* No. 19 (June 2001), *Collectividades* website, <http://www.colectividades.org/elo/019/p25.html> (accessed 2 December 2004).

⁶¹ Leonor Lains, 'Amália Rodrigues', tr. John D. Godinho, *Vidas Lusofonos* website, http://www.vidaslusofonas.pt/amalia_rodrigues2.htm (accessed 30 March 2005).

⁶² On *Estranha forma de vida*. CD1, Track 16.

⁶³ 'People', used here as a translation of the Portuguese *povo*, does not adequately differentiate that term from the term *gente*, as used in the lyrics of 'Estranha Forma de Vida' quoted above, but is the best word to use in the context. Just as the word 'people' can imply all kinds of meanings in English, so 'povo' and 'gente' resist easy definition; *povo* can be translated as 'peasantry', 'race' 'common people' or just 'people', yet there is nothing to exclude any of these from the more general *gente*. There are strong rural connotations to *povo* but also political, class-conscious articulations such as that implied in the coalition between the Portuguese Communist Party and the Portuguese Democratic Movement, known as Aliança Povo Unido (United People's Alliance, 1979-1987). Here I would want to understand the 'gente' used in the first song quoted as a very general 'people' among whom one shares

a world – fellow human beings. The ‘povo’ of the second song signifies an identification with, in this case, a rural community viewed as a socio-economic class.

⁶⁴ Timothy Mitchell, *Flamenco Deep Song* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1994), p. 128.

⁶⁵ I provide a few examples of Amália’s melisma and word fetishisation in my discussion of her song ‘Lágrima’ later in this chapter. Other examples can be found in Rodrigues recordings included on the accompanying CD1.

⁶⁶ [É um campo onde convivem os que estão excluídos, os da rua, os que vieram de fora, os que não têm passado, os que misturam as raças, os que vivem da dependência clientelar de uma nobreza, ela própria em decadência.] Joaquim Pais de Brito, ‘Tudo Isto é Fado (I)’, *Elo Associativo* No. 18 (April 2001), *Collectividades* website, <http://www.colectividades.org/elo/018/index.htm> (accessed 2 December 2004).

⁶⁷ It would be instructive to attempt a ‘production of culture’ account of the emergence of *fado canção* and the success of Amália along the lines of that provided by Richard Peterson for rock ‘n’ roll in his ‘Why 1955? Explaining the Advent of Rock Music’, *Popular Music*, Vol. 9 No. 1 (1990), pp. 97-116. Paul Vernon’s work on fado history and practice gives some flavour of how the recording industry emerged as it did in Portugal but more work clearly needs to be done here. See Vernon, *A History*.

⁶⁸ Vieira Nery, *Para uma História*, p. 245.

⁶⁹ An example of Afonso’s ‘Coimbran’ repertoire is included as CD1, Track 17 (José Afonso, ‘Saudades de Coimbra’).

⁷⁰ Polyphonic singing is particularly associated in Portugal with the southern region of Alentejo; an example is included as CD1, Track 18. Group singing here has traditionally accompanied agricultural work and, during the revolutionary period, the attraction of a collective ‘voice of the people’ was allied to issues of agrarian reform. To associate oneself with the region was to associate oneself with the progressive ideals of the Revolution.

⁷¹ Jorge Lima Barreto, *Musa Lusa* (Lisbon: Hugin, 1997), p. 9.

⁷² [“Grândola” situa-se noutra esfera musical: não é apenas uma reflexão sobre a revolução, é matéria-prima da própria revolução. É Música Popular Portuguesa.] Barreto, *Musa Lusa*, p. 79. The song is included as CD1, Track 19.

⁷³ [A música popular portuguesa é imediatamente contagiante; esse contágio é desencadeador da consciência política, incita à actividade e, como é o caso de “Grândola”, leva-nos a desfilar na rua e a consolidarmos o imaginário mais subversivo. “Grândola” não é apenas o nome duma localidade, como nas referências topológicas da música de consumo envoltas de nostalgia e melodrama. “Grândola” é um mito cultura portuguesa [...] que desencadeia a mais inabalável convicção humanista e revolucionária. Numa situação política em que tudo pretende mostrar-se como funcionando sem contradições ou o seu processo de degradação é excomungado (como em Santiago, como em Capetown, como em Timor Leste, como em Tianamen). “Grândola” é em primeiro lugar uma reverificação sincrónica e permanente do conceito de democracia, tão confundido entre a escória ideológica da política burguesa [...].] Barreto, *Musa Lusa*, p. 79.

⁷⁴ Geoffrey O’Brien, *Sonata for Jukebox: Pop Music, Memory, and the Imagined Life* (New York: Counterpoint, 2004), p. 20.

⁷⁵ O’Brien, *Sonata*, p. 21.

⁷⁶ O’Brien, *Sonata*, pp. 8-9.

⁷⁷ Philip Sweeney, ‘Portugal sifts among varied styles for ideal musical export. (The Billboard Report)’, in *Billboard* (1/8/1994), n.p., available online at <http://www.highbeam.com/doc/1G1-14982133.html> (accessed 4 December 2004).

⁷⁸ Notable examples being *Paris, Texas*, *Wings of Desire* and *Buena Vista Social Club*; one can find in each film a strong link between landscape and soundscape.

⁷⁹ It is interesting to note how, since entering the competition for the first time in 1964, Portugal has tended to favour music that does not carry a sense of Portugueseness much beyond its lyrical content. The nearest fado has come to being represented was probably Carlos do Carmo’s entry in 1976. Liana, who performed as the young Amália Rodrigues in Filipe La Féria’s musical and who produced the ambitious crossover album *Fado.pt* in 2004, won the 2000 *Festival RTP da Canção*, the national song festival that is used to select the Eurovision entry (Portugal did not enter in 2000), but her song was not a fado-style song.

⁸⁰ In Portugal three days of national mourning were announced following Rodrigues’s death and countless newspaper and magazine articles started to emerge about the late ‘queen of fado’. Internationally, there were numerous obituaries and feature articles, followed by the inevitable rush releasing of compilation albums.

⁸¹ Mariza, 'Ó gente da minha terra', *Fado em mim* (CD, World Connection 43038, 2002 [2001]). CD 1, Track 20. Track 21 is an excerpt from a piano and vocal version of the same song included on the album.

⁸² [Mais do que os arranjos, mais do que o uso de instrumentos estranhos ao fado tradicional, são os poemas que ilustram o fado destes dias. Já não se escreve sobre a Rua da Mariquinhas, sobre os Fadões gingões, sobre as tascas e as guitarradas. Mas continua-se a escrever sobre os grandes temas humanos: o amor, a solidão, o ciúme, a morte. Escreve-se sobre os divórcios, a droga, os flagelos sociais e os dramas pessoais.] Pedro Baptista-Bastos, 'O "Novo Fado" Não Existe', liner notes to *O Fado do Público* CD, vol. 5 (Lisbon: Corda Seca & Público, 2004), pp. 6-7. The Portuguese terms refer to a street (Rua da Mariquinhas) associated with local fado lore from the time of Maria Severa onwards, the 'swaying *fadistas*' of fado legend, the cheap eating places (*tascas*), and the guitar 'duels' or improvisations set up between fado instrumentalists.

⁸³ When questioned on this apparent contradiction by *fRoots* magazine, Guerreiro responded: 'Amália was the only person in this world that could do it. She was the queen. It's [a] very strong expression but she was the owner of fado and she could do whatever she wanted with fado because it would always be fado.' Again, as with the earlier quotations of Joaquim Pais de Brito and Leonor Lains, there is this sense of this Voice seeming to banish all contradictions through some magic power it carries. Guerreiro's comments can be found alongside interviews with other 'new fadistas' in Jon Lusk, 'Fado Figures', *fRoots* website, <http://www.frootsmag.com/content/features/mariza/page04.html> (accessed 18 March 2005). Guerreiro's 'Vodka e Valium 10' (with a lyric by António Lobo Antunes) is included as CD2, Track 1.

⁸⁴ This popularity can be asserted by witnessing the number of tours of the Netherlands by Portuguese artists such as Mariza, Cristina Branco and Ana Moura; the existence of home-grown fado clubs in Amsterdam and Utrecht; the easy availability of fado recordings by both established and less-famous performers in the record stores; and the fact that Mariza signed to a Dutch record label (World Connection) rather than a Portuguese one.

⁸⁵ Branco, a contemporary of and collaborator with José Afonso, was exiled during the Estado Novo period before returning to be a major contributor to the post-revolutionary Portuguese popular music. His albums *Mudam-se os tempos, mudam-se as vontades* (1971) and *Margem de certa maneira* (1972) are considered classics of the period.

⁸⁶ Zambujo's 'Trago Alentejo na voz' ('I carry/bear Alentejo in my voice', an apt title to evoke the process of witnessing-as-carrying described in Chapter One) is included as CD2, Track 4.

⁸⁷ Two examples of the bridging of musical worlds are included as CD2, Tracks 2 and 3. Lula Pena's version of 'Gaiivota' strips out the fado instrumentation and opts for a minimal guitar accompaniment that morphs into a ghostly, percussive exploration of the instrument's body. Joel Xavier's version of the same song, by contrast, is an exercise in guitar improvisation with Carlos do Carmo providing the vocals to a track he has performed many times over the years, generally accompanied by more 'traditional' accompaniment.

⁸⁸ Timothy D. Taylor, *Global Pop: World Music, World Markets* (London & New York: Routledge, 1997), p. 3.

⁸⁹ A good example of this can be found on Mariza's DVD *Live in London* (EMI 724359962795, 2004), which presents a concert given by the artist in London's Union Chapel. Throughout, the production quality (courtesy of the BBC) is of the high quality we have come to expect from a world music recording. The final track, however, finds singer and guitarists venturing out into the audience to perform 'Povo que lavas no rio' (that song of 'the people' discussed earlier) without amplification. At this stage the recording of the concert comes to resemble a field recording with noticeably directed microphones, made explicit when Mariza turns away from them and her voice is lost from the soundtrack.

⁹⁰ [O passar dos tempos, os trinta anos do 25 de Abril, a União Europeia, a Internet, o século XXI fizeram com que deixássemos de associar o Fado a um género de canção gasto, reaccionário e caduco para o vermos, nos dias de hoje, ligado a vozes que este CD nos apresenta e que são uma imagem de um outro Portugal.] Baptista-Bastos, 'Novo Fado', p. 6.

⁹¹ There is much to be said here, no doubt, about market choice too but I do not have space to discuss the political economy of fado in this chapter. My comments regarding popular music vanguards and traditions in Chapter Five imply connections between this process and market forces, although there again I do not have the space necessary to make these connections more explicit.

⁹² See Sweeney's *Billboard* report, cited above.

⁹³ O'Brien, *Sonata*, p. 10.

⁹⁴ A version of 'Povo que lavas no rio' by JC Loops feat. Ana Láíns, from *Amália Revisited* (CD, Different World DW50009CD, 2004), is included as CD2, Track 5.

⁹⁵ Quite how 'original' these recordings can remain in their journey through transference to new media, remastering and restoring is a highly debatable issue.

⁹⁶ Manuel Halperin, *O futuro da saudade: O Novo Fado e os Novos Fadistas* (Lisbon: Publicações Dom Quixote, 2004).

⁹⁷ António Variações, 'Povo que lavas no rio', 'Voz-Amália-de-nós' and 'Visões-ficções (Nostradamus)', all on *Anjo da guarda* (CD, EMI/Valentim de Carvalho 724382373223, 1998 [1983]). 'Povo' and 'Visões' are included as CD2, Tracks 6 & 7.

⁹⁸ Humanos, *Humanos* (EMI/Valentim de Carvalho 724356065222, 2004).

⁹⁹ *On Tudo isto é fado*. CD2, Track 8.

¹⁰⁰ Jacques Lacan, *Ethics*, p. 152.

¹⁰¹ Roland Barthes, 'The Grain of the Voice', in *Image-Music-Text*, tr. Stephen Heath (London: Fontana, 1977), p. 186.

¹⁰² Barthes, *Camera Lucida*, p. 26.

¹⁰³ Roland Barthes, *The Pleasure of the Text*, tr. Richard Miller (New York: Hill and Wang, 1975), p. 67.

¹⁰⁴ Although Barthes does use the metaphor of cutting when introducing a less formulated 'grain of the voice' in *The Pleasure of the Text*, as quoted above.

¹⁰⁵ Barthes, *Pleasure*, p. 12.

¹⁰⁶ Barthes, *Pleasure*, p. 6.

¹⁰⁷ Belsey, *Culture*, p. 72.

¹⁰⁸ Jacques Lacan, *Ethics*, p. 217.

¹⁰⁹ Jacques Lacan, *Ethics*, pp. 217, 238.

¹¹⁰ I cannot resist also pointing out the associations between the *guitarra* and the tear. Firstly, the body of the *guitarra* is tear-shaped and the model made in Coimbra is distinguished from its Lisbon counterpart by having the end of its tuning head shaped into a tear (Lisbon *guitarras* utilise a scroll design). Secondly, the notes plucked on the steel strings by the *unhas* resemble 'drops' and can fairly easily be imagined as the sound of tears falling between the words of the fado, the guitarist doing the 'crying' so that the singer can concentrate on the emotion of the lyrical message. Finally, to switch to the other use of 'tear' being offered in the text, these notes do seem to tear the unity of the song apart even as they hold it together; they irrupt into the symbolic structure of the fado text, cutting it into discrete moments of despair.

¹¹¹ Jorge Fernando & Argentina Santos, 'Lágrima', *Velho fado* (CD, Times Square/World Connection TSQD 9017, 2001). CD2, Track 9.

¹¹² At the same time, it could be argued that Rodrigues was in large part able to pursue the exploratory paths she did due to the relative luxury afforded her by her recording and film career and by her international success. There is an obvious disparity between an artist-centred and a 'production of culture' account here.

¹¹³ CD liner to Dulce Pontes, *Lágrimas* (Movieplay Portuguesa PE 51.003, 1993). Pontes's version of 'Lágrima' is included as CD2, Track 10

¹¹⁴ Mário Jorge Torres, liner notes to *Ritual* by Mísia (CD, Erato 8573-85818-2, 2001).

¹¹⁵ The guitar version and an excerpt of the piano version are included as CD1, Tracks 20 & 21.

¹¹⁶ Maria Isabel Barreno, Maria Teresa Horta & Maria Velho da Costa. *New Portuguese Letters*, tr. Helen R. Lane, Faith Gillespie & Suzette Macedo (London: Victor Gollancz, 1975), p. 15.

¹¹⁷ Roland Barthes, 'The War of Languages', in *The Rustle of Language*, tr. Richard Howard (Berkeley & Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1989), pp. 106-110.

¹¹⁸ [O saudosismo, <<os fumos da Índia>>, o sebastianismo, os <<espectros do passado>>, a petulância marialva, a predisposição lacrimante, a inércia e a indiferença cívicas, o narcisismo derrotista, a tacanhez, o desgosto da vida, a opacidade do futuro...]. António Osório, *A Mitologia Fadista* (Lisbon: Livros Horizonte, 1974), p. 11.

¹¹⁹ [Miséria, prostituição, doença, desonra, abandalhamento, tudo isto é <<fado>>. Explica e, por tabela, absolve todos os males. Perante os <<decretos do destino>> o poder da vontade mostra-se nulo; num fatalismo inexorável condensa-se a <<filosofia>> do fado, afinal nada mais que o <<fatum mahumetanum>> definido por Leibniz: a vontade nada pode, porque o homem e os acontecimentos são governadas maquinalmente pela <<força das coisas>>. O corolário extrai-se num ápice – ninguém é responsável de nada.] Osório, *Mitologia*, p. 103.

¹²⁰ [De mais a mais, a impotência do homem perante as circunstâncias, a vivência central do fado, não permeia apenas a criação de escritores portugueses contemporâneos, porque está no fundo da obra de

um Kafka, de um Beckett, de tantos escritores representativos do nosso tempo. Nas épocas opressivas e paralisadoras do indivíduo proliferam os germes do desânimo.] Osório, *Mitologia*, p. 117.

¹²¹ Belsey, *Culture*, p. 37.

Chapter Three

Reconstructing the Event: Spectres of Terror in Latin American New Song

Let the guitar be muted,
for the country is dressed in mourning.

Our country is growing darker.

Now they have murdered our soldier.

– Pablo Neruda, ‘Manuel Rodríguez: Cueca and Death’¹

If history does not offer us model men, it is the duty of the historian to make them.

– Diego Barros Arana²

Introduction

On March 31 1990, in the early days of the newly restored democracy in Chile, the Cuban *cantautor* (singer-songwriter) Silvio Rodríguez staged a concert in the Chilean capital's National Stadium in front of an audience of 80,000. Accompanying him were the fourteen-piece band Irakere, led by the Cuban jazz pianist Chucho Valdés, and the formerly exiled Chilean folksinger Isabel Parra and her group. After a rousing introduction featuring Valdés's 'Concierto Andino', Rodríguez delivered a set of songs that drew on his extensive song catalogue from the 1970s and 1980s, including particular audience favourites 'Pequeña serenata diurna', 'La maza', 'Unicornio' and, topically, 'Santiago de Chile'. The concert was recorded and released the following year as *Silvio Rodríguez en Chile* and was televised and broadcast in many Latin American countries. Shortly after the release of the live album, the label Luaka Bop, run by Yale Evelev and David Byrne, released, as the first volume of a series entitled *Cuba Classics*, a compilation of songs by Rodríguez. According to the producers of the disc, *Cuba Classics 1: Silvio Rodríguez Greatest Hits* was the first Cuban disc released in the United States since the start of the embargo placed on Cuban goods in 1962. The album sold well (over 400,000 copies), particularly in Spain and Latin America).

In this chapter I wish to locate Rodríguez's Santiago concert as an important site of memory in the cultural landscape of Chile and to suggest that it can shed light on a number of themes relevant to my thesis, namely the relationships between music, loss, mourning and remembrance, and on the ways that performative events allow these relationships to emerge. At the same time I wish to problematise the notion of the performative event by alluding to Jacques Derrida's concept of the event as expressed in *Specters of Marx* and to Alain Badiou's concepts of event and fidelity, outlined in *Being and Event*.³ Rodríguez's concert was, as can be seen from the summary above, an event in the sense that we often use the word. But it also takes part in what we can think of, following Derrida, as the creation of a bigger event. This event is not reducible to something that happened over the course of a few hours on a particular night in Santiago, but rather can be seen as a much larger and longer process which takes into account the recent history of Chile – a history dominated by the violence and repression of the Pinochet dictatorship (1973-1989) – as well as the recent history of Latin America more generally.⁴ Part of what I mean can be conveyed

by unpacking some extra information from the brief sketch of the concert already given. Doing so will also will provide a list of names and events crucial to an understanding of the issues involved and a schema for structuring the responses that will comprise the subsequent parts of the chapter

1. **Silvio Rodríguez.** More biographical information about the *cantautor* is provided below. Here it should suffice to pose a few questions regarding Rodríguez's presence in Santiago. What is/was the relevance of Rodríguez, his music, and Cuba generally to the people of Chile and how has this changed over the course of his career?
2. **Recording the concert.** As stated by Rodríguez in the liner notes to *En Chile*, the idea of recording the concert came from Ricardo Garcia, the founder of the Chilean record label Alerce. The album is also dedicated to Garcia, who died shortly after producing it. As a primary force behind the music known as *canto nuevo*, Garcia had an enormous influence on the direction of Chilean popular music during the Pinochet dictatorship, when state censorship and oppression sought to silence the voices of disquiet within the country.⁵ Garcia's participation in this particular project reminds us of the crucial role he played in encouraging the possibility of a "messianic" moment in authoritarian Chile, whereby the possibility of hope might find a space to emerge at unexpected moments.⁶ In addition, the very fact of having this historic concert recorded tempts us to ask questions regarding the recording process itself, in particular its role as a potential (though never entirely successful) "loss prevention" mechanism. Does the recording of concerts ever truly capture the moment in any effective way? Even assuming a recording "fixes" a moment, provides a site that will remain identical for its duration, how can we ever claim to be the same, or our memories reliable, when we return to that site (to listen, to pay homage to that original moment)?
3. **The Parras.** The participation of Isabel Parra in the concert allows us to tease out more historical connections. As with Ricardo Garcia we can ask what the participation of Isabel Parra in a concert in Chile's National Stadium in 1990 signifies beyond the merely denotative. What does Isabel Parra connote? The answers, involving her family (the folksinger Violeta Parra, the poet Nicanor Parra and the singer Angel Parra among them) along with her own career and

exile, provide us with much information about the role of popular music in Latin America in the second half of the twentieth century.

4. **Víctor Jara.** At a certain point in the concert Rodríguez dedicates the event to the *cantautor* Víctor Jara. Jara, as writer, performer, theatre director and political activist, had been one of the voices most closely associated with the campaign that brought Salvador Allende's socialist Unidad Popular party to power in the 1970 Chilean elections. One does not have to read much material on Latin American music before coming across references to Jara's role in the *nueva canción* movement, his arrest and subsequent murder by the Chilean forces following the military coup of 11 September 1973, and his posthumous Che Guevara-like career as an icon on posters, T-shirts and murals. However, unsurprising as Rodríguez's dedication might be, it is worth once again exploring beyond the obviously denotative (as indeed it is with Che). What are the layers of meaning exposed by dedicating a concert at this particular time and place to Jara or by recording, as Rodríguez was to do later on the *Tributo a Víctor Jara* album, Jara's song of loss and reminiscence, 'Te recuerdo Amanda'?
5. **The stadium.** The location of Rodríguez's concert was both pragmatic and symbolic. Chosen primarily – as with previous major sporting, cultural and political events – for its capacity, the very fact of using a stadium nonetheless evoked memories of the uses made by both democratic and violently non-democratic forces in this and other stadiums in Latin America. Following the military coup of 1973, the National Stadium was used by the military as a concentration camp for political prisoners, during which time prisoners were tortured and, in some cases, murdered. Víctor Jara himself was one of those held in one of the city's stadiums, the smaller Chile Stadium. Here he was subjected, according to eye witness reports, to interrogation and torture before being machine-gunned to death. The stadium has since been re-named in the singer's honour and there have been a number of musical and cultural events held in it to honour Jara's memory.

In addition to the topics that can be exploded out from this significant concert, which include those already mentioned and others to be covered in more detail below and which hopefully constitute both a useful historical survey and a significant contribution to the larger study of music and loss in late modernity, I will discuss a

selection of songs by Rodríguez and Jara, along with subsequent performances of their work by other artists, in an attempt to locate more precisely how themes of loss, trauma and memory are explored in the music.

The five part schema sketched above is presented as a possible topic tree emanating from a consideration of a single significant event; as such the primary protagonist – Silvio Rodríguez – is mentioned prior to the factors (people, events) which preceded and influenced the event. While this phenomenological model may help us in setting out the range of questions we wish to explore and in allowing us to think of the performance as the creation of an event larger than itself, it is perhaps wiser to revert to chronological order in working through those questions. Therefore I will begin with a section on Violeta Parra then move on to *nueva canción*, Víctor Jara and recent Chilean history before discussing the Jara song. The overlapping story of Cuban *nueva trova* will then be taken up, along with a discussion of Silvio Rodríguez's position in the movement, before discussing 'Unicornio'. I will then examine the 1990 concert in the light of these intersecting histories and the relevance of its continued existence as a recorded item. The chapter will conclude with a discussion of recordings as historical markers, using recent Chilean reissue programmes and cover versions as examples of reclamation practices in ongoing memory wars.

Part One – Figures and Movements

Explanation of terms

As the three terms *nueva trova*, *nueva canción* and *canto nuevo* are all to appear in this chapter, it is worthwhile offering a brief outline of the similarities and differences in these music genres. Firstly, *nueva canción* refers to the 'new song' movements that arose in Latin America and Spain in the 1960s and 1970s, normally identified by a commitment to indigenous themes and often to indigenous instruments. The beginnings of the movement in Latin America are normally associated with the Chilean Violeta Parra (1917-1967) and the Argentinian Atahualpa Yupanqui (Héctor Roberto Chavero, 1908-1992), both of whom were song collectors, singer-songwriters and guitarists involved with recording and re-presenting the folk songs of their respective countries. The term is also applied to the various singer-songwriters and groups who were inspired by them and other folklorists: these include Víctor Jara,

Inti-Illimani, Quilapayún, Patricio Manns (Chile); Mercedes Sosa (Argentina); Chico Buarque (Brazil); Daniel Viglietti (Uruguay); Joan Manuel Serrat, Joan Isaac (Catalunya, Spain). Secondly, *nueva trova*, while being included in the new song movement, refers specifically to the music of Cuba and to the *trova* singer-songwriter tradition of that island. The protagonists of this ‘movement’ were seen as rescuing Cuban music from the US-dominated show tunes of the Batista era and returning *trova* to its rightful place. This musical revolution was often tied to the aims of the Cuban Revolution itself, although it was often critical of the regime. Finally, *canto nuevo*, though used as a term referring to ‘new song’ and undistinguished from *nueva canción* in most of Latin America, has a specific meaning in the case of Chile, referring to music made after the military coup of 1973. At this point *nueva canción* becomes the music associated with those groups exiled from Chile (Inti-Illimani, Quilapayún, Illapu) while *canto nuevo* becomes the music of opposition within the country. Another important distinction to make is that, while all three music genres are seen as oppositional and very much interested in the voice of the people, many of the *nueva canción* groups enacted their opposition as much through the playing of indigenous (Andean) instruments, the use of which was banned in Chile following the coup, as in the lyrics of their songs.⁷

Establishing Chileanness: Mistral, Neruda, Parra

In discussing the role of *nueva canción* in Chile and the rest of Latin America it is important to reflect on the ways this musical event (what I am figuring here as the minor event of the major event of opposition to injustice) was able to establish its sense of place, for it is in that sense of place – and in the host of myths that attach themselves to place – that we can recognise much of the revolutionary appeal. It is worth our while, then, to look at ways in which Chileanness – and a broader (Latin) Americanness – came to be written into the story of *nueva canción*. The cultural backdrop to this development can be traced to earlier developments in Latin American art and politics; here I will focus very briefly on the importance of Gabriela Mistral and Pablo Neruda in the Chilean context before examining some of the ways in which the ‘mother of new Chilean song’, Violeta Parra, can be seen to relate to these poets.

Gabriela Mistral

‘One cannot talk about Gabriela Mistral without discussing the landscape of her childhood’, suggests Marjorie Agosín.⁸ Agosín further claims that ‘Mistral, herself, is a vast landscape’, one that is, however, ‘more than Chilean territory; rather, it implies a feeling, a way of communicating and inhabiting a world that is Indian, *mestizo* and genuinely American’.⁹ Mistral for her part would see a commitment to a *mestizo* (mixed/hybrid) character in Pablo Neruda’s work, one that rejects much of the influence from North America, save perhaps the liberatory possibilities of verse inherited from Walt Whitman. As she put it, ‘Our imitation of America is painful; the journey back to being ourselves is a joyous undertaking.’¹⁰ Yet Mistral had already beaten Neruda to this goal in her own stories and poetry which sought to name the landscape from which she had emerged. Much of her poetry, for example her *Sonetos de la Muerte* (Sonnets of Death, 1914) and her collection *Desolación* (1922), seems to suggest the dry, seemingly lifeless landscape of northern Chile where she grew up, though a lushness associated with the south of the country – where she worked as a school teacher for a while and became an influence on Pablo Neruda – can be found in them too, as well as in prose works such as *In Praise of Earthly Things*. Much of Mistral’s work involves the hymning of such ‘earthly’ things – odes to the Chilean soil or to figs, walnuts, strawberries. Although associated very much with the countryside and with the role of rural schoolteacher, Mistral was a cosmopolitan figure who spent much of her time away from Chile as a consul, thus forging an imagination of her country from far away. The word she often used for the yearning she felt when away from Chile, and which she used as the title for one of the sections in her collection *Tala* (1938), was *saudade*, the ‘untranslatable’ Portuguese term she had learnt while working as Chilean consul in Lisbon.¹¹ Often in her writing one finds the sense of absence that exile brings and an attempt to match the continuing education of the international traveller with the fondly remembered maternal education received at home.¹² The conflation of images of femininity, and particularly maternity, with those of (mother) nature is one that can be found throughout Mistral’s work, linking her both to Violeta Parra (the ‘mother’ of the New Chilean Song) and Pablo Neruda (for whom Mistral becomes a kind of mother figure and from whom he inherits a desire to hymn nature).

As Agosín puts it, ‘The life of Gabriela Mistral, the footprints of her restless soul, her comings and goings, her absence from Chile for more than thirty years, have

made her a mysterious and hermetic figure, known and unknown at the same time'.¹³ Mistral was well enough known outside her country to be the first Latin American writer to win the Nobel Prize (in 1945), yet seemingly destined to be forever overshadowed by her countryman and fellow Nobel laureate Pablo Neruda. While Neruda was allowed to revel in inconsistency and contradiction (in his poetic style if not his politics, which remained steadfast) and lack of restraint (in poetry *and* politics), any sign of such behaviour in Mistral was frowned upon: in Agosín's words, 'The male-dominated press has tended to regard her work as that of an eccentric feminist'. Agosín reports how the centenary of Mistral's birth was recognised by only a very small ceremony in Santiago in 1989 and notes that the poet's complete works have yet to be edited.¹⁴

Pablo Neruda

Pablo Neruda's career and poetry, as already suggested, bore a number of parallels with Mistral's. Like her, he was influenced by the vegetation and landscape of Chile (initially the forests around Temuco in the south where he grew up and where he was to meet Mistral) to compose poetry that attempted to capture the simplicity and earthiness of natural objects; his *Odas elementales* (1954) are perhaps the supreme example of this although the tendency can be found throughout his work. Like Mistral he worked for many years as a Chilean consul and came to know many parts of the world (reflected in his *Residencia en la tierra* (1933, 1935) while constructing an image of his homeland that was as much a projection of home from abroad as a reflection of firsthand experience. Like her he received the Nobel Prize and was recognised by the awarders as having exported a vital reflection of Chile and Latin America more generally to world literature.

Neruda himself saw this as an important mission. While also a composer of poetry on 'universal' themes (love, nature, death), his most consistent project was an attempt to channel what he saw as a Chilean sensibility into the creation of a world class body of work. Though perhaps not his most poetically perfect of works, his ambition can be said to have found its greatest outlet in his epic poem *Canto general*, his 'general song' of the Americas with its particular focus on the landscape and history of Latin America, especially Chile. Equally important to him was to locate a role for the Chilean people as agents in this landscape and history, a desire born of Neruda's commitment to communism. His methodology for this was to evoke the

great human tragedies of Latin American history: oppression, deceit, war, genocide and massacre. In one section of the poem, following one such account, he writes of 'The red, drop by drop, [...] being born', an image of the country coming into existence through the shed blood of the people.¹⁵ Neruda's poetry, especially in *Canto general*, seeks to link a number of disparate events to the larger 'event' of naming the people of Latin America and their struggles for justice and dignity, what Neruda himself referred to, in a tribute to his friend Ilya Ehrenburg, as 'the battle against terror and war'.¹⁶ His work is a catalogue of events, names and demands all adding up to this event, which is ultimately an event of remembrance. In 'Forever' he writes:

Though feet may walk on this site for a thousand years,
they'll never expunge the blood of those who fell here.

And the hour on which you fell will not expire,
though thousands of voices may cross this silence.
The rain will soak the plaza's stones,
but it won't extinguish your blazing names.

A thousand dark-winged nights will fall,
without destroying the day these dead await.¹⁷

Here we find a language familiar to other poems of remembrance and can detect a messianic element ('the day these dead await') that seeks to cloak its demands for justice in a kind of holy righteousness. This link to religious verse is notable in other aspects of Neruda's work, not least in the way it often seems to resemble litany. Roberto González Echevarría highlights this aspect of the poet's verse:

There is something sacramental in Neruda's poetic language, like the words of a religion in the process of being founded, of a liturgy establishing its rituals and choosing its words. The grandiose tropes of his verse emerge as if not only to give names to things but to anoint them.¹⁸

And while Amado Alonso found it necessary to remark on the 'godless apocalypse' described in Neruda's poetry, Echevarría points out that, rather than getting caught up with the 'existentialist gloom' of post-war Europe, Neruda's work embodied 'a heady *mundonovismo*, based on the New World's ever-renewed promise of a fresh start'.¹⁹ It was a poetry that spoke 'the language of human emotion in the presence of things and

events'.²⁰ For Gabriela Mistral, Neruda's elegies for lost places and people and the shattering loss of alternative emancipatory histories were 'elegies in which death, treated in a new way, becomes an event we could not truly feel before'. Mistral saw in Neruda's work a poetry obsessed with death, which she remarked as the only evidence of a 'Castillean vein' in it.²¹ Derek Walcott, a poet whose work is suffused with the process of naming and of providing a poetic language that would reflect the postcolonial predicament of the Caribbean, described Neruda in a 1976 poem as a 'benign, rigorous uncle', while the Russian poet Yevgeny Yevtushenko, in his 'Epistle to Pablo Neruda' focused on the poet's ability to anchor his voice into the memories of his people and have it work against the various attempts by the authorities to silence it (something Yevtushenko had his own bitter experience of):

He carries his poetry to the people
As simply and calmly
 as a loaf of bread.
Many poets follow false paths,
But if the poet is with the people to the bitter end,
Like a conscience—
 then nothing
Can possibly overthrow poetry.²²

Violeta Parra

Violeta Parra was an artist who based her innovations in the Chilean song form on an attempt to bring her own brand of poetry to established forms such as the *décima*, while bringing traditional Chilean music – in particular the *cueca* – to modern poetry.²³ In the spirit of her brother Nicanor's 'anti-poems' – which saw him lauded briefly as the major post-Neruda poet in Chile – she composed 'anti-cuecas', deliberately distorting the traditional forms to create her own aesthetic. In a sentence that makes much of the tropes, familiar to scholars of Latin America, of *mestizaje*, or mixing, Silvio Rodríguez says, 'Song is a hybrid which produces a mulatto product – music and poetry. That is, song is a mestizo product, just like cinema, because it's a mixture of more than one artistic form'.²⁴ Parra's contribution to the development of what would come to be known as *nueva canción* was in bringing these forms together to form a 'mestizo product' that was seen as completely new. Furthermore, her extensive sojourns abroad (mainly Paris and Geneva), where she spent her time performing music and educating audiences about the song forms and folk crafts of

Chile, gave her an experience not dissimilar to that of Neruda and Mistral: the poet-singer-teacher disseminating her culture from an increasing experience of spatial and temporal distance. She was perhaps nearer to Mistral in both her desire to teach and in the subject matter of her songs, a fact Parra was seemingly well aware of; following Mistral's death in 1957, Parra composed her 'Verso por despedida a Gabriela' (Farewell Verse to Gabriela), in which she dwelt on these connections. Like Mistral, Parra was increasingly seen as an eccentric figure, living as she did for the last years of her life in a large circus tent on the outskirts of Santiago from which she ran a cultural centre. Increasingly alienated, despite late recognition of her creativity, she took her own life in 1967, just as her song 'Gracias a la vida' (her own farewell verse in many ways) was becoming one of the most popular in the *peña* run by her children Isabel and Angel.²⁵

Some measure of the way that Violeta Parra has come to be thought of since her death in 1967 can be found in the liner notes to an album of her songs released in 1997 by EMI. The album is entitled *La jardinera y su canto* ('the gardener and her song'), a reference to Parra's song 'La jardinera', yet it also bears the title *Haciendo Historia* ('making history'). This latter title appears to serve at least two purposes: on the one hand, it makes reference to Parra's work as a collector and disseminator of Chilean folk song and as a songwriter of note who is widely accepted as the 'mother of Chilean *nueva canción*'; on the other hand, it serves to highlight the fact that this release is tied into a promotional campaign by EMI to mark the company's centenary, and by EMI Chile to mark its seventieth anniversary. The liner notes extend this comparison by implicitly linking EMI's declared project – to preserve the music of the world, as seen through its centenary reissue programmes – with Parra's goal of preserving the music of her country. Thus, in one part of the liner, Rubén Nouzielles, a former Artistic Director of EMI Chile and subsequent curator of their archives, makes much of the image of Parra as a 'gardener', who, like the subject of her song, has succeeded in 'cultivating' the 'expressive forms' of the land:

She became a guitarist and a peasant singer, an investigator on a donkey, capturing in her primitive battery-operated tape recorder the butterflies of oral tradition escaping from the lost valleys, so that the winds of modernity would not carry them away to infinite oblivion.

She became an interpreter of the sounds of the land and its traditions,
carrying in her voice all the timbres of the wind and the weather.²⁶

Of particular note here are the metaphors of nature and purity applied to Parra and her work; even her tape recorder, that aura-destroying icon of modernity, is made purer by its lack of sophistication (the adjective ‘incipiente’, used in the original Spanish text, perhaps gives a better sense, when transliterated, of this innocence). Nature and purity are motifs taken up by other writers on Parra; one study of her work is titled *Violeta Parra: Saint of Pure Clay*.²⁷ The *cantautor* Patricio Manns follows a similar path when writing of Parra: ‘She rose from the earth little by little, like a tree, and she fed, fulfilling herself, on the eager germs of the winds of her time’.²⁸ There is an echo here of Neruda’s poetry, saturated as it is with references to nature: also of the way Neruda described his own mentor, the poet Gabriela Mistral, as a ‘beloved daughter of these wild mushroom blossoms, these rocks, this giant wind.’²⁹ Yet, while such imagery, when applied to the objective facts of Parra’s life, might strike us as far-fetched or uncritically poetic, we should perhaps not see its main purpose as the construction of an image of purity but rather as a series of attempts to establish Parra (and Mistral) in connection with Chile – its landscape and soundscape, people and traditions – and to establish the notion of Chileanness within her and her work. We should, in other words, seek what is at stake in the *act* of naming rather than search for *accuracy* in the description offered. In Gina Cánepa’s words, Parra’s work sought to ‘offer the urban Chilean public authentic folk music as an alternative to the reception of commercial European and Anglo-American music, to the Europeanised culture of the urban élites, to unauthentic [sic] commercial folk music and to the folk from the archives of the Institutes for Ethnomusicology, Anthropology and Folklore.’³⁰

While we may also have problems with loaded terms like ‘authentic’ and ‘unauthentic’, the use of such words can be understood to a large extent via a survey of the popular music scene in Chile at the time when Violeta Parra’s work was becoming prominent (roughly the late 1950s to the mid 1960s). It was a scene dominated by ‘yanqui’ cultural imperialism, where Chilean performers found they had to Americanise their names in order to succeed: Patricio Henríquez to Pat Henry; Los Hermanos Carrasco to The Carr Twins; Guillermo Rebolledo to William Reb.³¹ Though folk song collecting had been given a serious boost in the 1940s with the

establishment of organisations dedicated to song preservation, the ‘folk music’ that made it to the public eye continued a practice that had been popular since the 1930s, in which groups dressed as *huasos* (landowners) sang idealised songs about their *latifundios* (estates) and the people who worked them. Such groups, and those who followed them in what came to be known as Neofolklore – a musical form influenced by similar music from Argentina, where president Juan Perón had passed legislation requiring fifty percent of the music broadcast to be Argentinian – would find themselves welcomed back in later years when a sanitised version of Chileanness, devoid of any signifiers of rebellion, became attractive to the military dictatorship. We should be careful not to invoke an ahistorical Chileanness, then, in assessing Violeta Parra’s innovations in folk music, but rather to speak of the kind of contextualised response suggested by Patricia Vilches when she writes that ‘to hear a Parra song is not in and of itself a passive act, but an active immersion in 1960s Chilean subjectivity, in the historical processes of its time’.³² Vilches bases her discussion of Parra and her influence on subsequent musicians on Michel Foucault’s use of *épistèmes* in his account of the archaeology of knowledge. For Vilches, Parra helped bring about the conditions of possibility for subsequent developments in Chilean song:

In this way Parra enables us to recuperate the collective memory and to make use of what Spivak calls the ideological ‘script’ of our circumstances; Parra’s song lyrics make us re-examine the relationship that exists between memory and experience and place her as the artistic mother of Víctor Jara and [Chilean rock band] Los Prisioneros.³³

This pivotal role in influencing, or allowing the conditions of possibility for, Jara, Los Prisioneros and other musicians is one I will return to below. For now, I will merely add the words of another set of musicians Parra influenced – Inti-Illimani, one of the foremost groups in what would come to be known as *nueva canción* – for the light they shed on another important aspect of Parra’s ‘Chileanisation’ of popular music, namely its appeal to a broader class group than the neo-folklore it challenged:

Before Violeta people had an image of peasant music similar to that the bourgeois estate owners had of their estates. The perfumed streams, the

weeping willow...songs like this. Songs that were no more than a classist vision of what the people were. With Violeta they began to reconfigure things because she began to understand love, life, struggles...all from the point of view of a particular class. This was Violeta's greatest inspiration, that she could speak to you in songs like 'Gracias a la vida' or 'Corazón Maldito' of problems that had been spoken of in thousands of so-called popular songs that did not have this perspective of the people that Violeta's songs had. This constituted something special, a great discovery, for us and for many others.³⁴

It is also worth mentioning the use of and reference to *arpilleras* (traditional patchwork tapestries produced in Chile and Argentina, also called *tapices*) in the designs for the CD reissues of Parra's work produced by the Fundación Violeta Parra and released by Warner Music Chile in 1999. Parra was a keen visual artist as well as musician and writer and produced a number of paintings and *arpilleras* during her career, many of which she carried around with her on her European tours as examples of Chilean handicrafts. *Arpilleras*, associated with the domestic sphere and produced almost exclusively by women, often take the form of landscapes inhabited by figures, with the *cordillera* of the Andes a common background. During the time of the dictatorships in Argentina and Chile, these tapestries came to reflect the new situation that the craftswomen found themselves in, one in which husbands and children were 'disappeared' on a daily basis. The figures depicted in the *arpilleras* thus came to take on symbolic political roles, telling the stories of disappearances and killings. Although this particular role was one that developed after Parra's death, the use of her *arpilleras* on the CD reissues provides an implicit connection between memorialising the artist and reminding her audience of how the folklore – music and craft – that she celebrated and sought to preserve would come to have a quite different resonance in the period following her death. The packaging of the reissues thus celebrates not only the woman and her creativity but also those elements that the military regime attempted to destroy, silence, and disappear.³⁵

Víctor Jara, Quilapayún, Inti-Illimani: From Nation to Imagination

I do not wish to go much beyond the brief biographical details of Víctor Jara already given above. The best account of Jara's life and work remains his widow Joan's book

Víctor: An Unfinished Song (1983), while the more recent *Víctor: te recuerda Chile* (2003) contains a number of useful and evocative accounts in Spanish of the singer's collaborations with and influence on a whole range of people. A number of the articles on *nueva canción* that can be found in the notes to this chapter and in the Bibliography also contain useful information on the singer. Joan Jara details the emerging folklore scene described above and the decisive role played by her husband in continuing the project initiated by Violeta Parra. His role in many ways can be likened to that of Neruda's in the wake of Gabriela Mistral, with both women retrospectively being granted 'maternal' positions that saw them recognised as innovators, achievers and influences but which nevertheless, as so often in masculinist society, saw their status diminish somewhat in the light of the prodigal sons' subsequent careers. Jara was a contemporary of Parra's folksinging children Isabel and Angel and was both a friend and musical collaborator of theirs, bringing to the Peña de los Parra in Santiago his most important songs as they were written. Yet Joan is keen to also stress Víctor's role as a theatre director, detailing events such as that he directed as a homage to Pablo Neruda on the poet's return to Chile in 1972 following his receipt of the Nobel Prize. This event, a 'mass cultural spectacle' based on Neruda's life, involved the participation of delegations of workers from around the country under the direction of Jara and Patricio Bunster. Taking place as it did in Santiago's National Stadium it was yet another mass event (though many stayed away due to the climate of fear brewing at the time) in a location that would become a lens through which Chile's cultural life might be viewed.³⁶

Jara was also involved with the groups Inti-Illimani and Quilapayún. Quilapayún were the first to form, in 1966, and one of their first undertakings was to ask Jara to be their artistic director, a role he maintained for the next three years. Inti-Illimani formed in 1967 and, while not as involved on a day-to-day level with Jara, performed and recorded with him on numerous occasions. Both groups consisted of students who were not music specialists (or even, to begin with, musicians in many cases) but who had an interest in researching the folklore of Chile and other Latin American countries. Both groups were based in Santiago, meaning that they brought an urban imagination to the predominantly rural music they played. At the same time they sought to distance themselves from the prettified music of the *Nueva Ola Folklórica* (Los Cuatro Cuartos, Las Cuatro Brujas) and the anglicised pop groups of the time (Alex Alexander, Pat Henry, Danny Chilean, Peter Rock, The Carr Twins).

Both groups started producing recordings soon after forming – Quilapayún's self-titled debut album was released in 1966 while Inti-Illimani released a mini-album of Mexican revolutionary songs in 1969 followed the same year by a self-titled full-length album – and have remained regular and prolific in their record releases ever since.

Nueva canción as practised by Quilapayún and Inti-Illimani remained popular within Chile up to the time of the 1973 coup. At the time of the coup both groups were away from Chile on tour and remained in exile for the duration of the dictatorship. Because much *nueva canción* music (as well as rock by groups such as Los Blops) had been released by DICAP (Discoteca del Cantar Popular de las Juventudes Comunistas, the communist youth record label), and because of the political affiliation between the movement and Salvador Allende's Unidad Popular party, it became a target of repression following the military take-over. All master tapes held by DICAP were destroyed in military raids, the music was banned from radios and the playing of certain instruments associated with *nueva canción* was prohibited. While this meant that the playing of a recording by Inti-Illimani, Quilapayún or Víctor Jara could become an act of resistance to the dictatorship, the absence of these musicians themselves and the concomitant impossibility of seeing their work develop or respond to the times meant an inevitable decline in popularity. As Juan Pablo González points out, the groups' exile placed the music they continued to perform and record outside the environment of their country and *nueva canción* itself came to be 'considered by the new generations more as a classic of the past than as an expression of the present'.³⁷ However, not all blame for the decline in popularity of *nueva canción* can be placed on the attempted extinction of the music by the authorities. Fernando Barraza's book *La Nueva Canción Chilena*, written in 1972 and thus providing an account of the movement uninfluenced by the events of the following year, suggests that the music reached its peak around the years of Allende's ultimately successful presidential campaign (1968-70) and that, as a music of protest with 'nothing' to protest any longer, it ceased to have a *raison d'être*. While this conclusion is highly questionable – *nueva canción* being as much about cultural representation as political programs – it is something to be considered alongside the subsequent silencing of the music and the inevitable change in musical tastes.

One can trace, then, a number of notable aspects in the trajectory of those *nueva canción* groups who continued (and continue³⁸) to perform and record. Firstly,

as already mentioned, the music of Inti-Illimani and Quilapayún involved an imagination of the country from a predominately urban (and often academic) viewpoint. Secondly, there is the appropriation of a (mostly rural) working class cultural activity by middle class practitioners and the particular network of imaginations this process inevitably brings about – most obviously, perhaps, the radical recontextualisation of rural folk practice into an urban artistic and political project. Both these aspects are closely connected to a third, namely the transformation of ‘folk’ music into a form of ‘art’ music; by 1980 Inti-Illimani could say the following in an interview:

Since Violeta Parra, Chilean *Nueva Canción* has started a trajectory that has brought it into the realm of classical music. This proximity has been natural over time...We think this relationship is indispensable. Classical music is a source of compositional technique, a technique of elaboration of musical thoughts.³⁹

The group also claim for themselves a universal approach to art, comparing what they do with what Pablo Neruda did with poetry, i.e. not using ‘folk poetry’ but ‘[taking] possession of the rules of universal culture’.⁴⁰ This universalism can in turn be connected to a fourth aspect: the projection, via the enforcement of exile, of home from abroad, of the country (in both senses of the word: Chile *and* the rural world) from the city (Rome, Paris and London as much as – and increasingly more than – Santiago). The members of Inti-Illimani are well aware of this and have spoken about it in interviews as well as giving their accounts of Violeta Parra’s ‘authentic’ imagination of the countryside and the *campesinos* (see above).

What seems to be crucial here is to consider again the conflict between accuracy and act. Despite the plethora of imaginary projections that the groups discussed here may have been prey to, they have achieved important cultural work. Quilapayún, for example, set up a notion of connected international politicisation early on in their career with their album *Por Vietnam* (1968). In addition to the anti-US-imperialist subject matter of the title track, they include songs from the Spanish Civil War and the Cuban Revolution, as well as folk songs from Italy and Chile, all performed in their trademark style drawn from an Andean music that exceeds the boundaries of modern nation states (Chile, Bolivia, Peru, Ecuador). To a certain

extent this was a freedom they could enjoy at their particular historical moment and could continue to enjoy in the years of the Allende government. Although there was a tendency toward more Chile-related material following the coup and their exile – as was also the case with Inti-Illimani – they have continued to promote a wider international consciousness, such as the *cantata popular* ‘Americas’ on *Umbral* (1979). If neither Inti-Illimani or Quilapayún can be said to be entirely *authentic* (and, while I use this word with many reservations, it seems a reasonably short way of making an understandable point), the *act* that they have chosen to pursue is one that has contributed enormously to the connections we can draw between music and politics, whether the use of music alongside a particular political programme or, as has increasingly been the case with both groups, the political imperative of memory work.⁴¹

Silvio Rodríguez

As a singer-songwriter, poet, composer and political activist, Silvio Rodríguez has been at the forefront of the ‘movement’ that came to be known as *nueva trova* (see explanation of terms above). The sense of there being a ‘movement’ is one that, much like the concept of the ‘event’ to be discussed here, was applied *post facto* to a group of performers (Rodríguez, Pablo Milanés, Noel Nicola and others) who emerged in the late 1960s and were retroactively perceived to be renovating the Cuban *trova* song form, a renovation necessary due to the ‘corruption’ of popular music by the hegemony and unwanted influence of Anglo-American popular music forms (a ‘fact’ made ever more explicit following the Cuban Revolution). As with most *post facto* manifestos, the truth was somewhat different; Rodríguez, for one, has always claimed as much influence from the Beatles and Bob Dylan as from orthodox ‘new song’ pioneers such as Chico Buarque and Violeta Parra.⁴² Not surprisingly, however, and with clear tactical aims, *nueva trova* became associated with other *nueva canción* movements that were emerging contemporaneously in other Latin American countries and in Spain. Rodríguez’s music, a potent mixture of explicit political statements and more coded, densely metaphorical pieces, found a receptive audience throughout the Hispanic and Lusophone worlds and, in often brutal times – such as during the military dictatorships which gripped Argentina and Chile during the 1970s – offered messages of hope and remembrance to the victims of oppressive regimes.⁴³

Rodríguez had visited Chile, where his music was to become enormously popular, prior to the 1973 coup that brought General Augusto Pinochet to power, and had maintained close links with the *nueva canción* musicians then and subsequently; his return in 1990 signified, as much as anything in the early days of postdictatorship, a return to the promise of the Allende years (1970-73) and an end to the official silencing of his and others' music during the intervening period.

Part Two – The Creation of the Event

The information given in Part One provides us with evidence to consider the 'event' described in the Introduction to this chapter as perhaps larger than that initially imagined when confronted with the bare facts of a single concert that happened to take place during one evening in one city. What I wish to add to this is Derrida's suggestion that we should not fall into the comfortable position of positing an event as either an origin or a *telos*. The concert under scrutiny is not a culmination of any, let alone all, of the mini-histories mentioned above. None of the associations and connections we can draw out of any account of the concert or its participants can be said to constitute a *reason* for the concert, neither is the concert the inevitable result of or response to a set of prior events. What the concert in fact does is to *create* this larger event, or what we might initially prefer to think of as 'the event-ness of the event'.⁴⁴ This then has implications for the way we think of performance. Asking what the role of this particular performance might be encourages us to examine more general issues surrounding performance. How do performative events contribute to the working through of private and public memories, particularly those associated with periods of trauma? What is the public dimension of mourning? Can we see performative musical events such as the stadium concert as ritualistic processes analogous to other ritualistic events (sacred or non sacred)? How does the attempt to fix the ritual process, via recording technology, add to the possibilities of memory and mourning work? These questions are prompted here by a consideration of a performance event in a country where, as Jan Fairley points out, the stadium concert has become a favoured site for the making public of private traumas.⁴⁵ Yet they have resonance for all performance events, whether or not those events actively seek to exorcise spectres or open up a space for hope.

Death and Disappearance

Before returning to these issues of performance, I wish to examine a pair of songs closely associated with *nueva trova/nueva canción*, Víctor Jara's 'Te recuerdo Amanda' and Silvio Rodríguez's 'Unicornio'. Both songs provide good examples of works that bring together the themes I am exploring here (performance, the creation of the event, mourning and memorialisation, exorcism and conjuration) in that both have been kept alive through repeated performance (live and recorded) and deal in their own ways with notions of death and disappearance.

'Te recuerdo Amanda' appeared on Jara's album *Pongo en tus manos abiertas* (1969) and proved to be a concert favourite for the rest of the singer's life. The song reappeared on the posthumous collection *Manifiesto* (1974) with an English translation read by Jara's widow Joan. This album was produced and released in Britain, where Joan had fled with her and Víctor's children following the coup and Víctor's murder. The song went on to have a busy afterlife, being covered by numerous artists, including Quilapayún (1976), Robert Wyatt (1984) and Silvio Rodríguez (1998). As with its ghostly appearance on *Manifiesto*, where Víctor's voice seems to haunt Joan's reading, the song became a spectral accompaniment to the many performances of opposition to the Chilean dictatorship. Quilapayún featured it in their concert programme as they toured the world, Joan Baez performed it during her concert in Chile in 1981, and Patricio Manns included the song in a concert in Santiago in 1990 that marked both his country's return to democracy and Manns's return from exile.

Silvio Rodríguez's 'Unicornio' appeared on an album of the same title in 1982, bearing a dedication to Roque Dalton, the Salvadoran poet and political theorist assassinated in 1975. Like 'Te recuerdo Amanda', 'Unicornio' became a live favourite, whether performed with guitar accompaniment (as can be heard on the live album *Silvio Rodríguez y Pablo Milanés en vivo en Argentina*) or with piano (as in the Chilean version). The importance granted the song in Rodríguez's live repertoire can be gleaned from watching the 1990 concert in Santiago, where the song is played as an encore and features an ornate piano introduction by Chucho Valdés, and the participation of the crowd in the song's evocative 'se fue' refrain.⁴⁶ In addition to

numerous performances by Rodríguez, 'Unicornio' has been performed in concert and/or recorded by a number of international artists, including Mercedes Sosa (1983), Mísia (who recorded fado versions of the song in Portuguese and Spanish in 1993), Lucetita Benitez (2000) and Joan Isaac (a version in Catalan, performed as a duet with Silvio Rodríguez in 2002).⁴⁷

A translation of the lyrics to the two songs is given here, followed by a reading of them in relation to the themes of death and disappearance:

'Te recuerdo Amanda'
Words & Music: Víctor Jara⁴⁸

Te recuerdo, Amanda,
la calle mojada,
corriendo a la fábrica
donde trabajaba Manuel.
La sonrisa ancha,
la lluvia en el pelo,
no importaba nada,
ibas a encontrarte con él,
con él, con él,
con él, con él.
Son cinco minutos,
la vida es eterna
en cinco minutos.
Suenan la sirena
de vuelta al trabajo,
y tú caminando,
lo iluminas todo.
Los cinco minutos
te hacen florecer.

Te recuerdo, Amanda,
la calle mojada,
corriendo a la fábrica
donde trabajaba Manuel.
La sonrisa ancha,
la lluvia en el pelo,
no importaba nada,
ibas a encontrarte con él,
con él, con él,
con él, con él,
que partió a la sierra,
que nunca hizo daño,
que partió a la sierra
y en cinco minutos
quedó destrozado.

I remember you Amanda
when the streets were wet,
running to the factory
where Manuel was working.
With your wide smile
and the rain in your hair,
nothing else mattered:
you were going to meet him.
(with him)
(with him)
Five minutes only,
all of your life
in five minutes.
The siren is sounding.
Time to go back to work.
And, as you walk,
you light up everything.
Those five minutes
have made you flower.

I remember you Amanda
when the streets were wet,
running to the factory
where Manuel was working.
With your wide smile
and the rain in your hair,
nothing else mattered:
you were going to meet him.

And he took to the mountains to fight.
He had never hurt a fly
but he took to the mountains
and in five minutes
it was all wiped out.

Suena la sirena
de vuelta al trabajo.
Muchos no volvieron.
Tampoco Manuel.

The siren is sounding.
Time to go back to work.
Many will not go back.
One of them is Manuel.

Te recuerdo, Amanda,
la calle mojada
corriendo a la fábrica
donde trabajaba Manuel.

I remember you Amanda
when the streets were wet,
running to the factory
where Manuel was working.

‘Unicornio’
Words & Music: Silvio Rodríguez⁴⁹

Mi unicornio azul
ayer se me perdió:
pastando lo dejé
y desapareció.
Cualquier información
bien la voy a pagar:
las flores que dejó
no me han querido hablar.

Yesterday,
I lost my blue unicorn.
I left him grazing in the fields
and he disappeared.
I’ll pay handsomely
for any lead.
The flowers he left behind
will not tell me a thing.

Mi unicornio azul
ayer se me perdió.
No sé si se me fue,
no sé si se extravió,
y yo no tengo más
que un unicornio azul.
Si alguien sabe de él
le ruego información:
cien mil o un millón
yo pagaré.
Mi unicornio azul
se me ha perdido ayer,
se fue.

Yesterday,
I lost my blue unicorn.
I don’t know if he ran away,
I don’t know if he went astray.
And I have
but one blue unicorn.
If anyone knows where he is
I beg you to tell me.
I’ll pay
a hundred thousand, a million.
For I lost my blue unicorn
yesterday.
Now he’s gone.

Mi unicornio y yo
hicimos amistad
- un poco con amor,
un poco con verdad -
Con su cuerno de añil
pescaba una canción.
Saberla compartir
era su vocación.

My unicorn and I
became friends,
partly through love,
partly through honesty.
With his indigo horn
he’d catch a song;
knowing how to share it
was his greatest joy.

Mi unicornio azul
ayer se me perdió,
y puede parecer
acaso una obsesión.

Yesterday,
I lost my blue unicorn.
It may seem
like an obsession,

Pero no tengo más
que un unicornio azul
y aunque tuviera dos,
yo sólo quiero aquel.
Cualquier información
la pagaré.
Mi unicornio azul
se me ha perdido ayer,
se fue.

yet I have
but one blue unicorn.
And even if I had two,
he's the one I love.
I'll pay handsomely
for any lead.
I lost my blue unicorn
yesterday.
Now he's gone.

By introducing the topics of death and disappearance I wish to draw a distinction between the idea of a fixed state (death) and an unknown or unknowable outcome (disappearance). We might also map these notions onto those of presence (death) and absence (disappearance). The Spanish writer Julio Llamazares provides an eloquent comparison of the two terms in the following passage from his novel *Yellow Rain*:

When doubt constantly feeds desire and stores up hopes for what can never be, it is very hard to wipe from the memory all traces of the past. Death at least has tangible images: the grave, the words spoken over it, the flowers that refresh the face of memory and, above all, that absolute awareness of the irreversibility of death that makes itself at home in time and makes of absence just another familiar habit. Disappearance, however, has no limits; it is the contrary of a fixed state.⁵⁰

Or, as Derrida puts it in *Specters of Marx*:

Nothing could be worse, for the work of mourning, than confusion or doubt: one *has to know* who is buried where – and *it is necessary* (to know – to make certain) that, in what remains of him, *he remains there*. Let him stay there and move no more!⁵¹

Derrida's mention of mourning may well remind us of the distinction drawn by Freud between mourning and melancholy, whereby the former represents a working-through of grief and hence a 'healthy' ritual for reincorporating oneself into 'normal' life (Derrida speaks of mourning as 'work': 'not one kind of work among others' but 'work itself'⁵²) and the latter represents an inability to come to terms with the lost

object and hence a weakness on the part of the melancholic, who can never fully (re)adjust to 'normality'.⁵³ I would stress here that, in relating these concepts to the deaths and disappearances that resulted through the regimes of terror enacted by the military dictatorships in Latin America, I do not mean to suggest a weakness of character on the part of those affected by the loss of loved ones (or by the loss of freedom), but rather an enforced weakness that might better be thought of as a helplessness in the face of brute, authoritarian terror. More specifically, neither of the songs detailed here can be said to be *about* the dictatorship as such; Jara's song predates it and Rodríguez's decidedly ambiguous narrative pertains to be, if anything, about the loss of some dreamlike or mythical beast. Yet certain factors allow the songs to be read in ways that shed light on the role of music in traumatic and posttraumatic times.

'Te recuerdo Amanda', focussing as it does on the relationship between two working class Chileans and the rupture of that relationship in some unwanted conflict, makes implicit reference to the history of conflicts that had shaped life for many generations in Chile and elsewhere in Latin America. As poets such as Pablo Neruda had sought to express the experience of the common man in such times of conflict, so Jara evokes the fate of another trapped between the slavery of the factory and the battle ground. 'Unicornio', on the other hand, notably stands apart from numerous more explicit songs by Rodríguez, songs that often concern particular national and international conflicts or engage with specific examples of injustice. By a strange reversal, it is as if 'Unicornio's very lack of explicit context is what makes it such a useful and evocative song to summon up the reality of the dirty wars in Argentina and Chile, where disappearance and ambiguity became such a part of everyday life.⁵⁴ Like the metaphorical allusions of postcoup *canto nuevo* in Chile, the poetics of what cannot be said (or sung) come to say more and mean more to those experiencing the trauma of disappeared friends and family. Rodríguez famously refuses to explain the song or say what or who the blue unicorn represents but many Chileans made the decision themselves, substituting their loss for that bemoaned by the song's narrator.⁵⁵

The music of 'Unicornio' echoes this ambiguity. The second and fourth verses conclude with the refrain 'se fue', the second of which is then held over the space of three bars as the melody used at the introduction takes over. There is no resolution; 'se fue' – and the musical figure it engenders – does not signal an end, an image, but rather the beginning of a whole new cyclical return to the root of the trauma, to the

fact of disappearance. This musical device reflects what Llamazares calls 'the contrary of a fixed state'. 'Te recuerdo Amanda', in staging death in battle, allows for the limits and irreversibility of death that Llamazares speaks of. This finality is echoed in the musical arrangement. Although, like 'Unicornio', two of the verses contain a two syllable motif (in this case 'con él') that seems, through its repetition, as if it could take the melody to a position of ambiguity, in fact the musical project here is to let the motif act as both emotional emphasis of 'él' and as bridging device to a section that in both cases signals a conclusion. In the first case this conclusion maps onto the return to work signalled by the siren; in the second the fact that Manuel will not be returning. His ending and the ending of the song are unambiguous. At the same time, the repeat of the first four lines may suggest an attempt to bring him back to life. These lines also serve to remind us that this is a song about the memory of someone (the singer) for Amanda. Her fate is rather more ambiguous than Manuel's.

'Te recuerdo Amanda', as a song strongly identified with Víctor Jara (probably his best known), has come to stand in also for the finality of the singer's death, becoming a kind of aural gravestone. Its use on the British *Manifiesto* album in 1974; its status as *the* song to cover by other performers who wish to evoke Jara's memory; the allusion to the song in the title of a book of memories of Jara published on the thirtieth anniversary of the coup and of Jara's murder; its inclusion in the programme of 'fundamental songs' performed by Quilapayún in a series of concerts to mark that same anniversary: all these uses of 'Te recuerdo Amanda' signal the role it has taken on as historical and emotional marker in the years since Jara's murder.⁵⁶ To sing the song at any point since Jara's death is to partake in what Derrida calls 'the singular spectrality of [a] performative utterance'.⁵⁷ 'Unicornio', meanwhile, has become the song that mourns those less famous; in its ambiguity it speaks to and for the thousands of disappeared. As Jara wrote, 'muchos no volvieron'; many did not return and for many more therefore there could (and can) be no finality.

Performance as the Creation of an Event

I return now to my point of departure, a concert that took place on one particular night in one particular city, one of no doubt thousands of performances taking place at the same time. This, in our conventional use of the word, can be made into a signifying *event* by underlining, as I did earlier, a number of other events that contribute to its

significance. In this way we are able to *create* events by creating their event-ness, to locate what Alain Badiou calls their ‘evental sites’.⁵⁸ Derrida’s deconstruction of the notion of the event is to highlight exactly this created (constructed) aspect, to show how institutions such as governments, the media, language itself, help to focus our attention on certain events at the exclusion of others. These other events that are ignored tend to be ongoing events that are not reducible to a particular time or place, events such as inequality, homelessness, poverty, or, in our case, terror. Here, then, I wish to go beyond my (albeit partial) reconstruction of a particular concert and my reading of two songs – whereby I take part in my own creation of these performative events *qua* events – and point to the ways in which these events themselves partake of a creation of a larger event, namely an attempt to counteract the terror and oppression of the ‘event’ of authoritarianism. This counteraction can also be seen as the ‘conjunction’ that Derrida relates to, among other acts, an ‘exorcism’ undertaken by the forces of neo-liberalism against the spectre of Marxism.⁵⁹ The performative events described in this chapter relate to the exorcising of the spectre of right-wing terror, however, in a similar manner to that described in Ariel Dorfman’s (2003) book on the Pinochet trial, *Exorcising Terror*. Near the start of his text Dorfman describes a ‘communal act of mourning’ that preceded the inaugural speech of the first post-Pinochet president, Patricio Aylwin, in the National Stadium of Santiago:

Seventy thousand men and women suddenly hushed as they heard a solitary pianist playing, down on the green field, variations on a song by Víctor Jara [...]. As the melody died, a group of women in black skirts and white blouses emerged, carrying placards with photos of their *desaparecidos*. And then one of the women – a wife, a daughter, a mother? – began to dance a *cueca*, our national dance, dancing all her immense solitude because she was dancing a dance meant for a couple. There was a moment of shocked silence followed by the sound of people, slowly, tentatively, starting to clap along with the music, a savage, tender beating of palms that said to the nearby watching mountains that we were sharing that sorrow, that we were also dancing with all our missing loves of history, all our dead, and that we were bringing them back somehow from the invisibility to which Pinochet had banished them. And as if answering us from beyond time, the Symphony Orchestra of Chile burst out with the chorale from Beethoven’s Ninth Symphony and the song adopted by

the Chilean resistance in its street battles, Schiller's Ode to Joy, his prophecy of a day 'when all men will once again be brothers'.⁶⁰

In this 'communal act of mourning' that Dorfman narrates, we can perhaps see the recognition on the part of the organisers of the event and the participants (performers and audience) of what Walter Benjamin called 'Messianic time', a sense of the unforeseen possibilities of the here-and-now.⁶¹ This formulation, adapted by Derrida in his account of the unpredictability of the event in *Specters of Marx*, is described by Fredric Jameson as 'the notion of the non-announced, the turning of a corner in which an altogether different present happens, which was not foreseen'.⁶²

Badiou's notion of event is similarly connected to unpredictability and, further, to *undecidability*. As described in Chapter One, for Badiou an event is something that can – but will not necessarily – occur at an evental site and that occurs as a complete break with the continuum of being, emerging in the fields of science, art, politics and love. Like the Derridean event, Badiou's event is something larger (though, for Badiou, the larger process is the fidelity to the event, a truth process by which subjects are created). I wish to return to the notion of fidelity discussed earlier, particularly Badiou's idea of fidelity to a truth and the idea that each new response to an event that shows fidelity acts as both an individual new act of creation and as a memorialising of the original event. The Rodríguez concert, then, is such an act of fidelity and one which is at pains to highlight further acts of fidelity to the memorialising of the event of opposition to terror. The importance of recording the concert becomes paramount here, as does the fidelity to maintaining this music's visibility and audibility in the public sphere. If history is a battle over memories, then recordings take their place as aural monuments to the past, albeit in an ever more populated field. They become what Pierre Nora refers to as *lieux de memoire*, memory sites which it is possible to revisit as one would monuments.⁶³ And if this is true of new recordings, it is perhaps even more so of reissued recordings from the past, whose 'truth' has already been proven. Recent years in Chile have seen a number of reissue programmes relating to the pre- and post-coup period, such as authoritative versions of the works of Víctor Jara and Isabel and Violeta Parra and of many of the previously banned recordings of exiled *nueva canción* groups such as Inti-Illimani and Quilapayún. The sheer effort of will to get these recordings – many of whose master tapes were destroyed following the coup, necessitating remastering

from surviving vinyl copies – speaks to me more of an act of fidelity to an event than of cynical record companies’ ability to endlessly market the same product.

As for performance, the fidelity to the truth of an event relates to what we might term a ‘performative responsibility’ in which the repetitive (ritualistic) elements of performance contribute to the responsibility to mourn those from whom we have inherited the *presence* of the here-and-now, to attempt to do them *justice*. In a related way, performance enacts the creation of an event which is simultaneously a site of mourning and an avowal of the potential of ‘Messianic time’, while also positioning us, in Dorfman’s words, ‘beyond time’. Meanwhile technology, particularly recording technology, intervenes in and contributes to the work of mourning by providing the appearance of permanent memory sites, seemingly (reassuringly) fixed and grounded aural monuments that we can revisit at crucial moments. We can never be sure that *we* will be as fixed and grounded on our return, that our memories will remain faithful to the original event or that we will ever hear the same recording in the same way twice, yet the permanence of the recording maintains a fidelity that, for the most part, we are willing to believe in. Technology enables our mourning work to be both intensely private – at the level, say, of the personal stereo – and intensely public – the stadium PA system. Whichever way it operates, it provides material, as does the individual song or the stadium concert, for the reconstruction of a much larger event than might at first be imagined. It is therefore quite possible to enquire of performance how it partakes of an ethics that goes far beyond fidelity to a particular musical prescription (score, hit song, tradition) and applies itself to a position in the battle of memories that we call history.

Part Three – Fidelity to the Event

Y en eso llegó la fidelidad: Latin American New Song as Event

I want to continue this chapter, then, with an examination of one of the aforementioned modes of fidelity to the event, the interpretation by new artists of musical material associated with key figures of the event. The relevance to my thesis of this particular mode of engagement (or commitment) is that this action serves the double purpose of maintaining fidelity both to the ‘larger’ or ‘major’ event (here, opposition to and remembrance of authoritarian terror) and to the ‘smaller’ or ‘minor’

musical event (the creation of musical materials and performances attached to the major event). It is perhaps worthwhile to first say a little about what these events might be by way of a summary of some of the points already made.

The title of this section comes from Carlos Puebla's well-known song celebrating the arrival of the Cuban revolutionaries, 'Y en eso llegó Fidel'. It is a classic romantic text poetically describing the corrupt Batista-era Cuba and the irruption into it of the revolutionary heroes condensed into the charismatic figure of *el comandante*:

'Y en eso llegó Fidel' – Carlos Puebla y sus tradicionales
Words & Music: Carlos Puebla⁶⁴

Aquí pensaban seguir
ganando el ciento por cierto
con casas de apartamentos
y echar al pueblo a sufrir
y seguir de modo cruel
contra el pueblo conspirando
para seguirlo explotando
y en esto llegó Fidel.

They were planning to stay on here
earning 100% (on their investments)
with apartment houses and the like
while the people suffered
and to continue in a cruel manner
conspiring against the people
to stay on exploiting it
and then Fidel arrived.

Coda:
Y se acabó la diversión,
llegó el comandante y mandó
a parar.

And that was the end of the party
the commander arrived and ordered
(all that) to stop.

Aquí pensaban seguir
tragando y tragando tierra
sin sospechar que en la sierra
se alumbraba el porvenir
y seguir de modo cruel
la costumbre del delito
hacer de Cuba un garito
y en eso llegó Fidel

They were planning to stay on here,
taking in more and more land
without suspecting that in the mountains
the future was igniting
and to continue in a cruel manner
the custom of crime
to turn Cuba into a gambling den
and then Fidel arrived.

Aquí pensaban seguir
diciendo que los cuatreros,
forajidos, bandoleros
asolaban al país
y seguir de modo cruel
con la infamia por escudo
difamando a los barbudos,
y en eso llegó Fidel.

They were planning to stay on here
saying that cattle thieves,
outlaws, highwaymen,
were destroying the country,
and to continue in a cruel way
with infamy as their shield
defaming the bearded ones,
and that's when Fidel arrived.

Aquí pensaban seguir
jugando a la democracia

They were planning to stay on here
playing democracy

y el pueblo que en su desgracia
se acabara de morir
Y seguir de modo cruel
sin cuidarse ni la forma,
con el robo como norma,
y en eso llegó Fidel.

and the people in its misery
was to end up their days
and to continue in a cruel way
without even bothering with appearances
with theft as their norm,
and that's when Fidel arrived.

When we speak of the Cuban Revolution we speak both of an event that can be fixed to the year 1959 – when victory brought a culmination to years of insurrection – and an ongoing event, an unfinished project. Here I wish to highlight this dual notion of the event – as both a singular moment and an ongoing process or project – by referring again to Badiou. We could say that Puebla's verses detail for us an evental site, the situation in Cuba prior to the event of the Revolution, while the final line of each verse and the refrain note the event itself. The reference to the revolution igniting itself away from the gaze and expectations of those in power reminds us of the unpredictability, or undecidability, of the event: there was no certainty that the Revolution would happen, but every possibility it might.

As we have seen, for Badiou fidelity to the event is a process that exceeds the event itself, a truth process by which subjects are created. The event in question here is both Castro's victory of 1959 and the ongoing project of the Cuban Revolution. In this sense, as I suggest in my subtitle, not only are we marking the arrival of Fidel but of a new act of fidelity also, a fidelity brought about through the retrospective recognition of what the event of revolution entails. In Badiou's terms, the Revolution acts as a 'truth event' which in turn produces, or constitutes, subjects committed to maintaining fidelity to its truth. This process of fidelity may take what we might term a hard-line stance – a strong fidelity to the specific programme of the Revolution as it comes into being – or a more general stance that sees this particular event as itself something constituted by a larger event, named variously democracy, anti-imperialism, opposition to authoritarian terror. In this latter formulation we can speak of a number of event branches all constituted by the trunk of truth of this larger event. By doing so we are able to connect the project of the Cuban Revolution to other projects that accompany it and share its broad aims if not its specific strategy.

An obvious project here is that set in motion by Salvador Allende in the 1960s in Chile. Sharing similar broad aims but a radically different strategy this project too could be said to have been constituted through a fidelity to a democracy born of anti-imperialist, anti-authoritarian desires. The musical accompaniment to this project, as

discussed in this chapter, was the *nueva canción* movement, itself a part of a larger New Song movement emerging throughout Latin America, Spain and Portugal and directed at both the renovation of local musical traditions and the desire to attach these musical projects to political projects at both a national and international level. The links between political projects and new song projects were quite clearly maintained. Speaking of the group of musicians working in Cuba who came to be retrospectively labelled *nueva trova*, Bernardo Palombo claims 'The reasons for the Revolution of '59 were the reasons for the birth of *Nueva Trova*'.⁶⁵ So too were the reasons for the changes that were being sought in Chilean society caught up with the reasons for the music of Violeta Parra, Víctor Jara, Inti-Illimani and Quilapayún. As Horacio Salinas of Inti-Illimani put it in an interview in 1999:

I think that the political song was an extraordinary event in the history of music in Chile because it was overall an artistic product of very high quality. Not only was it music of denunciation, but also of extraordinary artistic value. I also think that it stayed in the memory of Chile as something new and something very revolutionary and very beautiful. This is the phenomenon of political song. There is Violeta Parra who is very important, Víctor Jara, Patricio Mans [sic]. They are three of the most important creators of songs and music – something completely new, which has stayed in our memory – the memory of Chile – as a notable event, perhaps the most important in this century in Chile in musical terms.⁶⁶

I wish here to look at some of the ways New Song as a phenomenon, an event, has been remembered after the period with which it is most associated. As mentioned previously, the connection between the music of New Song movements and politics was one that tragically endured following the crushing defeat of the political project of Salvador Allende and the Unidad Popular coalition. With the deaths of Allende, Jara and Neruda within days of each other in September 1973, Chile lost three iconic figures.⁶⁷ Yet this was only the beginning of the silence that was to come. There followed the burning of *nueva canción* recordings, the silencing of certain indigenous instruments associated with the music and the exile of many notable musicians: Inti-Illimani, Quilapayún, Isabel and Angel Parra, Patricio Manns.

There slowly emerged from this silence those new forms of coded protest song which came to be known as *canto nuevo*. These songs sought, in the face of censorship and the threat of terror, to keep alive the memory of the period prior to September 1973. It is widely accepted that *canto nuevo* provided hope for people in the 1970s, though some have argued that by the 1980s it had lost much of its power, reduced to what Mark Mattern calls ‘politically impotent nostalgia’.⁶⁸ This accusation of nostalgia is one that has been levelled at other attempts to remember the pre-coup period. Meanwhile there emerged a popular music scene that sought its inspiration in the increasingly globalised, mass-mediated forms of rock and pop. Among these groups too there were voices of protest, notably the group Los Prisioneros, who managed to merge a 1980s rock aesthetic that could have come from almost anywhere with polemical lyrics rooted in Chilean experience. At the same time older rock groups such as Los Jaivas continued to perform a brand of progressive rock imbued with Andean instrumentation that gave the music associated with *nueva canción* a different kind of globalised fusion. The album Los Jaivas produced of Violeta Parra songs in 1984, and the continued performances of their musical adaptation of Neruda’s ‘Alturas de Macchu Picchu’ (1981), suggested that, while they might have resisted siding with any particular political ideology back in the early 1970s, they were now as engaged as many of their peers in the crucial project of memory work.

Mercedes Sosa and Southern Cone Rock

Chile was not, of course, alone among Latin American nations in experiencing state terror in the 1970s and 1980s. In neighbouring Argentina the shorter but bloodier period known as the *Guerra Sucia*, or Dirty War (1976-1983), produced a large amount of music of opposition to terror. Mercedes Sosa, a notable figure of this period, provides us with the possibility to trace within the career of one performer a trajectory that is fairly typical of the move from New Song to other forms of ‘national’ music – mainly rock – that picked up the baton of opposition, whether as members of some sort of counterculture forged from the recent fires (or embers, depending on the generational viewpoint) of pop/rock culture or as militant spokespersons for the various pro-democracy groups brought into being by the harsh political times. Sosa’s career has covered the early blossoming of folk music in the 1960s alongside more ‘classically’ presented works based on folklore (such as her

work with the composer/arranger Ariel Ramirez and the poet/lyricist Félix Luna on *Mujeres Argentinas* [1969] and *Cantata Sudamericana* [1972]), passed through a period of music associated with *nueva canción* and *nueva trova* (*Hasta la victoria* [1972] and *Traigo un pueblo en mi voz* [1973] provide good examples of this direction) and progressed to a repertoire that includes all of these genres and a significant amount of material from *rock nacional* artists such as Charly García, León Gieco and Victor Heredia (*Mercedes Sosa en Argentina* [1982], *¿Será posible el sur?* [1984] and *De mi* [1991], for example). Through the accumulation of a repertoire that covers the ‘classic’ *nueva canción* material of Yupanqui, Parra, and Jara, the *nueva trova* music of Rodríguez and Milanés, the new Brazilian song of Milton Nascimento, and the Argentinian rock of Gieco and García, Sosa has traced the evolution of some of the major forms of interconnected committed song in Latin America. In live performance this is something she continuously highlights by mentioning the countries associated with the songs and/or the songwriters whose material she is singing. Sosa’s voice, an internationally recognised and renowned instrument of great power, has become a vehicle that intersects the material and the history of other singer-songwriter-performers, lending their work a stamp of authority that can perhaps best be described as *maternal*. The momentum built up by her career meets that established by the artists she covers to create a consolidation of both the event of their work and of the event their work is attached to. Whenever one artist’s work intersects with another we can recognise such consolidation; Sosa provides a striking and relevant example of such a process in the context of our interests here.⁶⁹

There is a sense in which, through the authority invested in the material Sosa covers and the knowledge of her audience regarding her politics, almost any music she chooses to associate herself with will become infected (and this word can be read with a positive or negative bias) with political import. Yet the connection between political contexts and Argentinian rock – one of *the* major musical genres in Latin America – has not always been so clearly distinguishable. In very simple terms there has been from the outset a point of view that rock music is inherently oppositional and that there is no additional need for musicians or music fans to associate themselves with politics of the kind that were second nature to the practitioners of the various New Song movements. In both Argentina and Chile one comes across rock musicians from the late 1960s through to the 1990s bemoaning the fact that they are supposed to have political opinions and associate themselves with a major faction (generally

speaking, for or against the demands of the Left) when what they really want is to maintain fidelity to a quite different form of liberation: that ushered in by the event of rock 'n' roll and its attendant countercultural possibilities. This is a familiar argument but one with which most musicians and their fans in areas associated with the source of this event (mainly Britain and America) have had not had to grapple.⁷⁰

In Chile this issue is exemplified by bands such as Kissing Spell/Embrujo, Los Blops, Congreso and Los Jaivas. Kissing Spell (later to be known as Embrujo – the Spanish word for ‘spell’) were formed in 1967, initially as a *bossa nova* band and later as a rock group influenced by the Beatles. The music they produced reflected an ethos of ‘peace and love’ though they explicitly distanced themselves from other ‘hippie’ groups of the time through their anti-drug proclamations. In the notes to the 2005 reissue of their 1970 album *Los Pajaros*, guitarist/drummer Carlos Fernández speaks of the group’s apoliticism and antipathy to ‘political agitators’ and the latter’s ‘slogans and violent attitudes’.⁷¹ Los Blops also performed a repertoire inspired by the work of British groups such as the Beatles, the Rolling Stones, the Kinks and Pink Floyd before producing their own material written and performed in a psychedelic/progressive rock style. Like Carlos Fernández, Eduardo Gatti – guitarist and vocalist for Los Blops – looks back on the period 1970-73 as one in which the band were caught between the Left’s dislike of them for being ‘good looking guys’ and the Right’s for being ‘long hair guys’. The fact that the group saw their statement of intent as being a ‘purely’ musical one, rather than that of groups such as Inti-Illimani and Quilapayún, whose musical project was connected from the start with an explicit political project, did not stop their first album being produced and distributed by the communist-run DICAP label.⁷² Indeed, the reason that this album became so hard to get hold of subsequently was due to the fact that its master tapes, along with so many other *nueva canción* recordings, were destroyed by the military during a raid on DICAP’s offices following the coup. Los Blops also worked closely with Víctor Jara – appearing on the title track of his 1971 album *El derecho de vivir en paz*, a rare use of electric instrumentation on a Jara recording – and with Angel and Isabel Parra (their second [1971] album being produced on the Peña de los Parra record imprint).⁷³ Congreso released their first album in 1971, a mixture of folk and rock themes with only a hint of the jazz-rock they would bring to the fore on later work. Los Jaivas, the longest lived of these groups, formed in the mid 1960s (though only as Los Jaivas in 1968) and are still performing. While the band started off influenced by Anglo-

American rock and sporting an English name (High Bass, subsequently hispanicised to 'Jaivas', also the Spanish for 'crabs') they were clearly aligning themselves with those anglophone groups, such as the Grateful Dead, that were exploring the borders of rock, folk and jazz; their live performances in the late 1960s and early 1970s consisted of mostly improvised material.⁷⁴ From this they went on to create a music that was both Chilean and universal, fusing 'local' elements such as Andean instruments (panpipes, *quena* flute, *charango*) with rock instruments (prominent guitar, enormous drum kit, synthesisers) and a quasi-symphonic style not dissimilar to that being employed by European and North American groups of the era. With the emphasis initially on their improvised rock explorations and apolitical lyrics, Los Jaivas, much like Kissing Spell and Los Blops, established a position seemingly between camps, especially in songs such as the popular 'Todos Juntos' ('All Together').⁷⁵ As Gina Cánepa points out, 'In a period of sharp class contradictions in Chile and daily political confrontation, when everyone had to define themselves as supporting the popular government of Dr Salvador Allende or contributing to its fall, a song such as "Todos Juntos" had a markedly nostalgic and utopian character'.⁷⁶ With the subsequent development of their style, incorporating indigenous Latin American instrumentation and using song motifs based on folkloric music whilst embracing the latest in electronic rock instrumentation, Los Jaivas continued to suggest in their music the possibility of integration (of being 'todos juntos') while maintaining the paradox that Cánepa highlights: the simultaneous possibility (messianic, perhaps?) of the past (nostalgia) and the future (utopia). In a period when certain strands of western popular music (such as progressive rock, Glam, jazz, funk and disco) sought ever closer alliances with the world of science fiction, albums such as *Los Jaivas* (1975), *Todos juntos* (1976) and *Alturas de Macchu Picchu* (1981) took their place as aural equivalents of what Fredric Jameson has recently termed 'archaeologies of the future', a phrase that nicely echoes the title of Congreso's 1989 album *Para los arqueólogos del futuro*.⁷⁷

Remembering/Rendering Neruda, Parra and Jara

Against and alongside this backdrop of alternative alignment there ran, and continues to run, a strand of memory work that can be said to attach itself to the event(s) outlined in this chapter via a more 'traditional' route: that of remembering through

naming past figures and themes of the event and rendering the poetical and musical materials forged in the event in new and rearranged versions. From the start of the *nueva canción* period and long after its wane musicians both in and out of Chile have taken part in this practice. Here I briefly list some of the prominent versions of work written by three of the ‘lost’ figures already discussed in this chapter: Pablo Neruda, Violeta Parra and Víctor Jara.

Pablo Neruda

- An early musical adaptation of Neruda’s work was ‘Tonada de Manuel Rodríguez’, an adaptation of Neruda’s ‘Manuel Rodríguez’ from *Canto general*. The poem, which gives this chapter one of its epigraphs, was written in honour of Manuel Rodríguez Erdoíza, one of the main figures in the struggle for Chilean independence. The poem was put to music by the Chilean composer Vicente Bianchi in the mid-1950s and soon thereafter started to be taught in grammar schools in Chile. Mercedes Sosa included a version on her early album *Yo no canto por cantar* (1966). Sosa has also performed and recorded other songs based on Neruda’s work, including ‘Galopa Murieta’ and ‘Poema 15’ (set to music by Víctor Jara), both of which can be heard on the live album *Acústico* (2002).
- Víctor Jara set a number of Neruda’s poems to music including ‘Asi como hoy matan negros’ (1967), ‘Ya parte el galgo terrible’ (with Quilapayún, 1969), ‘Cueca de Joaquin Murieta’ (1970), ‘Con el poncho embravacido’ (1971), ‘Danza de los niños’ (with Inti-Illimani, 1972), ‘Poema 15’ (1972), and ‘Aqui me quedo’ (1973).
- Aparcoa, a *nueva canción* group formed in the mid 1960s in Chile, collaborated with Neruda on a musical version of *Canto general* which was performed in 1970 in Santiago’s Teatro Municipal and in Valparaíso.
- Mikis Theodorakis was present at one of Aparcoa’s performances in Valparaíso while on a concert tour of Chile in 1971 and was inspired to compose his own version of *Canto general*. With the first seven parts finished the following year, he was due to present the work in Santiago in September 1973, an event that was forestalled by the coup of 11 September. As Neruda had been forced to complete *Canto general* while in exile from Gabriel González Videla’s Chile after 1946, so Theodorakis composed the score to his *Canto general* while in exile in Paris.

When the work received its Greek premiere in 1975 in Athens, the connections between Neruda's work and the return to democracy in Greece following the recent military dictatorship could not have gone unnoticed.⁷⁸ Theodorakis would eventually conduct the score in Santiago in 1993.

- The Argentinian singer-songwriter Víctor Heredia released an album entitled *Víctor Heredia canta Pablo Neruda* in 1974, having performed in the 1972 Festival de Viña del Mar in Chile (one of the foremost song festivals in Latin America at the time and host to both politically committed *nueva canción* and more ambiguous experimental rock).⁷⁹
- Inti-Illimani recorded a number of Neruda poems, including 'Ya parte el galgo terrible' (*Autores Chilenos*, 1971), 'Así como hoy matan negros' (*La Nueva Canción Chilena*, 1974) and 'La patria prisionera' (*Hacia la Libertad*, 1975). Their fellow *nueva cancioneros* Quilapayún recorded, among other pieces by Neruda, 'Cueca de Joaquin Murieta' (*Por Vietnam*, 1968), 'Pido castigo' (*Adelante*, 1975), 'Continua nuestra lucha' and 'Un son para Cuba' (*Patria*, 1976), 'America' and 'El árbol de los libres' (*Umbral*, 1979). Their adaptation of Louis Aragon's 'Complainte de Pablo Neruda' also appeared on *Umbral*.
- In the rock sphere, Congreso were one of the earliest groups to set Neruda to music when they recorded 'Maestranzas de noche', with music by the group's guitarist Fernando González, on their debut *El congreso* album (1971). Perhaps the major rock adaptation has been that of Los Jaivas, who recorded the concept album *Alturas de Macchu Picchu* in 1981. The seven pieces are taken from the part of *Canto general* where Neruda dwells upon the famous ruined Inca city of Macchu Picchu, a major point in *Canto general* and one in which, to cite Roberto González Echevarría, 'Neruda's vision is refocused by the very presence of these ruins, testament to a utopia in the past, an allegiance of a collectivity with nature to create beauty and justice'.⁸⁰ Such a vision is one that connected very well with that of Los Jaivas (see above).
- Musical versions of Neruda's work have continued into the new millennium. The Peruvian singer Susana Baca recorded 'La guillermina' 'Matilde' and 'Los marineros' on her *Lamento Negro* in 2001. There have also been tribute albums such as the Latin American *Marinero En Tierra - Tributo A Neruda* (2000) featuring Los Miserables (see below) and the Spanish *Neruda en el corazón*

(2004) – its title a reference to Neruda's work *España en el corazón* (1937) – celebrating the centenary of the poet's birth. In Portugal the fadista Gonçalo Salgueiro has recently included a version of Neruda's 'No te quiero' on his album *Segue a minha voz* (2006).

Violeta Parra

- Again, Mercedes Sosa was quick to record versions of the work of Violeta Parra, her *Homenaje a Violeta Parra* (1971) appearing four years after the singer's death. Sosa's 'Gracias a la vida' is perhaps the most widely known version of any Parra song and remains a perennial favourite in her live performances as both a hymn to life (the focus on the personal that was seemingly Parra's motivation for the song) and a gesture of defiance against the event of terror (the public life that has come to the fore so emotionally in countless stadium concerts throughout Latin America and the rest of the world).
- The major *nueva canción* groups made it a point from the start of their careers to include Parra songs and to perform with her or her children Isabel and Angel. Those recorded by Inti-Illimani include 'Run Run se fue p'al norte', 'Run del angelito', 'La exiliada del sur' and 'Volver a los 17' (all on *Autores chilenos*, 1971). Their *Canto para una semilla*, recorded with Isabel Parra and Carmen Bunster, consists entirely of poems by Parra set to music by Luis Advis.⁸¹ Parra songs recorded by Quilapayún include 'Qué dirá el Santo Padre', 'Los pueblos americanos' (both on *Por Vietnam*, 1968), 'La carta' and 'Porque los pobres no tienen' (both on *Basta*, 1969).
- Los Jaivas again provide the main rock reference via their *Obras de Violeta Parra* album (1984). The album contained ten Parra songs performed in the trademark style of the band – a mixture of Andean and rock instrumentation, rock-symphonic style, alternating solo/choral vocal sections, extended instrument solos – and could be seen as a further attempt by the band to create a Chilean art rock style.⁸² Following on from the Neruda album a few years earlier it became possible to posit Los Jaivas as a band who had travelled a long way from what had been (mis?)perceived as an entrenchment in an Anglo-American idea of popular music to an exploratory mode of playing that was both international and quite explicit about its Chileanness. That Neruda and Parra had been the tools that

brought about the most persuasive aspects of this transformation serves to highlight the extent to which those artists themselves were connected to the country of their birth. If the mountain/moonscape scenery decorating the cover of Los Jaivas' *Alturas de Macchu Picchu* had fitted with both the utopias of science fiction that the band had often identified with and those found in Neruda's great poem, then the cover of *Obras de Violeta Parra*, an illustration showing an ethereal Violeta merging with the sky and the mountains, served as yet another reminder of the way in which the Mother of *nueva canción* was seemingly forever to be remembered as being at one with Mother Nature.

- In 2003 an album entitled *Después de vivir un siglo: Tributo a Violeta Parra* was released, featuring rock versions of the singer's work by groups such as Los Miserables. A jazz tribute to Parra and Víctor Jara was released in 2001 by Araukania Kuintet, a group comprised of members of the Chilean bands Congreso and Santiago del Nuevo Extremo and the Cuban bands Irakere and Afrocuba.
- As described in Chapter One, the Chilean DJ Ricardo Villalobos has made a point of featuring Parra's work in his epic DJ sets.

Víctor Jara

- Mercedes Sosa recorded 'Plegaria a un labrador' (*Hasta la victoria*, 1972), 'Cuando voy al trabajo' (*En dirección del viento*, 1976) and 'Te recuerdo Amanda' (*Recital*, 1983).
- As Víctor Jara was instrumental in both forming and directing the groups Inti-Illimani and Quilapayún it is hardly surprising to find so many of his songs being covered by these and other *nueva canción* groups. Tracks recorded by Inti-Illimani following the singer's murder and the group's exile include 'La partida' (*La Nueva Canción Chilena*, 1974), 'El arado', 'Vientos del pueblo' and the instrumental 'Caicaivilu' (all on *Hacia la Libertad* (1975), 'Luchin' and 'A Luis Emilio Recabarren' (both on *Chile resistencia*, 1977). An album entitled *Inti-Illimani Performs Víctor Jara* was released in 1999. Jara tracks recorded by Quilapayún during the same period include 'Con el alma llena de banderas' (*El pueblo unido jamás será vencido*, 1974), 'Te recuerdo Amanda' (*Patria*, 1976), 'Canción del minero' (*La marche et le drapeau*, 1977), 'Paloma quiero contarte'

(*Umbral*, 1979 – the same album contained Eduardo Carrasco's 'Canción para Víctor Jara').

- Tribute albums to Jara include one released in 1998 featuring established names such as Silvio Rodríguez, León Gieco, Isabel Parra, Patricio Manns, Los Jaivas, Víctor Heredia, Quilapayún and Congreso, and another entitled *Víctor Jara: tributo rock* featuring more recent groups such as Attaque 77, Los Miserables and Boom Boom Kid. For further consideration of these tributes, see below.

Other Memory Work

In addition to the renderings listed above, international awareness of both *nueva canción* artists and those associated with them via other new song movements such as *nueva trova* was maintained both through the performances of *nueva canción* groups in exile and by other non-Latin American musicians performing inside and outside Latin America. Arlo Guthrie set Adrian Mitchell's poem about Víctor Jara to music and included it on his 1976 album *Amigo*. Joan Baez performed in Chile in 1981 and included in her set music by Víctor Jara. The Clash namechecked Jara on the track 'Washington Bullets' from the album *Sandinista!* (1980). Robert Wyatt covered Jara's 'Te recuerdo Amanda' and 'Yolanda' by Pablo Milanés on his 1984 *Work in Progress* EP, as well as recording Violeta Parra's 'Arauco tiene una pena' on *Nothing Can Stop Us* (1982). U2 mentioned Jara in their song 'One Tree Hill'; this and 'Mothers of the Disappeared', referring to the Dirty War in Argentina, can be found on *The Joshua Tree* (1987). Perhaps more notable here, in connection to the material covered in Chapter Two, is the fact that many artists in the Iberian peninsular performed music associated with the various New Song movements, whether European or Latin American. One of the notable groups to emerge from the resurgence in politicised regional musics that accompanied the 1974 Revolution in Portugal named itself Brigada Víctor Jara. Post-Revolutionary rock music in Portugal found connections with the music of Cuba via the work of Luis Represas, a former member of Trovante and translator of Silvio Rodríguez's 'Unicornio' into Portuguese. Represas's translation of the song, as well as a version in Spanish, were both performed by the fadista Mísia on her album *Tanto menos tanto mais* (1993). Carlos do Carmo, one of the major figures of fado in the post-revolutionary period, recorded songs by Silvio Rodríguez alongside revolutionary Portuguese poems by José Ary dos

Santos. With the emergence of *fado novo* in the 1990s, a repertoire emerged that sought to connect the work of fado's greatest star Amália Rodrigues with that of Brazilian New Song pioneers such as Chico Buarque and Portuguese *nova canção* writers like José Afonso.

In Chile itself, there were numerous events in 1990 to mark the return to democracy following the end of Pinochet's rule. Among these were the concert by Silvio Rodríguez in Santiago, Patricio Manns's return to his home country to perform, again recorded and released, and the event described above by Ariel Dorfman that preceded Patricio Aylwin's inaugural speech. These rituals of remembrance have been followed up more recently by concerts in 2003 by Inti-Illimani, Quilapayún, and Silvio Rodríguez among others, to mark the thirtieth anniversary of the coup, of Allende's and Jara's deaths, and of the end of the revolutionary project of Unidad Popular. 2003 also saw the publication of *Víctor Jara: Te recuerda Chile*, a book of reminiscences by people who had known and been close to Jara, its title a reference to Jara's 'Te recuerdo Amanda'. There were also the tribute albums to Jara already mentioned and reissues of his work alongside that of Violeta Parra, Quilapayún and Inti-Illimani.

Locating fidelity's key

Not everyone has seen these events as positive memory work, however. The 'politically impotent nostalgia' that Mark Mattern speaks of in relation to late *canto nuevo* is, for some, one that also finds itself reflected in an obsession with remembering the musical moment of the late 1960s and early 1970s. As well as being politically impotent there is the suggestion that the music of that time is generationally specific and that personal rather than collective memory is most at stake in these projects. But if New Song has come in for criticism in terms of its perceived reliance on nostalgia, national forms of rock and other Anglo-American-inspired popular musics have been attacked from another direction. In the introduction to *Rockin' Las Américas: The Global Politics of Rock in Latin/o America*, the editors highlight the familiar aspect of this attack:

Set against the dismal realities of U.S. economic and military interventions in Latin America, it is no wonder that for many, especially those on the left end of the political spectrum, rock was seen as an unwanted export of the Colossus

to the North – at best, a distracting influence from the more urgent task of revolution, and at worst, the cultural component of what was perceived to be a blatant imperialist offensive.⁸³

However the authors point out that this narrative, while harbouring elements of truth within it, has neglected the complexity of the musical situation in Latin America:

[C]onventional notions of a U.S.-Latin American cultural axis that is defined by U.S. cultural hegemony no longer hold true (if they ever did): music, images, and ideas now circulate via multiple nodal points of production and reception, severely complicating any simplistic dichotomy of a North-South divide. Moreover, there are peripheries within the ‘core,’ and ‘cores’ within the periphery, and these latter cores also exercise their own forms of hegemony (such as with the preeminence of Argentine and Mexican rock, to the exclusion of other national groups).⁸⁴

While it is possible that the concern over the influence of foreign models is less of an issue now than in the past, it finds itself in good company among those who fret over the loss of tradition. How, then, to reconcile forms of music accused of succumbing to the worst effects of globalisation with those accused of over reliance on nostalgia? Part of the problem appears to reside in an undertheorising of the status and potential uses of nostalgia and a tendency towards constructing arguments based on national identities and nationalising theories even while those arguments themselves point out the existence of a globalised, standardised world. Here I would like to highlight again Svetlana Boym’s work on nostalgia, particularly her account of what she terms ‘restorative’ and ‘reflective’ nostalgia.⁸⁵ Restorative nostalgia is the nostalgia Boym associates with nationalism, with regaining or rebuilding an ideal past. Reflective nostalgia, on the other hand, is a critical nostalgia more concerned with learning from the successes and mistakes of the past and in the notion of the ongoing event.

Speaking on the notion of fidelity, Jacques Derrida suggests that ‘you cannot simply repeat the same thing, you have to invent, to do something else if only to respect the alterity of the other’.⁸⁶ He continues via reference to marriage vows: ‘In order to follow the “I do” today (before the priest), the “I do” of tomorrow should be the same and different.’⁸⁷ Derrida speaks of a simultaneous fidelity and betrayal, or

rather of a betrayal whose possibility is born at the very moment of a commitment to fidelity, a betrayal which must be checked by a renewal of fidelity that is both the same as the original and different, what we might term a *critical fidelity* (see also above, pp. 44-47, p. 81). With these points in mind we might find it productive to compare two recent albums produced as tributes to the work of Víctor Jara as well as the memory work being done by the Chilean rock band Los Miserables.

In her book *Postmemories of Terror*, Susana Kaiser presents her research into the experiences and attitudes of youths in Argentina who have inherited the legacy of the Dirty War. By looking at age groups who were too young to have been politically involved in the era, Kaiser is able to highlight the way that memories of traumatic events are inherited by those for whom the events were not experienced at first hand.⁸⁸ This aspect of ‘postmemory’ is one that is also useful in considering the role played by younger popular musicians in Chile. Walescka Pino-Ojeda identifies memory and mourning as a central feature of what she calls ‘post-authoritarian rock’. Although she does not use Boym’s or Kaiser’s work, the aspects of Chilean rock she pays most attention to suggest both reflective nostalgia and postmemory. She argues against a view of rock as a nihilistic medium and highlights the inheritance of mourning, memory and memory work:

Chilean rock, rather than staging a compulsive forgetfulness [...] stages an unresolved mourning, presented in the form of nostalgia engendered by sociopolitical reality (the dictatorial experience), as well as by the effect of the economy’s transnationalization and the globalization of culture. In fact, what now exists is an obsession to remember that could certainly be explained as a *fin de siècle* syndrome.⁸⁹

Pino-Ojeda sees it ‘as a response to the crisis of a modernity which celebrates the present as a utopia of the “always-new,” of the new-as-utopian, as described by Huyssen, which makes itself all too evident in the world of consumerism’.⁹⁰ This seems to me to be a theme which can be expanded to encompass my thesis as a whole. In claiming loss as a symptom of modernity the idea of the ‘instantly obsolete’ (in thought and opinion as much as in merchandise) is a major one. It is also worth noting how the ‘always-new’ is reflected and played out in punk (the ‘future dream’ as ‘a shopping scheme’ as the Sex Pistols suggested).

It is also worth remembering how, in the mass-mediated world we inhabit, the past can just as often be a site of the 'always-new', a past that can be endlessly re-mined (and its audience re-minded even, as the culture industries hope, it forgets again) to unearth saleable commodities for the present. Pino-Ojeda writes about how one aspect of what she terms Chilean rock's 'detour to the past' involved the adoption and reinterpretation by post-authoritarian rock groups of mainstream, conservative pop performers of the 1960s. 'Mainstream' and 'conservative' here are terms used to describe types of music that reached the top of the charts, were 'favored by the broadcast and print media' and whose main audience was seen as comprising 'housewives, domestic help, and high school students exempt from the influence of rock and pop in English'.⁹¹ There may well be parallels to be drawn between this and the similar reversion found in Portugal. Again, in a similar vein to that found in Portugal in the 1980s and 1990s, there is the suspicion amongst young people of what they perceive as the previous generation's Manichean dualism:

Both iconographic and auditory 'committed' images constitute a monument with which today's youth do not want to deal, not just because of mere generational rejection, but also because of the burial of memories, a mourning that has not yet taken place. On the other hand, and now in a more conscious way, the most evident characteristic of this generation is a frontal rejection of worn-out binaries, expressed in a clear attempt to distance themselves from polar ideologies (Left vs. Right), hierarchical categorizations of cultural practices (elite culture and subculture), as well as values based on spaces of coexistence (the public arena vs. the private one; urban space vs. rural). In the end, it all boils down to questioning and exercising disobedience toward lettered culture and its attendant standardization, domestication, and hierarchization of knowledge.⁹²

One group who have sought to re-establish a commitment to the political projects of the past (to connect, as we would have it here, to the event) is the punk rock band Los Miserables. The group was formed in the 1990s and fairly quickly came to fill the gap left by Los Prisioneros, the Chilean rock band who had dominated the previous decade. With their debut album appearing in 1991, Los Miserables were clearly a post-dictatorship band but they were one whose main interest resided in not allowing

the horrors of the Pinochet era to be forgotten and in remembering the figures that the junta had attempted to wipe from history. Examples of both practices can be found on their ninth album *Date cuenta!* (2000), where they include the song ‘La caravana de la muerte’, a reference to one of the extermination programs carried out by the dictatorship, and a song evoking the memory of Salvador Allende, ‘Siempre vivirás’ (You Will Live Forever):

‘Siempre vivirás’ – Los Miserables
Words: Claudio Garcia. Music: Oscar Silva⁹³

Junto a Neruda y Víctor Jara junto a Violeta y su guitarra abrazamos la esperanza de libertad. Tu muerte no fue en vano ya han pasado tantos años la semilla que tu sembraste ya florecio. En el alma quedara tu voz y el recuerdo de un gran hombre por su pueblo la vida entrego.	Alongside Neruda and Víctor Jara alongside Violeta and her guitar we’re embracing the hope of freedom. Your death was not in vain over the course of many years the seed that you sowed has flourished. In our souls will remain your voice and the memory of a great man who gave his life for his people.
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The lyrics show that, after more than a quarter of a century the names of Jara, Parra and Allende continued to play a crucial and interconnected part in the narrative of committed memory as it stood ten years into the democratic project. That this memory work is being done over punk rock music rather than the hallowed instrumentation of *nueva canción* helps to raise questions once more about the relationship between the *sound* and the verbal message of opposition. Los Miserables emerged from a period that had produced loud North American bands with great youth appeal such as Green Day (who they name-check), Downset and Weezer (both of whom they cover on *Date cuenta!*). They adopted the image and sound of these bands while writing songs rooted in Chilean experience. On the album *Gritos de la calle* (2001) they mix covers of songs by The Clash (‘O te quedas o te vas’, a Spanish language version of ‘Should I Stay Or Should I Go’⁹⁴) and the Dead Kennedys (‘Intuicion’) with a version of Víctor Jara’s ‘El aparecido’. The group also provide a version of Jara’s ‘Mobil Oil

Special' to the *Tributo rock* album and appear on tribute albums to Pablo Neruda and Violeta Parra.

To compare Los Miserables' 'El aparecido' with Jara's original (1967) version is to note a major reworking but perhaps no more so than that practised by earlier groups such as Los Jaivas on the *nueva canción* material they covered.⁹⁵ The rock is heavier but the song remains more or less the same. The opening electric guitar blast and rock drums disorient the listener briefly but the melody is instantly recognisable and, while the vocals veer more to the shouted than the sung, they are clear. Where the arrangement of acoustic instruments on the original (courtesy of Sergio Ortega y Orquesta) provide an alternative to the melodic line of the vocal, the electric guitars of the new version anticipate and repeat the vocal line, not unusually for this style of rock playing. The refrain 'Correlé, correlé, correlá/ por aquí, por allí, por allá' remains a main focal point of the song, its second appearance in the original being accompanied by more pronounced percussion, a move echoed in the later version. That rock drums have replaced *bombo* in the new version should not divert us from the fact that this is a 'respectful' rendition. Far more challenging is the Argentinian singer Boom Boom Kid's version of 'Te recuerdo Amanda', which it is worth comparing both to Jara's original and to the version Silvio Rodríguez provides to *Tributo a Víctor Jara*.⁹⁶ Rodríguez's version is 'faithful' to the original in the sense in which we often use the word, meaning that it does not depart from the original musical boundaries. For fans of these singers, it is pleasing to hear Rodríguez sing Jara for a number of reasons: the nuanced differences he brings to the song via his Cubanising of Jara's Chilean Spanish ('calle' is now *cay-yay*, not *ca-jay*); the alternating fragility and grit of his vocal on this paean to fragility and persistence; and the sense that he is continuing to engage in the event of remembering Jara. The sense of seriousness attached to Rodríguez's fidelity seems to be shattered by Boom Boom Kid's 'Amanda', along with any fragility. The guitar introduction alerts us immediately to a style of hardcore (reminiscent of the 'grindcore' of groups like Napalm Death), which is then confirmed by the grunted vocals which render the hastily-delivered words indecipherable. For the first 52 seconds the song remains unrecognisable until the familiar words 'Te recuerdo Amanda' emerge as a kind of chorus – radically transformed from the original but at least serving as identification of the track. The song is over in just over two minutes, with a nod to a kind of fragility appearing unexpectedly at the end on the words 'tampoco Manuel'. The fans

of Jara's original who appreciated Rodríguez's sympathetic rendition may very well feel shocked at this seeming desecration of a classic *nueva canción* text.⁹⁷ Yet, on reflection, it becomes apparent that Boom Boom Kid has raised serious questions about the shape this text should take in a way that Rodríguez has not. Where the latter seems to provide us with an opportunity to bathe in *plaisir*, the former blasts us with *jouissance*. Might this be a truer testing place for fidelity?

The suggestion to be made here is that the larger event continues even though the object changes – the task of mourning is passed on and emerges in new song forms. What emerges as of vital importance here is a further recognition of act over accuracy. As Jacques Derrida pointed out, when it comes to fidelity it may well be necessary for the act to change. Indeed it is in this changing that the reminder of fidelity resides: an unchanging fidelity is a dead fidelity. The vital act here is to *make the decision*: in Derrida's words, 'One must decide whether or not to remain faithful after the death of someone who's not here to check, verify or respond; the other one is just not here to know. And that, for me, is the condition of fidelity, the absolute condition of fidelity.'⁹⁸ To forget the event of Jara (and in turn Allende, Neruda and Parra) is to collaborate in the construction of a nationalistically-defined concept of 'Chilean Music', in other words as a music defined through difference and safely stored away in its box of traditions. What is suggested by the challenge thrown up by artists such as Los Miserables and Boom Boom Kid is the embrace of a Chilean music that is active in the construction of a major and ongoing event, the fight against the neoliberal logic of the End of History. That construction is achieved, I would argue, through a series of connected fidelities. This is why interventions such as those in Chilean and Argentinian rock are as important as the continuing valuation of Jara's music via more 'traditional' means. A rock band committing itself to an act of fidelity to an event such as Jara, rendered in a form suited to its own multifarious constitutedness (by which I mean: constituted by the original event but also by its own socio-historical location), commits itself by extension to the event that Jara was constituted by himself and that so many others are constituted by. To use a non-Badiouian term, it attaches itself to a *cause*. Slavoj Žižek has this to say about lost causes:

Today more than ever, in the midst of the scoundrel time we live in, the duty of the Left is to keep alive the memory of all lost causes, of all shattered and

perverved dreams and hopes attached to leftist projects. The ethics which we have in mind here, apropos of this duty, is the ethics of Causes *qua* Thing, the ethics of the Real which, as Lacan puts it, ‘always returns to its place’.⁹⁹

This Thing that always returns is analogous, I would suggest, to the unresolved trauma of history that is injustice, today as prevalent as it ever was before. In imagining possible alternatives to the current we find ourselves in, we should not be persuaded by those who accuse us of a dangerously nostalgic attachment to the past and its projects. Žižek again:

This, then, is the point where the Left must not ‘give way’: it must preserve the traces of all historical traumas, dreams and catastrophes which the ruling ideology of the ‘End of History’ would prefer to obliterate – it must become itself their living monument, so that as long as the Left is here, these traumas will remain marked. Such an attitude, far from confining the Left within a nostalgic infatuation with the past, is the only possibility for attaining a distance on the present, a distance which will enable us to discern signs of the New.¹⁰⁰

Between The Clash reminding us of ‘V́ctor Jara in the Santiago Stadium’ on their track ‘Washington Bullets’ and Los Miserables connecting Jara’s ‘El aparecido’ to The Clash’s ‘Should I Stay Or Should I Go’ on *Gritos de la calle*, we find a musical project that is both part of the globalization of culture and part of an internationalised network of awareness of and resistance to certain hegemonic discourses of neoliberal politics, a project which, in the terms I have been using here, amounts to fidelity to a truth event. Horacio Salinas of Inti-Illimani, while not speaking with Badiou, Žižek, Los Miserables or The Clash in mind, manages to connect popular music to its political context most effectively:

While ultimately what one wants to do with popular music is gain a poetic comprehension of a musical event, sometimes it's difficult to understand what a band is trying to convey. So in this way, the musicians, the musical band or the people who work with popular music have to understand things other than just the music – the problems of the people, the food of the people – they have

to always be curious. And here is another point that I think is very important, which is for those who play and those who observe the phenomenon to have a political position, an ethical position. Because if not, if you don't achieve this, you can only understand one level. You'll never be able to completely understand the music because to have a political position and an ethical position facilitates an effective relationship with the music, without which it is very difficult to understand.¹⁰¹

It is with these thoughts very much in mind that we move on to look at another politically-charged body of music in the next chapter.

Notes

¹ Pablo Neruda, *Canto General*, tr. Jack Schmitt (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991), XXV, p.109.

² Quoted in William Rowe & Vivian Schelling, *Memory and Modernity: Popular Culture in Latin America* (London & New York: Verso, 1991), p. 229.

³ Jacques Derrida, *Specters of Marx: The State of the Debt, the Work of Mourning, and the New International*, tr. Peggy Kamuf (New York and London: Routledge, 1994); Alain Badiou, *Being and Event*, tr. Oliver Feltham (London and New York: Continuum, 2005).

⁴ Although most of what I have to say here is based on a reading of my chosen performances in relation to the recent history of the Pinochet dictatorship, I do not have space here to go into any historical detail of the Pinochet years. For an account of this period, see Pamela Constable and Arturo Valenzuela, *A Nation of Enemies: Chile under Pinochet* (New York and London: W.W. Norton, 1991).

⁵ *Canto nuevo* was the name given to the highly coded 'protest' music produced in Chile during the years of the Pinochet dictatorship. Following the coup, there was a ban on anything related to *nueva canción* (records, indigenous instruments, performance of or other dissemination of songs associated with the movement). As many of the predominant figures of *nueva canción* (Quilapayún, Inti-Illimani, Angel and Isabel Parra, Patricio Manns) were forced into exile, their music became a way of informing the world outside Chile of what had been hoped for, lost and destroyed and in soliciting solidarity for various anti-dictatorship causes. Within Chile itself, due to the constraints of censorship and terror, oppositional performers adopted a language of metaphor to voice their criticism.

⁶ The use of 'Messianic' here is a reference to Walter Benjamin's 'Theses on the Philosophy of History', in which Benjamin relates the non-successive view of time and history to be found in Jewish mysticism. This is a point picked up on by Derrida in *Specters of Marx* (see below). Walter Benjamin, 'Theses on the Philosophy of History', in *Illuminations*, ed. Hannah Arendt, tr. Harry Zorn (London: Pimlico, 1999), pp. 245-255.

⁷ See: Rina Benmayor, 'La "Nueva Trova": New Cuban Song', *Latin American Music Review/Revista de Música Latinoamericana*, Vol. 2 No. 1 (Spring-Summer, 1981), pp. 11-44; Robin Moore, 'Transformations in Cuban *Nueva Trova*, 1965-95', *Ethnomusicology* Vol. 47 No. 1 (Winter 2003), pp. 1-41; Jan Fairley, 'Annotated Bibliography of Latin-American Popular Music with Particular Reference to Chile and to *Nueva Canción*', *Popular Music*, Vol. 5 Continuity and Change (1985), pp. 305-56; Albrecht Moreno, 'Violeta Parra and "La Nueva Canción Chilena"', *Studies in Latin American Popular Culture*, Vol. 5 (1986), pp. 108-125; Nancy Morris, "'Canto porque es necesario cantar": The New Song Movement in Chile', *Latin American Research Review*, Vol. 21 No. 2 (1986), pp. 111-136.

⁸ Marjorie Agosín, 'Gabriela Mistral, the Restless Soul', introduction to *A Gabriela Mistral Reader*, ed. Marjorie Agosín, tr. Maria Giacheti (Fredonia: White Pine Press, 1997), p. 17.

⁹ Agosín, 'Gabriela Mistral', p. 23.

¹⁰ Gabriela Mistral, 'A Message About Pablo Neruda', in *A Gabriela Mistral Reader*, p. 220.

¹¹ See Chapter Two for a discussion of *saudade*.

¹² See for example the prose piece from 1923, 'Gabriela Thinks About Her Absent Mother', in *A Gabriela Mistral Reader*, pp. 193-197.

¹³ Agosín, 'Gabriela Mistral', p. 22.

¹⁴ Agosín, 'Gabriela Mistral', p. 22.

¹⁵ Pablo Neruda, *Canto General*, tr. Jack Schmitt (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991), p. 189.

¹⁶ Quoted in Adam Feinstein, *Pablo Neruda: A Passion for Life* (London: Bloomsbury, 2004), p. 357.

¹⁷ Pablo Neruda, *Canto General*, p. 191.

¹⁸ Roberto González Echevarría, 'Neruda's *Canto General*, The Poetics of Betrayal', introduction to Pablo Neruda, *Canto General*, p. 7.

¹⁹ González Echevarría, 'Poetics', pp. 1-2. Amado Alonso quoted on p. 3.

²⁰ González Echevarría, 'Poetics', p. 12.

²¹ Mistral, 'A Message', p. 218.

²² Derek Walcott, 'For Pablo Neruda', *Poems 1965-1980* (London: Jonathan Cape, 1992), p. 177.

Yevgeny Yevtushenko, 'Epistle to Pablo Neruda', *The Face behind the Face*, tr. Arthur Boyars & Simon Franklin (London and Boston: Marion Boyars, 1979), p. 157.

²³ 'Décima: A verse form, commonly sung, comprising ten lines (rhyme scheme abbaaccddc), which develops a theme introduced by a quatrain (rhymed abab). Textual material may be set or improvised, religious or secular. [...] The *décima* is common throughout Latin America and is particularly characteristic of Argentine and Chilean *payas* (*payadas*), *tonos* and *estilos*.' William Gradante, 'Décima', in L. Macy (ed.), *Grove Music Online* (accessed 1 September 2007). 'The *cueca* is Chile's national dance. Widely diffused throughout the country, it has regional variants. [...] Of black American origin, and sung to guitar and *pandereta* accompaniment, it is a dance of mixed, independent couples with characteristic use of a swirled handkerchief. It consists of three parts called *pies*, each of which correspond to divisions of the poetic text: a *remate*, consisting of a concluding pair of verses. In between these parts brief and expressive refrains are inserted [...] Melodies, usually in the major mode, are composed in two phrases, which freely alternate and vary, allowing the insertion of expressive refrains. Such melodies are based on melodic formulas characterized by *sesquialtera* rhythms and metric alternation between 6/8, 3/4 and 2/4. The vocal melody is interpreted by a singer, usually with a doubling in 3rds or 6ths by a second voice. Both voices are characterized by high-pitched tone and intense volume, probably developing from the need for the voice to carry in a natural manner. María Ester Grebe, 'Chile II, Traditional Music 6: Spanish and Mestizo Musics', in L. Macy (ed.), *Grove Music Online* (accessed 1 September 2007).

²⁴ Silvio Rodríguez, liner notes to *Cuba Classics 1: Silvio Rodríguez Greatest Hits* (CD, Luaka Bop VVR1030032, 1991).

²⁵ Two examples of Parra's distinctive song style are included on the accompanying CDs. 'Santiago penando éstas', the song used by Ricardo Villalobos and discussed in Chapter One, is CD1, Track 3, while 'Arauco tiene una pena' is CD2, Track 11.

²⁶ [Así fue guitarrista y cantora campesina, investigadora a lomo de burro capturando en incipiente grabadora a pilas, por perdidos valles, las fugaces mariposas de la tradición oral, para que los vientos de la modernidad no las arrastrasen al olvido infinito. Así fue intérprete de los sones de la tierra y las tradiciones, sugiriendo con su voz todos los timbres del viento y el tiempo.] Rubén Nouzielles, liner notes to *La jardinera y su canto* by Violeta Parra (CD, EMI Odeon Chilena 823524 2, 1997).

²⁷ Marjorie Agosín & Inés Dölz Blackburn, *Violeta Parra: santa de pura greda. Un estudio de su obra poética* (Santiago de Chile: Editorial Planeta, 1988). Cited in Christian Spencer Espinosa, 'Folklore e idiomática: Violeta Parra y su doble pertenencia a la industria cultural', *Actas del III congreso Latinoamericano IASPM*, IASPM Latin America website, <http://www.hist.puc.cl/historia/iaspm/pdf/Spencer.pdf> (accessed 1 November 2005).

²⁸ [Se eleva de la tierra poco a poco, como un árbol, y se alimenta, completándose, con los gérmenes ávidos del viento de su tiempo.] Patricio Manns, quoted in Patricia Vilches, 'De Violeta Parra a Víctor Jara y Los Prisioneros: Recuperación de la memoria colectiva e identidad cultural a través de la música comprometida', *Latin American Music Review*, Vol. 25 No. 2 (Autumn-Winter, 2004), pp. 210-211 [endnote 8].

²⁹ Pablo Neruda, *Memoirs*, tr. Hardie St. Martin (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1978), p.286.

³⁰ Gina Cánepa, 'Violeta Parra and Los Jaivas: Unequal Discourse or Successful Integration?', tr. Catherine Boyle, *Popular Music*, Vol. 6 No. 2, Latin America (May, 1987), p. 235.

³¹ See: Juan Orrego Salas, 'La nueva canción chilena: tradición, espíritu y contenido de su música', *Literatura chilena en el exilio*, Vol. 4 No. 2 (Apr. 1980), p. 3; Joan Jara, *Victor: An Unfinished Song* (London: Jonathan Cape, 1983), p. 82.

³² Vilches, 'Violeta', p. 198.

³³ [De esta manera, con la ayuda de Parra recuperamos la memoria colectiva, y hacemos uso de lo que Spivak denomina el "script" ideológico de nuestras circunstancias; la lírica de sus canciones nos hace reexaminar la relación que existe entre la memoria y la experiencia, situándola como madre artística de Víctor Jara y Los Prisioneros.] Vilches, 'Violeta', p. 199.

³⁴ [Antes de Violeta se conocía como música campesina aquella visión que tiene la burguesía de sus latifundios. El arroyito perfumado, el sauce llorón... Canciones así. Canciones que no eran mas que una visión clasista de lo que es el pueblo. Con Violeta comienzan a redimensionarse las cosas, porque ella comienza a entender el amor, la vida, las luchas... Todos desde un punto de vista de clase distinto. Eso es lo más genial que tiene Violeta, que ella puede hablarte en canción como "Gracias a la vida" o "Corazón Maldito" de problemas de los que han hablado millares de canciones que se dicen populares, pero que no tienen ese ángulo del pueblo que tienen las canciones de Violeta. Eso constituyó para nosotros y para otros muchos, algo especial, un gran descubrimiento.] Inti-Illimani, quoted in José Manuel García, 'Violeta', in *La nueva canción chilena* (LiteraMúsica, 2001), online version, *Trovadores.net* website, <http://www.trovadores.net/lm.exe?FR=4> (accessed 1 November 2005).

³⁵ For more on the political uses of *arpilleras*, see Marjorie Agosin, *Scraps of Life. Chilean Arpilleras: Chilean Women and the Pinochet Dictatorship*, tr. Cola Franzen (London: Zed Books, 1987).

³⁶ Jara, *Victor*, pp. 203-6. The homage to Neruda is also described in Feinstein, pp. 391-2.

³⁷ Juan Pablo González, "'Inti-Illimani" and the Artistic Treatment of Folklore', *Latin American Music Review*, Vol. 10 No. 2 (Fall/Winter, 1989), p. 269.

³⁸ Though 2006 found both Inti-Illimani and Quilapayún, after so many years of keeping the spirit of 1960s Chile alive, locked in ugly internal disputes concerning ex-band members and ownership of names.

³⁹ Quoted in González, 'Inti', p. 272.

⁴⁰ Quoted in González, 'Inti', p. 272.

⁴¹ Two songs by each of these predominant groups are included on the accompanying CDs.

Quilapayún's 'Por Vietnam' and 'El pueblo unido jamás será vencido' are CD2, Tracks 12 & 13. The latter is notable for the inclusion of the rhythmic figure that has had so many slogans attached to it in protest marches worldwide. The translation is 'The people united will never be defeated'; during the pro-Allende marches the words 'Allende, Allende, el pueblo te defiende' ('Allende, Allende, the people will defend you') were also used. Inti-Illimani's self-titled signature tune and 'Cueca de la C.U.T.' are Tracks 14 & 15. The *cueca*, of course, is the Chilean national dance described above; the C.U.T. (Central Unica de Trabajadores) was the leftist Workers Federation.

⁴² This is not to deny the political import of what came to be (and continues to be in its present forms) known as *nueva trova*, but merely to allude to a discourse of the *event* which sees the latter not as something that merely happened, in the 'past simple' sense of the verb, but that is a much larger ongoing *continuous* process that, nevertheless, can only recognise itself retroactively.

⁴³ The paradox here is that, for many Cubans, the same words might be used to describe their own regime. There is not space here to go into the often ambivalent relationship *nueva trova* has 'enjoyed' with Castro's government. For an account of this, see Moore, 'Transformations'.

⁴⁴ Derrida, *Specters of Marx*, pp. 28, 63; Badiou, *Being and Event*, pp. 193, 217.

⁴⁵ See Jan Fairley, 'Alive and Performing in Latin America', *Popular Music* Vol. 7 No. 1 (Jan., 1988), pp. 105-110, in which the author reviews, among other live recordings, the recording of the concert hosted by Silvio Rodríguez and Pablo Milanés in Buenos Aires following the return to democracy in Argentina in 1984. That event could as easily have been the departure point for this article, as could Patricio Manns's 1990 concert, Quilapayún's 2003 performance in Santiago, and many more.

⁴⁶ An audio recording of the event is included as CD2, Track 18.

⁴⁷ Rather strangely, a version of the song also appeared in a BMW promotional film entitled *The Follow*, directed by Wong Kar Wei in 2001. This version was recorded by sessions musicians and a guest vocalist and featured a saxophone performing the melodic hook of the song, suggesting it as a kind of late night jazzy lament.

⁴⁸ From the album *Pongo en tus manos abiertas* (CD, Warner Music Chile 8573 87604-2, 2001). The translation is that provided by Joan Jara and Adrian Mitchell in the CD liner notes to *Manifiesto* (Castle Communications ESMCD 657, 1998). CD2, Track 16.

⁴⁹ From the album *Unicornio* (CD, Fonomusic CD-8034, 1991). The translation is that provided by Rina Benmayor and Félix Cortés in the CD liner notes to *Cuba Classics 1*. CD2, Track 17.

⁵⁰ Julio Llamazares, *Yellow Rain*, tr. Margaret Jull Costa (London: Harvill, 2003), p. 44.

⁵¹ Derrida, *Specters*, p. 9, emphasis in the original.

⁵² Derrida, *Specters*, p. 97.

⁵³ Sigmund Freud, 'Mourning and Melancholia', *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud*, vol. 14, tr. James Strachey (London: The Hogarth Press, 1957), pp. 237-58.

⁵⁴ This point is analogous to that made in Chapter One regarding Brainard's *I Remember*; it is arguably more important that people can tap into the shared process of remembering than that they are asked to focus on a memory designated by the writer or singer. This is not to deny the importance of context in remembering – a theme reiterated throughout this chapter – but to distinguish between the closure of death and the ambiguity of disappearance.

⁵⁵ This information is taken from conversations with Chilean fans of Silvio Rodríguez during the author's visit to Chile in 1995-96.

⁵⁶ See *Víctor Jara: Te recuerda Chile*, ed. Omar Jurado & Juan Miguel Morales (Taffala: Editorial Txalaparta, 2003). The Quilapayún concerts to mark the thirtieth anniversary of the coup took place on 10 and 11 September 2003 in the Teatro Telefón in Santiago; these performances and others were subsequently released as the CD/DVD *Quilapayún: El reencuentro* (Warner Music Argentina 2564-61901-2, 2004).

⁵⁷ Derrida, *Specters*, p. 104.

⁵⁸ Badiou, *Being and Event*, p. 173-77.

⁵⁹ Derrida, *Specters*, p. 96.

⁶⁰ Ariel Dorfman, *Exorcising Terror: The Incredible Unending Trial of General Augusto Pinochet* (London: Pluto Press, 2003), pp. 12-13.

⁶¹ Benjamin, 'Theses', *Illuminations*, p. 255.

⁶² Fredric Jameson, 'Marx's Purloined Letter', in *Ghostly Demarcations: A Symposium on Derrida's Specters of Marx*, ed. Michael Sprinker (London & New York: Verso, 1999), p. 62.

⁶³ See Chapter One for a discussion of Nora's work.

⁶⁴ From the album *Hasta siempre* (CD, EGREM CD 0083, 1994). Translation based on that provided on the website of the Language Resource Center at Salem State College, <http://www.lrc.salemstate.edu/spanishlyrics/fidel.htm> (Accessed 10 August 2006). **CD2, Track 19.**

⁶⁵ Bernardo Palombo, CD liner notes to *Cuba Classics 1*.

⁶⁶ Horacio Salinas, interview with the Centre for Latin America Studies at the University of California, Berkeley, 6 October 1999. Accessible via the Centre's website, <http://www.clas.berkeley.edu:7001/Events/fall1999/10-06-99-inti-illimani/index.html> (accessed 23 May 2006).

⁶⁷ Violeta Parra had been absent from the scene for six years at this point following her suicide in 1967.

⁶⁸ Mark Mattern, 'Popular Music and Redemocratization in Santiago, Chile 1973-1989', in *Studies in Latin American Popular Culture*, Vol. 16 (1997), p. 106.

⁶⁹ For more on Mercedes Sosa, see Rodolfo Braceli, *Mercedes Sosa: La Negra* (Buenos Aires: Editorial Sudamericana, 2003).

⁷⁰ For more on this issue in connection with the Argentinean context, see Sergio Pujol, *Rock y Dictadura: Crónica de una generación (1976-1983)* (Buenos Aires: Emecé Editores, 2005).

⁷¹ Carlos Fernández, liner notes to *Kissing Spell, Los pajaros* (LP, Shadoks Music 064, 2005). A track from the album is included as **CD3, Track 1.**

⁷² See interview with Eduardo Gatti in the liner notes to *Los Blops* box set (3LP, Shadoks Music [no catalogue number], 2005).

⁷³ Los Blop's can be heard backing Víctor Jara on **CD3, Track 2.**

⁷⁴ See the five volume set *La Vorágine* (Columbia, 2003) for examples of this material.

⁷⁵ Los Jaivas, 'Todos juntos', *Todos juntos* (Arci/Warner Music Chile 3984 24441-2, 1998). **CD3, Track 3.**

⁷⁶ Gina Cánepa, 'Violeta Parra and Los Jaivas', p. 237.

⁷⁷ Fredric Jameson, *Archaeologies of the Future: The Desire Called Utopia and Other Science Fictions* (London and New York: Verso, 2005).

⁷⁸ A recording of this preliminary version can be found on Mikis Theodorakis and Pablo Neruda, *Canto General* (LP, RCA 26.28134, 1975). For more on *Canto General* as an 'international work', see Gail Holst-Warhaft, *Theodorakis: Myth & Politics in Modern Greek Music* (Amsterdam: Hakkert, 1980).

⁷⁹ For an account of the rather negative response to an appearance by Los Blops at Viña, see the liner notes to *Los Blops* box set.

⁸⁰ González Echevarría, 'Poetics' p. 7.

- ⁸¹ A later version recorded with Isabel Parra and Marés González was released in 1978. The same year saw an Italian release entitled *Canto per un seme* and recorded with Parra and Edmonda Aldini.
- ⁸² An excerpt from Los Jaivas's version of 'Arauco tiene una pena' is included as CD3, Track 4.
- ⁸³ Deborah Pacini Hernandez, Héctor Fernández L'Hoeste & Eric Zolov, 'Introduction: Mapping Rock Music Cultures Across the Americas' in Pacini Hernandez et al. (eds.), *Rockin' Las Américas: The Global Politics of Rock in Latin/o America* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2004), pp. 5-6.
- ⁸⁴ Pacini Hernandez et al., 'Introduction', p. 21.
- ⁸⁵ Svetlana Boym, *The Future of Nostalgia* (New York: Basic Books, 2001).
- ⁸⁶ Jacques Derrida, 'Following Theory: Jacques Derrida', interview in *Life After Theory* ed. Michael Payne and John Chad (London & New York: Continuum, 2003), p. 10.
- ⁸⁷ Derrida, 'Following Theory', p. 11.
- ⁸⁸ Susana Kaiser, *Postmemories of Terror: A New Generation Copes with the Legacy of the 'Dirty War'* (New York and Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005).
- ⁸⁹ Walescka Pino-Ojeda, 'A Detour to the Past: Memory and Mourning in Chilean Post-Authoritarian Rock', in Pacini Hernandez et al. (eds.), *Rockin' Las Américas*, pp.296-7.
- ⁹⁰ Pino-Ojeda, 'Detour', p. 297.
- ⁹¹ Pino-Ojeda, 'Detour', pp. 209, 303.
- ⁹² Pino-Ojeda, 'Detour', p. 306.
- ⁹³ From the album *Date cuenta!* (CD, Warner Music Chile 8573 84988-2, 2000). CD3, Track 5.
- ⁹⁴ Los Miserables, 'O te quedas o te vas', *Gritos de la calle* (CD, Warner Music Chile 0927425752, 2001). CD3, Track 6. Of course, Joe Strummer and country singer Joe Ely included Spanish backing vocals on the original recording too (on the 1982 album *Combat Rock*).
- ⁹⁵ Víctor Jara, 'El aparecido', *1959-1969* (2CD, EMI Odeón Chilena, 2001); Los Miserables, 'El aparecido', *Gritos de la calle*. CD3, Tracks 7 & 8.
- ⁹⁶ Silvio Rodríguez, 'Te recuerdo Amanda', *Tributo a Víctor Jara* (CD, Alerce CDAL 0336, 1998); Boom Boom Kid, 'Te recuerdo Amanda', *Víctor Jara: Tributo rock* (CD, Ayva/Alerce AV 209, 2001). CD3, Tracks 9 & 10. Jara's original is CD2, Track 16.
- ⁹⁷ Those I played the track to at a conference in 2006 certainly were.
- ⁹⁸ Derrida in *Life After Theory*, p. 28.
- ⁹⁹ Slavoj Žižek, *For They Know Not What They Do: Enjoyment as a Political Factor*, 2nd edn. (London and New York: Verso, 2002), p. 271.
- ¹⁰⁰ Žižek, *For They Know Not*, p. 273.
- ¹⁰¹ Horacio Salinas, interview with CLAS.

Chapter Four

‘I’m Awfully Bitter These Days’: Freedom, Yearning and Defeat in Nina Simone’s Late Voice

A woman is seated, her gaze plunging into empty space, her face indistinct, her chin resting on a clenched fist; at her waist hang some keys, symbols of power, and a purse, symbol of wealth – two forms of vanity, in short. Melancholia remains forever this hunched, pensive figure. Fatigue? Grief? Sorrow? Meditation? The question returns: is this the posture of declining health or of reflective genius? [...] Might not truth itself be gloomy, following the adage of Ecclesiastes?

– Paul Ricoeur, *Memory, History, Forgetting*¹

And always, always, the work of mourning.

Each morning, it sometimes seems, mourning anew: for Medger Evers, for those four little black girls in Alabama blown apart *in church* by white “Christians”. Malcolm X in 1965. Martin Luther King in 1968. George Jackson in 1971. America’s answer to every difficult question: a bullet, and a target, and blood.

– Ian Penman, *The Wire*²

What happens to a dream deferred?

Does it dry up
like a raisin in the sun?
Or fester like a sore
and then run?

– Langston Hughes, ‘Harlem’³

My life has been rough,
I’m awfully bitter these days
Because my parents were slaves.
What do they call me?
They call me Peaches.

– Nina Simone, ‘Four Women’⁴

Don’t play any of those real songs.

– Mary Kate Waymon (Nina Simone’s mother)⁵

Introduction

In the previous chapter I analysed the cultural work done by Víctor Jara, Silvio Rodríguez and others in the light of Alain Badiou's theorisation of the event. For this chapter, which focuses on the work of the American singer Nina Simone (1933-2003), I wish to remain with Badiou, at least for some of the time; at certain moments I will either depart from Badiou's theorisation or look at some of the ways that it might be challenged by different notions of event. While holding on to Badiou's thinking of event, I wish also to think of Simone's life and work with respect to another concept crucial to the Badiouian account, namely *truth*, or, more specifically the seizing of an individual by a *truth event* that provokes in turn a subjectivisation based on fidelity to that truth event. The chapter will begin with an examination of how such a truth event has been written into accounts of Simone's composition and performance practice. It will then consider another theorisation of event, that of the *traumatic event*, and will seek to connect Simone's cultural work to that of others associated with the civil rights movement, a movement whose work, it has been argued, was grounded in the overcoming of the lingering cultural trauma engendered by slavery. Having examined these aspects of cultural trauma, the chapter will proceed in dialectical fashion via a critique of the potential for reduction and essentialisation in such accounts. This critique will involve placing a greater emphasis on aesthetic than social concerns, an argument favoured, despite the seeming centrality of the social in identity politics, by a number of theorists of race and gender. Having established an antithesis to our starting point, I will seek a return to that starting point by considering Nina Simone's late work in light of the broader concerns of this thesis, namely loss, mourning and nostalgia, and the attempts by the artist to come to terms with a radical, irresolvable yearning.

From Truth Event to Traumatic Event: Nina Simone as 'a symptom of history'

I wish to start by reflecting on the way that Simone has most often been connected (and indeed connected herself) to a subjectivising event. The event in question is described in the singer's 1991 autobiography, from which I quote here at length:

In Mount Vernon we had a little apartment built over the garage which was my private hideaway, where I went to practise and prepare for forthcoming

performances. I was sitting there in my den on 15 September when news came over the radio that somebody had thrown dynamite into the 16th Street Baptist Church in Birmingham, Alabama while black children were attending a Bible study class. Four of them – Denise McNair, Cynthia Wesley, Carole Robertson and Addie Mae Collins – had been killed. Later that day, in the rioting which followed, Birmingham police shot another black kid and a white mob pulled a young black man off his bicycle and beat him to death, out in the street. It was more than I could take, and I sat struck dumb in my den like St Paul on the road to Damascus: all the truths that I had denied to myself for so long rose up and slapped my face. The bombing of the little girls in Alabama and the murder of Medger Evers were like the final pieces of a jigsaw that made no sense until you had fitted the whole thing together. I suddenly realised what it was to be black in America in 1963, but it wasn't an intellectual connection of the type Lorraine [Hansberry] had been repeating to me over and over – it came as a rush of fury, hatred and determination. In church language, the Truth entered into me and I 'came through'.⁶

This paragraph, which appears roughly midway through Simone's account of her life, is noteworthy on a number of levels. Leaving aside for now the specific events that completed the 'jigsaw' of Simone's politicisation, what is immediately apparent, especially for those who have read the book up to this crucial moment, is the use of religious language to describe Simone's 'Damascus moment'. Coming from a strict religious background (her mother was a Methodist minister), Simone had had experience of 'church language' from an early age. In her memoir, she recounts how, as a young girl, she would play piano in church to accompany the gospel singing of the congregation. This gave her a sense of the power of performance: 'When I played I could take a congregation where I wanted – calm them down or lift them up until they became completely lost in the music and atmosphere'.⁷ She describes how people in church were seized by the music, finding themselves 'transported' to another place. Meanwhile her mother referred to non-church music as 'real' music, ordering her daughter to not 'play any of those real songs'.⁸

For anyone reading Badiou – or Jacques Lacan for that matter – alongside Simone, it is difficult to overlook the relevance of words such as 'truth' or 'real', or the reference to St Paul. Badiou's notion of event relies heavily on the notion of a

truth passing through an individual; indeed it is this very passing through of truth, and the fidelity which it subsequently allows, that is the founding of the Subject. What Badiou calls the ‘evental supplement’, in effect the event which acts as the excess of a situation, is thus intimately connected with truth:

From which ‘decision’, then, stems the process of a truth? From the decision to relate henceforth to the situation *from the perspective of its evental supplement*. Let us call this a fidelity. To be faithful to an event is to move within the situation that this event has supplemented, by *thinking* [...] the situation ‘according to’ the event. And this, of course – since the event was excluded by all regular laws of the situation – compels the subject to *invent* a new way of being and acting in the situation.⁹

Simone’s reader does not have to wait long to find out the two strategies Simone works through in order to ‘invent a new way of being and acting’. The first, fortunately stillborn, involves revenge for the atrocious events that have brought home to her the excess of her (and her fellow black Americans’) situation. Simone attempts to build a gun in order to deliver retribution to the objects of her ‘hatred’ and ‘fury’. Her husband, a former police officer, discovers her and stops her, saying, ‘Nina, you don’t know anything about killing. The only thing you’ve got is music.’ Simone accepts this and sits down at her piano:

An hour later I came out of my apartment with the sheet music for ‘Mississippi Goddam’ in my hand. It was my first civil rights song, and it erupted out of me quicker than I could write it down. I knew then that I would dedicate myself to the struggle for black justice, freedom and equality under the law for as long as it took, until all our battles were won.¹⁰

As Simone goes on to note, when she started to become involved in the civil rights movement many already considered her an activist due to the publicity she gave to various aspects of the movement in her concerts and in interviews. But clearly she herself felt it necessary, albeit in this retrospective account, to delimit a ‘before’ and ‘after’. Others have followed Simone’s lead in providing a periodisation of her work before and after ‘Mississippi Goddam’. Ruth Feldstein, for example, at the start of her

article on Simone and black activism in the 1960s, provides a summary of the artist's conversion and of her previous career:

On September 15, 1963, Nina Simone learned that four young African American girls had been killed in the bombing of the Sixteenth Street Baptist Church in Birmingham, Alabama. Prior to that point, Simone, an African American singer, pianist, and songwriter, had an eclectic repertoire that blended jazz with blues, gospel, and classical music. Immediately after hearing about the events in Birmingham, however, Simone wrote the song 'Mississippi Goddam.' It came to her in a 'rush of fury, hatred and determination' as she 'suddenly realized what it was to be black in America in 1963.' It was, she said, 'my first civil rights song'.¹¹

While I agree with the emphasis placed on this crucial moment in Simone's career and while this chapter will be for the most part concerned with the 'after' of this event, I do not want to miss the opportunity to visit two crucial moments in Simone's biography that took place many years before.

The first event is one that has also received a considerable amount of attention from writers on Simone's life. It concerns the traumatic experience Simone (then Eunice Waymon) underwent at the age of eleven during a public piano recital:

When I was eleven years old I was asked to give a recital in the town hall. I sat at the piano with my trained elegance while a white man introduced me, and when I looked up my parents, who were dressed in their best, were being thrown out of their front row seats in favour of a white family I had never seen before. And Daddy and Momma were allowing themselves to be moved. Nobody else said anything, but I wasn't going to see them treated like that and stood up in my starched dress and said if anyone expected to hear me play then they'd better make sure that my family was sitting right there in the front row where I could see them, and to hell with poise and elegance. So they moved them back. But my parents were embarrassed and I saw some of the white folks laughing at me.¹²

This was a major traumatic event for a girl who had grown up relatively immune to the injustices of racism: ‘All of a sudden it seemed a different world, and nothing was easy anymore’.¹³ What Simone experienced here was the collapsing together of a personal trauma with a larger and longstanding public, or cultural, trauma. That trauma was, of course, the legacy of slavery that had left such a permanent scar on the body of American society.

Recent years have seen a growing body of literature on public trauma, some of which has already been referenced in this thesis. Here I want to draw on work by Cathy Caruth and Ron Eyerman on cultural trauma. Eyerman speaks of the trauma of slavery as ‘collective memory, a form of remembrance that grounded the identity-formation of a people’. In addition to the brutal reality of those who lived and died in captivity, ‘slavery was traumatic in retrospect, and formed a “primal scene” which could, potentially, unite all “African Americans” in the United States, whether or not they had themselves been slaves or had any knowledge of or feeling for Africa.’¹⁴ In many ways, this seems similar to the concept of ‘postmemory’ discussed in the previous chapter. Eyerman is keen to find connections between cultural trauma and the trauma associated with the psychological subject but also wishes to stress important differences:

As opposed to psychological or physical trauma, which involves a wound and the experience of great emotional anguish by an individual, cultural trauma refers to a dramatic loss of identity and meaning, a tear in the social fabric, affecting a group of people that has achieved some degree of cohesion. In this sense, the trauma need not necessarily be felt by everyone in a community or experienced directly by any or all. While it may be necessary to establish some event as the significant ‘cause,’ its traumatic meaning must be established and accepted, a process which requires time, as well as mediation and representation.¹⁵

We can contrast this with the kind of personal trauma highlighted by Orlando Patterson when he reminds us that one of the features of a slave childhood ‘was the added psychological trauma of witnessing the daily degradation of their parents at the hands of slaveholders’.¹⁶ The experience described by Patterson can be compared to the traumatic experience of the eleven year old Eunice Waymon at the piano recital.

Simone, in remembering nearly fifty years later, even uses a metaphor appropriate to slavery and post-Reconstruction racism: ‘The day after the recital I walked around feeling as if I had been flayed and every slight, real or imagined, cut me raw.’ In her memory Simone can still project defiant rage and an awareness of a developing identity to that moment: ‘But the skin grew back again a little tougher, a little less innocent, and a little more black.’¹⁷ In her memory the individual and collective experiences, hers and her slave ancestors’, have merged together. And it is in the act of remembering, as Cathy Caruth points out, that the traumatic effect is produced, not in the original event:

[T]he pathology cannot be defined either by the event itself – which may or may not be catastrophic, and may not traumatize everyone equally – nor can it be defined in terms of a *distortion* of the event, achieving its haunting power as a result of distorting personal significances attached to it. The pathology consists, rather, solely in the *structure of its experience* or reception: the event is not assimilated or experienced fully at the time, but only belatedly, in its repeated *possession* of the one who experiences it. To be traumatized is precisely to be possessed by an image or event.¹⁸

Caruth follows Freud’s emphasis on deferred action, or *Nachträglichkeit*, in her theorisation of post-traumatic stress disorder. The traumatic dream for Freud is ‘the literal return of the event against the will of the one it inhabits’.¹⁹ Traumatic dreams are often literal and non-symbolic: ‘It is this literality and its insistent return which thus constitutes trauma and points towards its enigmatic core: the delay or incompleteness in knowing, or even in seeing, an overwhelming occurrence that then remains, in its insistent return, absolutely *true* to the event’.²⁰ Trauma, in other words, shows fidelity to the event.

If this formulation suddenly brings Badiou back into the picture we need to ask whether it is possible to have a negative event in the Badiouian universe. Or is the traumatic event always a different kind of event from the Badiouian one? Certain similarities can be found between these events. In addition to the aspect of fidelity already mentioned, there is the retrospective recognition of eventness. Caruth speaks of ‘the inability to fully witness the event as it occurs, or the ability to witness the *event* fully only at the cost of witnessing oneself’. She goes on:

Central to the very immediacy of this experience, that is, is a gap that carries the force of the event and does so precisely at the expense of simple knowledge and memory. The force of this experience would appear to arise precisely, in other words, in the collapse of its understanding. [...] The historical power of the trauma is not just that the experience is repeated after its forgetting, but that it is only in and through its inherent forgetting that it is first experienced at all. And it is this inherent latency of the event that paradoxically explains the peculiar temporal structure, the belatedness, of historical experience: since the traumatic event is not experienced as it occurs, it is fully evident only in connection with another place, and in another time.²¹

Following a similar line, Eyerman suggests we speak of 'traumatic affect' rather than 'traumatic events'.²² I intend to keep the latter vocabulary in use, however, since I wish to maintain a connection between a truth event and a traumatic event. In Badiou's theorisation (and in Derrida's too, as we saw in the last chapter), an event can only be recognised retrospectively; yet the lack of visibility of the event from within its evental site *does not prevent it from being considered as an event*.

Eyerman's and Caruth's accounts both emphasise the structure of time which links the traumatic event irrevocably with history; in Caruth's words, post-traumatic stress disorder 'is not a pathology [...] of falsehood or displacement of meaning, but of history itself [...] not so much a symptom of the unconscious, as it is a symptom of history'.²³ This provides a useful way of navigating between those aspects of trauma associated with the personal and those considered more in the light of the collective; as history applies itself both to the individual and the society, so trauma ravages the individual body and the body politic. It is with this seemingly in mind that Kaja Silverman discusses 'historical trauma', a term she recognises as paradoxical 'since it uses an adjective connotative of the public sphere to qualify a noun conventionally associated with the psychic or physiological shock suffered by an individual person'. Her solution is to appeal to a situation that 'exceeds our usual categories' and she provides a useful definition of what historical trauma might be: 'a historically precipitated but psychoanalytically specific disruption, with ramifications extending far beyond the individual psyche'.²⁴

The other crucial event in Simone's life prior to the writing of 'Mississippi Goddam' was her rejection from the prestigious Curtis Institute, where she had hoped to continue her music education. Here it is worth recalling Mrs Waymon's use of the word 'real' to describe non-church music. For her daughter, 'real music' was Bach, Czerny and Liszt: 'in it I found a happiness I didn't have to share with anybody.'²⁵ At the time of her rejection from the Curtis Institute, Simone was still intending to spend her life playing this kind of 'real music'. Having invested so much in her music and having had others invest so much in her, Simone had allowed herself to become subject to an act of faith, in this case not religious faith but the faith that music – and preferably classical music – would be her future. Instead, despite the great success she went on to achieve, the faith she had in music would be equally tempered with rejection and disavowal: in many ways, rejection was to become the trauma of her life. Simone remained bitter about the Curtis Institute for the remainder of her life, finding in it a painful example of American racism. In her autobiography she makes no bones about declaring her disappointment, providing a conflation of the past anger she wishes to represent and the present, residual anger of the moment of representation. She is similarly vocal about the incident in one of the interviews included in the film *La Légende* (1991), a documentary about her life and work.²⁶ The film closes with a fantasy sequence in which Simone is seen playing Tchaikovsky's *Romeo and Juliet* with members of the Orchestre de Paris to an audience seated in a French formal garden and comprising her daughter and a prominently positioned black couple, presumably representing her parents. Along with the music we hear the elderly Mrs Waymon giving her account of her daughter's traumatic childhood recital when mother and father were told to move from the front row. Meanwhile we witness, supposedly, Simone's youthful ambitions realised as she makes a return to 'real music'.

The (Miss.)uses of Biography

It should be clear from the preceding that I will be weaving in and out of the personal and the public in my consideration of Simone's work. Hers was a life lived in public view, albeit one from which she fled at certain times. However, it is still worth addressing the question of relevance of biographical detail in the interpretation of an

artist's material and the problems inherent in mixing biography with public history and theory.

In Chapter One I mentioned Slavoj Žižek's response to recent debates in the cognitive sciences and philosophy regarding consciousness; Žižek suggests that consciousness carries a 'strange excess' whereby, regardless of whether we adhere to cognitivism or phenomenology, we are unable to account for the drive to question consciousness. Consciousness considered in evolutionary terms might even be a 'mistake', an awareness that arises at the point when things no longer function, when we experience trauma.²⁷ With this in mind it is worth thinking about the role of music in marking what Lacan called the *points de capiton* that pin down, in however temporary and fragmentary a fashion, our subjective experience. In the previous chapter emphasis was placed on the collective (political) consciousness and how music has been used to mark awareness of traumatic public events. Here, as already suggested, I want to interweave between notions of personal and public consciousness. If one of the notable themes of Nina Simone's work is her unresolved search for (and simultaneous denial of) identity, one of the tenets of this chapter will be that any such search inevitably involves a questioning of oneself as an individual that can only proceed alongside a recognition of oneself as definable through one's relationship to a collective. Along this line of thinking, consciousness can only exist via recognition of the Other.

Between accuracy and act

In his article on remembering as moral practice Michael Lambek makes a distinction between accuracy in memory and consciousness and what we might term memory acts. Lambek critiques certain models of thinking about memory – for example, memories (plural) as files to be retrieved by the mind or memory (singular) as a video camera recording experiences to be played back at a later time – preferring instead to think of memory as something situated in time and in a particularly motivated process. It is not just a question about whether the former processes can attain any kind of accuracy but rather a question about the desire for accuracy in the first place.²⁸ For Lambek, in an argument reminiscent of Benjamin's philosophy of history, memory should be treated as a series of claims made by the rememberer and subject to the kind of moral questioning we might attach to any kind of claim. 'Such an approach treats memory not as a neutral representation, more or less accurate, of the

past, but as a claim or set of claims, more or less firm, more or less justified, more or less appropriate, about it.’²⁹ Remembering and forgetting are ‘motivated acts’ in the Freudian sense: they are never neutral. This distinction, it seems to me, is analogous to that made by Žižek between the potential for accuracy aimed for by cognitive science in explaining consciousness and the strange excess left by the gap between questioner/explainer and her conscious awareness of herself.

Meanwhile, in *Social Movements: A Cognitive Approach*, Ron Eyerman and Andrew Jamison use the term ‘cognitive praxis’ to ‘emphasise the creative role of consciousness and cognition in all human action, individual and collective’.³⁰ It is this cognitive praxis, they argue, that transforms individuals into social movements and that gives social movements their particular meaning or consciousness, which might be understood as their relations to knowledge (both worldview and particular micro-political agenda). At the same time as being constituted (Eyerman & Jamison follow thinkers such as E.P. Thompson in seeing consciousness as a historical construction) social movements are themselves constitutive, bringing about major changes in how society understands itself. ‘Social movements articulate new historical projects by reflecting on their own cognitive identity. In formulating their common assumptions, developing their programmatic presentations of themselves to the rest of society, in short by saying what they stand for, social movement activists develop new ideas that are fundamental to broader processes of human creativity.’³¹ They use the example of the American civil rights movement as one that created a new kind of self-knowledge in the country. The movement ‘re-cognized American society as fundamentally unjust, combining religious and legal consciousness into an integrated “social gospel”’.³²

Eyerman’s working through of cultural trauma, as mentioned earlier, is useful for the major songwriting event in Simone’s life, the bombing of the church in Alabama and the subsequent writing of ‘Mississippi Goddam’. Eyerman stresses the role of what he calls ‘movement intellectuals’ in mediating between cultural and political spheres: ‘Intellectuals are mediators and translators between spheres of activity and differently situated social groups, including the situatedness in time and space. Intellectuals in this sense can be film directors and singers of songs, as well as college professors.’³³ And Eyerman and Jamison, recognising their own indebtedness to the work of Raymond Williams and Antonio Gramsci, suggest that what is missing from many other theorists ‘is a sociological concern with the actions of contextually

bound agents, with what we have termed movement intellectuals and movement artists. It is here that biography meets history. [...T]he life stories of key actors in the transformation of tradition – James Weldon Johnson, Langston Hughes, Zora Neale Hurston, Pete Seeger, Woody Guthrie, Bob Dylan, Phil Ochs, Janis Joplin, and Jimi Hendrix, to name a few – are central to our approach to sociological analysis.’³⁴ Needless to say, I would wish to add Simone’s name to this list. Indeed, if, as Eyerman claims, ‘Cultural trauma articulates a membership group as it identifies an event or an experience, a primal scene, that solidifies individual/collective identity’, it is all the more surprising that he has not focussed on Nina Simone in his work.³⁵

Jacques Le Goff warns of the possible dangers of mixing individual and collective memory processes in historiographical practice but suggests that it would be equally unwise to ignore the individual:

It would be a mistake to transpose the data of individual psychology into the domain of collective consciousness, and an even graver mistake to compare the child’s acquisition of mastery over time to the evolution of conceptions of time through history. But reference to these domains can provide a certain number of clues (most of them metaphorical in nature) that can illuminate one aspect or another of the past/present opposition at the historical and collective levels.³⁶

Le Goff draws on Jean Piaget and others to highlight the parallels between individual and collective memory, connecting an ability to construct personal and collective histories with the mastery over time slowly learnt by the child:

The pathology of individual attitudes towards time shows that ‘normal’ behavior maintains an equilibrium between the consciousness of the past, the present and the future, but with a slight predominance of the orientation toward the future, whether the latter is feared or desired. The orientation toward the present, characteristic of very young children (who even ‘reconstitute the past in relation to the present,’ as Piaget has noted), of mentally defective or insane persons, as well as of former deportees whose personality has been disturbed, is encountered fairly commonly among old people and some persons with persecution complexes who fear the future. The

classic example is Jean-Jacques Rousseau, who wrote in the *Confessions* that his ‘wild imagination,’ which led him ‘to foresee only a cruel future’, made him take refuge in the present: ‘My heart is occupied by the present alone, which fills all its space and all its capacity.’ In other kinds of illness, the individual’s anguish concerning time takes the form of a *flight toward the future* or a *refuge in the past*. The classic case of the latter, in literature, is Marcel Proust.³⁷

Proust, of course, provides the prime example of the conflation of (auto)biography, memory, history and narrative. In Proust we rediscover the chaotic coexistence of the past with the present and witness the frantic quilting of that past which, always being recalled by the least expected of objects, simultaneously flies away in a torrent of loss. Those quilting points that Proust provides for us (and for himself), being ever (in danger of being) present, do not correspond to chronological moments of time. They challenge us over our conflation of history with teleology and show that, like memory, the stories we tell ourselves (be they autobiographies of individuals or histories of cultures) have no clear beginning, middle or end. Again, as we saw in Chapter One, memory and mourning do not operate via neat chronologies but rather by the random deployment of what Roland Barthes termed ‘biographemes’. In Seán Burke’s words,

For Barthes, never far from Proust, the biographeme reverberates with the pathos of lost time, and yet participates in its recovery [...] Like the photograph of his mother so beautifully described [in *Camera Lucida*], the biographeme is all that endures once a life has run its course: those elements that can be stilled, pictured – a bloated eunuch in a prison cell, a man dead among his flowerpots, a white muff worn on a night in 1768. What is modestly adumbrated here is a revaluation of biography, a new form of its writing which does not lie against time but accepts its conditions in a spirit of melancholy defiance. While the death of the author had addressed itself to the timeless ‘Author-God’, the return of the biographical author is a return to transience [sic.], mortality.³⁸

Biographemes can be compared and contrasted with the ‘decisive events’ so often referred to in popular music lore: Robert Johnson at the crossroads is a decisive event, albeit one that takes the form of a myth (as, presumably, Bob Dylan at the crossroads is a decisive event for Greil Marcus³⁹); Amália Rodrigues selling fruit on the streets of Lisbon is not a decisive event but a biographeme; Nina Simone’s events are traumatic and decisive. At the same time, as we will see below, Simone articulates an experimental attitude to time and the weaving of past and present that can be discerned in her deployment of a late voice that navigates a path between the always-already and the future anterior, a voice that articulates both ‘a flight toward the future’ *and* ‘a refuge in the past’.

Revolution, Movement, Scene

Queen of the Village

In order to ascertain what Nina Simone’s ‘late voice’ may have been a response to, I offer the following excerpts from Simone’s autobiography, all describing the moment of her initial fame in the early 1960s, the period in which she became for many (including herself) an event:

The day of the show I dressed in a long white gown draped over one shoulder and white satin shoes. [...] The MC called my name and I walked on like an Egyptian queen – slow, calm and serious.

[...]

All those club dates had been trashy rehearsals for this, the real thing, a concert platform. [...] Colpix recorded the concert and released it as *Nina Simone at Town Hall* [...] The reviews were the best I had ever had. I was a sensation. An overnight success, like in the movies.

[...]

Suddenly I was the hot new thing, Queen of the Village for a while. I started to get recognized on the street, I was offered concerts all across the States, my records were released in Europe, journalists started pressing me for interviews, and TV producers wanted me for their shows.

[...]

The audience that was the first to pick up on me in a really big way were the people who hung out in the Village, the artistic and intellectual crowd. In the Village there were a number of different groupings. There was the jazz scene, with guys like John Coltrane, Art Pepper, George Adams and many more just walking about the place looking for fun and a place to play [...] Surrounding them, gravitating around the music, were the writers, poets and painters, remarkable men and women who would become my friends. Langston Hughes, Jimmy Baldwin, Leroi Jones [...] Lorraine Hansberry, Godfrey Cambridge, Dick Gregory – so many talented and exciting people. On the outside of them were the folks that understood something special was happening, that it was an extraordinary time to be in the Village [...] But the jazz crowd were only part of the story because at the Bitter End – just across the street from the Village Gate – you found the folk crowd [...] They had their own heroes around the place, people like Joan Baez, Tim Hardin, Peter, Paul and Mary, Odetta, and this very young guy who sang comedy parodies in the intermissions, Bob Dylan.⁴⁰

This moment, then, combined a rush of success with exposure to an art world that could feed Simone's intellectual and creative needs. Greenwich Village at this time was a utopian site that contained the promise for artistic, political and personal revolutions in the decade to come. As David Wild writes of late 1961, the time of John Coltrane's historic performances at the Village Vanguard, 'It's hard to grasp the amount of good jazz available to the Vanguard's audience in the Village that fall. The Five Spot had had Ornette Coleman's Quartet on-stage during the first weeks of October, and had followed it up with Cecil Taylor. Lennie Tristano and Lee Konitz were at the Half Note, and Sonny Rollins was at the Jazz Gallery – to name a few. For that matter, Ravi Shankar had offered a concert of Indian music only a month earlier.'⁴¹ And Nina Simone was fast becoming a regular feature of one of the area's other venues, the Village Gate, where she would record a live album the following year.⁴²

Considering Simone's connection with the Village (David Nathan describes the Village Gate as 'Nina's [...] "home"⁴³), we may be able to discern a little better the ease with which the singer could follow her established strategy of performing music from a wide variety of categories. Writing about the recorded performances of

Simone at the Village Gate that were released in 1962, David Nathan highlights the variety of genres on display and also notes how influential her versions of non-original material would be to others – ‘He Was Too Good to Me’ and ‘House of the Rising Sun’ – both recorded at the Gate – would inspire Laura Nyro and the Animals respectively.⁴⁴ In this sense, as will be discussed later in this chapter, Simone can be said to be ‘re-authoring’ material originally written by others by providing ‘definitive’ versions.

What I wish to highlight here is Simone’s involvement in a utopian moment – primarily based around Greenwich Village but extending beyond its borders – that served as both the seed of her future development and the hard kernel of her future disappointment. For, if this was not a decisive traumatic event in the manner of those described earlier – indeed, it seems as far from traumatic as it could be – it would become one later precisely through its exposure as a decision not taken; the potential offered by the Village art world and the potential offered by the civil rights movement Simone was beginning to become involved with at this time would be later conflated in the light of the failure of the latter to deliver obvious material changes to American society and of the former to lead to a cultural milieu where someone of Simone’s uncompromising eclecticism might comfortably feel she belonged.⁴⁵

For now, though, there was still hope. This was the era of Simone’s first ‘civil rights song’, a reading of Oscar Brown Jr’s ‘Brown Baby’. Brown was one of the great black hopes of the time, a successful and talented young man whose 1960 album *Sin & Soul* had gathered critical acclaim and whose collaboration the same year with Max Roach and Abbey Lincoln on *We Insist! Freedom Now Suite* had launched a new musical challenge at the racial politics of the time. Simone had a ‘home’ in both the aesthetic and political moment that such projects were in the process of shaping.

Accuracy and Act/Aesthetics

This is perhaps a good place to consider the questions raised by often antagonistic arguments surrounding issues of politics and aesthetics. Robin Kelley, for one, would argue against an account, such as mine, that sought to conflate the traumas of racial politics with the creation of art. For Kelley, as suggested in his book *Yo’ Mama’s Disfunktional!*, such an approach would tap into a narrative that is always already suspect due to its assumption of an essentialised group:

Conceiving of black urban culture in the singular opened the door for the invention of the ‘underclass’. Once culture is seen as a static, measurable thing – behavior – that is either part of an old African or slave tradition or a product of dire circumstances, it is not hard to cast black people as pathological products of broken families, broken economies, and/or broken communities.⁴⁶

Kelley argues against the white ‘neo-Enlightenment Left’s vision of emancipation which blames the emphasis on identity politics for the demise of class-based analysis’. Kelley points out that an understanding of class always already necessitates an understanding of race, gender and sexuality. He is thus supportive of identity politics and wishes to recuperate it from the critique to which it has been subjected by those he sees as wanting to deny difference. It is worth thinking about such a position in relation to thinkers such as Badiou, who places his critique not so much against a splitting of race/gender/sexuality on the one hand and class on the other as against an emphasis on difference at the expense of a political programme based on sameness (equality). Kelley’s argument is, to a certain extent, also about a desire for sameness – or at least a plea for a consideration of African American art and culture along the axes of pleasure and aesthetics rather than those of social unease. He sees his book as a defence of ‘victims of racist and sexist social science, social policy, and social disinvestment’.⁴⁷ For him, too much social science posits black creative culture as a response to or coping mechanism of oppression and ignores aspects of aesthetics, style and pleasure.

A case in point is the definition of the word ‘soul’ and the prevailing assumption that, whatever it might or might not be, it is something that black people (though Kelley emphasises black men) are assumed to have. ‘At the very least, *soul* was a euphemism or a creative way of identifying what many believed was a black aesthetic, or black style, and it was a synonym for black itself or a way to talk about being black without reference to colour, which is why people of other ethnic groups could have soul.’⁴⁸ William L. Van Deburg, meanwhile, devotes a whole section of his book *New Day in Babylon* to just such a black-centred account of soul: soul style, soul music, soulful talk, etc. But while he talks about the appropriation of soul music by whites,⁴⁹ he seems not far removed from Kelley when he talks about appropriation of ‘white’ music by blacks:

As sung by the Beatles, 'Eleanor Rigby' and 'Day Tripper' were prime examples of clever mid-sixties Euro-American pop. The music was engaging, but contained not a hint of soulfulness. Versions of the same songs performed by Ray Charles and the Vontastics had it in abundance. The same could be said for Aretha Franklin's interpretations of hits by Simon and Garfunkel and Dusty Springfield. The singer, not the song, determined whether a tune would be considered soulful.⁵⁰

So soul was, and is, something we cannot define: we just know it when we hear it and that tends to be when black performers sing songs rather than white. Peter Guralnick writes of Franklin's version of the country song 'With Pen in Hand' that it 'sounds as direct, as enterprising, as freshly minted as her own compositions, the emotion welling up in a full-throated cry which, if not always supported by the weight of the words, uplifts, *in a way that cannot be pinpointed*, the mundane limitations of the text.'⁵¹ Then there is Rob Bowman's analysis of Franklin's version of 'Try a Little Tenderness', which he contrasts with the display of (white, male) mastery in Bing Crosby's version.⁵² This is a point I will come back to below in a discussion of Nina Simone's versions of songs associated with Frank Sinatra. Here it is worth noting how Bowman attempts to escape the problem of merely claiming Franklin's version as soulful, submitting it instead to a scientific analysis. The contrast with Crosby, no matter how scientific, does, however, still pivot around the difference between Crosby's implicitly bland mastery and Franklin's explicitly 'adventurous' embrace of 'signifiers of emotional engagement'.⁵³ Is *this* what soul is?

Brian Ward, meanwhile, suggests that 'soul' is a kind of response to the political trauma of the times, a musical counterpart to the civil rights movement. While he is careful to note that music may not have actually changed things, he is keen to site black artists as articulators of a shared trauma.⁵⁴ Who actually heard the message that was being articulated is another area that is up for debate, with Van Deburg for one seeking to polarise white and black reception of the music: 'While blacks listened to the message in each song, whites were content to boogaloo blindly to the beat.'⁵⁵

There are crucial political reasons why such accounts as this, which seem to resist 'logic', are nevertheless important ones to pay attention to. As I have mentioned

elsewhere in this thesis, the Badiouian distinction between the veridical and the true may be relevant here. It may be less important to attempt a 'taxonomy of soul' – no doubt impossible, anyway – than to recognise the potential 'eventness' that 'soul' can bring to music otherwise associated with dominant groups. As has often been noted, black musical innovations have often come about as a result of, and response to, an appropriation of prior black styles into the mainstream; what we might think of as a 'will to difference' has driven black creativity and led to a situation in which what is done to musical form must both be named (quilted) and moved on from. 'Soul' is only one word to describe this process. As Ben Sidran, points out, 'blues feeling' has also served this strategic role; following Leadbelly's definition of blues as a feeling, Sidran writes: '[A]ccepting the "feeling" definition allows one to interpret the music as part of a larger cultural movement and to make distinctions between the use of the blues *form*, which many whites were employing, and the development of new techniques of blues *feeling*.'⁵⁶

All of this notwithstanding, it is as well not to let the politics of the situation (or, rather, the event) blind us to what Badiou calls constructivist knowledge, for the latter does have its uses, not least in academic work. Kelley's insistence on the importance of aesthetics and pleasure in black cultural pursuits is important. He is keenly attuned to the pleasures of black speech acts and uses the example of the game of the dozens to provide an alternative reading to that of the 'social scientists' who would see 'only' (collective) political implications. For him the purpose of the dozens is 'deceptively simple: to get a laugh'.⁵⁷ As with the dozens, Kelley suggests that hip hop is too readily seen by commentators as street journalism (Chuck D's famous 'black *CNN*'), an approach that 'does not allow for the playfulness and storytelling that is so central to Hip Hop specifically, and black vernacular culture generally'.⁵⁸

Coming from a different direction, Richard Lischer emphasises the role of pleasure in the political speeches of Martin Luther King, noting King's 'formulas', his 'key-signature phrases by which he transformed the prosaic discouragement of his audiences into the poetry of a Movement'. Lischer continues the musical analogy: 'His audiences would cheer when he *began* one of his set pieces the way fans respond to the first bars of their favorite song at a rock concert. The formulas not only verified the identity of the speaker, they also guaranteed a collaborative role for the hearer in an important moment of history.'⁵⁹ The role of the contemporary popular music performer has many connections to that of the political or religious orator (King, of

course, was both), a point underlined in Simone's own description of the 'power' she acquired when performing:

- It was at this time, in the mid-sixties, that I first began to feel the power and spirituality I could connect with when I played in front of an audience. I'd been performing for ten years, but it was only at this time that I felt a kind of state of grace come upon me on those occasions when everything fell into place. At such times I would give a concert that everyone who witnessed it would remember for years, and they would go home afterwards knowing that something very special had happened.⁶⁰

Russell A. Berman points out that Simone's description of performance emphasises the identification between performer and audience and is therefore 'precisely the opposite of classical Brechtian theater'.⁶¹ He goes on to draw the following conclusions:

In this light, her rendition of 'Pirate Jenny' must be seen less as an American or African-American version of the song than as an updating of [Lotte] Lenya into the new sensibility of the 1960s counterculture era. To the extent that the latter is reasonably understood as the heir to certain neo-Romantic cultural traditions, Simone is in effect redefining the Brechtian texts, especially 'Pirate Jenny,' in Wagnerian terms. Her goal is evidently not to hone rational criticism, but rather to appeal to emotion, to the terror and pity that characterize the Aristotelian poetics for which Brecht reserved only contempt. [...F]rom a strictly Brechtian viewpoint, Simone's radical sounds imply an inadequate politics; the sentiment is correct, but, as sentiment alone, it is strategically wrong.'⁶²

Yet this wrongness represents, for Berman, an aesthetic success and one, moreover, that serves as a reminder of the failure of a 'strict' Brechtian strategy in the Weimar Republic as well as highlighting the inviability of such a strategy in Simone's historical context: '[w]hile a Brechtian critique of Simone's sentimentalism is surely imaginable and could possibly explain her slide into outsider positions – tax resistance

and exile – Brechtian orthodoxy was not a plausible position in the American civil rights movement.⁶³

It Is Finished

In an intriguing move that connects Nina Simone's sentimentalism with both her own individual creativity and the loss of a sense of collectivity (of the civil rights movement), Berman writes:

Her liminal position among the musical options of the 1960s – never exactly blues or soul, jazz or folk – is as much an expression of her unique creativity as it is of the coming-to-an-end of a lineage of political music. The protest song, as an expression of the 1960s, may have been the end of musical politics, at least in the conventional mode of a topical ballad or chanson. New forms of music were emerging. Politicized jazz, with Mingus, could offer a more compelling treatment of the dialectic of improvisational freedom and organizational necessity; new rock [...] could engage a mass public in a different sort of popular cultural discourse, far beyond Simone's liberal and urban audience.⁶⁴

For Berman, Simone's refusal of categorisation is connected to an individualism that takes off from where collective politics ends or fails. For Ashley Kahn, however, it is the refusal itself which is political: 'Forever binding music and message, Simone ultimately saw her defiance of category – social, racial, musical – as an intrinsic part of her mission of self-affirmation and protest.'⁶⁵ This would seem to tie in with Simone's own views; in her autobiography she claims, 'For black musicians the result of the sixties was exile to dance music and the old black ghettos of jazz and blues.'⁶⁶ While many have suggested that black music has sought to move on to new styles whenever its previous innovations have been co-opted by the white mainstream, a process that leads to a recurrent black creativity in popular music (what I earlier termed a 'will to difference'), Simone seems to find an attachment to black music regressive rather than progressive. And while the developments in black soul, jazz, blues and funk are arguably manifestations of a range of political aesthetics – Berman's point – Simone would seem to suggest that her politics resides in her ability

to take on the mainstream and do it her way (for her version of ‘My Way’, see below). This does appear at odds with her oft-recorded advocacy of black separatism over assimilation, and of militancy over diplomacy, but these are all aspects of what Ashley Kahn calls her ‘enduring enigma’.⁶⁷

As for teleology, Kahn warns against seeing stylistic progression from one point of Simone’s career to another, stressing rather an expansion of the repertoire with the old numbers still played, performed, recorded, updated. Indeed, in a manner analogous to the way Ajay Heble highlights Paul Robeson’s changing improvisations of the lyrics to ‘Ol’ Man River’ over the years to reflect the presence of black resistance to the white mainstream,⁶⁸ it is worth noting the way Nina Simone continued to improvise on the lyrics of ‘Mississippi Goddam’ late in her career to work in references to Ronald Reagan, Margaret Thatcher and Jesse and Michael Jackson amongst others. The song has this possibility built into its structure so that, even in its ‘original’ form – let us call this the version we witness on *Nina Simone In Concert* (1964) – the final payoff involves the introduction of new terms (‘Alabama’, for example) into the ‘Mississippi’ placeholder (‘Everybody knows about _____’).⁶⁹ However, while I agree with Kahn that Simone’s repertoire was one that, to a certain extent, defied neat chronology, I will suggest below that a distinctive ‘late voice’ can be identified, one that is compatible with Berman’s observations about Simone’s sentimentalism and with accounts – including Simone’s own – of the singer’s increasing disillusionment over the failure of the civil rights movement. Ron Eyerman describes this ‘failure’ as follows:

The 1960s appeared differently to whites and blacks. Whites tend to remember the sixties as filled with political and cultural confrontation, where young college students protested against the war in Vietnam, where a sexual revolution altered the boundaries of what was normal and acceptable, and where feminism changed the way Americans looked at gender, marriage and family life. [...] Blacks, especially those influenced by cultural nationalism, remember something different. Here the period tends to be viewed through a perceived defeat of the civil rights movement, the failure to either achieve its goals of inclusion or to speak to the specific needs of urban blacks. The failure, in other words, of the progressive narrative.⁷⁰

The loss of the ideals of the movement followed on, of course, from the loss of so many individuals associated with it: Malcolm X and Martin Luther King in the sphere of politics, Lorraine Hansberry and John Coltrane in the sphere of culture. Nina Simone was painfully aware of these losses. In a performance the night after the assassination of Martin Luther King, she used three songs to comment on the event. The first of these, 'Sunday In Savannah', was presented as a song of comfort for those who had come to the concert. The second was a new song, written the day before by Simone's bassist Gene Taylor and entitled 'Why (The King Of Love Is Dead)'. Midway through, Simone paused to reflect on the loss of King and others: 'Lorraine Hansberry left us [...] and then Langston Hughes left us, Coltrane left us, Otis Redding left us. Who can go on? Do you realise how many we have lost? [...] We can't afford any more losses [...] They're shooting us down one by one.' The third song was the defiant 'Mississippi Goddam', tailored to the particular events of the day before.⁷¹

Simone's mourning of Martin Luther King connects to discussions earlier in this thesis around the loss of political projects and lost utopias. While Simone had tended to align herself more with the militant demands of Malcolm X and Eldridge Cleaver than the utopian dreams of King, and while she could still interject militant demands into renditions of 'Mississippi Goddam' such as the one performed in the wake of King's assassination ('I ain't about to be nonviolent honey!' she shouts at one point), and even as she was writing and recording a track called 'Revolution', she had an increasing sense that it was all for nothing. In a kind of reverse mirror stage, the illusion of being a whole person, of having an important role to play in the Symbolic Order, started slowly to shatter:

I didn't suddenly wake up one morning feeling dissatisfied. These feelings just became more and more intense, until by the time the sixties ended I'd look in the mirror and see two faces, knowing that on the one hand I loved being black and being a woman, and that on the other it was my colour and sex which had fucked me up in the first place.⁷²

She goes on:

The days when revolution really had seemed possible were gone forever. I watched the survivors run for cover in community and academic programmes and felt betrayed, partly by our own leaders but mostly by white America. And I felt disgusted by my own innocence. I had presumed we could change the world and had run down a dead-end street leaving my career, child and husband way behind, neglected. Optimists talked about the advances we had made, but all I saw were lost opportunities. In March 1970 I played a concert in Newark, New Jersey, in front of a segregated audience – entirely black – and I was full of hate, tearing spitefully into political leaders of all races. Backstage after the show people said I was an inspiration to continue the struggle, but that was the end of it all for me – the beginning of my withdrawal from political performance.⁷³

In his book on jazz, dissonance and critical practice, Ajay Heble discusses whether dissonant (i.e. ‘unpopular’) music is ‘more’ or ‘less’ politically dissident than tonal (‘accessible’) music. He makes reference to Theodor Adorno’s points about the political possibilities of avant-garde classical music and denies the line of argument that suggests political messages should be attached to simple musical languages: ‘who is to say that accessibility of form necessarily equals efficacious dissemination of a political message?’⁷⁴ Heble uses a case study of the Art Ensemble of Chicago to suggest that it is possible for musicians to employ challenging musical structures while still encouraging direct communication of message, writing of ‘the ways in which the Art Ensemble [...] encourages us to conflate its repertoire of insurgent musical practices with its cultural politics, to consider its sonic innovation in the context of complex levels of interaction among history, representation, collective identities, and agency.’⁷⁵ Heble then goes on to suggest that the Art Ensemble’s subsequent return to tonality was and remains a move away from insurgent politics in an otherwise unnoted recognition that the Black Power politics to which they had connected themselves in the 1960s had lost their way.

For Heble, then, the Art Ensemble’s late work represents a similar ‘running for cover’ to the one Simone suggests, suggesting perhaps a recognition that the group’s work was done inasmuch as they had located a place for black art initiatives. We should note a similarity here with the situation described in Chapter Three whereby *nueva canción* groups such as Inti-Illimani and Quilapayún ceased to have an

immediate relevance in the period following the successful implementation of Salvador Allende's reforms. The collaboration forged in that context between culture, especially popular music, and politics gave way to the establishment of cultural programmes initiated by Unidad Popular and with the importance placed by Allende on the role of music. The *nueva canción* groups regained their importance following the coup of 1973 but the work they did was increasingly memory work; immediate critique within the country passed to the *Canto Nuevo* movement. At the same time the exiled groups combined this memory work with the evocation of memory of their homeland, a return to the homeland being conflated with a return to the lost utopia of Unidad Popular (see above, pp. 173-175, 187-188).

It is also worth noting at this point how the era and figures of the civil rights movement, so inextricably connected to Nina Simone's work, partake of what I called, at the close of the previous chapter, an 'internationalised network of awareness and resistance'. Ariel Dorfman, writing on the fortieth anniversary of Martin Luther King's 'I have a dream' speech, notes how the full implications of King's dream hit him on hearing of the man's assassination:

It was only then, I think, that I realized, perhaps began to realize, who Martin Luther King had been, what we had lost with his departure from the world, the legend he was already becoming in front of my very eyes. In the years to come, I would often return to that speech and would, on each occasion, hew from its mountain of meanings a different rock upon which to stand and understand the world.⁷⁶

As Dorfman goes on to note, the resonances of what had happened (and was still happening) in the USA were keenly felt in his adopted homeland Chile: 'The dogs and sheriffs of Alabama and Mississippi were alive and well in the streets of Santiago and Valparaiso [...] And just like the blacks in the United States, so in Chile we sang in the streets of the cities that had been stolen from us.'⁷⁷ Music is crucial to the endeavour of resistance as a form of spectacular mediation:

Why were we singing? To give ourselves courage, of course. But not only that [...] In Chile, we sang and stood against the hoses and the tear gas and the truncheons because we knew that somebody else was watching. In this, we

also followed in the cunning, media-savvy footsteps of Martin Luther King: that mismatched confrontation between the police state and the people was being witnessed, photographed, transmitted to other eyes.⁷⁸

Dorfman has not been the only one to make such connections. Bernice Johnson Reagon, the civil rights campaigner and leader of the vocal group Sweet Honey In The Rock, connects Chile with both the American South and apartheid-era South Africa in her powerful song 'Chile Your Waters Run Red Through Soweto' (1981, also recorded by Billy Bragg in 1988):

The hands that choked the spirit of Allende
Pulled the trigger on the children in a muddy Soweto street

Chile your waters run red through Soweto

The hands that turned the key in 10 Wilmington jail cells
Put young Steve Mitchell in a dusty hill grave⁷⁹

Sweet Honey have also participated in a number of *nueva canción* festivals in Latin America and provide information about *nueva canción* and *cancioneros* as part of the educational work they practice in the USA on songs and struggle. Finally, in this regard, we should not fail to note the participation of Nina Simone herself in a recording made by the Brazilian singer Maria Bethânia. Bethânia, a singer with a history of political engagement in Brazil alongside Caetano Veloso (her brother) and Gilberto Gil, duets with Simone on Veloso's 'Pronto pra cantar'.⁸⁰

To return to the point made above about the sense of one's work being done, I would like to suggest that we can detect in Nina Simone a subject who, to use terms taken once more from Badiou, has moved from a position outside of the veridical, a position associated with a truth, to a position within it. As Badiou says, 'Knowledge calms the passion of being: measure taken of excess, it tames the state, and unfolds the infinity of the situation within the horizon of a constructive procedure shored up on the already-known.'⁸¹ Weighed down by the burden of knowledge and the realisation that the promised event had not materialised, Simone attempted to 'calm the passion of being' by moving away from the site of disappointment to successive exiles in Barbados, Liberia and Europe. Though she continued to perform, record and sell records, her work fell off the critical radar. In an obituary for the singer in 2003,

Dave Marsh felt able to write that ‘Nina Simone hadn’t made an important record or written a well-known song since the early 1970s, so in a sense her absence will not be widely felt.’⁸² While I would dispute the accuracy of this statement, it is undoubtedly the case that Simone came to be seen as a performer who was unable, unwilling or – as she herself would see it – denied the opportunity to rescale the heights of her 1960s heyday. While pursuing her own memory work – her increasingly nostalgic songs, her autobiography, her contributions to *La Légende* and, elsewhere, to the shoring up of her legend through increasingly erratic behaviour – she became subject to the memory work of her audience, who looked back to that same heyday.

This multiple memorial role is an important one to note, especially when evaluating the later work of musicians who have enjoyed considerable attention early in their careers. It could be argued that it is because we associate such artists with early innovation that we come to question their later work. The anxiety over the late Bob Dylan is a case in point; here we witness the constant dreadful hope on the part of fans and critics that there will be a return to past greatness, that each album that is lauded as ‘the best since _____’ will provide a route back to the works on which the artist staked his claim. The notion of the artist as ‘a shadow of their former self’, or even a pastiche of their former self, is another marker of the way loss is inscribed into the discourse of popular music’s teleology, albeit a teleology described less as a move toward something than as a move away. I do not want to dwell at this stage on a discussion to come in Chapter Five about the level (or lack) of acceptance of ageing in popular music discourse, but to point to the ways in which a move may often be seen to be made from early innovation to later memory work. This memory work may result in the often-seen re-presentation of an artist as a living repository of past hits (‘golden oldies’) but may also lead to the creation of a quite new persona. This is arguably the case with Dylan and with Frank Sinatra, whose late persona can be seen as a response to his earlier self, one who is lauded for entering ‘The September Of [His] Years’ rather than mocked for doing so. It is with Sinatra in mind that I wish to move now to a consideration of the role of mastery and submission in popular song and, returning partially to areas covered earlier in this thesis, to a theorisation of the authenticating voice.

The Authenticating Voice

Power

In his essay 'I Hear You With My Eyes', Slavoj Žižek leaves aside for a few pages his primary concern with gaze and voice to discuss the mutiny on *The Bounty* and the rituals associated with sailors crossing the Equator for the first time. Žižek's focus here is on the uses of unofficial power and the relationship between power and enjoyment. The enjoyment, or *jouissance*, associated with unofficial power – the power, that is, that operates 'below decks' – must be recognised and allowed to operate by the forces of official power 'above'. Should the official power attempt to curtail the unofficial, the latter will most likely rise up against the former. 'The mutiny – violence – broke out when Bligh interfered with this murky world of obscene rituals that served as the phantasmatic background of power.'⁸³ This account of 'Crossing the Line', with its attendant presence of cruelty, brings to mind the opening section of Hart Crane's poem 'Voyages':

O brilliant kids, frisk with your dog,
Fondle your shells and sticks, bleached
By time and the elements; but there is a line
You must not cross nor ever trust beyond it
Spry cordage of your bodies to caresses
Too lichen-faithful from too wide a breast.
The bottom of the sea is cruel.⁸⁴

The sea is too loud and the children too far away for the narrator to deliver this message ('could they hear me I would tell them', he says) but we might ask, in the light of Žižek's account of *The Mutiny*, what good it would do either party if he could prevent the children crossing the line. In order to deliver the message, he would have to interrupt their play, take from them their enjoyment. And, if he were to persuade them, he would be taking away another kind of enjoyment, the seduction of the ocean with its promises of 'caresses' and its association with the mother's breast.⁸⁵

Crane's poem is notable for its evocation of the line between innocence and experience. I wish to think of the voice of experience also in terms of the voice of authority, or the authenticating voice – the voice, that is, imbued with the power to authenticate due to its association with experience. Yet at the same time we must ask questions about the nature of this line that is crossed for it seems that, much like the

Equator, it is a line that can be crossed in at least two directions; it represents both the journey away from home and familiarity to the realm of the unknown (the promise of experience) *and* the journey back to what we thought was familiar – home – but which we may find, after all, is where destruction really awaits. The sea is both the lure of a return to the maternal bosom and the promise of the deadly caress.

Making sense

I will stay for the moment with the former, the journey from innocence to experience, the crossing of the line from what Julia Kristeva calls the semiotic to the symbolic, a journey that for Kristeva one from non-sense to sense. The world makes sense to us as we enter the symbolic, as we master language and assume our position as subjects. For Jacques Lacan, from whom Kristeva borrows the concept of the symbolic, the Symbolic is distinguished from the Imaginary Order by the latter's association with the 'Mirror Stage', that process whereby the subject imagines itself in possession of a wholeness it does not, in reality, have. For Lacan, this process does not evaporate with the subject's subsequent entry into the Symbolic but remains for life as that part of the subject in which fantasy resides. Kaja Silverman, following Guy Rosolato, has taken Lacan's account of the process by which the infant develops an illusion of itself as a whole being in possession of a mastery it does not yet possess and sonicised it to give a theory of the acoustic mirror. Here, voice replaces gaze as the primary channel by which this attempt to claim mastery over oneself is enacted.⁸⁶

In a psychoanalytic reading of the music of Steve Reich, David Schwarz has taken Silverman's and Kristeva's work as a base to explore the ways the line between the semiotic and the symbolic can be crossed and re-crossed (crossed on the way home, as it were).⁸⁷ Crucial to the Kristevan account of the semiotic and the symbolic is the association of the former with the prelinguistic, maternal phase and the latter with the linguistic, paternal phase. This association between masculine language and feminine music is taken up by both Mladen Dolar and Slavoj Žižek, who both point out the importance placed on policing this divide in the history of music. Here, the singing voice was seen as an attempt to escape from masculine language, from the constraints of the Symbolic Order.⁸⁸

Jacqueline Rose, in her discussion of Kristeva's work, points out the necessity for revolutionary texts to re-engage with the political sphere from which they have ostensibly broken away: 'the avant-garde text, like the speech of the psychotic and the

neurotic symptom, speaks a truth in a form which is too easily banished' (banished, in Badiouian terms, from the realm of the veridical, of constructivist thought, for which such symptoms can never provide adequate purchase on the world). Kristeva, for Rose, recognises that 'the semiotic has to work through the very order of language it defies'; her work is allied, then, to the analytic *cure*.⁸⁹ Rose finds the semiotic 'the least useful aspect of Kristeva's work'; it is either demonised as the underside of culture or idealised as something culture cannot manage and therefore has to repress.⁹⁰ Kaja Silverman, for her part, is at pains to stress the mother's vital role in introducing the infant to the Symbolic Order and in acting as its first tutor. She criticises Kristeva for her use of the term 'victory' to suggest that the infant's mastery of language is a battle against the mother, who is associated with pre-language. Silverman strives for a theory that rather 'closes off the pre-Oedipal domain both as an arena for resistance to the symbolic and as an erotic refuge'.⁹¹

Silverman's points about the (mis)use of the pre-Oedipal are convincing, not least in her critique of Michel Chion and his overly reductive account of the role of the mother's voice. Yet other accounts of pre-Oedipal refusal, or de-oedipalisation, remain relevant. I find Richard Leppert's and George Lipsitz's 'Age, The Body, and Experience in the Music of Hank Williams', for example, a very useful way of theorising how Williams was able to convincingly speak to an audience undergoing profound changes in identity politics.⁹² Highlighting his broad appeal to whites and blacks, his 'standpoint as a worker and an ordinary citizen', his resistance to 'the dominant oedipal narrative', and his foregrounding of 'existential despair in an age of exuberant and uncritical "progress"', the authors argue that Williams's success resulted from an ability to combine an articulation of age and experience while maintaining an image of vulnerability. In constructing their argument, Leppert and Lipsitz emphasise the way that Williams 'feminised' his male narratives via his vocal style. Williams's emphasis on unrequited love allowed an articulation of failure that connects to this chapter's main subject:

By emphasising a love that is never responded to, as opposed to a love that once was but is now lost, unrequited love songs fundamentally account for an equally defeating – if not necessarily worse – sort of failure: the inability to find love in the first place, to love but not be loved in return, to be rejected. It is in songs of unrequited love that the work of Hank Williams approaches

black music most directly, and where it crosses gender lines into emotional ground more commonly occupied by women, and notably by women who are black (e.g. Billie Holliday, Nina Simone). As Billie Holiday, dying, gravel-voiced, movingly – and pathetically – sang in ‘Glad to be Unhappy’, one of her last recorded songs, when someone you adore fails to love you back, ‘It’s a pleasure to be sad’.⁹³

I will have reason to place Leppert and Lipsitz alongside Silverman again later in this chapter. For now I wish to use this appearance of Billie Holiday and Nina Simone to start reflecting on what I will be referring to throughout the rest of this chapter as the ‘late voice’. Having already made the comparison between Hank Williams and ‘Billie Holiday, Nina Simone’ Leppert and Lipsitz provide a comparison between the two female singers in a footnote. Having mentioned the ‘dying’ Billie Holiday’s articulation of the pleasure of unrequited love, they reference Nina Simone’s rendition of ‘He Needs Me’ from her live album *Little Girl Blue* (1958). Given that this album (also known as *Jazz As Played In An Exclusive Side Street Club*) was Simone’s first album, this sets up an intriguing question: how can the experiences of the twenty-five year old Simone be compared to those of the ‘dying’ Holiday? This is not a question of the wider historical context – Holiday’s last recordings and Simone’s first are contemporaneous and comparison between the material they are performing both relevant and illuminating – but of the context in which the material is presented in terms of the individual’s history. In other words, it is a question of biography again.⁹⁴

Leppert & Lipsitz argue that Hank Williams was able to project a voice of experience from an early age partly through the use of techniques such as the vocal ‘tear’ (as I did in discussing Amália Rodrigues’s performance of ‘Lágrima’ in Chapter Two, Leppert & Lipsitz play on the double meaning of ‘tear’ as ‘both weeping and pulling apart’⁹⁵) and partly through his own considerable experience. What I want to think of as Williams’s, Holiday’s, Simone’s or others’ ‘late voice’ is both a reflection of this reality and a fantasy conjured by a vocal act. Young singers can and do sing effective songs of loss, which could, in this light, be reduced to particular musical patterns, instrumental and vocal techniques. Similarly their affect could be reduced to particular effects on the listener caused by particular sound combinations which might be isolated and ‘proved’ effective or otherwise. Indeed, as suggested earlier, cognitive psychology is attempting to prove exactly these effects and map them for

constructivist knowledge. But we must also keep in mind the *learnt* nature of these effects. And if the recognition of musical patterns relating to ‘loss’ is always learnt – i.e. if there are no musical universals – then age, biography, and experience are always already implicated into the perception of music.

While the abuse-scarred voices of Williams and Holiday attested to the possibility of a ‘late voice’ attained early, I want to consider here two singers – Nina Simone and Frank Sinatra – who, though having sung numerous songs of loss and experience early in their careers, came to be associated (especially Sinatra) with late voices tailored to their particular circumstances. In Sinatra’s case, from the late 1950s onwards, this involved the dialectics of mastery and submission, middle-aged suavity and vulnerability; in the case of Simone, from the mid-1970s onwards, it involved a re-appropriation of the kind of experienced-but-vulnerable voice that Leppert and Lipsitz attribute to Williams. To what extent these voices spoke to these artists’ listeners no doubt depends to a great extent on the amount of knowledge listeners had of the artists; the numerous music lovers for whom Nina Simone remains the voice and piano of ‘My Baby Just Cares For Me’ would not necessarily recognise any of what I am going to suggest about her later yearning and disappointment. There will be other listeners for whom the late voice works as an articulation of a life whose story they know fairly well. Sinatra’s and Simone’s are lives publicly lived, and if Simone’s later years are less well-known, no one who has read her autobiography or seen *La Légende* is likely to hear her late music without endowing it with a powerful sense of loss. But there is another connection between the personal and the public as well, the process described by Eyerman and Jamison where ‘movement artists’ act as representatives of collective traumas. In a review of Nina Simone’s 1972 album *Emergency Ward!*, Stephen Holden links the biographical voice with the representational voice: ‘This is the voice of experience itself, the voice of conscience lamenting the insane dark side of our collective will.’⁹⁶ Of course what we mean by ‘experience’ in the context of trauma is never entirely straightforward; as we saw earlier, and as Jean Laplanche and J.-B. Pontalis remind us, ‘It is not lived experience in general that undergoes a deferred revision but, specifically, whatever it has been impossible in the first instance to incorporate fully into a meaningful context. The traumatic event is the epitome of such unassimilated experience.’⁹⁷

The Vocal Actor

One of the crucial points that comes out of comparing music with film (i.e. wanting to use, say, Silverman's *The Acoustic Mirror* in a musicological text) is that most studies of film, such as Silverman's, differentiate between the actor and the character whereas this tends to happen less instantaneously in popular music. So, although in film what the characters say is granted importance (as we tend to grant importance to the lyrics in music), the words are attributed to the character and not the actor. In popular music, there tend to be certain singers who fans and critics find it easy to perceive as actors and others who 'convince' us otherwise. Popular music discourse weaves an array of references around performers – such as album covers, performance styles and videos – that do much of the authenticating work necessary to conflate the subject of the song with the singer. Frank Sinatra – who, of course, was both a film actor and a singer – is a good case in point here; his famous album covers act as 'stills' from a movie of 'his' life. Of course, one of the crucial points here is the extent to which the 'act' of articulating experience or the self through the performance of popular music is highlighted. When a review of a Mike Johnson album claims that 'Mike Johnson is either one of the most broken men in the musical world or he is a damn fine actor',⁹⁸ the point is surely that the acting, if such it is, is so invisible (inaudible?) that we really cannot tell. But for other artists the act is there to be highlighted, a classic example being David Bowie, whose song 'Cracked Actor' offers a suggestion of the ways performers inhabit roles. As Ben Gerson wrote in a review of the song, 'His intent on "Cracked Actor," a portrait of an aging screen idol, vicious, conceited, mercenary, the object of the ministrations of a male gigolo, is to strip the subject of his validity, as he [Bowie] has done with the rocker, as a step towards a re-definition of these roles and his own inhabiting of them.'⁹⁹

Acting is also connected with the putting on of voices and masks. As Stephen Scobie writes of Bob Dylan,

If we read 'Bob Dylan' not as a person but as a textual system, it is a great advantage that Bob Dylan (or should we here say, Robert Zimmerman) has exhibited an exceptionally high degree of self-consciousness in his collaboration in that creation. Any author who adopts a pseudonym is, by that very gesture, foregrounding the writing of his life as a text. The assumed name

is a kind of mask: 'It's Halloween,' Dylan announced to a New York audience on October 31, 1964. 'I have my Bob Dylan mask on.'¹⁰⁰

'Nina Simone', similarly, was a mask, or a range of masks, as Ian Penman highlights in describing the roles that Simone adopted or found herself forced into:

She was called 'diva', which was maybe just one more way of not listening to what she had to say. [...] She was queen, not diva. Erzulie. The woman in the red dress. Nefertiti. Orpheus & Eurydice in one 'right on!' chorus. 'Nina Simone' was, after all, only a stage name, not her real self, and in later life she seemed often to decide to be this or that 'Nina' for a while – a recognisable black survival tactic detoured against sleazy promoters, easy audiences and know-nothing hacks. The latter would compare her to Billie Holiday (another staged name) because, well, because they were both BLACK! And sang! Whereas, in real terms (of actual learned conservatory skills of phrasing and form) her flexibly muscular voice was nearer – as she claimed – to Maria Callas than Billie's sinuously, sinfully slurry jazz.¹⁰¹

In thinking about the notion of performers taking on roles and parts, it is worth making one more analogy, that of the actor who takes on a part that has been played before – most obviously in the theatre, but also in films and television. The analogy would be with the cover version or definitive interpretation of a song, of which I will have more to say below. As we speak of 'Olivier's Hamlet' or 'Gielgud's Lear', so we might think about the ways singers take possession of certain songs. In his foreword to David Margolick's *Strange Fruit*, Hilton Als writes,

Billie Holiday did not write 'Strange Fruit' [...b]ut she made it her own. [...] And since the song became her, and she became the song, who, technically, could be called the truer auteur of 'Strange Fruit'? We remember her singing the song, and we don't remember the writer, Mr. Meerpol. What does that say about the way popularity eclipses the more private environs inhabited by the writer? Would 'Strange Fruit' matter to us if Billie Holiday had not sung it at a particular time, In New York, and placed all those black bodies in our minds

as a way of conveying something about herself, undoubtedly, this most impersonal of biographical artists?’¹⁰²

Many performers, of course, are authors as well as actors; in thinking about them, it is useful to consider Kaja Silverman’s discussion of film directors and *auteur* theory – particularly her emphasis on the author ‘outside’ the text and the author ‘inside’ the text. Silverman speaks of ‘an author “outside” the text who would come into existence as a dreaming, desiring, self-affirming subject only through the inscription of an author “inside” the text, [...] not one who could ever lay claim to a radical and self-present exteriority, even though he or she might masquerade in such a guise’.¹⁰³

Silverman also draws on the work of Raymond Bellour:

As enunciator, Bellour explains, Hitchcock is both the site ‘from which the set of representations are ordered and organized,’ and the site ‘toward which they are channelled back.’ He puts things in discursive motion, but he derives his authorial status only from a series of masculine representations, which as a group define the subject of his speech [...] The name ‘Hitchcock’ would [...] seem to designate not so much a biographical person as a symbolic position.¹⁰⁴

It is with such a symbolic position that I want to start to consider the persona of Frank Sinatra.

Belly to belly with Reality: The fantasy of authentication

Will Friedwald makes much in his book on Frank Sinatra of the connection (or lack thereof) between the man and the lyrics, especially those lyrics relating to loss and experience.¹⁰⁵ *Is* it experience we are hearing – Sinatra’s ‘real’ late voice – or is it technique, a set of skills which any competently trained and talented singer could recreate? Rather than attempt to prove or disprove either suggestion, I want to gesture towards what seems undeniably important here, namely the construction of a fantasy whereby the communication channel between singer and listener is made to seem transparent. The following sleeve notes from Sinatra’s 1966 album *Strangers in the Night*, written by Stan Cornyn, are worth quoting at length as a fine example of the way Sinatra was spoken about by hagiographers of the time:

ON SINATRA or HOW TO BE TIMELESS TONIGHT

Back in New York, where he started, where twenty thousand bobby soxers once pressed themselves against the doors of The Paramount Theatre to see him, things are different. The brilliant bronze doors are green with neglect. On one side wall, the chalk legend “The Animals Are Loved Only By Girls Named Josephine”.

Animals may come, and they sure do go, but Sinatra stayeth. He stays to sing. Whatever it says at the top of your calendar, that’s what Sinatra sings like: 66, 67, 99 ... He isn’t *with* the times. More than any other singer, he *is* the times.

If the electric guitar were disinvented tonight, a few thousand singers would be out on their amps. But not Sinatra.

He defies fad. He stayeth. He has known more and felt more about the stuff songs are made of, the words of poets. He’s been a Stranger in the Night, and you have to be long rid of baby fat to be that Stranger. You can’t sing the way he does until you’ve been belly to belly with Reality a few times.

That’s what makes insight, and what’s made The Sinatra. What’s made him last, and get better. Allowed him to last through The Age of Anxiety and The Age of the Atom and The Age of Acne.

He’s lasted. Most men would give away twenty years of life to be him, or even to have his memories.

[...]

So the man’s the master of pop singing form. But that’s not the big thing. What’s the big thing is the way he uses form.

Sinatra, when he sings at you, doesn’t look at you. He looks about six inches behind your eyes.

His eyes a little far away. A little closer to where the truth lives.¹⁰⁶

There is much to note here, from the period language through the criticism of rock music to the alliance of voice and gaze. For now I will merely add to this not untypical paean to Sinatran mastery the words of the chauffeur in Rob Reiner’s classic ‘rockumentary’ *This is Spinal Tap*. Commenting on the lack of appreciation shown by the eponymous heavy rock group to the Sinatra tunes he plays in their limo, he declares, ‘[...]you know, when you’ve loved and lost the way Frank has, then you know what life’s about’.¹⁰⁷

What we are looking at, then, is a complex network of interactive knowledge whereby the listener combines experience of their own with their knowledge of the singer, of language, of musical technique, and the singer and/or songwriter do the same (in a way, they 'know' the listener). This fantasy can be linked to a fantasy of mastery and submission inasmuch as the account of stylistic mastery can be seen as an account of how a masterful singer is able, via the manipulation of a pleasure-giving organ (Voice) to invite submission on the part of the listener. If the listener is a 'subject' to this Voice it is interesting to note the number of singers to whom power-related titles were given (King, Queen, Empress, Lady, High Priestess, Boss, Godfather). Sinatra has been the recipient of at least two such authoritative titles: Chairman of the Board and The Voice.¹⁰⁸

The voice of authority is also the voice of authenticity, the authenticating voice. Mladen Dolar suggests that 'there is something in the very nature of the voice that endows it with master-like authority' and that 'listening is "always-already" incipient obedience'.¹⁰⁹ We attempt to master our own voices even as we submit to the mastery of others' voices. In this formulation the singer can become a kind of master or dominatrix to the slave-like listener. Yet, following in the footsteps of Hegel, Lacan and Žižek, we must remember that this relationship is a dialectical one. Indeed, like the dialectic of mastery and vulnerability already sketched out above, the roles are constantly in negotiation. A singer, exorcising a trauma through the compulsive repetition of the song, seems to enact mastery over voice, language and listening subject even as the listening subject takes up a position as the masterful analyst of the singer's condition, the subject on the side of the Law and the cure. These voices and ears need each other: voice as mastery and the recognition of voice as mastery are prerequisites for the fantasy of authentication.

By 'fantasy of authentication' I mean something similar to that suggested by David Brackett in an essay on Hank Williams. Brackett is interested in the paradox of Williams as simultaneous 'man of the people' and country star and in the ways Williams was able to mediate between these positions in performance:

Williams *did* become a 'voice of the people,' but only through introducing new elements, rearranging old ones, and, in short, by setting himself apart from 'the people' through the expression of a unique world view. This point only illustrates that he functioned as a star in much the same fashion as other

stars function in mass culture: by becoming an object of fantasy and identification for millions of people through the projection of difference.¹¹⁰

Here is where Sinatra's 'existential man' image comes in. In hearing Sinatra sing of life, love and loss, and in seeing him portrayed on his record sleeves and in publicity material as a kind of existential hero, a graduate of the school of hard knocks turned observer of the human condition, we simultaneously identify with his similarity to us – yes, we've lived, loved, lost too; we've 'Been Down That Road Before' (to steal a refrain from Hank Williams) – while we marvel at his difference: that unattainable cool, his mastery of style (sartorial and vocal), his success, even (Cormyn claims) his memories.

Mastery/Vulnerability/Masochism

Mastery is experience's gift but, if we follow Freud, it also comes about as a response to vulnerability. Indeed the two are sides of a coin and, rather than separate them, I wish to think about them together. Mastery comes, for both Freud's grandson and for those patients of his who were suffering war neuroses, as a consequence of mastering the pain of trauma, in other words from a position of vulnerability. Recounting the '*fort/da*' game played by his grandson to mark the traumatic departure of the boy's mother, Freud writes, 'At the outset he was in a *passive* situation – he was overpowered by the experience; but, by repeating it, unpleasurable though it was, as a game, he took on an active part. These efforts might be put down to an instinct for mastery that was acting independently of whether the memory was in itself pleasurable or not.'¹¹¹ Yet, as Kaja Silverman stresses, the repetition that accompanies this process is connected by Freud to an emphasis on compulsion that seems at odds with any notion of mastery.¹¹² Here, mastery is born of a desire to overcome the vulnerability of trauma but, through its compulsive repetition, leads back again to a position of vulnerability. This dialectic of mastery and vulnerability is well illustrated by the figure of the man-of-experience slumped at the bar so well illustrated in certain popular music genres. David Brackett writes of Hank Williams:

The very phenomenon of the 'vulnerable' male (an image circulated widely at the same time in Tin Pan Alley popular music as well), frequently perched on a bar stool in a honky-tonk, constituted one of the recurring figures of the

honky-tonk style. If the expression of loss does carry with it conventional associations of femininity, then the use of those conventions by males is something of a convention itself during the period of Williams' ascendance to popularity.¹¹³

It is interesting to note Brackett's connection here between honky-tonk and Tin Pan Alley. And it is also worth noting that the image Brackett describes has continued to have a long history in the period since Williams's heyday. Indeed the cowboy provides a crucial mytheme for a number of popular song genres, from rock through reggae to hip hop. The cowboy – and what we might call 'cowboyism' – provides male rock (and other) musicians with a romantic role model: the loner, the outlaw, the man true to himself.¹¹⁴ And while Frank Sinatra may not have obviously presented himself as such, there is something cowboyish about his late 1960s persona and his posse of Rat Packers.¹¹⁵ Cowboyism, while supposedly basing itself on the image of the 'real' man, also evokes notions of play (boys' games, fancy dress, the Village People) and this connection marks its paradoxical position in the Imaginary. It stakes out a position of vulnerability: man becomes child again. Vulnerability and/or projections back to more innocent times were staple features of a number of Sinatra's 'concept albums', such as *Where Are You?* (1957), *No One Cares* (1959), *All Alone* (1962), *September of My Years* (1965), *Cycles* (1968), *A Man Alone* (1969) and *Watertown* (1969).

As discussed in Chapter One, popular music is not just about the appropriation of the (authoritative) voice but about the work necessary for listeners to delegate representative authenticating voices to reflect their experiences, especially those of loss. Sinatra becomes the author of his songs by the process of authentication described above and by the aura of authority attached to him (as, for Hilton Als, Billie Holiday became the author of 'Strange Fruit'). He does this not by writing or composing the songs but by voicing them. Yet, while he is posited as a shining example of male mastery there is also the equally persuasive narrative of male inadequacy and loss with which he has been associated; this is Sinatra, the man who has loved and lost, the man of experience always to be found on his own at the end of the day, downing a whisky at the bar, the Sinatra of *In the Wee Small Hours* (1955), *Where Are You?*, *Only The Lonely* (1958) and *No One Cares*.

This is the Sinatra that Nina Simone ‘steals’. Before discussing how this theft works, however, I would like to consider a handful of songs covered by Simone. Simone, of course, was a fine example of an interpreter *and* a refashioner of others’ work; this is not to denigrate her original material but to remember that it accounts for a small minority of her recorded output. As Richard Middleton puts it, the application of Simone’s qualitatively ‘constant’ voice to others’ material ‘can be regarded as already a kind of authorial gesture, pulling the material into her own orbit where it pretty much circles round this voice’.¹¹⁶ Perhaps her identification with Callas rather than Holiday resulted partly from a desire to be seen as a vocal actor rather than a communicator of personal angst, even while, as I hope to highlight in this chapter, that personal angst was indeed being communicated. This would seem to fit with her adoption/adaptation of numerous song genres. While Simone’s early career saw her tackling material from the mid-century songbooks of classic songwriters rather than performers, she increasingly turned her attention to the newly emerging ‘songbooks’ of the post-Beatles era, singer-songwriters such as John Lennon/Paul McCartney, Bob Dylan, Leonard Cohen, the Gibb brothers (known in their performing capacity as the Bee Gees – Simone was one of their most prolific interpreters), Jimmy Webb and Randy Newman.

Approaching the Late Voice

Suzanne

In discussing Nina Simone’s reading of Leonard Cohen’s ‘Suzanne’, it is worth briefly situating the artist within a trio of female performers whose work around the late 1960s and early 1970s provides some fascinating parallels and overlaps. The trio comprises Simone herself, Judy Collins and Roberta Flack. I hope to pursue the connections between these three artists at more length elsewhere. For now I will keep my comments brief enough to highlight a few reasons why it may be fruitful to think about these artists together. Firstly, all three have shared roots in classical music. Simone, as we have already noted, was a child prodigy at the piano and received many years training that was intended (at least by her and those closest to her) to lead to a career as a classical pianist. As we know, for reasons that remained traumatic for her, she was not able to follow this path but she nonetheless made an ultimately successful diversion to popular music and attached herself to a cause that would

hopefully fight against the reasons for her expulsion from the classical music world. Judy Collins (b. 1939) had a similar background in classical piano, a training that, due to her race and social status, she was in a better position than Simone to pursue. Nevertheless, she experienced a politicisation at a fairly young age that brought about a conversion to folk music, to which she diverted her talents wholeheartedly. Arriving in Greenwich Village in 1961, she became part of the folk crowd described by Simone in her autobiography. Roberta Flack (b. 1939) was, like Simone, a youthful black piano prodigy who went into popular music following a certain amount of formal classical training.

Secondly, all three artists performed a combination of material made up of their own songs and those of others, with the greater proportion being taken up by the latter for all three. All three had eclectic tastes and covered a wide array of musical styles, including folk, art song, jazz, country, blues, soul, rock and pop. The third point I wish to highlight is the shared repertoire of the three artists. Although the amount of material included in this shared repertoire is small (especially between Collins and Flack) in proportion to their large individual catalogues, I believe it represents an interesting ‘moment’ in popular music history. The table below gives some indication of how this crossover worked:

Song	Writer	Collins	Simone	Flack
Just Like Tom Thumb's Blues	Dylan	1966 ¹¹⁷	1969	
Pirate Jenny	Brecht/Weill	1966	1964	
Suzanne	Cohen	1966	1969	1973
I Think It's Going To Rain Today	Newman	1966	1969	
Turn! Turn! Turn!	Seeger	1964/1969	1969	
My Father	Collins	1968	1971/1978	
Who Knows Where The Time Goes	Denny	1968	1971	
Hey, That's No Way To Say Goodbye	Cohen	1968		1969
Just Like A Woman	Dylan	1994	1971	1970
If He Changed My Name/I Told Jesus	McGimsey		1962	1969
Do What You Gotta Do	Webb		1968	1970
Let It Be Me	Curtis/ Becaud/ Delanoe		1974/1987	1970
To Love Somebody	Gibb/ Gibb		1969	1971

One of the reasons I think it is worth highlighting these overlaps is the suggestion it provides that, at least in Simone's and Flack's cases, these artists were not necessarily looking to the 'original' sources (Dylan, Cohen, Webb, etc.) for their material but to each other's work. This can be supported by the fact that certain of their versions contain 'disparities' that are inconsistent with the original material but consistent with each other. An example of this is given below in Simone's reading of 'Who Knows Where The Time Goes', which changes the first line of Sandy Denny's 'original' in the same way that Collins's version does. Simone's and Flack's readings of 'Just Like A Woman' make comparable changes to the personal pronouns and include a word ('problems') that did not appear in the 'original'.

Of the three, it tends to be Collins's versions of the songs that maintain the closest lyrical fidelity to the source material. This is perhaps not surprising given the fact that she tends to be the first to record the songs. But it is also noticeable in her late reading of 'Just Like A Woman', which follows Dylan's words exactly and avoids the lyrical improvisations, or permanent alterations, that Simone, Flack and numerous others have added in the intervening years.¹¹⁸ However, Collins does provide a number of innovations in the music that accompanies her versions. This was a notable development in the album that contained her version of 'Suzanne'. *In My Life* (1966) marked a distinct move from the folk music of her previous five studio albums towards more of an art song approach. This was achieved partly by the inclusion of material such as Richard Peaslee's 'Marat/Sade' and Brecht/Weill's 'Pirate Jenny' (also recorded by Nina Simone in 1964), Randy Newman's 'I Think It's Going To Rain Today' (recorded by Simone in 1969), Cohen's 'Suzanne' and 'Dress Rehearsal Rag', and an unusual setting of Bob Dylan's 'Just Like Tom Thumb's Blues' (also recorded by Simone), providing links to music for the theatre and film and to erudite poetry. In addition to this the instrumental backing to the numbers was quite different from that of the folk styles of Collins's earlier career: her version of Richard Farina's 'Hard Lovin' Loser' combined harpsichord with electric blues-rock, for example, while flutes, strings and piano were prominent features of other tracks.

The album provided the public with the first opportunity to hear recordings of Leonard Cohen's songs, the aforementioned 'Suzanne' and 'Dress Rehearsal Rag'. Cohen (b. 1934), although well established as a poet, had yet to record any of his

music, his first album *Song of Leonard Cohen* appearing fourteen months after *In My Life*. It would be interesting to enquire if the move from poetry to popular music was, for Cohen, analogous to that made by Collins, Simone and Flack from classical to popular music, an analogy that would contribute to a more general enquiry into the place that popular music had occupied in the post-Dylan, post-Beatles, post-Velvet Underground era as the quintessential contemporary Western art form. For now, I merely wish to note the ease with which Cohen transferred from one means of expression to another, acting as a Canadian-cum-European bridge between the beat poets of the 1950s and the rock 'n' rollers of the 1960s. As a successful young poet, media figure and popular intellectual, Cohen had developed a persona that exuded a similar aura of male confidence and mastery in his world as the more mainstream Sinatra did in his. This mastery was evident not only in the way Cohen carried himself through his public engagements but also in the very material of his work, voicing as it often did a curious sense of the wonder of the poet and the savoir faire of the ladies' man.¹¹⁹ A good example of this combination is his song 'Famous Blue Raincoat', made famous by Judy Collins, who has returned to it often in her career. The song manages to suggest both liberation (intellectual, sexual) and possession (again, intellectual and sexual). The woman in the song, Jane, is presented as 'free', as 'nobody's wife', and simultaneously as 'my woman' or 'his woman'. She operates as an object of exchange between the men in the song.¹²⁰

Collins provides a faithful version of 'Suzanne', enunciating the lyric clearly over a descending acoustic guitar figure similar to the one Cohen himself would use in his recording of 1968.¹²¹ Taking its place on *In My Life* between 'Pirate Jenny' and Jacques Brel's 'La Colombe', 'Suzanne' is an effective slice of erudite song and a notable debut for Leonard Cohen's songwriting skills. It established a performance style – sombre, reflective, slightly monotonous – that would remain fairly constant in numerous future versions of the song by other artists. Because the song is 'wordy' and yet subtle (there is a constant shifting of personal pronouns that ensures we are never sure who is singing the song and to whom) there is a tendency in most renditions not to elaborate on the melody or harmony in order to show fidelity to the material. This has often led to a situation in which, paradoxically, in attempting to master the song, singers have often fallen subject to it.

This subjection is evident to a certain extent in a take of the song recorded by Nina Simone in 1969 but rejected in favour of the (presumably later) version used on

To Love Somebody.¹²² The unreleased version features Simone on piano, marking a different approach to the song than that so far attempted by other singers. As the track progresses, however, Al Shackman's electric guitar gradually comes to dominate and Simone does not sound in complete control of the lyric, with its confusing distribution of personal pronouns. The released version is strikingly different, dominated as it is by Simone's memorable piano arpeggios, a truly innovative addition to the instrumental accompaniment of this hitherto exemplary bedsit troubadour anthem.¹²³ There is a much brighter tempo and the track actually seems to make reference to its own recording, sounding like the layered studio construct it no doubt is. In the unreleased version, Simone sounds as if the song is controlling her; here, she has taken complete control. The repetition of certain words, the stretching of notes and use of melisma (the two syllable 'mi-ind' from 1:22 to 1:26) all take the song away from its literal meaning. Added interjections (the 'yeah' immediately following 'mi-ind' at 1:27) suggest that Simone knows she has set in motion an irresistible (unrestable) groove and can now add whatever she wishes to it, keep it going or cease it at her whim, a sensation she will emulate in her rendition of 'My Way' two years later.

Roberta Flack's version of 'Suzanne' is nearly ten minutes and closes her album *Killing Me Softly* (1973); in the midst of the album era, this meant nearly a quarter of an album.¹²⁴ Appropriately perhaps, given the album it appears on, there is a softness to Flack's version. A constant cymbal ride in the background seems to promise a build up of the beat but this never comes. Similarly, a sporadically deployed electric bass marks time but never develops the rhythm. Only the opening and close of the song seem to suggest freedom. A long introduction on piano gives no clues as to the (by this time very familiar) song to come. After the last refrain has been sung, the piano springs to life and the drums follow suit. Strings enter, bringing a sense of soaring drama that had hitherto been absent. Flack improvises wordless vocals, stretching out with her voice as the strings continue to veer up and down like sirens. But, seemingly unaware of this promise of freedom, right at the end Flack circles back to the start of the song, slowly singing the first line, 'Suzanne takes you down to a place by the river'. But it is she who has been taken down, imprisoned by the song and unable to escape to the giddy heights discovered by Simone.¹²⁵

My Way

A brightness similar to her version of ‘Suzanne’ can be found in Simone’s reading of ‘My Way’, a song associated with Frank Sinatra. Before discussing the song in more detail, it is worth noting briefly both Simone’s and Sinatra’s mutual admiration for each other’s work and the small but significant group of songs that both have recorded versions of. Interestingly, each has recorded what might be considered the key signature song of the other. Despite her immense reservations about the song, Simone is still most widely remembered – outside of her more dedicated fanbase – for ‘My Baby Just Cares For Me’, the song that she first recorded in 1958 and which has been a notable hit in at least three different eras. Sinatra included a version of the song on his 1969 album *Strangers in the Night*. And, as already mentioned, Simone recorded a version of ‘My Way’, to be discussed below. Other shared repertoire includes Hoagy Carmichael’s ‘I Get Along Without You Very Well’, recorded in 1955 by Sinatra and 1969 by Simone, and Jacques Brel’s ‘Ne me quitte pas’, recorded in French by Simone and in Rod McKuen’s translation as ‘If You Go Away’ by Sinatra. A special group of songs written especially for Sinatra and recorded by Simone – ‘For A While’, ‘The Single Man’, ‘Lonesome Cities’, ‘Love’s Been Good To Me’ – will be considered later.

‘My Way’ originated as a French *chanson* entitled ‘Comme d’habitude’ (‘As Usual’). It was first recorded by Claude François, a popular French singer who co-wrote the song with Gilles Thibaut and Jacques Revaux and included it on his self-titled album (1967). Paul Anka ‘translated’ the lyric into English specifically for Sinatra, changing the main sense of the song’s lyrics and its overall message but retaining the melody. The table below contains the original French lyrics, a literal translation of them and Anka’s version:

‘Comme d’habitude’ (Thibaut/François/Revaux) ¹²⁶	‘As Usual’ (literal translation) ¹²⁷	‘My Way’ (Anka/François/Revaux/Thibaut) ¹²⁸
Je me lève Et je te bouscule Tu n’té réveilles pas Comme d’habitude	I get up And I bump into you You don’t wake up As usual	And now The end is near And so I face The final curtain
Sur toi Je remonte le drap J’ai peur que tu aies froid Comme d’habitude	On you I pull up the sheet I’m scared you might get cold As usual	My friend I’ll say it clear I’ll state my case Of which I’m certain

<p>Ma main Caresse tes cheveux Presque malgré moi Comme d'habitude</p>	<p>My hand Strokes your hair Almost in spite of myself As usual</p>	<p>I've lived A life that's full I travelled each And every highway</p>
<p>Mais toi Tu me tournes le dos Comme d'habitude</p>	<p>But you You turn your back on me As usual</p>	<p>And more Much more than this I did it my way</p>
<p>Alors Je m'habille très vite Je sors de la chambre Comme d'habitude</p>	<p>So I quickly get dressed I get out of the bedroom As usual</p>	<p>Regrets I've had a few But then again Too few to mention</p>
<p>Tout seul Je bois mon café Je suis en retard Comme d'habitude</p>	<p>All alone I drink my coffee I'm late As usual</p>	<p>I did What I had to do And saw it through Without exemption</p>
<p>Sans bruit Je quitte la maison Tout est gris dehors Comme d'habitude</p>	<p>Quietly I leave the house Everything is grey outside As usual</p>	<p>I planned Each charted course Each careful step Along the byway</p>
<p>J'ai froid Je relève mon col Comme d'habitude</p>	<p>I'm cold I pull up my collar As usual</p>	<p>And more Much more than this I did it my way</p>
<p>REFRAIN/CHORUS Comme d'habitude Toute la journée Je vais jouer A faire semblant Comme d'habitude Je vais sourire Comme d'habitude Je vais même rire Comme d'habitude Enfin je vais vivre Comme d'habitude</p>	<p>REFRAIN/CHORUS As usual All day I'll be playing At pretending As usual I will smile As usual I will even laugh As usual I will live As usual</p>	<p>Yes, there were times I'm sure you knew When I bit off More than I could chew But through it all When there was doubt I ate it up And spit it out I faced it all And I stood tall And did it my way</p>
<p>Et puis Le jour s'en ira Moi je reviendrai Comme d'habitude</p>	<p>Then The day will go I will come back As usual</p>	<p>I've loved I've laughed and cried I've had my fill My share of losing</p>
<p>Toi Tu seras sortie Pas encore rentrée Comme d'habitude</p>	<p>You You'll be out Not back yet As usual</p>	<p>And now As tears subside I find it all So amusing</p>
<p>Tout seul J'irai me coucher Dans ce grand lit froid Comme d'habitude</p>	<p>All alone I'll go and lie down In this big cold bed As usual</p>	<p>To think I did all that And may I say Not in a shy way</p>
<p>Mes larmes Je les cacherai Comme d'habitude</p>	<p>My tears I will hide them As usual</p>	<p>Oh no Oh no, not me I did it my way</p>

REFRAIN Mais comme d'habitude Même la nuit Je vais jouer A faire semblant Comme d'habitude Tu rentreras Comme d'habitude Je t'attendrai Comme d'habitude Tu me souriras Comme d'habitude Comme d'habitude Tu te déshabilleras Oui comme d'habitude Tu te coucheras Oui comme d'habitude On s'embrassera Comme d'habitude Comme d'habitude On fera semblant Comme d'habitude On fera l'amour Oui comme d'habitude On fera semblant Comme d'habitude	REFRAIN But as usual Even at night I will play At pretending As usual You'll come back As usual I will wait for you As usual You will smile at me As usual As usual You will get undressed Yes as usual You will get into bed Yes as usual We will kiss As usual As usual We will pretend As usual We will make love Yes as usual We will pretend As usual	For what is a man What has he got If not himself Then he has not To say the things He truly feels And not the words Of one who kneels The record shows I took the blows And did it my way Yes it was my way
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Other people who have recorded the song include: Paul Anka himself, on *Sincerely/Recorded Live at the Copa* (1969); Aretha Franklin, in a version unreleased until 2006, when it was made available on *Atlantic Unearthed: Sisters*; Dionne Warwick, on *I'll Never Fall In Love Again* (1970); Elvis Presley, on *Aloha from Hawaii Via Satellite* (1973); and the Sex Pistols, on *The Great Rock 'n' Roll Swindle* (1979). Interestingly, in connection to one of the themes of this chapter, Eartha Kitt recorded a live version of 'My Way' in 1987 as the finale to a concert held in commemoration of Martin Luther King: the message, presumably, was that *he did it his way*.¹²⁹ There have been at least two Spanish translations of the song, one of which is based on 'Comme d'habitude' and the other on 'My Way': La Lupe recorded the former, as 'Como Acostumbro', in 1974,¹³⁰ while the Gipsy Kings made the latter popular as 'Mi Manera' in 1988. 'Comme d'habitude' has been recorded by a number of French-speaking artists since François, including the Algerian *rai* singers Rachid Taha, Cheb Khaled and Faudel on their album *1, 2, 3 Soleils* (2000).

'My Way', despite its numerous versions, became indelibly associated with Sinatra during the 1970s following his return from 'retirement'. In a concert recorded for the 1974 album *The Main Event* (!), he introduces the song by saying, 'We will

now do the national anthem but you needn't rise'. The song is mentioned a number of times in Will Friedwald's *Sinatra! The Song is You*. Early in the book he writes:

No popular recording artist has ever been as totally believable so much of the time as Sinatra [...] The results come through especially clearly in an overtly autobiographical text like 'My Way.' Sung by any other interpreter, including the teenage idol Paul Anka (who translated it from the original French), that 1969 hit would sound like an obnoxious joke. In fact it's a deliberate gag in the messy mitts of Sid Vicious and an unintentional one in the trembling tremolos of Elvis Presley, both of whom recorded it.¹³¹

Elsewhere he transfers his derogatory comments to a far wider variety of targets: 'Like most French songs, "My Way", has the kind of droning rhythm and minimal melodic content that made it acceptable to kiddie-pop ears (which also explains why they seem so appropriate with country-western settings; 'c'est la guerre, pardners').'¹³² Anyone reading Friedwald's book will have realised by this point that he has nothing but contempt for contemporary (post rock 'n' roll) popular music (aligning him, of course, with the writer of the sleeve notes to *Strangers In The Night* quoted earlier, and, to a certain extent, with Sinatra himself, who made a number of disparaging comments in his time about rock, despite recording a number of rock songs) so will probably be less surprised by his reference to 'kiddie-pop' than to his sweeping dismissal of 'most' French song and all country music.¹³³ The dismissal of country is a particularly notable oversight (or blind spot) for a writer supposedly concerned more with voice – the book's subtitle is *A Singer's Art* – than with song, the voicing of song being an enormous part of what country music is about. Still, as we soon realise, Friedwald needs to denigrate other song forms, singers and even nations so that he can build up Sinatra's role in author(is)ing the song:

Musically, it's an underwhelming composition that contains nearly five identical stanzas, each consisting of a string of very monotonous four-note phrases. [...] Yet the way [Sinatra] transforms this unpromising source material takes him beyond alchemy and into the realm of sheer magic. Musically, it has no more content than most rock and roll, yet Sinatra pumps it

up with the grandeur of an operatic aria, a five-minute exercise in self-indulgence that starts quietly, even intimately, and ends enormously.¹³⁴

This is a reasonably convincing account of the song but it rather ignores a number of points which I would consider salient. Firstly, as evidenced in the earlier quotation, Friedwald considers this a 'translation' of the original French song. As we have already seen, while the melody has been kept, Anka's words are new ones. To be fair to Friedwald, he does seem to be more interested in the melody and what Sinatra does with it but, as is clear in his references to the 'autobiographical' nature of the song, he also realises that the words play a crucial role: this really is Sinatra looking back on his life, a message from him to us. Given the centrality of the words, it seems clear that we can not make a comparison to the French version without taking account of *what the latter is saying*. It is, as can be seen above, a song about routine, about mundanity, in which every negative thing repeats itself 'as usual'. This is a radically different message to that of 'My Way', a song about escaping the usual and being an individual. Furthermore, there is the issue of agency. 'Comme d'habitude' presents us with a narrator completely at the mercy of fate and the will of the other, while 'My Way' provides a battler against fate's whims, someone whom fate has made stronger and who is able to 'stand tall' and face not only the other but the big Other. In this sense, 'Comme d'habitude' can be connected to the chanson tradition and to other fatalistic song forms such as fado and – here Friedwald is on the right track but going in the wrong direction – country. There are histories and politics behind the use of fatalism in such song forms, the nuances of which will never be sensed behind pat dismissals such as Friedwald's.

To connect these points to those made earlier, a comparison of the songs leads us to the representation of mastery and submission. While the narrator of 'Comme d'habitude' 'plays at pretending' and submits to the domination of the other ('I will wait for you'), the narrator of 'My Way' dominates, looking down on the kind of man 'who kneels'. Gender, of course, is crucial here. 'What is a man?' Sinatra asks. Clearly one who can claim all the acts and the agency that 'My Way' boasts, one who can master himself, others and fate itself. And for Friedwald, as we have seen, this mastery extends to Sinatra himself, the only man who can take such paltry (feminine?) material and conjure 'sheer magic' from it with his massive voice phallus, shatter its 'intimacy' with his 'enormity'. François, meanwhile, the feminised

Frenchman, is left whining and weeping into his coffee, not man enough to take control of his life or his woman. We do not know from Friedwald's account whether he is familiar with the French lyrics but it does not require too much speculation, given what he does say about 'French songs' and 'kiddie-pop', to interpret his account of 'My Way' as a masculine response to a feminine problem. Perhaps the 'droning rhythm' he locates in those despicable song styles is too reminiscent of a nagging wife or child who needs to be silenced by the man of the house (the Chairman of the Board, a.k.a. The Voice).

The droning rhythm and repetition of the melody was entirely suited to the lyrical preoccupations of 'Comme d'habitude', and François's version highlights this by introducing difference at the climax of the song, perhaps signifying anger finally boiling over, an escape from submission, a warning note, the hint of violence (perhaps, in this light, Sinatra merely finishes what François has initiated). What Friedwald does not ask is: why did Paul Anka keep the melody of the French song and lose the words? Is it possible that Anka wished to transfer the 'monotony' of the melody to his account of the winner who rises above the mundane, setting in motion a dialectic between word and melody? In this sense, the song can be read as an escape from *d'habitude* and the habitus from which it draws its sense of itself and its self-difference: in other words, it comes to be about creativity.¹³⁵

It is as a song about creativity that Nina Simone approaches 'My Way', the closing track of her 1971 album *Here Comes The Sun*.¹³⁶ Simone's version of 'My Way' allows us to play Friedwald at his own game. Mike Butler seems to do precisely this as he offers a neat summary of the performance:

Is this the definitive My Way? Nina Simone, an individualist if ever there was one, is free from the self-deception that disqualifies most of the field. Which leaves Frank Sinatra and Sid Vicious. The present version generates excitement from the off: bongos double the tempo as Nina takes her first note; strings swell in rising excitement; harpsichord and harp rip along, adding period charm. Nina is exultant as she swoops and dives over the hypnotic Latin beat. Frank sounds doleful in comparison, as if he can't wait for the final curtain, and Sid is just plain silly. There's no competition, really.¹³⁷

A number of questions immediately arise from this, some already alluded to earlier in the discussion of cover versions and ‘vocal acting’. What does it mean to give a definitive version? What does it mean to say that someone really gets to what the song was about? What might it mean, paraphrasing Lacan, to find something that is in the song more than itself? How might this differ with songs thought of *as* songs (the products of songwriters) rather than as original performances? In pop, the songwriter and the original performer are sometimes the same: in rock, almost invariably. To say someone has found something fundamental in the song *qua* song is to say they gave a proper interpretation to the piece; to say someone gets to the fundamental in a song that was already a supposedly definitive performance seems less straightforward and possibly even downright odd. This does not, of course, stop music fans – including critics and other musicians – from doing so.

When Mike Butler asks whether Nina Simone’s version of ‘My Way’ is the definitive one, we can see that the question is absurd unless viewed through the fantasy of authenticity. How can a song about doing it *my way* have a definitive version? And is a definitive version the same as an authoritative version? ‘Definitive’ and ‘authoritative’ are different words with different meanings and yet are often used as synonyms in such qualitative evaluations of culture. While a dictionary may list many definitions of a word, we are unlikely to hear someone say that a version of a song is *a* definitive version (among others); it is invariably *the* definitive version, making it synonymous with the authoritative version. But isn’t ‘My Way’ precisely about not taking part in something that can be defined, essentialised or authorised? Isn’t it about individualism and hence individual perspective? Does ‘My Way’ actually gesture towards a nascent identity politics? If we consider Nina Simone’s version and Sid Vicious’s version we witness this possibility in action. They sing it *their way* and their way is entirely fitting *for them*. Only the illusion created by the fantasy of authenticity allows any one of them to be definitive. It is, then, a battle for authenticity, authorship and authority rather than a cool judgement on aesthetics and style. It is therefore deeply ideological. And while this may seem to lead us into the quagmire of relativism, the fantasy of authentication will tend to stop us long before we sink too far in, allowing us, perhaps, to declare a ‘victor’.

It may also depend whether we think of the new version as replacing the original or existing in dialogue with it. As S. Renee Dechert writes, making reference

to Mikhail Bakhtin in a comparison between the Carter Family's 'No Depressions' and alt. country group Uncle Tupelo's (1990) cover of it,

When artists allude to texts that have preceded them, they do more than simply echo the ideas of earlier authors; they also call for a reinterpretation, both of the original work and their own, in light of those allusions, effectively opening a 'dialogue' or conversation between their text and those that have preceded it.¹³⁸

Artists performing cover versions must make a song their own if they are to keep up their side of the conversation. While appropriation may not be the same thing as dialogue, neither is imitation, and cover versions that are too similar to originals cannot help but raise questions regarding their validity; to maintain a conversation, the voices making it need to be distinct. But, circling back to our original problem, how can there be a definitive voice in such a conversation?

The conversation Nina Simone has with 'My Way' is, as Butler intimates, a fascinating one, with the artist in complete control of her material. In addition to the features Butler mentions – harp, harpsichord, 'Latin' beat – it is hard not to be surprised by the transition from one stanza to the next. Where the Sinatra version had finished each section on a decisive note, Simone's immediately completes the final line (each 'my way') with twelve quick keyboard stabs which work both to emphasise the line and to give a sense of climax to each verse. As a sense of ambiguity descends – will the song end here? – Simone's right hand picks a bright ascending figure out of the final stab and leads us into the next verse. Each verse brings more with it musically – extra percussion, electric bass, strings – leading to a situation where, as each comes crashing to a close with those twelve repeated beats only to rise again from the wreckage, there is an overwhelming sense of excess. Indeed, for a song already so steeped in excess in Sinatra's versions – especially his live performances – it seems as if Simone is trying to deliberately exceed The Voice himself.

Simone makes hardly any changes to the lyric – 'shy way' becomes 'sly way', 'friend' is changed to 'friends', 'spit' corrected to 'spat' – and none to the sequence of the song. This is in marked contrast to her version of Bob Dylan's 'Just Like A Woman' from the same album, where she places a chorus before the first verse, misses one whole verse out and, crucially, plays around with the problematic personal

pronouns of the song.¹³⁹ She does, however, add melisma and occasional interjections to the words, giving a sense once again of control over the material and the groove of the song (a groove her version invents, of course: who could have thought of this as a groovy song before? Certainly not ‘monotonous’ Claude François, nor Sinatra/Friedwald). At the start of the second verse a stretched ‘ye-es’ (0:46-0:47) provides a vocal accompaniment to the keyboard’s lead-in, providing both musical and linguistic transition (‘yes, regrets...’: *of course I’ve had them but that’s not what’s important now*). At the very end of the last verse, the point where Sinatra’s version would be building up to its climax (‘The record shows/I took the blows/And did it/My/Way’), Simone adds melisma to the final ‘way’, stretching it to four syllables, then lets it fade into the rising strings which now take over from the vocal – there is no repetition (reassertion) of the final line. We are only 3:26 into the song when Simone’s vocal dies away. But she and the other musicians are not finished; fully aware she has set up an irresistible groove (Butler says ‘hypnotic’: ‘infectious’ seems nearer the mark¹⁴⁰), she lets the orchestra ride the song out for another minute and a half. Strings soar, swoop, hover, dive; a cymbal taps out a jazzy rhythm to add to the melange; Simone indulges herself on the piano (she’s deserved it); the strings grow in crescendo; ‘soulful’ backing vocals join in; and it all fades out far too soon. It is a spectacular way to close an album and it seems no coincidence that it is placed at the end of *Here Comes The Sun*, just as Sinatra would come to place the song at the climax of his live shows. Indeed, one could argue that Simone has discovered and disseminated the eventual possibilities of ‘My Way’ long before we get to hear them on *The Main Event*. What is the ‘main event’ referred to in the title of that album? Is it to Frank Sinatra as the headline act? In which case, is his finale of ‘My Way’ the main event of this main event? If so, it seems that Nina Simone has beaten him at his own game.

Who Knows Where The Time Goes

Before looking at the ‘Sinatra’ songs appropriated by Nina Simone later in her career, I wish to reflect briefly on two recordings from the 1970s. The first is Simone’s reading of Sandy Denny’s ‘Who Knows Where The Time Goes’, released by Simone as a live performance on *Black Gold* (1970) the year before her version of ‘My Way’. I wish to consider this song in light of its preoccupation with what I am calling a ‘late voice’. This concept of the ‘late voice’ is complex in that I wish to refer both to an

actual voice of experience and to a predictive process that voices experience as future anteriority. Simone was by no means 'old' when she recorded the song (37) but she manages to pour a lifetime's experience into her rendition. What is perhaps more remarkable is the sense of experience already extant in the original version of the song by the young Sandy Denny (b. 1947). Denny first recorded the song with the Strawbs in 1967, when she was twenty, and again two years later with Fairport Convention (*Unhalfbricking*, 1969). The lyrics are as follows:

'Who Knows Where The Time Goes'
Words & music: Sandy Denny¹⁴¹

Across the evening sky
All the birds are leaving
But how can they know
It's time for them to go?
Before the winter fire
I will still be dreaming
I have no thought of time.

For who knows where the time goes?
Who knows where the time goes?

Sad deserted shore
Your fickle friends are leaving
Ah, but then you know
It's time for them to go
But I will still be here
I have no thought of leaving
I do not count the time.

For who knows where the time goes?
Who knows where the time goes?

And I am not alone
While my love is near me
I know it will be so
Until it's time to go
So come the storms of winter
And then the birds in Spring again
I do not fear the time

For who knows how my love grows?
Who knows where the time goes?

Should we hear the song as one of innocence or experience? Perhaps it is both. On the one hand, it is a song of youthful wonder; experience may not only be unnecessary but it may be the very lack of experience that can command such wonder. The question posed by the young Sandy Denny may just be a more sophisticated version of the child's endless 'Why...?', of a seemingly infinite fascination with the world. On the other hand, the sense of childhood's end, of being abandoned by 'fickle friends', loss of what was taken for granted, is palpable. Experience is hardening the 'dreamer' and warning that, as the cycle of the seasons turns, so loss will be recurrent on the journey through life. In this sense it is a steeling of oneself against inevitable loss: 'I have no fear of time' suggests a confidence that the mournful refrain cannot support. But just as importantly, the words are – appropriately – timeless and this no doubt accounts for the number of cover versions of the song and of its ability to mean different things at different stages of its performers' and audiences' lives.

The late voice, then, is both a voice arrived at – a voice that carries a sense of time, experience, loss, and so on – and a future anterior speech act, an enquiry made by an ostensibly youthful voice anticipating experience that it does not yet possess. This *may* be a case of the calculated donning of a particular vocal masque¹⁴²; in other words, it may be effective acting, the successful passing on of a sincerely believed-in imaginary self image to the speculative credulity of the other or the group (audience, listener, fanbase), the whole connected via a collective fantasy. Or it may be the successful attachment of an enquiry to a place outside the immediate situation, a predictive or revolutionary moment – event – that allows the artist to found a truth not yet contained within constructivist thought as it exists for that artist's collective. It is a moment that stops time only to then set it back on a different track. Paradoxical as this future anteriority might seem, it is something we recognise when we use phrases such as 'wise beyond her years'.¹⁴³ Of course, deciding on which artists convince us that they have opened the path to a truth and which seem 'mere' actors is an impossibly complex process. Resorting once again to the notion of the phantasmatic relationship built up between artist and audience may let us off the hook here momentarily but will never, it seems, allow for a satisfactory taxonomy of authenticity. This is probably a good thing.

It is likely Nina Simone heard 'Who Knows Where The Time Goes' on Judy Collins's album of the same name (1968), given that she recorded Collins's song 'My Father' around the same time as she was singing Denny's song. Like Collins, she

changes the first line to 'Across the morning sky', instantly offering us a paradox: if Denny's version was a song of innocence, why did it start in the evening?¹⁴⁴ Surely this 'morning sky' version gets closer to the wide-eyed wonder of the innocent. However, Simone offers a preamble to the song that emphasises its reflective aspect and makes it clear that she reads the song as one of experience rather than innocence:

Let's see what we can do with this lovely, lovely thing that goes past all racial conflict and all kinds of conflict. It is a reflective tune and some time in your life you will have occasion to say 'What is this thing called time? You know, what is that?' The clock...you go to work by the clock, you get your martini in the afternoon by the clock, you have your coffee by the clock, and you have to get on the plane by a certain time and arrive by a certain time, and it goes on and on and on...

And time is a dictator, as we know it: where does it go? What does it do? Most of all, is it alive? Is it a thing that we cannot touch and is it alive? And then one day you look in the mirror – how old – and you say, 'Where did the time go?' We leave you with that one.¹⁴⁵

The reading of the song that follows this is a stark and beautiful one. Backed only by a slowly strummed acoustic guitar, Simone sings the first two verses and refrains before taking a brief and understated piano solo. For the third verse the piano is silent again while the final refrain is supported by a few skeletal notes from the singer's right hand. The overall impression is one of peaceful, thoughtful reflection and a yearning devoid of any bitterness (it 'goes past [...] all kinds of conflict'). This makes what happens next all the more surprising. Before the final 'goes' has disappeared the band comes crashing in, organ, electric guitar and percussion providing what is presumably a climax to the show ('we leave you with that one'). It is a shocking moment, jolting us from our reverie. Time seemed to have stood still, we let it go by, we didn't know, we don't know where the time goes. But we weren't particularly worried until that band came back like a superego telling us we must move on from our fantasy. It is both part of the masquerade – the abrupt climax to the show – and brutally honest, suggesting that experience can be a shattering process as much as the gradual one Simone narrates in her introduction.

My Father

I would like now to look at a song written by Judy Collins and recorded (belatedly) by Nina Simone. The song, which appeared on Collins's *Who Knows Where The Time Goes*, is 'My Father' and the lyrics are as follows:

'My Father'
Words & music: Judy Collins¹⁴⁶

My father always promised us
That we would live in France
We'd go boating on the Seine
And I would learn to dance
We lived in Ohio then
He worked in the mines
On his dreams like boats we knew
We'd sail in time

All my sisters soon were gone
To Denver and Cheyenne
Marrying their grown up dreams
The lilacs and the man
I stayed behind the youngest still
Only danced alone
The colours of my father's dreams
Faded without a sound

And I live in Paris now
My children dance and dream
Hearing the words of a miner's life
In words they've never seen
I sail my memories of home
Like boats across the Seine
And watch the Paris sun
Set in my father's eyes again

My father always promised us
That we would live in France
We'd go boating on the Seine
And I would learn to dance
I sail my memories of home
Like boats across the Seine
And watch the Paris sun
Set in my father's eyes again

Collins's father was a blind singer and radio broadcaster who, by her own accounts, had a strong influence on his daughter's life.¹⁴⁷ He died in 1967 and there is little

doubt that this song was inspired by his passing. That said, it is not ‘autobiographical’ in the sense of being *all* about Collins or her father. He is not the miner mentioned in the first and third verses, nor did the family live in Ohio. Collins did not have any older sisters and the family already lived in Denver at the time the memories appear to recall (Collins’s childhood: the family had also lived in Los Angeles and Seattle prior to this) so it would not have been a place to move away to. As for the role of Paris in the song, this seems to be entirely fictional, though we cannot be sure of the veracity or otherwise of the father’s promise. Clearly, then, the song is a ‘fictional’ narrative, written and sung by Collins as both author and vocal actor. Yet the sadness of the melody, the sense of loss evoked by the lyrics and the reference to the sun setting in ‘her’ father’s (blind?) eyes cannot help but evoke the notion of a direct remembrance of Collins’s own late father.

Nina Simone, of course, approaches the song as a cover version, a move we might assume would further remove the possibility of any authorial connection to a father that might be considered ‘hers’. Yet, in much the same way that Collins’s fictional song is still somehow *about* her and her father, so Simone’s reading removes the fiction dividing the song’s singer from its subject. A fragment of a recording session released in 1998 shows that the singer intended to cut the song in 1971. This suggests that she had been listening to Collins’s *Who Knows Where The Time Goes*, the title song of which she had recorded the previous year, as we have seen. In this first recorded attempt, Simone changes the first line to ‘My father always promised me’, but then only gets through six lines of the first verse, stopping after ‘He worked in the mines’ to declare to those assembled in the studio, ‘I don’t want to sing this song. It’s not [for?] me. [Pause] My father always promised me that we would be free but he did not promise me that we would live in France.’ Simone then collapses into laughter. A male voice asks ‘How about Brooklyn?’ to which Simone immediately responds, ‘No. My father knew nothing about New York at all. He promised me that we would live in peace. And that maybe I can still get.’ She then removes the song from consideration in that session: ‘Okay, we have to skip that one for later.’¹⁴⁸

Simone did come back to the song later, including a version on *Baltimore* (1978), an album that saw the singer return to recording for the first time in many years.¹⁴⁹ Though Simone was later dismissive of the album, claiming she had had no control over the choice of material, this seems a little doubtful in the case of ‘My Father’ given her attempt to record the song earlier in the decade. She presents the

song as three verses, omitting Collins's fourth combination verse. As in her earlier reading, Simone sings 'My father always promised me', singularising the object pronoun. Other notable changes include her adjustment of the last line of each verse. In the first, she hovers on the final word 'time', letting it drift for six seconds (1:27 to 1:33) so that it becomes more of a hum or drone than a word, before resolving the melody with a repeat of the last two words, 'in time'. In the second verse a similar expectation is set up in the second half by a slight vocal drone on 'alone'. Simone then alters Collins's words to sing the couplet 'Hoping that my father's dreams/would someday take me home'. 'Home' features a vocal drone (2:50 to 2:53), aligning it with the end of the previous verse ('time') and with 'alone' from this verse. There is a slightly longer pause than in the previous verse and then a repetition of 'take me home'. At the close of the third and final verse, Simone again alters the lyrics, seemingly due to a mistake this time: 'And watch my father's eyes watch the setting sun/Set in my father's eyes...again'. At the place where the vocal drone had been in the earlier verses, she offers the word 'eyes' (4:17 to 4:22), starting out on the same droning note as before but quickly moving into a soft melisma that lets the word float briefly before the resolution of 'again'. Simone's reading of the song, then, serves to emphasise crucial words to underline a narrative of loss and yearning. Meanwhile, this yearning is backed up by an 'aching' string arrangement that builds gradually during the first verse and then soars at significant moments of the narrative in the second and third verses: 'grown up dreams', 'danced alone', 'children dance and sing', 'I sail my memories of home'.

The words that Simone emphasises – time, alone, home, eyes – may remind us of a point relationship made by Walter Benjamin between gaze and familiarity: 'looking at someone carries the implicit expectation that our look will be returned by the object of our gaze. Where this expectation is met (which, in the case of thought processes, can apply equally to the look of the eye of the mind and to a glance pure and simple), there is an experience of the aura to the fullest extent.'¹⁵⁰ Benjamin uses this concept to suggest that Baudelaire's poetry is one that highlights the destruction of the aura – and hence embraces modernity – in its preoccupation with the unreturned gaze: 'What is involved here is that the expectation roused by the look of the human eye is not fulfilled. Baudelaire describes eyes of which one is inclined to say that they have lost their ability to look.'¹⁵¹ As Eric Santner points out, Benjamin's point is to note the distinction between an acceptance, initiated by Baudelaire, of

modern experience – *Erlebnis* – and a nostalgia for premodern experience – *Erfahrung* – the latter associated with home and the familiar in all of its connotations. Paraphrasing Benjamin, Santner writes, ‘Home [...] is first and foremost that place [...] where one finds the aura constituted by eyes that return a gaze.’¹⁵² The narrator of ‘My Father’ seems to articulate the quest for such a place. Home is here a remembered past but one that is never stable in that it resides in a place of constant dreaming, of escape. It is mostly spoken from a place described by Benjamin as ‘the look of the eye of the mind’ (memory: a searching for a past that looks back at the searcher) but the only explicit reference to eyes is that of the final line of the third verse. In Collins’s version, it is tempting to read into this lyric a reference to her father’s blindness, to eyes that ‘have lost their ability to look’, yet Simone’s handling of these lines is perhaps more fascinating. The curious (Freudian? Lacanian?) slippage that leads to ‘watch my father’s eyes watch the setting sun/Set in my father’s eyes...again’ compels us to dwell on the notion of the gaze. The sense of confusion here – who is watching what? – emphasises gaze as process over any obvious sense of someone looking or someone or something being looked at. If we *do* pick apart the meaning, however, we seem to be left with this: where the ‘correct’ version had a narrator watching the sun reflected in her father’s (possibly blind – at least *to her*) eyes, this version emphasises the father’s own watching, with the narrator’s watching now resigned to a secondary place, a watching of a watching. It is tempting to read this secondary watching as a kind of determination, such as that settled on by Simone after what she felt was her father’s betrayal of her trust. Overhearing him lie to one of her brothers about the importance of his role in the family – a role reduced in reality due to ill health – Simone was shocked and found herself making a vow not to see him again, a promise she kept even as he lay dying. Hers was a refusal, then, of familiarity and home, a refusal to go back to a place that would return her gaze. The secondary watching described in the last line of ‘My Father’ can be read as the passive awareness of a daughter waiting for her father to die: ‘I knew I was hurting Daddy and myself more,’ wrote Simone, ‘but there was nothing I could do: I was helpless because of the vow I had made, the vow I had to obey.’¹⁵³

This hurt was one that would continue to grow in Simone in later years, leading to regret that she had not reconciled herself with her father. It is perhaps the replacement of that earlier refusal of the gaze with a subsequent longing for it that explains Simone’s return to ‘My Father’. This certainly seems to be the case in the

film *La Légende*, where the song is played over footage of Simone visiting her father's grave in Trion, her home town. The father represents the lure of the promised land ('freedom', 'peace', 'France') which he cannot deliver, leaving the daughter to seek it out herself ('maybe that I can still find') even as she fears utopia may be not be a place that lies ahead but one she has abandoned long ago, leading to what Santner calls a 'utopian libido [...] a yearning for a space of specular mutuality'. Furthermore, 'The absence of a space where eyes return a gaze initiates [...] all those quests for and conquests of new territories of auratic experience, new searches for the gaze that would finally authenticate one's worth and reality.'¹⁵⁴

To be Frank

Nina Simone's recorded output after *Baltimore* was sparse. She recorded an album in France in 1982 entitled *Fodder On My Wings* and bearing a dedication to 'My Father', but the album was little known outside of her French fanbase. It is a fascinating document of Simone's late voice and worthy of a more detailed analysis than there is space for here. In passing, however, I will mention the inclusion of a harrowing version of Gilbert O'Sullivan's 'Alone Again Naturally', in which Simone completely dispenses with the original verses and replaces them with lyrics written about her father's final days. The determination that I read into her reading of 'My Father' is strongly emphasised here in lines such as 'Now he's fading away/and I'm glad to say/He's dying at last, naturally'. The first verse speaks of 'Blinded eyes still searching/For some distant dream/that had faded away at the seams', providing another link with 'My Father' and allowing us to read back the unmentioned blindness of Collins's father into that song.¹⁵⁵

The next studio album, *Nina's Back*, was recorded in 1985 in New York, after which there were some live albums but no studio recording until her final album *A Single Woman* (1993). The final two studio albums are notable for the fact that they contain versions of songs associated with the Frank Sinatra's late 1960s period. These songs all come from two albums recorded by Sinatra in 1969, *A Man Alone* and *Watertown*, both notable for being song suites written by songwriters especially for Sinatra to perform.¹⁵⁶ Both albums were clearly written with a particular image of Sinatra in mind. In the case of *A Man Alone*, this meant Rod McKuen, an immensely successful 'pop-poet' and translator of Jacques Brel's songs, providing the kind of material suited to the 'vulnerable' Sinatra described earlier in this chapter. *Watertown*

was an attempt to take Sinatra further into ‘abandoned male’ territory than he had previously been and was a concept album that told the story of a father attempting to bring up his two children and get over his loss after his wife leaves their small Midwestern town for a new life in the big city.

Not surprisingly, Will Friedwald is dismissive of both these albums, associated as they are with popular poets and pop-rock songwriters.¹⁵⁷ Of McKuen he has the following to say:

[I]n the *Laugh-In* era, McKuen had established himself as the most pecuniarily successful poet-songwriter of all time: helped by Herculean promotional skills, three books of his poetry had sold a million copies by 1968 plus two million LPs of those verses spoken and sung in that year. McKuen made himself the McDonald’s of poetry and got rich marketing his McPoems. One doesn’t imagine Sinatra took a lot of convincing to realize it would be worth his while to grab a piece of that action. [...] To put it succinctly, most of the songs [on *A Man Alone*] are absolutely nothing.¹⁵⁸

What makes the album listenable and ‘saves’ it ‘from being a total epistemological clambake’, are ‘Sinatra’s remarkable conviction’, his ‘beautiful voice’ and Don Costa’s orchestral arrangements. Friedwald reserves most of his scorn for the second of these albums, once again allowing his contempt for rock and country music to seriously cloud the accuracy of his statements:

Sergeant Pepper, long regarded as the definitive concept album of the rock epoch, had been a collection of whimsical psychedelia, while other famous thematic packages, such as The Who’s *Tommy* and Pink Floyd’s *The Wall*, addressed the issue of adolescent alienation. Sinatra’s ‘rock-concept’ set deals with more mature themes [...] Overall, the mood is halfway between the Beatles’ ‘She’s Leaving Home’ and virtually every country-western song ever written. In both attitude and its Costa-lite orchestrations [...] *Watertown* could be called *By the Time I Get to Phoenix – the Album*.¹⁵⁹

At numerous points in this thesis I have had reason to suggest that we pay as much attention to the claims made by those working outside what Badiou calls the veridical

as to those working within, for it is often in these places that we catch a glimpse of music's eventness. It is difficult in circumstances such as this, however, to avoid resorting to the veridical in order to counter views of popular music such as Friedwald's that represent a dangerously reactionary and potentially hegemonic voice in musicology that just *will not listen*.¹⁶⁰ The point here, though, is that, Whatever Friedwald might think of these late 1960s Sinatra albums, Nina Simone clearly heard something in them. The first recording she made of this material was a version of 'For A While', a track from *Watertown*.¹⁶¹ The song's lyricist Jake Holmes said of the song:

I've always felt that there is that moment in your life, when you forget about something that is really terrible. For five minutes the sun is shining and everything is beautiful. Then all of a sudden you realize that the person you cared about is gone, and it all comes back. It is one of those horrible things about grief – one of those little holes in grief when it becomes even more painful.¹⁶²

The memory process Holmes describes resembles the Proustian 'rush' that interrupts the everyday with the shock of all that has been lost. The song opens with the line 'Lost in day to day', suggesting that radical, unassimilated loss has been covered over – made distant – by a more homely loss associated with mundanity. The narrator gets by *comme d'habitude* and 'days go by with no empty feeling', until, that is, the Proustian moments when 'I remember you're gone'. The sentiment here is remarkably similar to an earlier song that Sinatra and Simone (and Billie Holiday) had recorded, Hoagy Carmichael's 'I Get Along Without You Very Well' with its famous list of exceptions: 'except when soft rains fall', 'except when I hear your name', 'except perhaps in Spring'. A notable difference resides in the fact that Carmichael's protagonist recognises that (s)he should not let these moments happen: 'But then I should never ever think of Spring/For that would surely break my heart in two'. Holmes has his protagonist rebuke his friends for trying to keep, or find, him company: 'They forget that I'm not over you/For a while'. He has twisted the title's meaning to suggest that he wants to hang on to this longing; rather than mourn and move on, he wishes to remain melancholy.

For Simone, drifting increasingly between mourning and melancholy, it was an ideal song to perform. The version she recorded for *Nina's Back* is not notable musically, in that she is backed by a group whose mid-1980s jazz-rock stylings – overemphasised by the production – provide an arrangement that threatens to overwhelm the lyric. However, what Simone does with the lyric *is* notable, especially for any listener who has more than a passing interest in the artist's career and personal life (arguably a large proportion of those still buying new Simone recordings in 1985). She delivers the first verse unchanged, but changes a line in the second from 'some work I've got to do' to 'some music I've got to do'. The alteration is small but telling and sets us up for the next changes: firstly the addition of the phrase 'I touch my hair and I touch my skin' just before 'I remember you're gone'; secondly, the lines 'People say to me/Nina, you need some company'. If we had been unsure before, there now seems little doubt that this is a song about Simone herself. Where the gap between the vocal actor and the 'I' of Sinatra's version had been emphasised due to the song's inclusion in a concept album told from the point of view of an obviously fictional narrator (albeit voiced by a singer whose vocal act was crucial to the believability of the work), here the song is removed from its context and personalised in a way that suggests two things about the singer. Firstly, she is describing her desire to sublimate the loss she feels with 'some music I've got to do': on the one hand, *'doing' the music will stop me from drifting into melancholy*; on the other, *I have to do it, it is what keeps me going* (in the song immediately preceding 'For A While', Simone included her own composition, 'I Sing Just To Know That I'm Alive'). Secondly, she is recognising that the losses of her life are ones she is far from being 'over'. Who or what is 'you' in this case? Her autobiography would soon provide some possible answers: her father, the various men in her life from her childhood sweetheart Edney onwards, the civil rights movement, the denial of her childhood ambitions to be a concert pianist.¹⁶³ Perhaps the 'you' is Nina Simone herself: 'I touch my hair and I touch my skin' anticipates the passage in her autobiography where she undergoes the late 1960s 'mirror stage' described earlier. The realisation of who she was and who she could have been led to a mourning of her own potential. We can come to read the documents of 1991 – *I Put a Spell on You* and *La Légende* – as attempts to find, via the mediation of memory in print and film – a promise lost in time.

In 1993 Simone appropriated more Sinatra material, this time three songs from *A Man Alone*. An interview with Michael Alago, the executive responsible for signing Simone to Elektra, provides a fascinating conflation of two figures who loomed large in Simone's life and career:

Nina and I fashioned the album so that it was like a homage to the Frank Sinatra album *A Man Alone*. Nina loved that album and we both adored Rod McKuen. It turned out to be a beautiful recording of love, loneliness and loss, as a homage to both Frank and her late father.¹⁶⁴

The album opens with 'A Single Woman', Simone's version of 'The Single Man' from the Sinatra/McKuen album.¹⁶⁵ Right from the start it paints a portrait of loneliness as we hear that familiar voice, now deepened with age, sing

I live alone
That hasn't always been
Easy to do
For just a single woman
Sometimes at night
The walls talk back to me
They seem to say
Wasn't yesterday
A better day?

Here we are placed in the home, a home that the third verse tells us 'once [...] was filled/with love', albeit that the narrator 'can't remember when'. Whereas in 'My Father', she had both sought and defied the eyes that might return a gaze, here she seems to be in thrall to (imprisoned by) walls that return a voice. They are familiar, comfortable, and plastered in melancholy. Outside these walls, as we hear in the second verse, the loneliness is equally acute:

Always alone
At home or in a crowd
A single woman
Out on her private cloud
Caught in a world
Few people understand
I am what I am
Only one single woman

What is this 'world few people understand'? Fame? Depression? It seems to be Simone's world rather than the world of modernity ushered in by the unreturned gazes of the crowd in Baudelaire's and Benjamin's cityscapes. Unless, as I suggested at the outset, Simone is a symptom of that very history, attached as it is to a particular dehumanising cultural trauma of which she could be said to be a product. But at this stage of her career, at this stage of the fantasy of authentication, such thoughts seem far away, tethered to a realm of constructivist knowledge that could not allow Simone the singularity she claims here.

Simone uses this singularity to add conviction to the other songs she covers from *A Man Alone*. The first of these is 'Lonesome Cities', a tale that mixes experience with wanderlust to paint a picture of a (sexual and geographical) explorer who is not yet ready to stop but who realises that she won't be able to 'run away from me'. The second is 'Love's Been Good To Me', another song of experience about a roamer who has 'never found a home' but is comforted by the memories of past loves. The changes to 'Lonesome Cities' are not surprising: a change from 'There's a few more pretty women/That I'd like to know/A bridge or two I'd like to cross/A few more oats to sow' to 'There's a few more handsome men/That I'd like to know/Just a few more handsome men/As down the road I go', the last line doubling up with a line from 'Love's Been Good To Me'. Similarly, in that song, the only changes are those attending to the gender of the lovers mentioned in the verses.

As we saw at the beginning of this chapter, with the concept of the traumatic event we have moved away from Badiou's theorisation of event while retaining some of his vocabulary. Badiou's question is how something new emerges, hence the aptness of his work in thinking about revolutionary moments. In his example of love the emphasis is very much on the emergence of an amorous relationship and the fidelity shown to it. He does not, however, have much to say about the end of the relationship – this is where thinking about the traumatic event comes in. When love breaks down (or rather when a relationship breaks down, for love itself has a tendency to persevere) there can be a change as relevant to the person's future as when it starts. We can also identify moments that exceed the situation of the break-up, making it an event in Badiouian terms; here, psychoanalysis may be more useful. Indeed one way to contrast Badiou's project with the psychoanalytic project is to note that Badiou is most interested in the emergence of the new while psychoanalysis is most interested

in the past, in dealing with the ways the new (in the form of the symptom) plays havoc with the subject. One should not pledge fidelity to one's symptom but rather, as Lacan and Badiou both remind us, to one's desire. And if love is the area which shows this split the most effectively, it is worth dwelling on Nina Simone's love songs as much as on her 'revolutionary' material. Ntozake Shange makes a similar point in her comments on Simone's final album, suggesting that its preoccupation with romance is as relevant as Simone's earlier commitment to the movement:

A Single Woman is about love, all kinds of love. Especially, a full grown woman in love. A woman in the process of defining her life, deciding her fate, accepting, without shame or guilt, her own needs and desires. With a voice, that unmistakable Simone voice, worldly, yet vulnerable, this album allows us the experiences only a strong woman survives. [...] Depending on how well we've been loved or not loved, these lyrics and the earned authority of Simone's voice will bring hope, reassurance, or the right to grieve.¹⁶⁶

What is notable here is the similarity to those observations I discussed earlier in relation to the 'worldly, yet vulnerable' Frank Sinatra. Perhaps it is worth noting, in addition to Shange's points, that Simone here has somehow managed to wrest the mantle of the male master. But perhaps Simone is not ultimately claiming something that the male qua Sinatra was always in possession of. Perhaps she is reclaiming a subject position stolen from the feminine, re-igniting torch singing as *écriture féminine*, a refusal of – and, paradoxically, a simultaneous dependence on – the Law as perfected in torch singing. There needs, after all, to be a space for the enunciation of failure, as Kaja Silverman points out in her discussion of Fassbinder's films.¹⁶⁷ Simone's is not a victory song.

The Theft of the Stolen Voice

Michel Poizat writes that opera produces a 'feeling of madness, of captivation, of rapture ..., an ecstatic gratification in the lost object, the feeling of its recovery, but never without the pain of remembering its loss, never without the desire for its pain.'¹⁶⁸ Suzanne Stewart quotes Poizat and points out that 'the *jouissance* that opera generates is, though Poizat never calls it such, masochistic'.¹⁶⁹ The operatic voice is singled out here because 'it strives to escape the laws of symbolization; it inevitably

seeks to transcend word and meaning and thus, in its climactic moments, verges on the cry, a moment when the human voice encounters the Real.’¹⁷⁰ Having established an identification with the voice-object, Stewart goes on to say, ‘There are several consequences of this identification with the voice: the voice is eroticized insofar as it is the object of a drive; it is constitutive of subjectivity in that it also performs interpellative functions; and it creates this subjectivity in terms of self-loss because the object sought, the voice, is always traversed by death.’¹⁷¹ As was argued in Chapter One, this interpellative function of the singing voice – indeed, of music generally – is considered throughout this thesis as a crucial element in the process of identification between singer and listener. Stewart continues:

This distinction between identification with the other and the incorporation of that other is reflected in Freud’s dual use of the term ‘identification’: identification is either heteropathic (the subject identifies with the other) or idiopathic (the subject incorporates the other). Freud analyzes the first form in terms of fantasy, hysteria, hypnosis, being in love, and the psychology of groups, insofar as it allows for the cathexis of a leader; the second appears in his discussion of oral incorporation or cannibalism, particularly in his analysis of the totem and melancholia.¹⁷²

Stewart describes the theft of the operatic voice (the female voice), which she connects to the advent of the phonograph: ‘It is possible to view the theft of Kundry’s voice as a recording studio session. The theme of stealing the voice and the gaze through their reproduction in the newly invented media is a ubiquitous theme that begins in the late nineteenth century and extends well into our own.’¹⁷³ This would be a theft only too familiar to Nina Simone, who saw those involved in the recording studio as thieves who had exploited her and her voice without due compensation.

Earlier in this chapter we read Kaja Silverman’s initial definition of ‘historical trauma’: ‘a historically precipitated but psychoanalytically specific disruption, with ramifications extending far beyond the individual psyche’. Silverman then goes on to nuance her definition in a way that is both illuminating and problematic for my discussion of Nina Simone:

I mean any historical event, whether socially engineered or of natural occurrence, which brings a large group of male subjects into such an intimate relation with lack that they are at least for the moment unable to sustain an imaginary relation with the phallus, and so withdraw their belief from the dominant fiction. Suddenly the latter is radically de-realized, and the social formation finds itself without a mechanism for achieving consensus.¹⁷⁴

Is it possible to connect Kaja Silverman's account of male subjectivity to Simone's situation? The route to such a connection might be to return to the points made by Richard Leppert and George Lipsitz that I discussed earlier. As we saw then, Leppert and Lipsitz argue that Hank Williams was visible and audible to such a large extent because he refused to play the masculine role, concentrating on feminised topics such as unrequited love or vocally feminising his more assertive honky-tonk songs. They contrast this with Patsy Cline's vocal style, which, they argue, allowed her to play similar gender reversal games, asserting vocal and musical mastery and domination over her 'feminine' lyrics of loss. For these writers, Williams and Cline stand out due to their adoption of roles that were unexpected of them. The vulnerability voiced by Williams was supposedly more shocking than that voiced by Billie Holiday or Nina Simone due to Williams's race and gender:

The emotional intensity that Billie Holiday accorded to this topic [unrequited love], via her vocal/timbral inscription of failure (as well as by the words), bears a distinct similarity to that achieved by Hank Williams, though musically by quite different means. The difference can be stated quite simply: the musical and cultural traditions that would allow a black woman to produce this lament generally affect men in a quite dissimilar way. For a man to utter similar sentiments, in this society, reflects a more extreme degree of failure and frustration.¹⁷⁵

Williams's articulation of the vocal 'tear' is not, for Leppert and Lipsitz, a theft as it might be in Stewart's account; rather it is an opportunity to break down divisions of gender and race. Williams differs from Sinatra, too, in that the former voices vulnerability throughout his work whereas the latter veers between vulnerability and male mastery. When Sinatra is posited as ur-representative of the male 'scarred by

lack' as a result of historical trauma (failure of various enterprises, breakdown of the family, changes in gender roles), there is little doubting that he is taking on a role: he is, after all, a consummate vocal actor. Perhaps this suggests that, while Sinatra can do 'lonely' and 'lost' as well as anyone – indeed, better than many – in doing so, he is not challenging the 'dominant fiction' in the same way as a performer such as Williams, actor though he may at times also be. While this may be to over-personalise the situation, however, and to neglect the important historical shift between Williams's era and that of the post-1960s 'late' Sinatra, it is worth at least considering *from the listener's perspective* how the fantasy of authentication weaves between the personal and the historical, the individual and the collective.

Nina Simone fits into this network of vocal actors by identifying both with the vocal act of a performer like Sinatra or Callas (she steals their mastery and claims their vulnerability) and with the 'refusal' of a performer like Williams or Holiday. Simone's articulation of themes of loss, mourning and unrequited love relates to the breakdown of hope in the revolutionary project of civil rights, a project that also did not deliver her from the spectres of her personal traumas. The late songs of loss reflect a voice scarred by the lack resulting from this failure. Silverman's account of the 'dominant fiction' (a term she borrows from Jacques Rancière) and historical trauma provides a useful point of reflection on Simone's late voice. Simone stopped reconfirming the dominant fiction and perhaps this is why she became disempowered by the recording industry and lost a large part of her audience (though there are other reasons such as the rise of rock, free jazz and new variants of soul music). Richard Middleton brings a number of similar ideas together in his consideration of Simone as an appropriator (or not) of the phallus:

[T]he edge in [Simone's] voice, forever standing in the way of maternal envelopment, is also continually to be reckoned with: this rattle in the throat, this grating in the vocal stream. On one level, this can be read as a mark of a refusal – a refusal of complete identification with the material; it opens a space for reflexivity, for critique, but also for representations of dissatisfaction, anxiety, loss, rupture. It is this that stamps Simone as a 'jazz' or 'blues' singer [...] rather than a more straight-ahead 'soul' singer.¹⁷⁶

As Kaja Silverman and Sean Cubitt point out with regard to the Hollywood film and the contemporary popular song respectively, pleasure comes from a break with dominance but pleasure (closer really to comfort) also comes with the return to the 'dominant fiction' or 'tonic'.¹⁷⁷ Perhaps Nina Simone stopped making that return. Or, perhaps, as seems likely from her late shows in the 1980s and 1990s, that return *did* come but as a return to the church of her youth, a search for that 'truth' the women of the church were so taken by. Performances of 'If You Pray Right' (a song learnt as a child from her father) in late concerts attest to this, as does footage of Simone returning to the church, and to her mother and daughter (those familiars who could return her gaze) in *La Légende*. Perhaps, in accordance with her mother's wish, she stopped playing 'those real songs' and went back to the Lord. As noted earlier, Simone was making two journeys back to her youth during the shooting of *La Légende*, playing in the church and fantasising about playing classical music.

The purloined voice

Simone's late voice was not only one of longing and return; it remained an angry one. For some time before her death in 2003, Nina Simone had been largely forgotten. In her later years, when she was written about, it tended to be in terms that emphasised her successful past and difficult present. Although she continued to perform sporadically up until the late 1990s, she was known as a difficult performer, an often obstreperous diva-figure. A book published after her death by long term friend Sylvia Hampton describes a woman driven by demons due to 'the devastating effects of a mental disorder that left her incapable of maintaining the emotional constancy she craved'.¹⁷⁸ Hampton does not give us any more information about this 'disorder' but spares few details in her descriptions of Simone's occasional cruelty to her and her brother. One of the reasons for Simone's ire seems to be her dwindling celebrity following her self-imposed exile and reclusion, a development that, according to Hampton, Simone seems to hold her and her brother partly responsible for (they had set up the first Simone fan appreciation society back in the 1960s but its numbers fell away during the 1970s). It is this increasing invisibility (and inaudibility) that most other commentators on Simone emphasise too, even as they highlight her importance to the 1960s. Comparing Simone to other black artists who successfully connected with the times, Philip Ennis writes,

Nina Simone was not as fortunate. Her decision to leave the States in late 1969 symbolized the impasse of black pop. She earned the name 'the High Priestess of Soul' the hard way, taking the condition of her people seriously enough to reject the ordinary settings in which black artists could speak and sing. She went beyond the boundaries of commercial R&B, could not enter gospel, was not invited into jazz very warmly, and, of course, never came anywhere near rock. She neither chose nor could find an organized political platform from which to concertize her ideas. Simone drove herself musically out of mainstream black cultural and political circles and ended up in a burning rage that took her out of America and into the shelter of Europe. Like almost all those who fought too far out past their audiences' musical tastes and political understanding, she fell harder than those who went easier. Some of rock's warriors would sadly soon follow this path.¹⁷⁹

Simone's eclecticism, in this account, was her downfall. It is interesting to note the connection made by Ennis between Simone's downfall and that of the 'warriors', often figured still as the exemplary figures of loss in rock mythology and elsewhere, suggesting that the loss of rock's romantic moment is more pertinent to many popular culture historians than the unrealised dreams of black music in the 1960s. Lucy O'Brien, describing an interview with Simone in 1992, focuses instead on Simone's own unrealised dreams: 'Her life story is packed with "should have beens". She should have become America's first black classical pianist, but the only realistic route open for a poor unknown black girl in the 1950s was supper-club swing or a strong dose of the blues. She should have been happily married with 2.2 kids and a white picket fence. Instead the rigours of the road left her with two failed marriages and a string of abandoned lovers.'¹⁸⁰

In an obituary in *The Wire*, Ian Penman recalls the incident from Simone's childhood, when, following an attempt by a white family to move Simone's parents from the front row of her first public piano recital and the child's demand that they stay there, the audience laughed at her assertive ways. Penman's Simone is a singer haunted by traumatic memories. 'It becomes easier to understand her "tantrums" or the difficulty she often found with performing if you remember that every stage was perhaps haunted by the spectres of that first recital.' Penman goes on:

To these ears, the use of the word 'diva' to pigeonhole her later in her career was just one more attempt – no matter how well intentioned – to pretend her skin wasn't there, made no difference, fell away somehow the moment she took to a stage. To pretend there was no pain, no politics; to jeer and laugh one more time at... funny Nina, wonky Nina, obstreperous Nina, Nina with the outsize dreams...¹⁸¹

Indeed, the word 'diva' does a lot of contradictory work. Although Simone had been quick to apply the term to herself from at least the late 1960s – part of her self-alignment with Maria Callas and no doubt also a pointed reminder to all of her abilities as a classical artist – the application of the word to her by others could be read in different ways. As Michel Poizat points out, the word has important connections to power: 'What is new in the appellation "diva" is that now it is the female singer and she alone who is accorded divine status, as though it were her power to transform herself into pure voice, inasmuch as she is *one* incarnation of *many* successive roles, that allowed her to be divine.'¹⁸² These 'successive roles' articulated by a single performer could connect with my earlier discussion of Simone as a 'vocal actor', while the focus on the 'divine' may remind us of the appellation 'High Priestess' applied to the singer. Yet, more in line with Penman's reading of the word, Poizat goes on to say:

The term 'diva' admits of another, incidental connotation in its application to the great female vocal artists, a connotation of what I have referred to as 'the mad law,' the caprice. Behind the title 'diva' there is often the somewhat pejorative idea of capricious behavior, bizarre demands, in short, the abuse of a position of absolute mastery.¹⁸³

Here, divine power and the cruelty it brings are brought together in the one word.

The 'capricious behavior' and 'bizarre demands' associated with Simone tend to fall into two categories: those resulting from her disappointment with inattentive ('disrespectful') audiences and those resulting from her treatment at the hands of the music industry. Ironically, when Simone is recalled, she is most often remembered for her hit 'My Baby Just Cares For Me', a song she not only thought was slight but which caused her considerable disappointment due to its having been part of her first

disastrous record deal with Bethlehem Records in the 1950s, when she signed away for a less than adequate sum the rights to the material she recorded. In her later concerts, Simone invariably included 'My Baby...' in her set, often as an encore and often with an introduction such as that found on her *Live at Ronnie Scott's* recording: 'I think this is what you've been waiting for'. As Ian Penman notes, quoting a couplet from 'My Baby...', even as she sought to escape into song, this one song did not allow for escape:

Singing, she remembers the dreams, reclaims some dignity. Sober, the daylight offends her eyes and remembrance has the sound of opening bomb hatches and what for latecomers are delights ('Even Lana Turner's smile/is something he can't see!') remain for her mnemonic daggers, reminders of rip-off and irrevocable loss, her own self-destructive airiness and ardour and spite.¹⁸⁴

In a sense, then, Simone *does* attempt a theft of the stolen voice. It is not just the theft of *a* or *the* female voice she seeks to articulate, but also the very real theft of *her specific voice* by what she sees as unscrupulous businessmen. Lucy O'Brien describes waiting for her interview with Simone while the singer harangued her publicist for not making sure copies of Simone's autobiography were in the shops, ignoring the fact that the book had not yet been published. In another often cited example, Simone appeared on an American television chat show to promote *A Single Woman* and demanded to be paid then and there; following this incident, her current record label Elektra decided to drop her. In these examples, and numerous others, we witness Simone's fear of the theft of her voice articulated as 'diva'-like behaviour. But is this really a 'stealing', or might it be better thought of as a 'purloining', after Poe's famous tale of 'The Purloined Letter' and Lacan's and Derrida's famous readings of it? There, a letter bearing a secret is stolen from a queen (at least, a 'royal personage') and placed by the 'purloiner' in a spot that is rendered invisible by its very visibility (i.e. it is in such an obvious place, the police do not think to look for it there). The story's plot, if not its connotations, resolves with the safe return of the letter to the queen by the detective Dupin. It might be intriguing to ask to what extent we can think of Nina Simone as a 'queen' (her preferred appellation, after all¹⁸⁵) whose voice is purloined and left in the open. Our task might then become Dupin's: to return the

purloined voice to its 'rightful' place. Foregoing that task for the present, I wish to look at a few of those who did 'notice' Simone's voice, placed as it was in full view (and within easy earshot), all along.¹⁸⁶

Remembering Simone

While Simone's work had been neglected to a certain extent up until her death, she was never completely forgotten. As I did in the previous chapter for Pablo Neruda, Víctor Jara and Violeta Parra, I will briefly list here some of the ways Simone has been remembered within popular culture.

- The singer has been mentioned in numerous popular songs and in films. At the time of her 'revolutionary' height, The Last Poets included her in their song 'Black Wish' (on the 1970 album *The Last Poets*), claiming 'I am the wish that makes Nina Simone wish she knew how it would feel to be free', a reference to Simone's 1969 rendition of 'I Wish I Knew How It Would Feel To Be Free' (from *Silk & Soul*). The Fugee's 'Ready Or Not' from their second album *The Score* (1996) contained the lines 'While you imitatin' Al Capone/I be Nina Simone and defecatin' on your microphone', which, according to Mark Anthony Neal, represented 'an effort to distinguish [vocalist/rapper Lauryn Hill's] womanist musings from the gangsterization of mainstream hip-hop'.¹⁸⁷ Meanwhile, Joe Strummer and the Mescaleros gave a shout out to the singer on the track of *Global A Go-Go* album (2001): 'Nina Simone over Sierra Leone'.
- Simone was a frequently audible presence in the 1993 film *Point of No Return* (also known as *The Assassin*), where the protagonist, played by Bridget Fonda, is a 'reformed' drug addict turned government killer who is obsessed by Simone's music and takes the codename 'Nina'. At one point in the film Simone's voice is fitted to a gaze 'Nina' casts at the sea outside her apartment shortly after she has been released from the training facility where she had been held; as we partake of her sense of freedom, the opening lines of 'Feeling Good' anchor the emotion: 'Birds flyin' high, you know how I feel/Sun in the sky, you know how I feel'. At another point it becomes clear that Simone's voice is associated with the heroine's mother. After her boyfriend asks why she always plays Simone's music when she is upset, she says that it was the music she grew up listening to: 'It sounded so

passionate, so savage, all about love and loss'. Simone is remembered posthumously in the closing section of Richard Linklater's *Before Sunset* (2004), a film preoccupied with loss (unrealised ambition, enslavement to the past, memories). As the two protagonists mourn Simone's passing, a recording of her singing 'Just In Time' serves to summarise the topics of the film and sets up the viewer's reflections on what has transpired as it moves from the final scene into the credits.

- Simone's own songs and her interpretations of other songs led to a number of cover versions, or versions based on her interpretations, from quite early in her career. As mentioned earlier, the Animals were influenced by her versions of 'House of the Rising Sun' and 'Don't Let Me Be Misunderstood', recording the former in 1964 and the latter in 1965, while former Animal Alan Price recorded 'I Put A Spell On You', a song Simone had given a distinctive reading. Simone's most covered song was one co-written by her and her bandleader Weldon Irvine. 'Young Gifted and Black' was a tribute to Simone's friend (and one of the main reasons for her involvement in the civil rights movement), the playwright Lorraine Hansberry. The song was famously recorded by Aretha Franklin, whose reading, in Peter Guralnick's words, was 'a joyous celebration of negritude';¹⁸⁸ other notable versions were made popular by Donny Hathaway, Dionne Warwick and Bob & Marcia, the latter providing the template for numerous reggae versions throughout the 1970s. More recent, posthumous 'covers' have included: Jeff Buckley's reading of 'Lilac Wine' (on *Grace*, 1996), which he based on Simone's 1965 version and his 'Be Your Husband', an adaptation of Simone's 'Be My Husband'; rock band Muse's version of 'Feeling Good' on their *Origin of Symmetry* album (2001), the song also becoming a feature of their live concerts; Americana band The Walkabouts' EP *Slow Days With Nina* (2005), featuring a handful of songs associated with Simone; and flamenco singer Estrella Morente's inclusion of 'Ne Me Quitte Pas' as a homage to Simone on her 'womanist' album *Mujeres* (2006). 2006 also saw the release of *Nina Simone Remixed & Reimagined*, which highlighted a trend towards raiding the singer's back catalogue for mixable material (Some of the Simone mixes were featured on the *Verve Remixed* album, while at least one twelve inch single of Simone remixes was circulating amongst DJs in 2006 and 2007. Tracks favoured for the remix treatment were 'Feeling Good', 'See Line Woman' and 'Sinnerman').

- Simone has also been a notable influence on other musicians, even when there have not been explicit references. As mentioned earlier in this chapter, one example is Roberta Flack, whose repertoire overlapped with, and whose ambition was comparable to, Simone's. Flack performed a mixture of jazz, soul, folk, dramatic and piano-led reflective material that often, especially in tracks such as 'Our Ages Or Our Hearts' (from *First Take*), with its repeated lines and interjections, expressed a similar vocal delivery to Simone. Flack, along with other singers of her generation who were either already in, or would move towards, soul music in the 1970s, represented a continuing voice of conscience that took on the burden that Simone's voice had carried. In his posthumous tribute to Simone, Mark Anthony Neal somewhat revises the centrality he had placed on Marvin Gaye's *What's Going On* in his earlier work¹⁸⁹ and shifts the focus of influence to Simone:

Literally all of the mainstream protest music recorded by Black artists in the late 1960s and early 1970s, like Sly and the Family Stone's 'Thank You (Falletinme Be Mice Elf Agin)', The Temptations' 'Ball of Confusion', Freda Payne's 'Bring the Boys Home', Roberta Flack's 'Compared to What?,' Marvin Gaye's *What's Going On*, and Stevie Wonder's *Innervisions*, were indebted to 'Mississippi Goddam'.¹⁹⁰

Neal pays tribute not only to Simone's art but to her importance as a historical reference point for a number of later musicians. As others have also pointed out, Simone was an influence on a number of 'new' or 'neo' soul figures of more recent years such as Erykah Badu, Mary J. Blige and Lauryn Hill (whose Fugees, as well as name-checking Simone, had a massive hit in 1996 with their version of Roberta Flack's 'Killing Me Softly With His Song').

Talib Kweli

I would like to focus in slightly more detail on the memory work done in hip hop in order to connect it to some of the themes I have been discussing and to the main subject of this chapter, Nina Simone. I do not mean to focus on Simone's views on hip hop but to highlight the way that the music has attempted to supplement its often-analysed concerns with the present (either as celebration of community or critique of

society) with a branch of ‘nostalgic’ or ‘elegiac’ hip hop that has kept an eye focused on the past. The past has been an important aspect of the music almost from its inception, be it in the archaeological work involved in sourcing samples and celebrating the black cultural past or in the quickly-formed notion of an ‘old skool’ that new ‘pretenders’ were to be referred back to for lessons in authenticity. As with so many of its other concerns, hip hop has its own language for this process, locating its screen memories in a place known as ‘back in the day’ and providing, in the figure of the ‘homie’ or ‘homeboy’ a simultaneous embodiment of community and manifestation of *nostos*. These terms have become almost ubiquitous as the genre and its offshoots move ever further from their mythical roots in New York (or Kingston, or Africa: hip hop’s search for origins is as blurred as any other genre mentioned in this thesis). Superstar rappers such as Jay-Z have built whole albums out of reminiscences of their formation in the ‘hoods of their childhood (*In My Lifetime, Vol. 1* (1997), for example, which includes the tracks ‘The City Is Mine’, ‘Streets Is Watching’ and ‘Where I’m From’) while gangsta rappers such as Ice Cube and Dr. Dre have taken time out from railing against the system to drop moving tributes to lost friends and family members (Cube’s ‘Dead Homiez’ from the *Kill At Will* EP (1990), Dre’s ‘The Message’ from *2001* (1999)). Missy Elliott has focussed at least one of her albums (*Under Construction*, 2003) on a celebration of ‘back in the day’ hip hop, delivered over ‘old skool’ 1980s beats. Here, I will focus on the work of rapper Talib Kweli, whose album *Reflection Eternal* (2000) was a critically-lauded piece of memory work.

In one of the most explicitly ‘reminiscent’ tracks on the album, entitled ‘Memories Live’, Kweli looks to the identity-forming moments of his past:

Like the faces that are woven in the fabric of my consciousness
From cities where making 21’s a big accomplishment
Like when my people understood they prominence
And my past like visions of the continent
Like the first time I saw KRS live rocking it
Or heard Resurrection by Common Sense¹⁹¹

Kweli’s lyrics manage to interweave personal and collective memory, mixing reminiscence with social observation and as-yet-unfulfilled desire. He evokes the house parties of his youth, awareness of black political slogans of the recent past, prominent black artists such as KRS One and Spike Lee, his entry into the rap world

and his desire to visit Africa. Africa is evoked, here and elsewhere in his work, as an eternal essence: root, route and ultimate destination. Kweli seeks to find his place in a tradition that looks both to the history of African expression and its survival in, and adaptation to, the New World:

I dive deep into my mind, see I got a treasury that
Float through my head like a sweet melody
What you tellin' me? Reflection is a collection of memories
Definitely this is what Hip Hop is meant to be
Eventually I knew I'd run into hi technology
It was only a matter of time like centuries

These last two lines carry at least a double meaning. Hi Tek is the name of Kweli's musical partner and this section immediately precedes Kweli's reminiscence about his early days with the DJ/producer. At the same time the meeting of mind with machine and the realisation of what the two can produce together suggests a parallel with LeRoi Jones's discussion of the meeting of African and American cultures.¹⁹²

In 'Memories Live', the lyrics are too voluminous to dwell on the subtleties of timbre variation and the vocal rhythm ploughs horizontally on with the inevitable rhythmic motion of a train (of thought), the modulations of the surrounding landscape being provided by the sampled vocals and instrumental loops set in motion by Hi Tek. There is, however, one important section of the track where Kweli the rapper allows himself a break from the breakneck delivery to repeat one line three times:

Like when my parents first split up, yo I was illin'
Seem like some years they was together for the sake of the children
And I love them for that, I don't know if they saw that
So I'm a say it and convey it when the world play it
I'm a say it and convey it when the world play it (x2)

The desire to take time out in song to show appreciation to family is another way in which memory and experience are reflected upon. This is something that is generally extended in rap CD liner notes and in the 'shout-outs' often found in the introductory tracks to albums, where the extended family, or posse, is also recognised.

In rap music it is extremely rare to find cover versions of previous rap tracks and yet the core process of constructing the backing to new tracks developed from a different type of (re)covering via the practice of sampling. As old recordings were cut

up, scratched, sampled and reused to form new musical pieces, so dialogues were set up between artists and eras. Though samples were traditionally taken from old soul and rock performances it has also become common to 'quote' from other rap records, as when Jay-Z samples lines from Nas and Outkast on his track 'Rap Game/Crack Game'. Tricia Rose suggests that sampling 'affirms black musical history and locates these "past" sounds in the "present"'. She believes such an affirmation needs to be made because of the short shelf life black musical products have historically experienced relative to predominantly white genres such as rock. It could be argued that this has more to do with the total predominance of rock music over all genres and the implicit suggestion by Rose, by differentiating black music, of a prioritisation of 'non-black' genres is somewhat inaccurate.¹⁹³ Yet Rose does have a valid point about the need (even duty) to research the less-heard musics of the past and that rap artists have a most effective way of going about this:

For the most part, sampling, not unlike versioning practices in Caribbean musics, is about paying homage, an invocation of another's voice to help you to say what you want to say. It is also a means of archival research, a process of musical and cultural archeology.¹⁹⁴

The dialogue this allows between different eras becomes part of the very fabric of rap's sonic matrix, allowing for new meanings to be developed in new contexts. The sampled voice becomes an instrument interwoven with the rapper's vocal and adds texture to what is often already a multi-vocal performance. Rap music tends to work in verse form with the verse either separated by a chorus or punctuated with a repeated refrain. Talib Kweli and Hi-Tek use the 'bringing back sweet memories' line from Ann Peebles's 'I Can't Stand the Rain' to set up an appropriate refrain between the reminiscences of 'Memories Live'. A technique such as this should draw attention to the artifice at work in the multi-layered rap song but in fact it allows a continuation of the illusion that the rapper is addressing the listener as he/she talks over and around the 'alien' chorus.

While I have attempted here to sketch out some of the ways that rap music and hip hop culture engage in memory work, the relevance of Talib Kweli's place in a chapter about Nina Simone may not be entirely clear. In fact, a number of factors encourage a thinking of the two artists together, from their similar preoccupation with

the conflation of personal and collective memory to their respective places in the black public sphere. More specific, however, are two fascinating links between the artists: firstly, the figure of Weldon Irvine and secondly, Kweli's 'cover version' of one of Simone's signature songs.

Weldon Irvine was one of the main musical collaborators of Nina Simone's career, working as an organist and arranger on a number of her performances and albums. Simone approached Irvine to write the lyrics to 'Young, Gifted and Black', a song which became well known not only through her version but through versions by Aretha Franklin and Bob & Marcia. In addition to his work with Simone, Irvine developed a solo career as a bandleader in the 1970s, releasing a number of acclaimed albums and paving the way for what would come to be known as 'acid jazz'. He also composed a number of musicals and continued to write songs for other performers, amassing some 500 compositions. In the 1990s he turned his attention to hip hop and became involved with Mos Def and Talib Kweli. Irvine provided keyboard and string arrangements for Mos Def's *Black On Both Sides* (1999) and played keyboards on Kweli's 'Africa Dream' (on *Reflection Eternal*). Kweli, Mos Def and Q-Tip appeared on Irvine's *The Amadou Project: The Price of Freedom* (2000).

The second specific connection between Kweli and Simone is his inclusion of her song 'Four Women' on *Reflection Eternal*. Simone included a version of the song on her album *Wild is the Wind* (1965), where the song was deemed significant enough to be featured as the main title of the record (the font for the song being larger than that for the album title).¹⁹⁵ Simone described the song as follows:

The women in the song are black, but their skin tones range from light to dark and their ideas of beauty and their own importance are deeply influenced by that. All the song did was to tell what entered the minds of most black women in America when they thought about themselves: their complexions, their hair [...] and what other women thought of them. Black women didn't know what the hell they wanted because they were defined by things they didn't control, and until they had the confidence to define themselves they'd be stuck in the same mess forever – that was the point the song made.¹⁹⁶

The song is, to a certain extent, a projection or fantasy of life in the South, a life that Simone had long been removed from when she came to write and sing these words.

Her adoption of New York as home for the five or six years prior to the song's composition had made her effectively an exile from the South, much as she would later be an exile from the USA. As such the 'four women' are parts she plays as a vocal actor, becoming, in Poizat's terms, the pure-voice diva who is 'one incarnation of many successive roles'. Yet, in performance, Simone would tend to add personal reminiscences to the verses to forge a connection between the characters she is 'playing' as the vocal actor of 'Four Women' and her own experience; as such the song became a sort of 'screen memory', in the Freudian sense.

Kweli entitles his version of the song 'For Women' and it is included as an extra track on *Reflection Eternal*. Kweli seems to be working from a later live recording, probably that contained on a number of compilations such as *The Tomato Collection*.¹⁹⁷ What is notable here is that Kweli has chosen, deliberately or not, to re-enact a version that Simone used to connect herself to her material. The story Simone tells about her mother during her introduction to the song also becomes Kweli's introduction. He stresses, as Simone does in the later recording, that the first, and presumably oldest, woman mentioned in the song, Aunt Sara, is still alive. Simone's point is to highlight the fact that the song is not (only) a chronological account of black women's consciousness from Emancipation to the militant 1960s but rather an account of coexisting modes of black female consciousness and complex notions of identity. In the same way that Simone, as diva, voices all these women, so, she seems to suggest, are her black female listeners all these women. Here, as we saw in Chapter One, listening as witnessing conflates with listening as burden: all her auditors must bear witness to these roles and carry their burdens.

Kweli uses Aunt Sara's longevity to suggest, as elsewhere on *Reflection Eternal*, the importance of paying attention to experience: as he says in his spoken preamble, 'we can't forget our elders'. Kweli may be referring to Simone at this point, but his point is taken up again in the verse relating his meeting with Aunt Sara: 'Just her presence was a blessing and her essence was a lesson [...] Livin' a century, the strength of her memories'. Where Simone had mentioned in her spoken interlude that 'Aunt Sara has lived long enough to see the full circle come round', Kweli extends the point to make the cyclical processes of identification (self and other) explicit: 'She lived from nigger to colored to negro to black/To Afro then African-American and right back to nigger'. Where Aunt Sara had been a continuing identity for Simone (quite possibly based on her own mother and, by extension, to those aspects of her

mother she found in herself¹⁹⁸), for Kweli, highlighting as he does the necessity to learn from previous generations, Sara represents a history lesson. This is certainly how Michael Eric Dyson reads Kweli's version:

The entire song is a study in the narrative reconstruction of the fragmented elements of black survival and a cautionary tale against the racial amnesia that destroys the fabric of black collective memory. By appealing to Simone's rhetorical precedent, Kweli situates the song's heuristic logic inside the matrix of racial identity and cultural continuity. By baptizing Simone's sentiments in a hip-hop rhetorical form, Kweli raises new questions about the relation between history and contemporary social practice and fuses the generational ambitions of two gifted artists – himself and Simone – while depicting the distinct political imperatives that drive his art.¹⁹⁹

Dyson, like Mark Anthony Neal, is keen to locate a sense of history in black music that removes it from accusations of 'presentism' and its accompanying association with commercialism and locates it rather in the ongoing formation of a 'black public sphere'. Other commentators, such as Ellis Cashmore, wish to do away with what Cashmore sees as the myth 'of an unbroken continuum that stretches back from rap music through soul, gospel and negro spirituals to the African-derived slave traditions'. Such a narrative does no justice to black culture's 'intricacies or indeed hiatuses'.²⁰⁰ While needing to bear this in mind alongside Robin Kelley's not entirely dissimilar points discussed earlier, I still want to recognise in Talib Kweli's work the effective use of such a narrative in order to pursue cultural memory work.

One way to approach this might be to follow the suggestions made by Paul Gilroy, who identifies the two strands of black aesthetics that we have already noted in our discussion of Kelley and Van Deburg. Gilroy describes opposing positions 'represented in contemporary discussions of black music [...which] contribute to staging a conversation between those who see music as the primary means to explore critically and reproduce politically the necessary ethnic essence of blackness and those who would dispute the existence of any such unifying, organic phenomenon.' He terms the former position 'exceptionalist' (nationalist) and the latter 'pluralistic'.²⁰¹ Following LeRoi Jones, Gilroy highlights the nature of 'the music as a *changing* rather than an unchanging same'. He goes on to add, 'Today, this involves

the difficult task of striving to comprehend the reproduction of cultural traditions not in the unproblematic transmission of a fixed essence through time but in the breaks and interruptions which suggest that the invocation of tradition may itself be a distinct, though covert, response to the destabilising flux of the post-contemporary world.²⁰² Suspicious as we may be of terms such as ‘post-contemporary’, the acceptance of Gilroy’s ‘breaks and interruptions’ and Cashmore’s ‘hiatuses’ may help us to see how the ‘invocation of tradition’ is articulated in music.

bell hooks addresses the issue of dislocation in her essay ‘Postmodern Blackness’ via recourse to the concept of ‘yearning’:

Yearning is the word that best describes a common psychological state shared by many of us, cutting across boundaries of race, class, gender, and sexual practice. Specifically, in relation to the post-modernist deconstruction of ‘master’ narratives, the yearning that wells in the hearts and minds of those whom such narratives have silenced is the longing for critical voice.²⁰³

As an example of ‘those whom such narratives have silenced’, hooks discusses the case of hip hop and the seeming conflict between the coming-to-voice of the black (generally male) subject and the postmodernist critique of the centred subject.

Elsewhere in the collection of essays to which she has given the title *Yearning*, hooks expresses, ‘with no shame’, a surprising nostalgia for a childhood of segregated schools and communities.²⁰⁴ This nostalgia – really a yearning for non-fragmented community – is reminiscent of that found in post-1989 Eastern European culture.²⁰⁵ Indeed many of the problems hooks highlights as symptomatic of racism – loss of community, dislocation – are problems encountered by many people as symptoms not of racism but of late modernity itself. Yet I would not wish, having stressed the active(ist) – rather than accurate – nature of memory work, to lay hook’s ‘blindness’ to an extended critique. Rather, what is of interest here is hook’s enactment of what Svetlana Boym would see as a ‘critical nostalgia’ – evidenced by hooks’s re-employment of ‘humanizing survival strategies of the past’.²⁰⁶ Indeed, hooks highlights the active nature of memory herself: ‘Memory need not be a passive reflection, a nostalgic longing for things to be as they once were; it can function as a way of knowing and learning from the past [...] It can serve as a catalyst for self-recovery.’²⁰⁷ And, in keeping with the religious tone of such languages of faith, she

concludes, 'We need to sing again the old songs, those spirituals that renewed the spirits and made the journey sweet, hear again the old testimony urging us to keep the faith, to go forward in love'.²⁰⁸

Conclusion

In this chapter I have tried to articulate the ways Nina Simone responded to various personal and cultural traumas, fashioning an art that dwelled on such seemingly contradictory topics as revolution and disappointment, utopia and dystopia, freedom's victory and the yearning for home. That she was able to do so was testimony to an authorial and active(ist) voice that became the centre of any material it attached itself to. In this, I follow Richard Middleton in seeing in Simone a 'vocal command' and 'mastery'; like Lucy O'Brien I believe Simone was 'a commanding musician'; and I would want to highlight the implications in such phrases of leadership and of an 'army' of musicians who followed in the singer's wake.²⁰⁹ I would also broadly echo Dave Marsh when he writes that 'The shadow that [Simone] casts across her blues [...] represents not so much what it is to live without freedom as what it is to live with the fear of losing the sense of self that allows freedom to exist', wanting only perhaps to supplement Marsh's 'shadow' with the notion of a 'vocal gaze' cast by Simone over her music and audience.²¹⁰ Yet I would also want to stress that Simone's authority cast a spell of mourning and melancholy that often spoke of anything but freedom. I do not wish to think of her well-publicised 'difficulty' as the 'down side' of an otherwise inspiring 'freedom singer' but rather as a reflection of a constitutive part of the freedom she sought, occasionally found and often lost.

What is our role as listeners in all of this? How could we extend the listening analyst of psychoanalysis to the listening analyst of music? Of the former, Cathy Caruth writes, 'To listen to the crisis of trauma [...] is not to listen for the event, but to hear in the testimony the survivor's departure from it; the challenge of the therapeutic listener, in other words, is *how to listen to departure*.'²¹¹ What would such a departure, in the case of Nina Simone (or any musician), be *from*? From the Law, the dominant fiction, revolution, tonality? Addressing any of these might make us, as Caruth suggests, 'therapeutic listeners', and it is arguably as such that we embark on the memory work (listening, reading, watching, studying, writing) of doing justice to a complex figure such as Simone, of 'rescuing' her (and ourselves) from her demons

and guiding her towards some kind of illumination. At the same time, there remains a certain amount of ambiguity regarding the benefits of departure and, by extension, absence. It is one thing to talk about the departure from trauma into a posttraumatic state that is 'disorderless' and to highlight the role of the listener in this process. In this light we might read Nina Simone's life and art as a more or less successful attempt to articulate (and be a recipient of) this process. But it is another thing entirely to seek to look for victory, or sing victory songs, merely in order to reassure ourselves, to place our selves and our objects of study within the cure of some agency that has 'come through', 'got over' or sung the song of freedom. While there are strategically important reasons to claim such victories, there are equally important reasons to attend to battles that have not (yet) been won. As we saw in Chapter Two, bearing up is not necessarily the appropriate act to engage in when history is bearing down on a culture in ways that the culture does not see as beneficial. Bearing witness may – and often does – not have anything to do with bearing up; indeed, it is often a necessary refusal to do so.

To follow a happenstantial linguistic slippage, let us allow *bearing* to become *baring* and bearing witness to function as a baring of one's soul. Nina Simone is an exemplary case of such a situation. Hers was not a departure from symptom to cure but a journey through the dark night of (the) soul that illuminated, in its wake, the tragic betrayal of the progressive dream. If one *were* to chronologise this journey – and here I will go against Ashley Kahn's otherwise salient points about the coterminousness of Simone's oeuvre by tentatively doing so – it could be laid out as follows: firstly, an attempt to speak the Symbolic from the position of symbolic exclusion (roughly, late 1950s to late 1960s); secondly, a move into a performance of psychosis that railed against a radical loss (c. 1970 to late 1970s); finally, a kind of 'settled instability' that veered, with some level of consistency, between mourning, melancholy and occasional victory (late 1970s to 2003).

If Simone, like Bob Dylan, reached a point where she no longer saw 'the chimes of freedom flashing', this does not detract from the fact that she represented, and continues to represent, for many, an example of just such a victorious sonic event. As witnesses to this event we need, as has already been hinted, to prevent Simone's 'departure' from becoming a symptomatic absence in the history of popular music and the wider culture. There are a number of possible reasons why Simone has been largely excluded from that history. One of these is the often-cited difficulty in

categorising her music; she should not, in a typical example, feature in books on blues or jazz because, well, she wasn't a blues or jazz singer (Middleton's point above notwithstanding – sadly few have followed *this* definition of blues or jazz). A similar line of 'reasoning' applies to works on soul and folk music. As for works on black music and/or music and gender, she does feature in a few: but then again, we might say, too few to mention. And, while many of those who do know her music associate her with the civil rights movement, the more rarefied area of civil rights scholarship often ignores her, as Ruth Feldstein notes:

In a stirring introduction to the multi-disk collection *Voices of the Civil Rights Movement: Black American Freedom Songs, 1960–1966*, the scholar, musician, and activist Bernice Johnson Reagon wrote that the 'struggle for freedom' revealed 'culture to be not luxury, not leisure, not entertainment, but the lifeblood of a community.' It was, she added, 'the first time that I know the power of song to be an instrument for the articulation of our community concerns.' Given those assessments, the absence of Simone from this forty-three-song compilation in which a major goal was to document a 'series of musical images, seen both distantly and at close range, of a people in conversation about their determination to be free' is telling. One result of this absence is that the politics of sex and gender have been segregated from the politics of race—far more so, in fact, than they were at the time.²¹²

It may well be that, for scholar-activists such as Reagon, Simone is too far removed from the 'grass roots' by her star status (and possibly, though this is rarely mentioned in this context, by her diva-like behaviour). It may also be the case, as I have tentatively suggested, that Simone's 'voice of freedom' gave way to a 'voice of defeat'; if indeed she was a 'symptom of history', she was a symptom that did not find a cure.

The departure that Nina Simone took from her 'homeland' in 1970 found its parallel in a departure from the hegemonic Anglophone popular music discourse.²¹³ For Anglo-American pop and rock culture in the 1970s, Simone was out of sight and out of mind while Aretha Franklin, Marvin Gaye, Curtis Mayfield and other voices of black conscience and consciousness were present and correct. If, as Cathy Caruth suggests, 'the inherent departure, within trauma, from the moment of its first

occurrence, is also a means of passing out of the isolation imposed by the event', and if 'the history of a trauma, in its inherent belatedness, can only take place through the listening of another', then perhaps Simone condemned herself to a continuation of trauma by isolating herself from her listeners.²¹⁴ Her departures and absences also tell us something about the way we came to define popular music in the latter part of the twentieth century and the emphasis we place, in our writing of its history, on stories of victory and defeat. We learn something of the role of listeners as witnesses to songs and their associations, to lives and their careers and to the importance of all of these to our own lives. And in coming to this realisation, we realise that we may also need to be listened to ourselves, that we may need others to interrupt our voices and gazes with enquiries that may point us toward some truth. 'In a catastrophic age [...] trauma itself may provide the very link between cultures: not as a simple understanding of the pasts of others but rather, within the traumas of contemporary history, as our ability to listen through the departures we have all taken from ourselves.'²¹⁵ In the final chapter I wish to reflect briefly on a few moments in recent history where popular music has tested its ability to do precisely this, to listen to the departures it has taken from itself and suggest cures. These cures will take us back to somewhere near where we started.

Notes

¹ Paul Ricoeur, *Memory, History, Forgetting*, tr. Kathleen Blamey & David Pellauer (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 2004), p. 76.

² Ian Penman, 'Always Searching For A Key', *The Wire*, No. 232 (June, 2003), p. 28.

³ Langston Hughes, 'Harlem', *Selected Poems* (London: Serpent's Tail, 1999), p. 268.

⁴ Nina Simone, 'Four Women', *Four Women: The Nina Simone Philips Recordings* (4CD, Verve 065021-2, 2003). Originally on *Wild Is The Wind* (LP, Philips PHS 600-207, 1965).

⁵ Quoted in Nina Simone with Stephen Cleary, *I Put a Spell On You: The Autobiography of Nina Simone* (New York: Da Capo Press, 2003 [1992]), p. 16.

⁶ Simone & Cleary, *Spell*, p. 89.

⁷ Simone & Cleary, *Spell*, p. 19.

⁸ Simone & Cleary, *Spell*, p. 16.

⁹ Alain Badiou, *Ethics: An Essay on the Understanding of Evil*, tr. Peter Hallward (London and New York: Verso, 2001 [1993]), pp. 41-2.

¹⁰ Simone & Cleary, *Spell*, p. 90.

¹¹ Ruth Feldstein, "'I Don't Trust You Anymore': Nina Simone, Culture, and Black Activism in the 1960s", *The Journal of American History*, Vol. 91 No. 4 (2005), online version, <http://www.historycooperative.org/journals/jah/91.4/feldstein.html>, par. 1, (accessed 7 September 2006).

¹² Simone & Cleary, *Spell*, p. 26.

¹³ Simone & Cleary, *Spell*, p. 26.

¹⁴ Ron Eyerman, *Cultural Trauma: Slavery and the Formation of African American Identity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), p. 1.

¹⁵ Eyerman, *Cultural Trauma*, p. 2.

- ¹⁶ Quoted in Eyerman, *Cultural Trauma*, p. 2. Originally in Orlando Patterson, *Rituals of Blood* (Washington, DC: Civitas, 1998), p. 40.
- ¹⁷ Simone & Cleary, pp. 26-7.
- ¹⁸ Cathy Caruth, 'Introduction' to Cathy Caruth (ed.), *Trauma: Explorations in Memory* (Baltimore and London: The John Hopkins University Press, 1995), p. 4.
- ¹⁹ Caruth, 'Introduction', p. 5.
- ²⁰ Caruth, 'Introduction', p. 5.
- ²¹ Caruth, 'Introduction', pp. 7, 8.
- ²² Eyerman, *Cultural Trauma*, p. 3.
- ²³ Caruth, 'Introduction', p. 5.
- ²⁴ Kaja Silverman, *Male Subjectivity at the Margins* (New York and London: Routledge, 1992), p. 55.
- ²⁵ Simone & Cleary, *Spell*, p. 51.
- ²⁶ *La Légende*, dir. Frank Lords (France/UK, 1991).
- ²⁷ Slavoj Žižek & Glyn Daly *Conversations with Žižek* (Cambridge: Polity, 2004), pp. 54-59.
- ²⁸ Michael Lambek, 'The Past Imperfect: Remembering As Moral Practice', in Paul Antze & Michael Lambek (eds.), *Tense Past: Cultural Essays in Trauma and Memory* (New York and London: Routledge, 1996), p. 239.
- ²⁹ Lambek, 'Past Imperfect', p. 239.
- ³⁰ Ron Eyerman & Andrew Jamison, *Social Movements: A Cognitive Approach* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1991), p. 3.
- ³¹ Eyerman & Jamison, *Social Movements*, p. 165.
- ³² Eyerman & Jamison, *Social Movements*, p. 165.
- ³³ Eyerman, *Cultural Trauma*, pp. 3-4.
- ³⁴ Ron Eyerman & Andrew Jamison, *Music and Social Movements: Mobilizing Traditions in the Twentieth Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), p. 164.
- ³⁵ Eyerman, *Cultural Trauma*, p. 15.
- ³⁶ Jacques Le Goff, *History and Memory*, tr. Stephen Rendall & Elizabeth Claman (New York and Oxford: Columbia University Press, 1992), p. 3.
- ³⁷ Le Goff, *History*, p. 4, emphases in the original.
- ³⁸ Seán Burke, *The Death and Return of the Author: Criticism and Subjectivity in Barthes, Foucault and Derrida*, 2nd edn. (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1998), p. 39. The biographemes Burke lists in this passage are a few of those mentioned in *Sade Fourier Loyola*, the work in which Barthes introduces the biographeme as a concept.
- ³⁹ See Greil Marcus, *Like a Rolling Stone: Bob Dylan at the Crossroads* (London: Faber and Faber, 2005). As for Robert Johnson, the issues of transience and eternity connected to a pact with Satan are beyond the scope of this study – though see the comments on heavy metal in Chapter One; presumably Johnson, rather than Barthes's 'Author-God', was taken over by an 'Author-Devil'? For a discussion of Tommy Johnson's earlier 'crossroads event' as depicted in The Cohn Brothers' *O Brother, Where Art Thou?*, see Chapter 2 of Richard Middleton, *Voicing the Popular: On the Subjects of Popular Music* (New York and London: Routledge, 2006).
- ⁴⁰ Simone & Cleary, *Spell*, pp. 66-8.
- ⁴¹ David. A Wild, liner notes to John Coltrane, *The Complete 1961 Village Vanguard Recordings* (4CD, Impulse! IMPD4-232, 1997), p. 16.
- ⁴² For more on the history of the Village Vanguard, see Max Gordon, *Live at the Village Vanguard* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1980). Also see Bob Dylan's account of his early career in Greenwich Village in his *Chronicles Volume One* (London: Pocket Books, 2005 [2004]).
- ⁴³ David Nathan, liner notes to Nina Simone, *At the Village Gate* (CD, Colpix/EMI 724347321825, 2005).
- ⁴⁴ Nathan, *Village Gate*. As well as recording 'House of the Rising Sun' The Animals had a hit with 'Don't Let Me Be Misunderstood' in 1965 and recorded 'I Put a Spell on You' the following year. Both tracks were strongly associated with Simone and can be said to have been 're-authored' by her in significant ways. On another note, it seems likely, given the atmosphere of the Village described by Simone, that Bob Dylan was as inspired by Simone to perform and record 'House of the Rising Sun' as he was by hearing Josh White's recording.
- ⁴⁵ In her autobiography, she would write, 'Sometimes I think the whole of my life has been a search to find the one place I truly belong' (Simone & Cleary, *Spell*, p. 113).
- ⁴⁶ Robin D. G. Kelley, *Yo' Mama's Disfunktional! Fighting the Culture Wars in Urban America* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1997), pp. 9-10.
- ⁴⁷ Kelley, *Mama*, p. 12.

⁴⁸ Kelley, *Mama*, pp. 25-26.

⁴⁹ William L. Van Deburg, *New Day in Babylon: The Black Power Movement and American Culture, 1965-1975* (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 1992), pp. 206-7.

⁵⁰ Van Deburg, *New Day*, p. 207.

⁵¹ Peter Guralnick, *Sweet Soul Music: Rhythm and Blues and the Southern Dream of Freedom* (London: Virgin, 1986), p. 349, my emphasis.

⁵² Rob Bowman, 'The Determining Role of Performance in the Articulation of Meaning: The Case of "Try a Little Tenderness"', in Allan F. Moore (ed.), *Analyzing Popular Music* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 103-130, p. 115. Bowman doesn't attend here to the gender or race implications but he does use the term 'mastery'.

⁵³ Bowman, 'Determining', p. 116.

⁵⁴ Brian Ward, *Just My Soul Responding: Rhythm and Blues, Black Consciousness, and Race Relations* (London: UCL Press, 1998).

⁵⁵ Van Deburg, *New Day*, p. 205.

⁵⁶ Ben Sidran, *Black Talk: How the Music of Black America Created a Radical Alternative to the Values of Western Literary Tradition* (Edinburgh: Payback Press, 1995 [1971]), p. 90.

⁵⁷ Kelley, *Mama*, p. 34. But what might a Freudian or Lacanian say about the 'simplicity' of 'getting a laugh'?

⁵⁸ Kelley, *Mama*, pp. 38-9.

⁵⁹ Richard Lischer, *The Preacher King: Martin Luther King, Jr. and the Word that Moved America* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995), p. 104. It is worth noting the connection here to points made elsewhere in the thesis about the authority of the voice, especially in the political rally, where the crowd has often made its mind up before a word is spoken.

⁶⁰ Simone & Cleary, *Spell*, p. 92.

⁶¹ Russell A. Berman, 'Sounds Familiar? Nina Simone's Performances of Brecht/Weill Songs', in Nora M. Alter & Lutz Koepnick (eds.), *Sound Matters: Essays on the Acoustics of Modern German Culture* (New York and Oxford: Berghahn Books, 2004), p. 181.

⁶² Berman, 'Sounds', p. 181.

⁶³ Berman, 'Sounds', p. 181.

⁶⁴ Berman, 'Sounds', pp. 181-2.

⁶⁵ Ashley Kahn, liner notes to Simone, *Four Women*.

⁶⁶ Simone & Cleary, *Spell*, p. 136.

⁶⁷ Kahn, *Four Women*.

⁶⁸ Ajay Heble, *Landing on the Wrong Note: Jazz, Dissonance and Critical Practice* (New York and London: Routledge, 2000), p. 93.

⁶⁹ Speaking in 1984, Simone said that she continued to perform 'Mississippi Goddam' because of the lack of memory around Martin Luther King. See the interview included on *Nina Simone Live at Ronnie Scott's* (DVD, Quantum Leap, 2003). Two versions of the song are included as CD3, Tracks 11 & 12, the first from 1964 and the second from 1987.

⁷⁰ Eyerman, *Cultural Trauma*, p. 191.

⁷¹ The performances of 'Sunday in Savannah' and 'Why?' were released on *Nuff Said!* in 1968 (currently available alongside *Nina Simone Sings The Blues* on CD, Camden 74321869672, 2001). This performance of 'Mississippi Goddam' was not released until 1997 when producer Paul Williams sequenced the three songs together as the 'Martin Luther King Suite' on the compilation *Saga Of The Good Life And Hard Times* (1997). The 'Suite' is also available on *Sugar In My Bowl: The Very Best Of Nina Simone 1967-1972* (2CD, RCA 07863676352, 1998).

⁷² Simone & Cleary, *Spell*, p. 118.

⁷³ Simone & Cleary, *Spell*, p. 118.

⁷⁴ Heble, *Landing*, p. 84.

⁷⁵ Heble, *Landing*, p. 84.

⁷⁶ Ariel Dorfman, *Other Septembers, Many Americas: Selected Provocations 1980-2004* (London: Pluto Press, 2004), p. 102. The title of Dorfman's book provides a similar instance of internationalised resistance and memory work. 11 September had been a date etched into the minds of Chileans ever since the particular one in 1973 when General Pinochet's military overthrew the government of Salvador Allende and brought a new era of terror to bear on the Chilean people. Dorfman's title is a plea, in the wake of the events of 11 September 2001, not to forget the existence of the 'other Americas' and their painful histories.

⁷⁷ Dorfman, *Other Septembers*, p. 104.

⁷⁸ Dorfman, *Other Septembers*, p. 104.

- ⁷⁹ Sweet Honey In The Rock, 'Chile Your Waters Run Red Through Soweto', on *Good News* (LP, Flying Fish FF 245, 1981). CD3, Track 13.
- ⁸⁰ On Maria Bethânia, *Canto do Pajé* (CD, Verve 848508-2, 1990). CD3, Track 14.
- ⁸¹ Alain Badiou, *Being and Event*, tr. Oliver Feltham (London and New York: Continuum, 2005 [1988]). p. 294.
- ⁸² Dave Marsh, 'I Know How It Feels to Be Free: Nina Simone 1933-2003', preface to Simone & Cleary, *Spell*, p. vi. Originally published as 'Nina Simone: Freedom Singer', *CounterPunch* (April 23 2003), available online at <http://www.counterpunch.org/marsh04232003.html> (accessed 29 January 2006).
- ⁸³ Slavoj Žižek, "'I Hear You With My Eyes"; or, The Invisible Master', in Renata Salecl & Slavoj Žižek (eds.), *Gaze and Voice as Love Objects* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 1996), p. 100. See also Žižek's 'Superego by Default', in *Metastases of Enjoyment: On Women and Causality* (London and New York: Verso, 2005 [1994]), pp. 54-85, for a similar discussion of the hidden workings of power.
- ⁸⁴ Hart Crane, 'Voyages I', *The Collected Poems of Hart Crane*, ed. Waldo Frank (New York: Liveright Publishing Corporation, 1933, p. 101.
- ⁸⁵ A seduction that was only too familiar to Crane himself. At the age of 39, while on a ship cruising the waters of the Caribbean, the poet threw himself overboard to this death.
- ⁸⁶ Kaja Silverman, *The Acoustic Mirror: The Female Voice in Psychoanalysis and Cinema* (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1988).
- ⁸⁷ David Schwarz, 'Listening Subjects: Semiotics, Psychoanalysis, and the Music of John Adams and Steve Reich', *Perspectives of New Music*, Vol. 31 No. 2. (Summer, 1993), pp. 24-56.
- ⁸⁸ See Mladen Dolar, 'The Object Voice', in Salecl & Žižek, *Gaze and Voice*, pp. 7-31, and Žižek, 'I Hear You With My Eyes'.
- ⁸⁹ Jacqueline Rose, *Sexuality in the Field of Vision* (London and New York: Verso, 2005 [1986]), pp. 146, 147.
- ⁹⁰ Rose, *Sexuality*, p. 154.
- ⁹¹ Silverman, *Acoustic*, p. 123.
- ⁹² Richard Leppert & George Lipsitz, "'Everybody's Lonesome for Somebody": Age, the Body and Experience in the Music of Hank Williams', *Popular Music*, Vol. 9 No. 3. (Oct., 1990), pp. 259-274.
- ⁹³ Leppert & Lipsitz, 'Everybody', p. 269.
- ⁹⁴ I do not want to make a clear distinction here between individual biography and history, for, as is clear from any study of the careers of Hank Williams and Billie Holiday, it is because of historical circumstances that these performers aged so quickly and were able to articulate at an early age experiences which their contemporaries in more privileged social positions could not have dreamed about. The point here is rather to move between the biographical and historical in the manner alluded to earlier in this chapter.
- ⁹⁵ Leppert & Lipsitz, 'Everybody', p. 265.
- ⁹⁶ Stephen Holden, review of *Emergency Ward!*, *Rolling Stone*, No. 121 (11 November, 1972), no pp. given, *Rolling Stone* website, <http://www.high-priestess.com/rollingstone121.html> (accessed 26 February 2007).
- ⁹⁷ Jean Laplanche & J.-B. Pontalis, *The Language of Psycho-Analysis*, tr. Donald Nicholson-Smith (London: The Hogarth Press, 1973), p. 112.
- ⁹⁸ Tim Sendra, review of Mike Johnson, *Gone Out Of Your Mind*, *allmusic* website, <http://www.allmusic.com/cg/amg.dll?p=amg&token=&sql=10:ysuh6j8571q0> (accessed 23 March 2007).
- ⁹⁹ Ben Gerson, 'Aladdin Sane', *Rolling Stone*, No. 139 (19 July 1973), no pp. given, *Rolling Stone* website, <http://www.rollingstone.com/artists/davidbowie/albums/album/283449/review/6067692> (accessed 9 May 2007).
- ¹⁰⁰ Stephen Scobie, *Alias Bob Dylan* (Alberta: Red Deer College Press, 1991), p. 21.
- ¹⁰¹ Penman, 'Always Searching', p. 28. 'Nina' was also one of many roles taken on by the protagonist of the film *Point of No Return* (known in the UK as *Assassin*) – see below.
- ¹⁰² Hilton Als, foreword to David Margolick, *Strange Fruit: Billie Holiday, Café Society, and an Early Cry for Civil Rights* (Edinburgh: Canongate, 2002 [2000]), pp. 12-13. It is worth recalling that Nina Simone also recorded a version of the song on her album *Pastel Blues* (1965).
- ¹⁰³ Silverman, *Acoustic*, p. 202.
- ¹⁰⁴ Silverman, *Acoustic*, pp. 203, 204.
- ¹⁰⁵ Will Friedwald, *Sinatra! The Song Is You: A Singer's Art* (New York: Da Capo Press, 1997).

¹⁰⁶ Stan Cormyn, liner notes to Frank Sinatra, *Strangers in the Night* (CD, Reprise 7599-27034-2, c.1990 [1966]).

¹⁰⁷ *This is Spinal Tap*, dir. Rob Reiner (USA, 1984). Even as it dramatises and satirises the 'loss' of an earlier era of recorded music, the film simultaneously narrates a sense of loss over Tap's heyday. The band of the present is a feuding, disintegrating unit relying on its fame and previous success to prop up a failing enterprise. Although the 'rockumentary' seeks to preserve something of the band there is a sense in which Tap's history is constantly being written under erasure. As Marty DiBergi (Rob Reiner) says in his introduction, recalling his first experience of the band, 'In 1966 I went down to Greenwich Village [!], New York City, to a rock club called the Electric Banana. Don't look for it, it's not there anymore'. What is notable about Cormyn's, Friedwald's and the limo driver's attitudes is that they share, in a strange way, similar sentiments to those of John Strausbaugh (discussed in Chapter Five) – rock is supposed to be a transient thing, pop/jazz can age – a notable reversal of the common distinction between pop as ephemeral and not based in experience and rock as authentic and rooted.

¹⁰⁸ 'The Voice' was no doubt intended to suggest the redundancy of other voices but one could also read a religious significance into it: influenced by the singular nature of *the* Word that was God, we might think of this as the Voice of God. Bob Dylan: 'When Frank sang ["Ebb Tide"] I could hear everything in his voice – death, God and the universe, everything.' Dylan, *Chronicles*, p. 81.

¹⁰⁹ Mladen Dolar, *A Voice and Nothing More* (Cambridge, MA, and London: The MIT Press, 2006), p. 76.

¹¹⁰ David Brackett, *Interpreting Popular Music* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000 [1995]), p. 106.

¹¹¹ Sigmund Freud, 'Beyond the Pleasure Principle', *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud*, Vol. 18, tr. & ed. James Strachey (London: The Hogarth Press, 1955), p. 16. As Kaja Silverman points out, Freud's alternative interpretation, that of the game as an act of revenge against the mother in which the infant claims to have got rid of her voluntarily, is no less a narrative of mastery. See Silverman, *Male Subjectivity*, p. 398, n. 13.

¹¹² Silverman, *Male Subjectivity*, pp. 57-8.

¹¹³ Brackett, *Interpreting*, p. 95.

¹¹⁴ Truth here is crucially connected to a position outside of the symbolic order, which is perceived as a big lie. As Bob Dylan told us in 'Absolutely Sweet Marie', 'To live outside the law you must be honest'. And, as we will see below, in 'My Way' Frank Sinatra defines the authentic man as one who 'says the things he truly feels'.

¹¹⁵ Similarly, for Barbara Ching, there is something Sinatra-ish about the group of country singers who went under the name The Outlaws in the 1970s (Willie Nelson, Waylon Jennings, Tompall Glaser and to some extent Kris Kristofferson): 'While their battles with record companies lacked silver-screen drama, their success did seem to validate the American worship of wild and woolly entrepreneurship. Like Frank Sinatra or William Randolph Hearst, the Outlaws made a lot of noise about doing it their way.' Barbara Ching, *Wrong's What I Do Best: Hard Country Music and Contemporary Culture* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2001), p. 120.

¹¹⁶ Middleton, *Voicing*, p. 118.

¹¹⁷ The dates given here are those of the best-known recordings of each performance. They can be found on the following albums. Collins: 1964, #3; 1966, *In My Life*; 1968, *Wildflowers* and *Who Knows Where The Time Goes*; 1969, 'Turn! Turn! Turn!' (7" single); 1994, *Judy Sings Dylan...Just Like A Woman*. Simone: 1964, *In Concert*; 1969, *To Love Somebody* and *Nina Simone & Piano!*; 1971, *Here Comes The Sun*; 1978, *Baltimore*. Flack: 1969, *First Take*; 1970, *Chapter Two*; 1971, *Quiet Fire*; 1973, *Killing Me Softly*.

¹¹⁸ Making Collins's version, to these ears, a rather dull version of the song. As we saw in the previous chapter, an unchanging fidelity can seem to become a dead fidelity. For a different opinion, see Dai Griffiths, 'Cover Versions and the Sound of Identity in Motion', in David Hesmondhalgh & Keith Negus (eds.), *Popular Music Studies* (London: Arnold, 2002), pp. 51-64.

¹¹⁹ A 1977 album by Cohen was entitled *Death of a Ladies' Man*. The second song on *Songs of Leonard Cohen*, meanwhile, is entitled 'Master Song'. For a fascinating, if dated, account of the young master-poet, see the documentary *Ladies and Gentlemen, Mr Leonard Cohen*, dir. Donald Brittain & Don Owen (DVD, WinStar 720917305028, 1998 [1965]).

¹²⁰ Leonard Cohen, 'Suzanne', *Songs of Leonard Cohen* ((Columbia/Legacy 88697 04742 2, 2007). CD3, Track 15. This kind of relationship is common to popular music and films. Examples of the former include: 'I Wonder If You Know' and 'On My Way To The Show' by the Louvin Brothers; 'Tennessee Waltz' by Pee Wee King and Redd Stewart (made famous by Roy Acuff but also recorded by Leonard Cohen on his late album *Dear Heather* (2004); and 'Lily Rosemary and the Jack of Hearts'

by Bob Dylan. Recent examples of the latter include: Alfonso Cuarón's *Y Tu Mama También* (2001), Bernardo Bertolucci's *The Dreamers* (2003) and Hans Weingartner's *The Edukators* (2004). For a discussion of woman as exchange object in Rainer Werner Fassbinder's *The Marriage of Maria Braun*, see Kaja Silverman, *Male Subjectivity at the Margins*, p. 126. See also Luce Irigaray, *This Sex Which Is Not One*, tr. Catherine Porter with Carolyn Burke (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1985), pp. 170-191.

¹²¹ Judy Collins, 'Suzanne', *In My Life* (LP, Elektra EKS 7320, 1966). CD3, Track 16.

¹²² This originally unreleased version is included on *Sugar In My Bowl: The Very Best of Nina Simone 1967-1972* (2CD, RCA 07863676352, 1998). CD3, Track 17.

¹²³ Nina Simone, 'Suzanne', *To Love Somebody/Here Comes The Sun* (CD, Camden 74321924792, 2002). CD3, Track 18.

¹²⁴ Roberta Flack, 'Suzanne', *Killing Me Softly* (CD, Atlantic 7567-87793-2, 1995). CD3, Track 19.

¹²⁵ Is it necessary to point out the use of the command 'Take him down' in the law court to authorise the removal of the prisoner to the cells?

¹²⁶ On Claude François, *Claude François* (CD, Mercury France 536 158-2, 2000 [LP, 1967]). CD4, Track 1.

¹²⁷ I am using the translation provided on the *Naked Translations* website by Céline Graciet, <http://www.nakedtranslations.com/en/2004/07/000193.php> (accessed 30 April 2007). It is interesting to note how the song has generated webpages such as this one and another at the French site *Lexilogos* (http://www.lexilogos.com/claude_francois_my_way.htm (accessed 30 April 2007)), which provides versions in French, English, Italian, German and Spanish. 'Comme d'habitude' and 'My Way' both have their own Wikipedia pages too.

¹²⁸ On Frank Sinatra, *My Way* (CD, Reprise 7599-27049-2, c. 1990). CD4, Track 2.

¹²⁹ Eartha Kitt, *My Way: A Musical Tribute to Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr.* (CD, Basic 50015, 1996 [1987]). Of course this version could be interpreted as being about Kitt herself, and it would fit her star persona sufficiently to warrant such an interpretation. Such are the ambiguities of the 'I' and the 'my' of popular songs.

¹³⁰ I am grateful to Vanessa Knights for bringing this to my attention.

¹³¹ Friedwald, *Sinatra!*, p. 24.

¹³² Friedwald, *Sinatra!*, p. 446.

¹³³ Friedwald has the following to say about 'If You Go Away', the 'translation' of Jacques Brel's 'Ne me quitte pas' performed by Sinatra on *My Way*: 'a dismal French melody with even drearier lyrics by pop poet Rod McKuen' (p. 437.).

¹³⁴ Friedwald, *Sinatra!*, p. 447.

¹³⁵ For a discussion of Bourdieu's concept of habitus in relation to creativity in popular music, see Jason Toynbee, *Making Popular Music: Musicians, Creativity and Institutions* (London: Arnold, 2000), pp. 36-40.

¹³⁶ Nina Simone, 'Suzanne', *To Love Somebody/Here Comes the Sun*. CD4, Track 3.

¹³⁷ Mike Butler, liner notes to *To Love Somebody/Here Comes the Sun*.

¹³⁸ S. Renee Dechert, "'Oh, What a Life a Mess Can Be": Uncle Tupelo, Bakhtin, and the Dialogue of Alternative Country Music' in *Country Music Annual* ed. by Charles K. Wolfe and James Akenson (University of Kentucky Press, 2001), p. 73.

¹³⁹ In this, and in other aspects which there is not space here to discuss, she follows Roberta Flack's version of the song (available on *Chapter Two* [1970]). Simone's is arguably the more radical restructuring of the song.

¹⁴⁰ There is no doubt some interesting cultural theoretical work to be done here with the notion of 'infection'. Certainly, a reading that proposes the way's Sinatra's theme song comes to be infected by a black female performer – which pays attention, in other words, to the racial and gendered implications of 'infection' – would be very worthwhile. Sid Vicious, of course, brings his own special brand of infection (and inflection) to the song later in the decade.

¹⁴¹ These lyrics are from the version by Fairport Convention, available on *Unhalfbricking* (CD, Island IMCD 61, 1989). This is closer to the version sung by Nina Simone than is the earlier version available on *Sandy Denny and the Strawbs* (LP, Hallmark SHM 813, 1974). The Fairport version is included as CD4, Track 4.

¹⁴² I spell the word this way to differentiate it from the 'vocal mask' used in speech and singing theory; the emphasis here is on the masquerade of the vocal actor.

¹⁴³ It is interesting to compare Denny's song with 'Meet On The Ledge', a song written by her bandmate Richard Thompson and recorded by Fairport Convention the same year. Thompson was nineteen when he wrote this reflection on lost friends. 'Meet on the Ledge' seems far less ambiguous a

song about loss than does 'Who Knows...', being genuinely a song of looking back. Connecting to the point I make here about future anteriority, Ashley Hutchings describes Thompson's song as 'the boy genius displaying his powers with an assurance well beyond his years. "Meet On The Ledge" has no right to come from such a green pen, and those soaring solos have no right to come from such young fingers.' Ashley Hutchings, liner notes to Fairport Convention, *What We Did On Our Holidays*, remastered edn. (CD, Island IMCD 294, 2003). Staying in the folk idiom, we might also want to compare both these songs to 'Bob Dylan's Dream', wherein the eponymous singer converts a ballad about a sailor lost at sea, 'Lord Franklin', to one about the lost friends of youth. The 22-year-old Dylan, on a fast track to artistic success and popular music revolution, is here found wishing himself back home in lines such as 'I wish I wish I wish in vain/That we could sit simply in that room again/Ten thousand dollars at the drop of a hat/I'd give it all gladly if our lives could be like that'. On *The Freewheelin' Bob Dylan* (LP, CBS 62193, 1963). Interestingly, according to the album's sleeve notes (by Nat Hentoff), the song arose out of a conversation the even younger Dylan had with Oscar Brown, Jr. Brown, of course, was the young black hope of the Village mentioned earlier, and the composer of a number of songs performed by Nina Simone such as 'Brown Baby' and 'Work Song'.

¹⁴⁴ Denny's original version with the Strawbs offered a more ambiguous 'purple sky'.

¹⁴⁵ Nina Simone, 'Who Knows Where The Time Goes', *Emergency Ward/It Is Finished/Black Gold* (2CD, Camden 74321924802, 2002). CD4, Track 5.

¹⁴⁶ On Judy Collins, *Who Knows Where The Time Goes* (LP, Elektra EKS70433, 1968). CD4, Track 6.

¹⁴⁷ See, amongst her numerous publications, Judy Collins, *Sanity and Grace: A Journey of Suicide, Survival, and Strength* (New York: Tarcher/Penguin, 2003).

¹⁴⁸ Nina Simone, 'My Father/Dialog', on *Sugar In My Bowl*. CD4, Track 7.

¹⁴⁹ Nina Simone, 'My Father', *Baltimore* (Epic/Legacy 5127912, 2001). CD4, Track 8.

¹⁵⁰ Walter Benjamin, 'On Some Motifs in Baudelaire', *Illuminations*, ed. Hannah Arendt, tr. Harry Zorn (London: Pimlico, 1999), p. 184.

¹⁵¹ Benjamin, 'Motifs', p. 185.

¹⁵² Eric L. Santner, *Stranded Objects: Mourning, Memory, and Film in Postwar Germany* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1990), p. 121.

¹⁵³ Simone & Cleary, *Spell*, p. 125.

¹⁵⁴ Santner, *Stranded*, p. 122. In this context it is worth repeating Simone's view of this search: 'Sometimes I think the whole of my life has been a search to find the one place I truly belong.' Simone & Cleary, p. 113.

¹⁵⁵ Nina Simone, *Fodder On My Wings* (CD, Cy Records/Sunnyside SSC 1144, 2005 [1982]). I have provided a table containing O'Sullivan's original lyrics and Simone's revision as Appendix One at the end of the thesis. The lyrics are also quoted in full in Simone & Cleary, pp. 126-8.

¹⁵⁶ Rod McKuen wrote *A Man Alone*, Jake Holmes and Bob Gaudio *Watertown*.

¹⁵⁷ Bob Gaudio was a member of the Four Seasons and wrote a number of that group's biggest hits.

¹⁵⁸ Friedwald, *Sinatra!*, p. 438.

¹⁵⁹ Friedwald, *Sinatra!*, p. 441.

¹⁶⁰ Here, then, I won't avoid doing so. Firstly, it is hard to see how *The Wall* (1979) could be relevant to a discussion about an album released ten years before it, while *Tommy* is so exactly contemporaneous (May 1969) that it could in no way be a precursor, as Friedwald's use of the past tense suggests. Secondly, the assumption that 'every' country song is about someone leaving is as ludicrous as Friedwald's earlier claim that 'most' French songs are monotonous. Finally, if he had ever listened to Jimmy Webb's 'By The Time I Get To Phoenix', he would realise that it is a narrative told from the point of view of one who is leaving (or at least planning to leave) rather than one who has been left behind. As Badiou himself points out, 'Even for those who wander on the borders of eventual sites, staking their lives upon the occurrence and the swiftness of intervention, it is, after all, appropriate to be knowledgeable.' Badiou, *Being and Event*, p. 294.

¹⁶¹ Frank Sinatra, 'For A While', *Watertown* (CD, Reprise 9362-45689-2, c.1990); Nina Simone, 'For A While', *Nina's Back* (CD, Magnum Music MM 059, 2000). CD4, Tracks 9 & 10.

¹⁶² Quoted in the liner notes to *Watertown*.

¹⁶³ During a 1984 performance at Ronnie Scott's in London, Simone dedicated the song to 'my lover who is gone from me, from Liberia, West Africa' and added a coda borrowed from her song 'If You Knew' addressed to 'CC' (see Simone, *Ronnie Scott's DVD*). As her autobiography reveals, both these references are to C.C. Dennis, her 'Liberian Rhet Butler': see Simone & Cleary, *Spell*, pp. 143-150. Dennis abandoned his plans to marry her and left her for another woman. This does not necessarily solve the dilemma as to who the 'you' of 'For A While' might be; as Simone writes, 'my reaction to losing C.C. was similar to the way I felt after Daddy died' (p. 149). The 1984 dedication is no doubt a

reference to Dennis's death shortly after the 1980 coup in Liberia as much as it is to his leaving her; like her father, he had left her twice, once in life and once in death. In memory, as Freud pointed out, such events are likely to be conflated into a 'single' moment. The 'screen memory' Simone articulates with 'For A While' no doubt conflates many such episodes, as indeed it does for us as listeners projecting the song onto our own acoustic screens.

¹⁶⁴ Quoted in Sylvia Hampton with David Nathan, *Nina Simone: Break Down & Let It All Out* (London: Sanctuary, 2004), p. 169.

¹⁶⁵ Frank Sinatra, 'The Single Man', *A Man Alone: The Words & Music of McKuen* (Reprise 7599-27050-2, c.1990); Nina Simone, 'A Single Woman', *A Single Woman* (CD, Elektra 7559-61503-2, 1993). CD4, Tracks 11 & 12.

¹⁶⁶ Ntozake Shange, liner notes to *A Single Woman*.

¹⁶⁷ See 'Masochistic Ecstasy and the Ruination of Masculinity in Fassbinder's Cinema' in Silverman, *Male Subjectivity*, pp. 214-296.

¹⁶⁸ Michel Poizat, *The Angel's Cry: Beyond the Pleasure Principle in Opera*, tr. Arthur Denner (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1992), p. 5.

¹⁶⁹ Suzanne R. Stewart, *Sublime Surrender: Male Masochism at the Fin-de-Siècle* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1998), p. 97.

¹⁷⁰ Stewart, *Sublime*, p. 97. In passing, it is worth enquiring into the extent in which this can be said of popular song genres such as those we are dealing with in this chapter. While it may be true of some soul singing – especially the more gospel-rooted styles – the music of Nina Simone and Frank Sinatra is not notable for this; in both cases, word and meaning play a central role and both singers maintain vocal styles that ensure this remains so. However, this does not mean that Stewart's (and Poizat's) theorisation is of no use to us. Indeed, it may be worth questioning Stewart's use of Poizat's theories. She does move rather too easily from these points about the role of the voice in opera to an interpretation of *Parsifal* that seems to be based more on a reading of its *story* (à la Žižek) than on its use of voices. No concrete examples are given of vocal practice in the opera. And, while opera for these writers may stage a privileging of the move from word to 'cry', such a move is never absent in popular song – it is not, after all, speech, no matter how 'speech-like' it may be at times. Voices break, sigh, scream, and sob in popular songs and perform numerous other vocalic but non-word-meaning acts. In fact we need to distinguish what is meant by 'meaning' in Stewart's use of the term. Clearly linguistic (verbal) meaning, for she has little to say about *musical* meaning. It is not clear that the Real can be approached only through such 'ecstatic' modes as the cry or scream. Is Nina Simone's rendering of Jacques Brel's 'The Desperate Ones' (on 1969's *Nina Simone and Piano!*) not an example of what we might term the *whisper* of the Real?

¹⁷¹ Stewart, *Sublime*, pp. 97-98.

¹⁷² Stewart, *Sublime*, p. 204, fn. 29.

¹⁷³ Stewart, *Sublime*, p. 205, fn. 51.

¹⁷⁴ Silverman, *Male Subjectivity*, p. 55.

¹⁷⁵ Leppert & Lipsitz, 'Everybody', p. 322.

¹⁷⁶ Middleton, *Voicing*, p. 118.

¹⁷⁷ Sean Cubitt, "'Maybellene': Meaning and the Musical Subject", *Popular Music*, Vol. 4, Performers and Audiences (1984), pp. 207-224.

¹⁷⁸ Hampton, *Break Down*, p. 9.

¹⁷⁹ Philip H. Ennis, *The Seventh Stream: The Emergence of Rocknroll in American Popular Music* (Hanover and London: Wesleyan University Press, 1992), p. 348.

¹⁸⁰ Lucy O'Brien, *She Bop II: The Definitive History of Women in Rock, Pop and Soul* (London and New York: Continuum, 2002), p. 59.

¹⁸¹ Penman, 'Always Searching', p. 26.

¹⁸² Poizat, *Angel's Cry*, p. 180.

¹⁸³ Poizat, *Angel's Cry*, p. 180.

¹⁸⁴ Penman, 'Always Searching', p. 28.

¹⁸⁵ At the close of *La Légende*, Simone is heard saying, 'Who am I? I'm a reincarnation of an Egyptian queen'. The singer made numerous similar references during concerts and was often pictured in 'regal' postures. The cover of *Fodder On My Wings* is an excellent example of this: Nina Simone as Cleopatra. See also her account of her appearance at New York's Town Hall and Penman's description of the numerous 'Ninas', both quoted earlier.

¹⁸⁶ 'In full view' because it is tempting to take the analogy with 'The Purloined Letter' further. In Poe's tale, the Minister 'hides' the incriminating document in the most obvious place, a card rack hanging from the mantelpiece. What more obvious place to 'hide' Simone's (and others') purloined voice than

in the overcrowded CD rack of a high street store? Those in the UK, such as Virgin and HMV, contain surprisingly large 'Nina Simone' sections: surprising because the amount of music on offer seems to be in inverse proportion to the amount of Simone's music actually known or heard in or outside these stores. For the full tale (of the letter, that is), see Edgar Allan Poe, *The Fall of the House of Usher and Other Writings*, ed. David Galloway (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1986), pp. 330-349. For Lacan's and Derrida's readings, see *The Purloined Poe: Lacan, Derrida & Psychoanalytic Reading*, ed. John P. Muller & William J. Richardson (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, c1988).

¹⁸⁷ Mark Anthony Neal, 'Nina Simone: She Cast a Spell – and Made a Choice', *SeeingBlack.com*, http://www.seeingblack.com/2003/x060403/nina_simone.shtml (accessed 21 May 2007).

¹⁸⁸ Guralnick, *Sweet Soul*, p. 349.

¹⁸⁹ Mark Anthony Neal, *What the Music Said: Black Popular Music and Black Public Culture* (New York and London: Routledge, 1999), pp. 61-66.

¹⁹⁰ Neal, 'Nina Simone'.

¹⁹¹ Talib Kweli & Hi-Tek, 'Memories Live', from the album *Reflection Eternal: Train of Thought* (Rawkus/EMI 072435 26143 25, 2000). CD4, Track 13.

¹⁹² LeRoi Jones, *Blues People: The Negro Experience in White America and the Music That Developed From It* (Edinburgh: Payback Press, 1995), p. 27.

¹⁹³ Tricia Rose, *Black Noise: Rap Music and Black Culture in Contemporary America* (Hanover: Wesleyan University Press, 1994), p. 89.

¹⁹⁴ Rose, *Black Noise*, p. 79.

¹⁹⁵ Nina Simone, 'Four Women', *Four Women*. CD4, Track 14.

¹⁹⁶ Simone & Cleary, *Spell*, p. 117.

¹⁹⁷ Nina Simone, 'Four Women', *The Tomato Collection* (2CD, Tomato TOM-3005, 2002); Talib Kweli & Hi-Tek, 'For Women', *Reflection Eternal*. CD4, Tracks 15 & 16. A table containing the lyrics to this version of 'Four Women' and to 'For Women' can be found in Appendix Two at the end of the thesis.

¹⁹⁸ It would be interesting to conduct a reading of the song based on matriarchy and Julia Kristeva's notions of refusal, the Oedipal mother and the *enceinte*, and to link this with Kaja Silverman's discussion of these concepts in relation to Robert Altman's 1977 film *Three Women* (Silverman, *Acoustic Mirror*, pp. 126-9). Unfortunately, there is not space to do so here.

¹⁹⁹ Michael Eric Dyson, *Open Mike: Reflections on Philosophy, Race, Sex, Culture and Religion* (New York: Basic Civitas Books, 2003), p. 300. But what are we to make of the fact that 'For Women' is not mentioned on the tracklisting of *Reflection Eternal*? Is this woman as lack? Or, being a bonus track that appears after the seeming conclusion to the album, is this woman as surplus, as something left over? There is a concern, here and elsewhere, that the hegemony of male hip hop stars represents a stealing back of the voice. And there is certainly a lot to be said for male mastery here, though perhaps also for male inadequacy, not the first thing we think of when confronted with hip hop but there nonetheless. bell hooks's work on hip hop and black masculinity is instructive here: see, for example, *We Real Cool: Black Men and Masculinity* (New York: Routledge, 2004). Dyson finds much to praise, however, in both the track's supplementarity and its gender politics. Of the former he writes, 'it's part of a "hidden track," which means it's not even numbered as a title on the compact disc's menu, and that only the truly curious, the truly desirous, will initially find their way to the song' (or the truly lazy – all it takes is not getting up to turn the CD off when the 'final' song finishes); of the latter, he claims that 'Kweli thrusts a rhetorical saber into the heart of hip-hop's patriarchal obsessions and narrates the black future in a female voice and vision, without which the race will not survive'. Dyson, pp. 299-300. And it should be pointed out that Kweli's shout outs to Simone on his tracks 'The Blast' (on *Reflection Eternal*) and 'Music' (on *Best Of*) and his sampling of 'Sinnerman' on 'Get By' (from *Quality*) suggest that his evocation of Simone is meant to be taken seriously.

²⁰⁰ Ellis Cashmore, *The Black Culture Industry* (London and New York: Routledge, 1997), p. 2.

²⁰¹ Paul Gilroy, *The Black Atlantic: Modernity and Double Consciousness* (London and New York: Verso, 1993), p. 100.

²⁰² Gilroy, *Black Atlantic*, p. 101.

²⁰³ bell hooks, 'Postmodern Blackness', in *Yearning: Race, Gender, and Cultural Politics* (Boston, MA: South End Press, 1990), p. 27.

²⁰⁴ bell hooks, 'The Chitlin Circuit: On Black Community', in *Yearning*, p. 34.

²⁰⁵ I am thinking here of films such as Wolfgang Becker's *Goodbye Lenin!* (2003) and Weingartner's aforementioned *The Edukators*.

²⁰⁶ hooks, 'Chitlin', p. 39. For a discussion of 'critical nostalgia' see Chapters One and Two of this thesis.

²⁰⁷ hooks, 'Chitlin', p. 40.

²⁰⁸ hooks, 'Chitlin', p. 40.

²⁰⁹ Middleton, *Voicing*, p. 121; O'Brien, *She-Bop*, p. 57.

²¹⁰ Marsh, 'I Know', pp. v-vi.

²¹¹ Caruth, 'Introduction', p. 10.

²¹² Feldstein, 'I Don't Trust You', par. 62. Mark Anthony Neal also highlights Simone's conflation of identity markers: 'Well before theorists discussed the realities of Black postmodern identities, Simone presented a portrait of Black femininity that spoke to various intersections of race, color, caste, sexuality and gender.' Neal, 'Nina Simone'.

²¹³ I should note here the regularity with which, during the course of my research for this chapter, I would open up a seemingly comprehensive popular music book at its index, only to find myself moving directly from 'Simon, Paul' to 'Sinatra, Frank', these two male 'masters' flanking an absence that, if it could be read, would spell 'Simone, Nina'. Given the discussion earlier in this chapter, it is intriguing to speculate on the relevance of Simone's potential proximity to Sinatra in the indexes of popular music history. For now, he marks the space of her absence.

²¹⁴ Caruth, 'Introduction', pp. 10-11.

²¹⁵ Caruth, 'Introduction', p. 11.

Chapter Five

Fidelity's end?

Surely each generation has some responsibility to trash what went before it – I thought that was the rule.

– Simple Kid¹

Is a dream a lie if it don't come true?

– Bruce Springsteen, 'The River'²

Nostalgia is the death of rock. We were supposed to die before we got old.

– John Strausbaugh, *Rock Rock 'Til You Drop*³

The boundaries which divide Life from Death, are at best shadowy and vague. Who shall say where the one ends and the other begins?

– Edgar Allan Poe, 'The Premature Burial'⁴

We did our job and that's the story and now we're gone. And that's it, that suits me fine.

– Mick Jones, *The Clash: Westway to the World*⁵

But who knows the fate of his bones, or how often he is to be buried?

– Sir Thomas Browne, 'Urne-Burial'⁶

Fidelity's end?

I wish to use this closing chapter to return to certain issues raised at the outset and to briefly consider some of the implications of the theoretical approaches and thematic aspects explored throughout the thesis. Rather than offering a 'summing-up', I will present these issues as a continuation of Chapter One by reflecting on the course the research took and by returning to a discussion of the 'rock event' that formed part of my initial discussion. I began the project with the notion of the 'everyday' very much in mind and sought to examine the processes by which individuals and collectives engage in the everyday experiences of witnessing, remembering and losing. Yet, even as I attended to the everyday, I became aware of another way of imagining the processes of loss I was interested in. As it became clear that all the musical case studies I wished to explore were connected to revolutionary moments (both musical and political) – in other words, to moments that seemed to exceed the everyday – I sought a vocabulary that would enable me to speak of 'events'. This led me initially to Jacques Derrida's discussion of the evental in *Specters of Marx* and then to Alain Badiou's *Being and Event*, which seemed to offer the kind of vocabulary I was seeking as I researched and wrote Chapter Three in particular. In contrast, Chapter Two, which was researched and written before I had engaged with Badiou at any great length, is devoid of the language of 'event'. I imagine that it would be possible to rewrite the chapter from a Badiouian perspective (I briefly considered doing so) but I find it more interesting to reflect the process of my research than attempt to fit it all to a consistent template (and, as the previous and current chapters emphasise, Badiou has by no means provided a solution to all my problems). By Chapter Four, the Badiouian discourse of event was already starting to crack under the strain of the new uses I wished to make of it. The project exists as a working *towards* ways of theorising loss in popular song and the finished product reflects this process. This is why I maintain an emphasis on loss (my starting point and the reason for this particular trajectory) rather than retrospectively renaming it 'Music and Event' or something similar, although this may well be the next stage of the research. If there has been a 'discovery' here (an 'answer' to the initial research question, hence a moving forwards), it is that the project needs to both recognise Badiou and offer a critical engagement with his work.

At the same time I was ‘discovered’ by Badiouian discourse as much as I discovered it. It is as if I came into a writing subjectivity through being interpellated by Badiou’s theory of the event; it enabled me to come to voice at certain times. In this sense, Badiou’s work is itself an event, as Žižek remarks in his foreword to Peter Hallward’s book on Badiou; Žižek suggests that Hallward’s work is the ultimate act of fidelity to the event of Badiou but that this does not mean it has to be slavish.⁷ A proper fidelity, as was suggested in Chapter Three, is a critical fidelity and both Hallward and I find much to disagree with in Badiou. One of the major breaks for me is that this is a thesis about popular music. It would be very hard to imagine Badiou condoning the subject matter or the use I attempt to make of his ideas in describing the subject matter. Badiou often uses music as an example of the event in art but his examples are invariably not ‘popular’: he mentions Haydn, Schoenberg, Cage, Berg and Webern and is generally rude about the popular love song. In this his views are not so far from those of Adorno: Adorno’s standardisation finds a corollary in Badiou’s implication that much of popular music represents a continuation of being without event. In ‘Considerations of the Current State of Cinema’, Badiou writes:

The twentieth century [...] essentially witnessed three types of music. First, there was post-romantic music which maintained the artifices of the finishing tonality, such as found in Mahler or Tchaikovsky’s symphonic melancholy, and which continues, via Strauss and Rachmaninov, right through to the current day, and singularly in cinema. Second, the great creation of American blacks, jazz, which has its major artists from Armstrong to Monk, but to which we must also attach, in mass, everything which falls under the term ‘youth music’, from rock to techno. Finally, there was the continuation through rupture of veritable musical creation, which, from Schoenberg to Brian Ferneyhough, liquidated tonality and constructed a universe of musical singularities, serial and post-serial.⁸

It is not hard to discern which of these three ‘types’ attracts Badiou’s admiration; which qualifies, in other words, as an event (although arguably the notion of ‘types’ suggests a structural rather than an evental history). One way to start challenging the location of ‘veritable musical creation’, then, would be to posit the irruption into the musical situation of the whole of African-American music – from ragtime through

jazz and rock to rap – as an event rather than a ‘type’. But I would want to go still further by allowing rock ‘n’ roll an eventness that its relegation to ‘a type of music derived from jazz’ does not allow.

Before posing some questions specific to popular music that arise from the consequences of making this decision (from ‘intervening’, to use a Badiouian term), it is necessary to raise some other questions about the event (and decision). The first of these is: Who gets to decide what an event is? The short answer would seem to be: those who find themselves brought into being as subjects (subjectivised) by their constitution as subjects via the truth claim, what Badiou refers to as ‘intervention’ and, in his attempt to connect the process to set theory, ‘forcing’. But there are problems with this, not least the fact that Badiou himself seems to insist on emphasising his own examples of events. This is a point made by Terry Eagleton in his critique of Badiou: ‘Commonplace social life [...] is for Badiou, as much as for Sartre, a zone of inauthenticity. Common knowledge is just idle opinion, and there is as sharp a gap for him between doxa and truth as there is for Plato.’ Eagleton goes on to ask: ‘Are there really no contradictions in this quotidian realm? Is there no selflessness, compassion, extraordinary endurance? Or do we need to resort for such virtues to the numinous sphere of our fidelity to non-normative, exceptionalist truth events?’⁹ I have at times found myself in sympathy with this critique, often wondering as I read *Being and Event* how any new creation could rival the seemingly indisputable ‘eventness’ of Badiou’s examples. And it is certainly true that we are surrounded by events that seem far more mundane than those Badiou relates. It might even be possible to think of ‘ubiquitous events’ in a manner that allows us to connect such a concept with what Anahid Kassabian calls ‘ubiquitous music’ and ‘ubiquitous listening’, except for the fact that such ubiquity would only seem to equate with *being*, not *event*, in Badiou’s world.¹⁰ In such a reading it would only be the desire to make a moment ‘momentous’ that would lift anything, including listening experiences, out of the ordinary and into the evental.

I would not, however, want to sacrifice what might be termed the ‘rare evental’ in order to focus on the ‘evental everyday’. Just because people experience (consciously or not) countless ‘mundane’ events each day of their lives does not mean that they do not mark their lives via larger, rarer evental moments. I would prefer to think of the more fluid interaction of the major and minor, the personal and the collective, suggested in the work of Joe Brainard, Georges Perec, Nina Simone and

numerous other artists and thinkers discussed in this thesis. The way that Brainard, for example, is able to move directly from ‘I remember the first time I saw television’ to ‘I remember the day John Kennedy was shot’ is illustrative of this.¹¹ Percec, for his part, says in an interview:

The idea would be that everyone would write a *Je me souviens*, but that no one else could write the 455 ‘je me souviens’ that are in the book [...] It’s like in set theory, I share memories with X that I don’t share with Y, and everyone could choose for themselves a unique configuration from out of the complete set of our memories. It’s the description of a conjunctive tissue of a kind, in which a whole generation might recognize itself.’¹²

Events are represented according to both teleological and historical aspects: they promise utopia in the future and serve as memory of the past. Here we witness a double aspect of ‘event’ that is evident when something that has not yet happened is *forecast* as an event and when something that has happened is *remembered* as event. In the case of the former, which is really based on a promise, there is always the possibility of disappointment; where this happens, we witness the non-event. A rock fan, for example, says: ‘I’d always been told that *x* was great but when I heard it I wasn’t impressed.’ Here a reported historical sound event (a ‘classic album’, say) did not live up to its reputation. Another fan looks forward to the release of a new album, or a live concert, only to find it falling short of expectation (it ‘doesn’t live up to the hype’). Neither the event nor the non-event can be predicted, leading to the phenomenon of marketing failures. Marketing logic proceeds along the formula ‘treat everything as an event and some things may just fulfil their promise of eventness’. The media’s role in shaping eventness is, of course, massive but this eventness is tied as much to expectation (to the *a priori* event) as to selective remembering (the *a posteriori* event). The non-event, in other words, is an eventness that cannot deliver an event. It is a de-vented event (analogous to decaffeinated coffee), a virtual event.

We must not neglect the notion of event in the present either. This may entail the rather vague notion of ‘current events’ or it may be the ability, via 24-hour news media, to be a witness to ‘events unfolding’. This notion of unfolding provides a staple for modern television entertainment, such as in the popularity of reality TV programmes or in the US series *24* where the main selling point of the programme is

that 'events occur in real time'. We might want to ask how this connects with the time experience of listening and what effect cutting and editing has on such events. It would seem that such editing is necessary due to the fact that 24-hour witnessing is impossible, at least if we resort to the definition given in Chapter One, where witnessing was described as a dual process of 'seeing' and 'saying'. We can imagine a 24-hour seeing, perhaps, as we relegate recording to electronic media which do not require sleep, only infinite storage capacity where items can be tagged, logged and held in an archive which never needs to be deleted but which, perversely, may never need to be accessed. Here is where the 'saying' comes in, the active part of witnessing, what the witness does with the knowledge s/he bears (witness to). Because this form of saying can still only reside in the human, 24-hour vigilance is not possible (despite what the makers of *24* might have us believe). Selection and partiality are therefore essential (even Borges's Funes had to sleep, as does *24*'s Jack Bauer, presumably in the twenty-fifth hour). This impossibility is reflected in the 'happy' process of forgetting.¹³ What remains is a series the 'markers' or 'quilting points', which lead us in turn back to events.

A priori and *a posteriori* events are often reported together in the news as 'event markers' of the present, meaning that the present has a vital role to play – as it does in the study of memory and trauma – as the point that marks the event. This is illustrated in the following news story from 2007 concerning the fortieth anniversary of the release of the Beatles' *Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band*:

Oasis, The Killers and Razorlight are to cover songs from The Beatles' Sgt Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band to mark the album's 40th anniversary.

James Morrison, The Fratellis, Travis and the Kaiser Chiefs are among the other acts taking part in the special recording sessions for BBC Radio 2.

The engineer in charge of the original 1967 sessions will use the same equipment to record the new versions.

The results will be aired on Radio 2 on 2 June, a day after the anniversary.

The original album was released on 1 June 1967 and went on to be regarded as one of the best and most influential releases in rock history.

Last year, it came top of a Radio 2 poll to find the best number one album of all time.

‘Unique event’

The modern rock bands will be recorded by audio engineer Geoff Emerick, using the one-inch four-track equipment he captured the original on 40 years ago.

Radio 2 is also celebrating its 40th birthday this year, and the programme will form part of the station's '60s Season.

Radio 2 controller Lesley Douglas said: ‘This will be not only a unique radio event, but a very special musical moment.

‘The range and quality of artists involved ensure that this will be a fitting tribute to one of the great albums of all time.’¹⁴

Here we find an *a priori* event (‘this will be [...] a unique radio event’) about an *a posteriori* event (the original album, which also has a canonised eternality about it due to its position at the top of the poll cited) reported in the present and using names of the present to lead the story (Oasis, The Killers, Razorlight, etc.). And this is to say nothing of the nostalgia present in the original work itself or of the similar event in 1987 where those memorialising the album were at least able to play on the line ‘it was twenty years ago today’ from the title track. It is just such tangles of history, memory and (anxiety over) forgetting that contribute to the continual enlarging of the archive. And it is just such tangles, relying as they do on the role of genealogies in constructing evental histories, that mark another challenge to Badiou’s theory.

I want to briefly explore how some of the problems raised by the clash of Badiou and popular music play out and will do so by asking a simple question: what has become of the event of rock ‘n’ roll? The following examples touch down on different moments in the ‘rock’ story but what I want to stress is not so much the leading of one of these moments to the next (although to a certain extent this is unavoidable) but the importance they have for the present. Like the longer case studies of this thesis, it is what each of these stories means now that matters to us; here, however, the emphasis is on un-eventing, re-eventing, the threat of fidelity’s end and falling out of love. I will begin with a verse from John Trudell’s ‘Baby Boom Ché’ not quoted in Chapter One. Having established the eventness of Elvis in the first part of the track, Trudell admits to the passing of the moment:

Anyway, man, for a while we had a breather of fresh energy

To keep us from falling into the big sleep
Then before long Elvis got assassinated in all the fame
Taking a long time to die
Others seized control while Elvis rode the needle out
Never understanding what he done¹⁵

For many observers and listeners, rock 'n' roll began to lose its eventness as early as the end of the 1950s. This might be thought of as being the moment that Elvis joined the real army, rather than the countercultural army Trudell has him leading, or the slow decline of the late Elvis who 'got assassinated in all the fame'; it could be 'the day the music died' evoked by Don McLean in his response to the loss of Buddy Holly and his fellow artists; or it could be the self-professed 'downbeat' story told by Bruce Tucker of the recuperation of rock 'n' roll by the dominant culture and the fates of four of rock's 'seminal' performers. As Tucker notes, 'in 1957, Little Richard simply retired from rock 'n' roll, confused apparently about religion, secular music, and his sexual orientation', while Chuck Berry and Jerry Lee Lewis suffered 'an exorcism of the cultural implications of [their] work'. Presley was not exorcised 'but trivialized, the central figure in the shifting of the discourse from cultural miscegenation to generational conflict', and, when he was drafted, 'his recuperation by the dominant culture was complete'.¹⁶

Of course, the 1960s were still to come and many others were able, as Trudell says, to 'seize control while Elvis rode the needle out'. It might even be claimed, from a current perspective on popular music, that this was the decade where the templates for contemporary styles were truly fashioned and where the modern pop sound was fixed, though few could deny that such templates were themselves built on earlier models. Yet, by the end of the 1960s, similarly downbeat stories to that related by Tucker were once again to be found. Loss here involved an updating of the recuperation story, famously described in the title of George Melly's *Revolt into Style* (1970), but also the disappointment of a range of failed projects from the hippy counterculture's demise to the fallout of the civil rights movement described in the previous chapter. This was also the moment that the canonisation of rock began, a process arguably connected to the death of rock as unfolding event and its birth as a retroactively posited event. Magazines such as *Creem* and *Rolling Stone* in the USA and *NME* and *Melody Maker* in the UK provided both the history and the reasons for writing the history, assigning the music an ever greater value. Book length studies

emerged to fill in the gaps left by the space restraints of the magazines, from the 'flash' histories of writers such as Nik Cohn to carefully researched accounts of the industry such as Charlie Gillett's *The Sound of the City* (1970) and interpretative cultural histories like Greil Marcus's *Mystery Train* (1975).

The gaze, then, had become a backwards one and with this came a certain amount of despair. In 1970, one of the young guns of the new music journalism, Lester Bangs, felt able to write the following:

Personally I believe that rock 'n' roll may be on the way out, just like adolescence as a relatively transitional period is on the way out. What we will have instead is a small island of new free music surrounded by some good reworkings of past idioms and a vast sargasso sea of absolute garbage.¹⁷

Bangs would be proved correct in his prediction of 'reworkings' as the 1970s ushered in such record industry practices as the search for 'new Dylans', incorporating all manner of male singer-songwriters from John Prine to Loudon Wainwright (who would later satirise the practice in his 'Talking New Bob Dylan') and Bruce Springsteen. While the latter's first two albums certainly seem to fall into the 'new Dylan' style, his third, *Born to Run* (1975), is perhaps the album that truly captures the Janus-faced nature of rock music at this stage, the point where the music's future may well lie in its past. Springsteen, famously touted at the time of *Born to Run* as 'the future of rock 'n' roll', was attempting a fusion of styles that were steeped in the music's history. While writing and recording the album he was aware of a continuation of a tradition rather than an attempt at something new, saying 'lyrically, I was entrenched in classic rock and roll images, and I wanted to find a way to use those images without their feeling anachronistic.'¹⁸ As June Skinner Sawyers writes, Springsteen 'considers himself a traditionalist – a synthesist – more a throwback to rock and roll glory than a harbinger of rock and roll future.'¹⁹ What becomes explicit on *Born to Run* is the arrival of the era of fan-as-artist, evident in 'citational' lines such as that found in the first verse of 'Thunder Road': 'Roy Orbison singing for the lonely/Hey that's me and I want you only'.²⁰

A similar process was evident in the contemporaneous pub rock scene in the UK, which sought a back to basics approach that challenged the increasingly mammoth proportions of rock. Yet it would not be long before this movement itself

would be challenged with the arrival of punk rock, many of whose musicians (and non-musicians) had also been involved in the pub rock scene. Given the context in which it emerged and the responses it drew, it does not seem unreasonable to posit punk as an event in much the same way that I dealt with rock 'n' roll in the first chapter. This is certainly how the movement is presented in the popular music press and, if I do not veer too far from the standard history of punk here, it is partly to emphasise the media's role in establishing this history. Punk, then, can be seen as an attempt to re-event as much as reinvent rock; indeed the felt necessity for such a re-eventing could be said to have required a reinventing of musical style, star persona and fan identification. While one of its anthems might have been 'God Save the Queen', one of its effects was to 'save' the King, notable in the 'primitive' rock 'n' roll styles of many punk bands or the homage to Elvis's first album in the cover design of The Clash's *London Calling*. That punk was all about 'surface' excess (in sound, language, style, etc.) few would deny; yet it was also, to use the Badiouian take on the term, about an attempt to find the excess of the situation.

One of the pub-rockers who was 'hailed' into a new existence was Joe Strummer, who later traced his conversion to a Sex Pistols gig which convinced him to leave his revivalist band the 101'ers and join Mick Jones and Paul Simonon in The Clash. To use Badiouian language, The Clash initially proclaimed a fidelity to punk and the death of rock, thus creating itself as a subject (a punk band) and as subject to truth (the truth of punk's declaration). In Althusserian terms, they were interpellated as punk subjects, having recognised a call to arms. As Pat Gilbert makes clear in his biography of the group, there was substantial indecision concerning whether Strummer should leave the 101'ers at the time but the retrospective positing of the Sex Pistols event was crucial to the politics of the situation. As Strummer himself put it, The Clash felt the need to take an 'almost Stalinist' approach, annihilating anything in their past that might contradict their current aims.²¹ On '1977', the B-side to their first single 'White Riot', the group sang of 'no Elvis, Beatles or the Rolling Stones/In 1977', while their first self-titled album, also released in 1977, contained the famous 'I'm So Bored with the U.S.A.' and, along with its songs about life in London, suggested an alternative musical influence via a cover of Junior Murvin's reggae number 'Police and Thieves'. Like a number of punk bands, The Clash were fascinated by reggae and found in it both an exoticism nurtured by its otherness and a 'local' language born of Jamaican immigrants' accounts of life in the UK (Simonon

had grown up in a predominantly black neighbourhood and was particularly knowledgeable about reggae). The group would continue to cover reggae numbers and to write their own material based on reggae styles (including dub), a practice enriched by their association with DJ and filmmaker Don Letts and their collaboration with reggae artist Mikey Dread.

By the time of their third album *London Calling* (1979) the 'Stalinist' anti-American, anti-rock 'n' roll stance was exposed for the act it had always been as the band covered rockabilly numbers such as 'Brand New Cadillac' and plastered the record cover with American images, from the pastiche of Elvis's first album via the use of black and white photography and green and pink typography to the use of three photographs of the band performing at venues in the USA, prominently labelled on the rear sleeve. The fact that it was a double album seemed to further remove them from the 'get-it-down-quick' ethos of early punk and the album exuded a well-worked-on rock feel. It might be said that the recognition of the call to arms of 1977 had become by this time a misrecognition as the band shifted their allegiance to both the ordinary event of 1955 and to a larger fidelity that was both international *and* local. Place remained crucial but the references were expanding. On a local level, London remained the main point of reference, with the formative influences of the Westway and Trellick Tower providing the group with their main 'psychogeographical' influences, just as they had for J.G. Ballard in his exploration of the contemporary urban uncanny (*Crash* (1973), *Concrete Island* (1974), *High Rise* (1975)). The reissue of *London Calling* includes a psychogeographical account by Tom Vague of 'the roads, buildings, history, myths and ancient vibes which infused and inspired' the album; Vague notes that, with *London Calling* hitting the US charts in 1980, 'finally, The Clash's London had gone global'.²² In a sense, the group had become active witnesses of London, in that they were bearing their metropolitan experience and passing it on to third parties. The title of Don Letts's documentary about the band, *Westway to the World*, captures this process, while indicating, in addition to the group's international fame, their growing awareness of global issues. This would become even clearer on their next album *Sandinista!* (1980), with its references to Latin America in the album title and in 'Washington Bullets' (a song that remembers Víctor Jara among the fallen), its continued use of reggae, its nod to the emergent hip hop scene ('The Magnificent Seven', where The Clash 'rap') and a general sense of internationalist commitment.

Pat Gilbert points out Strummer's awareness of the distance the group had come from its beginning, made explicit in the song 'Death or Glory' from *London Calling*:

'N' every gimmick hungry yob digging gold from rock 'n' roll
Grabs the mike to tell us he'll die before he's sold
But I believe in this – and it's been tested by research
That he who fucks nuns will later join the Church²³

The suggestion, as Gilbert points out, is the difficulty of living up to the promises of any revolutionary moment. To a certain extent The Clash could not avoid 'joining the church' (for some, they had done so the moment they signed to CBS) but they remained faithful to a number of their own vows:

Their initial, hard-line punk creed aroused so much righteous passion in their fans that any deviation from the script was bound to result in angry cries of 'sell out'. But it was the fact they tried so hard, and for so long, to keep true to their original vision, slowly bending it out of shape till it was almost unrecognisable, that makes what follows such an extraordinary story.²⁴

This changing fidelity is one that Joe Strummer would continue into his solo career, especially with his last group The Mescaleros, where he performed a mixture of rock, folk and what by then had become known as 'world music'. In this sense as in others, Strummer is an interesting character in relation to this thesis in that he personifies rock's questioning of itself and its subsequent search for answers in the past and in other cultural sites. The influence of Anglo-American rock on 'other' musics has been a constant throughout the case studies. The Clash highlight another response – from 'within the centre' – to the event of rock and to the wayward trajectories of its fidelities and infidelities.²⁵ They also provide a useful reminder that rock's very conditions of possibility are based on taking from outside the centre (black music primarily, but not exclusively). In a sense, then, Strummer's quest does not uncover some new development in rock so much as the (re)discovery that, prior to and during the Elvis event, the reliance on the other, on the marginal, was crucial.²⁶

It is also worth highlighting the way that The Clash and the punk scene more generally have become part of a campaign by the rock media to emphasise the

eventness of what happened at this point in rock's history. The extent of this fascination was furthered by Joe Strummer's premature death in 2002, which took many rock fans by surprise. In addition to Gilbert's book and Letts's film, recent years have also brought the luxurious repackaging of *London Calling* as a double CD and DVD to mark its twenty-fifth anniversary (2004), lengthy features in the rock monthlies to mark the event, and Julien Temple's film about Strummer, *The Future is Unwritten* (2007), again accompanied by features in the rock media (even the notoriously presentist *NME* put the Clash on their cover in May of that year with a tagline reading 'How they changed all our lives...').²⁷ More generally, *Mojo* ran a feature on 1976 as event ('Inside the '76 Revolution!') for its thirtieth anniversary, while most of the monthlies also featured 1977 as a year to be commemorated on its thirtieth.²⁸

For others, punk was never able to deliver the musical revolution it promised, leaving this job to those who were inspired by punk but keen to try something different. The scene that became known as 'post-punk' has had its history eloquently written by Simon Reynolds in *Rip It Up and Start Again* (2005). For Reynolds, post-punk was the realisation of the revolution punk had promised. Tracing punk's 'degeneration' to 1977, Reynolds identifies a fracture that produced two groups of musicians, 'the populist "real punks" [...] who believed that the music needed to stay accessible and unpretentious, the angry voice of the streets' and 'the vanguard [...] who saw 1977 not as a return to raw rock 'n' roll but the chance to make a break with tradition, and who defined punk as an imperative to constant change'.²⁹ For the latter group, styles based on 1950s rock 'n' roll, 1960s garage punk or mod, which had provided the engine for much of 'popular' punk, became as undesirable as the progressive rock stylings punk had sought to overthrow:

Rather than rama-lama riffing or bluesy chords, the post-punk pantheon of guitar innovators favoured angularity, a clean and brittle spikiness. For the most part they shunned solos, apart from brief bursts of lead integrated with more rhythm-oriented playing. Instead of a 'fat' sound, players [...] preferred 'skinny rhythm guitar', often inspired by reggae or post-James Brown funk [...] Drummers [...] avoided the clichés of heavy rock and developed new rhythm patterns that were starker and often 'inverted' in feel. [...] The bass abandoned its hitherto inconspicuous supportive role and stepped forward as

the lead instrumental voice [...] playing catch-up with the innovations of Sly Stone and James Brown.³⁰

Post-punk did look to the past, then, not only in its adoption of 1970s black music innovations but in its admiration for the more arty end of pre-punk music; ‘not’, Reynolds is keen to stress, ‘prog’s attempt to merge amplified electric guitars with nineteenth-century classical instrumentation and extended compositions, but the minimal-is-maximal lineage that runs from The Velvet Underground to Krautrock and the more intellectual end of glam.’³¹ As becomes increasingly clear from Reynolds’s distinction between the vanguard and the traditional, what is at stake in (this account of) post-punk is a particular attitude that in turn forges a particular style. The hostility found in some parts of the contemporary discourse towards new groups, such as Franz Ferdinand, who have started to use elements of this style stems from a disappointment that yet another revolt has turned into a style.

Another way to think about style is to think about tradition. If, as was suggested of fado in Chapter Two, musical tradition emerges at the point at which musical style is fixed, then the moments of revolt-into-style here can be seen as moments in the creation of a tradition, or set of traditions. It is the recognition of such a process that leads to some of the most hostile criticisms of popular music. If it has become something of a cliché to bemoan the loss of tradition in ‘traditional’ musics – often as a direct result of post-rock ‘n’ roll popular music – it has also become something of a commonplace to deny the latter any kind of longevity that would rely on traditional style. A recent example of this can be found in John Strausbaugh’s *Rock ‘Til You Drop*, an extended attack on what the author calls ‘colostomy rock’. For Strausbaugh, acts such as the Rolling Stones, although they remain immensely popular and attract new generations of fans, are betraying the rock music they helped fashion by treating the music as an exercise in nostalgia rather than as a challenge to the status quo: ‘Colostomy rock is not rebellion, it’s the antithesis of rebellion: it’s nostalgia [...] And nostalgia is the death of rock. We were supposed to die before we got old.’³² Strausbaugh’s focus is on nostalgia as much as on the figure of the ageing star and he also turns his sights on younger bands like Rage Against The Machine, accusing them of mere ‘revolutionary signifying’.³³ The question emerges, however, of whether one can be nostalgic for something one has not experienced (this would be true for both Rage Against The Machine and their audience). If nostalgia is a longing

for home, where is 'home' here? Is this analogous to the condition of 'postmemory' explored by Susana Kaiser and discussed in Chapter Three?³⁴ A critical nostalgia could suggest that the tactics of rock bands, young and old, are attempts at keeping hold of a (potentially lost) cause. But neither a critical nostalgia nor a desire to show fidelity to a (lost) cause need necessarily deny change. Here we find ourselves back in the realm of the Derridean 'living fidelity'. What Strausbaugh seems to fear among his ageing rockers is the existence of a zombified fidelity; would a living (changing) fidelity to rock overcome this? If not, do we have to consider rock music an isolated moment whose time has passed? If a changing fidelity *is* possible, however, in whose hands can it flourish? One answer would seem to lie in those (youthful) hands that Strausbaugh finds no time for, in groups such as Rage Against the Machine, or their contemporary equivalents.³⁵

Younger bands are crucial here in that they highlight the difficulty of establishing an 'original' statement in the contemporary pop scene. The process that Bangs described in 1970 has increasingly become the norm, with reworkings of past idioms passing for the 'new'. In the BBC's series of reports on the Best New Acts of 2007, for example, all the groups featured were described in terms of what aspects of the past they used. More surprising was just how recent the sources were and the extent to which the sources chosen were themselves reworkings of past acts. The feature on The Twang, for example, established the group's rock credentials by noting that 'the band are already getting a reputation for rowdiness' before going on to claim that 'they are also ambitious, fiercely committed and not short of charisma or talent – a combination that brings back memories of Oasis and the Happy Mondays.'³⁶ Meanwhile The Klaxons, who would go on to win the 2007 Mercury Music Prize, were noted for their invention of a style known as 'new rave'. In an interview, singer and bassist Jamie Reynolds was quite honest about their motivations:

Everything's got rehashed over the last five years [...] And for us, it seemed like the early '90s was the only thing that hadn't yet been rehashed. And as soon as we did that – rehashing the only thing there was left – it put a stop to that and we wanted to make a fresh start. Now we're left with the fact that we have to create something completely new and fresh.³⁷

In addition to bands taking this attitude, such comparisons have become normal in the description of new music in the media. In doing so they mix these references with their main project, which is to reinforce the canonisation of rock. One of the most visible ways in which they do this is through the seemingly endless production of lists. List-making has become a ubiquitous practice for the media generally, with a growing amount focussed on historical products of popular culture: the hundred greatest films of all time, the nation's favourite books, the top ten gardening programmes and so on. Often seen as examples of pop culture's increasing tendency to feed on itself, these lists grow ever more ironic and knowingly self-reflexive, with lists of lists already available on the internet. In thinking about lists and their relation to canon, a number of issues emerge, among them the relationship between the temporal and the eternal, qualitative versus quantitative judgements, who creates the lists and how, the roles played in the creation and maintenance of the canon by those involved professionally in the topic and those who are not, compilers' or voters' awareness of current canons and their roles in justifying or challenging them and what is being said not only by the lists but by the desire to compile them.

A lot of the issues highlight the interdependent notions of value and history in popular culture, interdependent because value can most easily be attributed to popular culture through an examination of its history and its history can only be written on the assumption of its value. Part of the agenda of cultural studies has long been to problematise the Matthew Arnold idea of culture ('the best that has been thought and said'), yet Arnold's formula, stressing as it does both value and history, is what popular culture lists are all about. In popular music, this has tended to be reflected in the sacralisation of certain musical texts into esteemed 'works'. This has led to a particular focus on albums, generally those dating from the mid-late 1960s or early 1970s, considered a golden age of rock music and the point where it stopped being temporal and became eternal, when pop claimed a value previously denied it and nominally became 'rock', and when albums became more important than singles in forging the canon. As mentioned earlier, this period also witnessed the turn towards historicising rock in magazines and books and there developed a change from popularity-based lists to lists of historically important 'works'. The emergence of writers' lists (such as that in the *NME* in 1974) seemed to suggest a distinction between those 'qualified' to take an objective position in valorising rock's past and those not. This has proven to be a constant in rock lists – there is still distinction

between critics' and readers' polls. The readers' polls have come to be the place where the temporal overlaps with the eternal and they force us to question the relationship between popularity and worth. Of course, all lists are based on popularity and worth; it is just the case that in 'long view' lists worth is attributed first and popularity gauged second and in 'short view' lists the reverse tends to be the case.

To return to the 'problem' of new bands, then, it is notable that the monthly magazines most prone to list-making, such as *Uncut*, *Mojo* and *Q*, induct new artists into the canon by connecting them stylistically (and sometimes attitudinally) to the established and constantly re-sacralised canonical acts. New music is almost by default described in terms of precursors, thus keeping both in their place. It is this situation which has led a number of pop and rock critics to suggest that the music has run out of future. In a recent feature in *The Guardian* entitled 'Meet the future of pop music', Jon Savage and Paul Morley bemoan the 'retro' nature of so many new acts, with Savage claiming that his test for new music is whether or not it could only have been made in the current year: if not, it is 'boring'.³⁸ It is clear what Savage means and yet his attitude does not allow for the fact that 'retro' music could possibly still only have been produced in the current year too (in other words, it is a symptomatic style). Simon Reynolds seems more aware of this when he writes:

I do think the uncanny persistence of indie-rock, the fact that it has outlasted all the obituaries written for it, is something to reckon with. Explaining it by positing an inherent lameness or laziness to its audience seems... inadequate. Perhaps it's a format that does a certain thing particularly well, and the mystery is not the survival of the format, but the survival of the need for it (society's to blame?).³⁹

In an internet debate between Reynolds and Mark Fisher about one of the biggest of the new British acts, the Arctic Monkeys, Fisher raises the issue of context while reinforcing Savage's aesthetic view. Claiming that, now, 'Pop really is trad.', Fisher states his position thus:

My quarrel [...] was less with the Arctic Monkeys per se [...] than with the critical climate that has elevated them into the stratosphere. If the AM album were re-classified as a guilty pleasure, akin to enjoying a good quality Abba

tribute band or something, I would have few problems with it. But not to challenge the NME rating – fifth best British album EVER – not to be alarmed by the audience’s fervour for it, is catastrophic for two reasons. First, because it colludes in the pretence that Pop is healthy and thriving (‘this is as good as it ever was!’) Second, because it actively contributes to a lowering of expectations (‘it won’t get any better than this’). It is, exactly, a matter of principle, of refusing to give up on desire, because to accept either of these positions is to betray (Pop’s) desire, to lapse in fidelity to those convulsive Events which made Pop matter, made it more than something pleasant to listen to. It is a betrayal worse than an actual renunciation of those events, since it is a forgetting that anything happened in the first place. For Pop no longer to make demands on the world but to accomodate [sic] itself to the world’s ‘it’ll have to do’ *realism* constitutes the very flatlining into undeath of which I wrote [in a previous post].⁴⁰

Reading accounts such as Fisher’s and Reynolds’s, one becomes aware of the extent to which this is essentially a debate about rock or pop music as art. For those who oppose tradition, pop is an avant-garde art that has no time for looking back unless it is a productive looking-back, a reclaiming of lost futurism. As witnessed in Chapter One, Reynolds has championed the latter type of nostalgia in his work on ‘haunted audio’, arguing that the kind of looking-back practised by groups such as those on the Ghost Box label entails a retrieval of a particular British post-war modernism. This is in marked contrast to his attitude to nostalgia in a piece predating ‘Haunted Audio’ by nearly a decade. Writing on his blog in 1998, Reynolds listed, as he does each year, his ‘unfave’ records of the year, those he considers most over-rated or which he finds himself in political opposition. In 1998 his major target was ‘Americana’, the term he uses to describe ‘the middle aged/middle class/middlebrow consensus behind Lucinda Williams, that 32 year old Bob Dylan record [*Live 1966*], Elliot Smith [sic], Billy Bragg and Wilco, Vic Chestnutt, and the rest of the retro roots minstrels’. Reynolds accuses fans of these artists of being scared of the future, of having an active phobia of electronic music and of buying into an ‘isolationist’ Americanism that denies non-US influences on popular music. He continues:

There's lots of reasons for all this nostalgia, nativism and necrophilia: inability to get a grip on electronic music in all its protean and mutational forms (and unwillingness to experience it in its 'real' and most engaging context – the ravefloor); not knowing where to go next after grunge made a mainstreamed mockery of indie-rock idioms; a perhaps understandable squeamishness about what real white American kids are into (Korn style funk-metal, ska, swing); a perhaps forgiveable confusion in the face of hip hop and R'n'B's encrypted resonances and commodity-fetishing [sic] playa ethos. So where else to go for nourishment and 'renewal,' then, but to the past?⁴¹

Reynolds also singles out Greil Marcus's book *Invisible Republic* and suggests that its focus on what Marcus terms 'the old weird America' (as documented by Harry Smith on his *Anthology of American Folk Music*) legitimised this looking-back. Alluding to Raymond Williams's formulation of emergent, dominant and residual elements of culture, Reynolds writes, 'I guess ultimately I'm an "emergent" rather than "residual" kind of guy – more interested in the weirdshit [sic] lodged in crevices of contemporary culture, the stuff that some future Harry Smith will archive. Why pine for the days of sharecroppers and Appalachian murder ballads when you can get your gnostic hermetic eso-terrorist buzz from, say the recordings and mythology of Underground Resistance/Drexcia?'⁴²

It would not be difficult to highlight a paradox between the seemingly absolute refusal of looking back posited here and the justification for Ghost Box's doing so in the 'Haunted Audio' article – to point out, for example, the necessity for Ghost Box to bring the 'residual' into play against the 'dominant' and possibly the 'emergent' – but that is not my intention any more than it is to provide an 'answer' to the debate between vanguardists and traditionalists (not surprisingly, I do not have one). Rather, I wish to draw attention to the ways in which the issues outlined in Chapter One regarding loss, memory and nostalgia have come to be incorporated into both popular music and the discourse surrounding it. My focus on the media, from where I have drawn a number of my quotations, is aimed at highlighting the ways in which both musicians and critics have taken on the roles of intervening in debates related to these topics.

The disparate case studies covered in this thesis have been an attempt at showing part of the extent to which popular music and its accompanying discourses have reflected larger issues related to loss, memory and nostalgia. As I stated in Chapter One, I wished to look outside the Anglophone tradition (if that has not become too loaded a word) out of both a personal interest in non-Anglophone cultural spaces and a more objective, political desire to escape the dominance of (the discourse around) Anglophone popular music. With regard to the latter I am fascinated by the way that this dominance serves both to parochialise popular music by omitting non-Anglophone musics from serious consideration within debates such as those mentioned in this chapter and to universalise it by assuming that what is true for Anglo-America is true everywhere. Again, I have not provided a solution to this problem in that, while I have devoted a large amount of space to non-Anglophone music, I have started and finished my overall account with the ‘mainstream’ (i.e. Anglophone) tradition. Again, I believe this serves to highlight ways in which the musical discourse reflects larger debates. To take one example, we can consider the debates surrounding universalism, relativism and the politics of difference and identity that tend to be juxtaposed or deployed against each other depending upon the stance one is taking on issues ranging from modernism and postmodernism to globalisation, aesthetics and much else besides. The position ascribed to Mark Fisher and the ‘vanguardists’ above is one we could fairly easily connect to an account of universalist modernist aesthetics; it is a position which does not see the necessity of looking outside the perimeters of Anglophone popular music even as it searches the stylistic perimeters of that ‘set’ for the promise of something new. It is as antagonistic to a politics of difference in this sense as the philosophy of Alain Badiou, who not only declares identity politics to be a distraction from political action (claiming that what is needed is a ‘politics of sameness’ that would restore the original promise of democracy) but who also chooses as the primary examples of his aesthetic politics an array of prototypically ‘evental’ modernist artworks. Against such a position we might wish to follow Bruce Tucker in his claim that otherness, as part of a postmodernism opposed to the universality of modernism, is one of the crucial elements in rock ‘n’ roll’s eventness. Tucker states:

Modernism has often included an ideology of modernization coupled with an internationalism that plays out in the political sphere as domination of other

cultures, subcultures, and social classes. It is just such domination that the emergence of otherness and marginality in politics and in art challenges. Placed in this historical context, culturally resistant postmodernism is seen to be more than merely a matter of style or of the latest avant-garde, but, as in the case of early rock 'n' roll, the locus of a full-blown crisis of cultural authority.⁴³

Here we might claim that, even as they draw on the influences of the recuperation of difference established by colonialist practices, those works of modernist art so dear to Badiou express a universalism that would deny that any such recuperation was necessary in the first place. Another point that Tucker makes, as we saw earlier, is that the relegation of rock 'n' roll's identity politics to a politics of generational difference was another universalising modernist move. We could then reverse such a procedure and suggest that the tendency for rock and pop to 'eat itself' could find its escape route in a turn outwards, learning to face the world for which it speaks and against which it defines itself via a universalising of sonic diversity. This would connect the story told in this chapter with that told in earlier chapters. While on the one hand it seems simplistic (and, as postcolonial theory has shown, problematic) to speak of a 'call' from the centre and a 'response' from the periphery, it remains the case that, at the level of historical development, the only 'universal' in all the music described in this thesis was the arrival of the rock event and the reaction of other non-rock musics to this event. It is equally the case that voices from 'elsewhere' have called to the rock 'centre' and enticed it away from its auto-cannibalism.

What seems most apparent is that rock and the other popular musics covered in this project have transitioned from 'events' to examples of 'being', to use Badiouian terms. As examples of encyclopaedic knowledge, they have become arenas for the exercise of accuracy over act as their histories are perfected, contested and revised. For many this brings about various processes of loss, not least the fear of a loss of vitality (described by Fisher as 'undeath'), where rock endangers itself in a manner analogous to the ways many have suggested it endangers other musics. This may well be, to go back to Poe, a 'premature burial' where 'the boundaries which divide Life from Death are at best shadowy and vague'. What becomes important, then, is the policing of those boundaries, as recognised by Fisher in his professed vigilance for messianic moments in Pop, or Žižek in his call for a defence of lost

causes. It is perhaps too early still to say for sure whether rock or pop, in their mid-late twentieth century incarnations, are lost causes but it is clear that they continue to play crucial roles in reflecting and refracting notions of loss, memory and nostalgia both within the arena of popular music and in our cultural lives more generally.

Notes

¹ Quoted in Maddy Costa, 'Meet the future of pop music', *The Guardian* (20 April 2007), available on the Guardian Unlimited website, <http://arts.guardian.co.uk/filmandmusic/story/0,,2060807,00.html> (accessed 29 August 2007).

² Bruce Springsteen, 'The River', *The River* (2LP, CBS 88510, 1980).

³ John Strausbaugh, *Rock 'Til You Drop: The Decline from Rebellion to Nostalgia* (London & New York: Verso, 2002 [2001]), p. 10.

⁴ Edgar Allan Poe, 'The Premature Burial', in *The Collected Tales and Poems of Edgar Allan Poe* (Ware: Wordsworth, 2004), p. 252.

⁵ Interview in *The Clash: Westway to the World*, dir. Don Letts (UK, 2000).

⁶ Sir Thomas Browne, 'Urne-Burial', in *The Works of Sir Thomas Browne*, vol. 1, ed. Geoffrey Keynes (London: Faber & Faber, 1964 [1928]), p. 131.

⁷ See Žižek's introduction to Peter Hallward, *Badiou: A Subject to Truth* (Minneapolis and London: University of Minnesota Press, 2003).

⁸ Alain Badiou, *Infinite Thought*, ed. & tr. Oliver Feltham and Justin Clemens (London and New York: Continuum, 2003), p. 92. Badiou's 'Considérations sur l'état actuel du cinéma' appears in this edition as 'Philosophy and Cinema', pp. 83-94.

⁹ Terry Eagleton, 'Alain Badiou', in *Figures of Dissent: Reviewing Fish, Spivak, Žižek and Others* (London and New York: Verso, 2005 [2003]), pp. 250, 251. Originally published as 'Subjects and Truths', *New Left Review* 9 (May/June 2001), pp. 155-160.

¹⁰ Anahid Kassabian, *The Soundtracks of Our Lives: Ubiquitous Musics and Distributed Subjectivities* (University of California Press, forthcoming).

¹¹ Joe Brainard, *I Remember* (New York: Granary Books, 2001 [1975]), p. 9. However, in Badiouian terms there is nothing necessarily 'evental' about Kennedy's assassination just as there is nothing necessarily evental about September 11, 2001. Both are days people remember but nothing new was created from them.

¹² Perec, *Species*, p. 133.

¹³ For 'happy forgetting', see the concluding chapters of Paul Ricoeur, *Memory, History, Forgetting*, tr. Kathleen Blamey & David Pellauer (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 2004).

¹⁴ 'Rock stars to recreate Sgt Pepper', BBC News website (6 April, 2007), <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/entertainment/6530959.stm> (accessed 6 April 2007).

¹⁵ John Trudell, 'Baby Boom Ché', *AKA Grafitti Man* (Rykodisc RCD 10223, 1992). CD1, Track 5.

¹⁶ Bruce Tucker, "'Tell Tchaikovsky the News": Postmodernism, Popular Culture, and the Emergence of Rock 'N' Roll', *Black Music Research Journal*, Vol. 9, No. 2, Papers of the 1989 National Conference on Black Music Research (Autumn, 1989), p.292.

¹⁷ Lester Bangs, *Psychotic Reactions and Carburettor Dung*, ed. Greil Marcus (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1987), p. 48.

¹⁸ Bruce Springsteen, *Songs* (New York: Avon, 1998), p. 44.

¹⁹ June Skinner Sawyers, 'Introduction', Skinner Sawyers (ed.), *Racing in the Street: The Bruce Springsteen Reader* (London: Penguin, 2004), p. 1.

²⁰ Bruce Springsteen, 'Thunder Road', *Born to Run* (LP, Columbia PC 33795, 1975).

²¹ Pat Gilbert, *Passion is a Fashion: The Real Story of The Clash* (London: Aurum, 2004), p. 86; Strummer quoted p. 80.

²² Tom Vague, liner notes to The Clash, *London Calling*, Deluxe Edition (2CD/DVD, Columbia 5179283, 2004).

²³ The Clash, 'Death Or Glory', *London Calling* (2LP, CBS CLASH3, 1979).

²⁴ Gilbert, *Passion*, p. 2.

²⁵ Given more space, an interesting comparison could be provided by Dutch punk band The Ex who have followed a path from hardcore punk to forays into world music, free jazz and the psychogeography of Holland while maintaining a strict fidelity to independent music publishing to various local and international political causes over the course of a nearly thirty year career.

²⁶ As Richard Middleton suggests, with Badiou in mind: 'Perhaps "black music" was the "void of the situation" from blackface minstrelsy onwards'. Private correspondence.

²⁷ The Clash, *London Calling*, Deluxe Edition (2CD/DVD, Columbia 5179283, 2004); Adam Sweeting et al., 'Death or Glory', *Uncut*, No. 89 (October, 2004), pp. 52-70; *The Future is Unwritten*, dir. Julien Temple (Ireland/UK, 2007); Stephen Dalton: 'Strummer: Lust for Glory', *Uncut*, No. 121 (June, 2007), pp. 60-64; 'Why We Love The Clash', *NME* (19 May 2007), pp. 24-29.

²⁸ 'Mojo's Top Secret Punk Files', *Mojo*, No. 151 (June 2006), pp. 54-88. Among its 'secret files', *Mojo* offers a deconstructed Joe Strummer. What emerges – as in *Uncut* 121 – is the familiar story of a man adopting a series of masks (like the vocal actors discussed in Chapter Four) and slipping in and out of roles.

²⁹ Simon Reynolds, *Rip It Up and Start Again: Post-punk 1978-84* (London: Faber and Faber, 2005), p. xvii.

³⁰ Reynolds, *Rip It*, pp. xix-xx.

³¹ Reynolds, *Rip It*, p. xxi.

³² John Strausbaugh, *Rock 'Til You Drop: The Decline from Rebellion to Nostalgia* (London & New York: Verso, 2002 [2001]), p. 10.

³³ Strausbaugh, *Rock*, p. 15.

³⁴ Susana Kaiser, *Postmemories of Terror: A New Generation Copes with the Legacy of the 'Dirty War'* (New York and Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005).

³⁵ There is a much wider issue here, of course, regarding the extent to which all avant-gardes eventually nullify themselves through repetition – as suggested elsewhere in this chapter – and to which Badiou offers his theory of 'event' as a solution. Here, however, I want to stay focussed on the localised issue of youth and age in rock music.

³⁶ <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/entertainment/6176049.stm> accessed 4 January 2007.

³⁷ Quoted in 'Sound of 2007: Klaxons', BBC News website (3 January 2007), <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/entertainment/6189307.stm> (accessed 3 January 2007).

³⁸ Costa, 'Meet the future of pop music'.

³⁹ Simon Reynolds, *Blissblog* weblog (13 February 2006), http://blissout.blogspot.com/2006_02_01_blissout_archive.html (accessed 31 August 2007).

⁴⁰ Mark Fisher, 'Night of the Living Indieheads', *K-Punk* weblog (8 Feb 2006), <http://k-punk.abstractdynamics.org/archives/007321.html>, accessed 31 August 2007. The full debate can be viewed by following the links from this post to Fisher's earlier posts and to Reynolds responses on his own *Blissblog* (see previous note).

⁴¹ Simon Reynolds, 'Overrated of 1998', *Blissout* weblog (no date), <http://members.aol.com/blissout/over98.htm> (accessed 31 August 2007).

⁴² Reynolds, 'Overrated'. We should note a connection here to the archaeologists and archaeologies of the future referred to in Chapter Three.

⁴³ Tucker, 'Tchaikovsky'. p. 270.

Appendix One: 'Alone Again Naturally'

This table compares Nina Simone's version of 'Alone Again Naturally' with Gilbert O'Sullivan's original.

'Alone Again, Naturally' Words & Music: Gilbert O'Sullivan ¹	'Alone Again Naturally' Words & Music: Nina Simone, Gilbert O'Sullivan ²
<p>In a little while from now If I'm not feeling any less sour I promise myself to treat myself And visit a nearby tower And climbing to the top will throw myself off In an effort to make it clear to who Ever what it's like when you're shattered Left standing in the lurch at a church Where people saying: "My God, that's tough She's stood him up" No point in us remaining We may as well go home As I did on my own Alone again, naturally</p> <p>To think that only yesterday I was cheerful, bright and gay Looking forward to well wouldn't do The role I was about to play But as if to knock me down Reality came around And without so much, as a mere touch Cut me into little pieces Leaving me to doubt Talk about God and His mercy Or if He really does exist Why did He desert me in my hour of need I truly am indeed Alone again, naturally</p>	<p>I remember this afternoon When my sister came into the room She refused to say how my father was But I knew he'd be dying soon. And I was oh so glad, and it was oh so sad That I realized that I despised this man I once called father. In his hanging on, with fingers clutching His body now just eighty-eight pounds Blinded eyes still searching For some distant dream that had faded away at the seams. Dying alone, naturally.</p> <p>I was his favourite child, I had him a little while Just as long as I could play the piano and smile a little smile Just when I needed him most, he was already a ghost And for all my life there where promises and they always have been broken Leaving me alone with all my troubles Not ever once touching me and saying "Daughter, I'll help you get over." Now he's fading away and I'm glad to say, He's dying at last, naturally.</p> <p>It's a very sad thing to see that my mother with all her heart Believes the words that the Bible said "Til death do us two part". For her that was forever and ay, he decided her night and day How could some English words so small affect someone so strangely? Taking her away from us, her soul included She might as well be gone with him, all the children are excluded. Loneliness is hell, I know so well, For I'm alone, naturally.</p>

<p>It seems to me that there are more hearts broken in the world that can't be mended Left unattended What do we do? What do we do?</p> <p>[Instrumental] Alone again, naturally</p> <p>Now looking back over the years And whatever else that appears I remember I cried when my father died Never wishing to hide the tears And at sixty-five years old My mother, God rest her soul, Couldn't understand why the only man She had ever loved had been taken Leaving her to start with a heart so badly broken Despite encouragement from me No words were ever spoken And when she passed away I cried and cried all day Alone again, naturally Alone again, naturally</p>	<p>I waited for three weeks for him to die I waited for three weeks for him to die Every night he was calling on me I wouldn't go to him. I waited for three weeks for him to die Three weeks for him to die.</p> <p>And after he died, after he died Every night I went out, every night I had a fight. It didn't matter who it was with 'Cos I knew what it was about. And if you could read between lines, my Dad and I close as flies. I loved him then and I love him still, that's why my heart's so broken. Leaving me to doubt God in His Mercy And if He really does exist then why did He desert me? When he passed away I smoked and drank all day, Alone again, naturally.</p>

¹ *The Best of Gilbert O'Sullivan* (R2-70560, 1991).

² On Nina Simone, *Fodder On My Wings* (CD, Cy Records/Sunnyside SSC 1144, 2005 [1982]).

Appendix Two: 'Four Women'/'For Women'

This table contains the lyrics and spoken interpolations from a performance by Nina Simone of her song 'Four Women' alongside the words to a version by Talib Kweli & Hi-Tek entitled 'For Women'.

Nina Simone, 'Four Women' Words & Music: Nina Simone ³	Talib Kweli, 'For Women' Words & Music: Nina Simone, T.K. Greene, T. Cottrell ⁴
<p>[Piano introduction/improvisation]</p> <p><i>Spoken: Four women.</i></p> <p><i>We've done this song many times for you so we don't need to explain Aunt Sara too much to you except to tell you that she's still going to work every morning about 7.30, walking the streets of Harlem. She's 107 and she's still struggling [...] but it's okay, it's okay, she don't have too long to wait now.</i></p> <p><i>Aunt Sara. She wears a rag on her head. Head rags are fashionable these days, they're all in vogue everywhere. Aunt Jemima is in style, haha.</i></p> <p><i>Aunt Sara has lived long enough to see the full circle come round.</i></p> <p>[Electric guitar improvisation]</p> <p><i>Her story is...</i></p> <p>My skin is black, my arms are long My hairs is woolly and my back is strong Strong enough to take all the pain That's been inflicted again and again and again and again and again and again [...] What do they call me? My name is Aunt Sara</p> <p><i>Spoken: Ok, I'll leave her there. I could tell you a story about my mama in the South and they called her 'auntie' in these grocery stores. I only wish I had been there when they called her auntie. Not 'Mrs' [...] You see, I know Berkeley's on fire, I know that anyway. I say that in a positive way. But I kind of have to hold myself down here because the vibrations are so strong. But I tell you this: if I had been there when they</i></p>	<p><i>Spoken: Yea, so we got this tune called "For Women", right. Originally, it was by Nina Simone. She said it was inspired by, you know, down south. In the south, they used to call her Mother Auntie, she said no Mrs, no. Just Auntie. She said if anybody ever called her Auntie she'd burn the whole goddamn place down. I'm movin' past that, coming into the new millennium, we can't forget our elders.</i></p> <p>I got off the 2 train in Brooklyn on my way to a session Said let me help this woman up the stairs before I get to steppin' We got in a conversation she said she a hundred and seven Just her presence was a blessing and her essence was a lesson She had her head wrapped And long dreads that peeked out the back Like antenna to help her get a sense of where she was at, imagine that Livin' a century, the strength of her memories Felt like an angel had been sent to me She lived from nigger to colored to negro to black To Afro then African-American and right back to nigger You figure she'd be bitter in the twilight But she alright, cuz she done seen the circle of life yo Her skin was black like it was packed with melanin Back in the days of slaves she packin' like Harriet Tubman Her arms are long and she moves like song Feet with corns, hand with calluses But her heart is warm and her hair is woolly And it attract a lot of energy even negative She gotta dead that the head wrap is her remedy Her back is strong and she far from a vagabond This is the back of the masters' whip used to crack upon Strong enough to take all the pain, that's been Inflicted again and again and again and again and flip It to the love for her children nothing else matters What do they call her? They call her aunt Sara.</p> <p>[Female backing vocal]</p> <p>I know a girl with a name as beautiful as the rain Her face is the same but she suffers an unusual pain Seems she only deals with losers who be usin' them games Chasin' the real brothers away like she confused in the brain She tried to get it where she fit in on that American Dream mission paid tuition</p>

*called my mama 'auntie' I would have
burned the whole goddam place down, I
tell you that.*

Second woman.

My skin is yellow and my hair is long
and straight [*like some of yours*]
Between two worlds I do belong
My father was rich and white
He forced my mother late one night
[*they call it rape*]
So here I am
They call they call me Saffronia

[Electric guitar solo]

My skin is tan (tan) and my hair's alright
whatever way I fix it, it's alright, it's
fine
But my hips my hips invite you daddy
and my mouth is like wine
Whose little girl am I?
Why yours if you've got enough money
to buy
And they call me
On 125th Street they call me Sweet
Thing

For the receipt to find out her history was missing and started
flippin'

Seeing the world through very different eyes
People askin' her what she'll do when it comes time to choose
sides

Yo, her skin is yellow, it's like her face is blond word is bond
And her hair is long and straight just like sleeping beauty
See, she truly feels like she belong in two worlds
And that she can't relate to other girls
Her father was rich and white still livin' with his wife
But he forced himself on her mother late one night
They call it rape that's right and now she take flight
Through life with hate and spite inside her mind
That keep her up to the break of light a lot of times
I gotta find myself (3X)
She had to remind herself
They called her Safronia the unwanted seed
Blood still blue in her vein and still red when she bleeds
Don't, don't, don't hurt me again (8X)

Teenage lovers sit on the stoops up in Harlem
Holdin' hands under the Apollo Marquee dreamin' of stardom
Since they was born the streets is watchin' and schemin'
And now it got them generations facin' diseases
That don't kill you they just got problems
and complications that get you first
Yo, it's getting worse, when children hide the fact that they
pregnant
Cuz they scared of giving birth
How will I feed this baby?
How will I survive, how will this baby shine?
Daddy dead from crack in '85, mommy dead from AIDS in '89
At 14 the baby hit the same streets they became her master
The children of the enslaved, they grow a little faster
They bodies become adult
While they keepin' the thoughts of a child her arrival
Into womanhood was hemmed up by her survival
Now she 25, barely grown out her own
Doin' whatever it takes strippin', workin' out on the block
Up on the phone, talkin' about
my skin is tan like the front of your hand
And my hair...
Well my hair's alright whatever way I want to fix it,
it's alright it's fine
But my hips, these sweet hips of mine invite you daddy
And when I fix my lips my mouth is like wine
Take a sip don't be shy, tonight I wanna be your lady
I ain't too good for your Mercedes, but first you got to pay me
You better quit with all the question, sugar who's little girl am I
Why I'm yours if you got enough money to buy
You better stop with the compliments we running out of time,
You wanna talk whatever we could do that it's your dime
From Harlem's from where I came, don't worry about my name,
Up on one-two-five they call me sweet thang

<p>My skin is brown and my manner is tough I swear I'll kill the first mother that messes with me My life has been much too rough I'm awfully bitter these days Because my only parents God gave to me they were slaves And it's crippled me What do they call me? They call me Peaches</p>	<p>[Scratches + backing vocal + sampled electric guitar]</p> <p>A daughter come up in Georgia, ripe and ready to plant seeds, Left the plantation when she saw a sign even thought she can't read It came from God and when life get hard she always speak to him, She'd rather kill her babies than let the master get to 'em, She on the run up north to get across that Mason-Dixon In church she learned how to be patient and keep wishin', The promise of eternal life after death for those that God bless She swears the next baby she'll have will breathe a free breath and get milk from a free breast, And love being alive, otherwise they'll have to give up being themselves to survive, Being maids, cleaning ladies, maybe teachers or college graduates, nurses, housewives, prostitutes, and drug addicts Some will grow to be old women, some will die before they born, They'll be mothers, and lovers who inspire and make songs, But me, my skin is brown and my manner is tough, Like the love I give my babies when the rainbow's enuff, I'll kill the first muthafucka that mess with me, I never bluff I ain't got time to lie, my life has been much too rough, Still running with barefeet, I ain't got nothin' but my soul, Freedom is the ultimate goal, life and death is small on the whole, in many ways I'm awfully bitter these days 'cuz the only parents God gave me, they were slaves, And it crippled me, I got the destiny of a casualty, But I live through my babies and I change my reality Maybe one day I'll ride back to Georgia on a train, Folks 'round there call me Peaches, I guess that's my name.</p>
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³ On *The Tomato Collection* (2CD, Tomato TOM-3005, 2002).

⁴ On *Reflection Eternal: Train of Thought* (CD, Rawkus/EMI 072435 26143 25, 2000).

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Videography

The videography is divided between 'films' and 'music videos, the former referring to works that were produced as feature films, short films or documentaries and the latter to live performances or collections of promotional videos. Full video or DVD references are provided for music videos but not for films, which are listed as they would be in a conventional filmography.

Films

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