

# Eating in the real Gozo: sound, authenticity, and identity in Gozitan restaurants

by Bryce Peake

## ARTICLE INFO

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### ***Introduction***

The sounds of music old and new, the ambient noise of foreign enclosure, and (in moments few and far between) silence simultaneously compose a soundscape seemingly foreign and near to the Island of Gozo. These sounds are part of the landscape, existing in multiple locales while bleeding into others, welcomed or otherwise. These soundscapes exist in every any-place, but their intentionality is most easily seen when the sounds are actively employed or evaded. Furthermore, it is in institutions, through performance of specified music consumption, that the role of soundscape becomes apparent, especially when examined in light of tourism and transnational flow, specifically restaurants.

Ethnomusicology, the discipline that has traditionally examined music in cultural contexts, has failed in the past to examine music as a non-performative cultural production. This is often characterized by American musicological approaches, like that of Timothy Taylor. Taylor (1997) suggests that western hegemony pervades the music of “the rest” without ever discussing the affect on the consumer; he is only concerned with the artists and their arts. These theorists have failed in the examination of performance through the commoditized consumption of music (post)performance which constitutes the very capitalistic system they argue as dominated. Further, the work done later by Taylor (2007) often celebrates the artist or composer as either a creator of a new social medium of meaning or condemns them to a result of cultural imperialism and homogenization, removing their social agency. There is another interesting dimension to the “sound” experience that remains untapped; how is consumed sound used to build cultural constructs? What are consumers “saying” through their consumption of specific sounds? What about the sound that exceeds the popular definition of music; are they void of “musical semiotics” despite their intentional usage and manipulation? Furthermore, do local and non-local communities see these sounds as having the same meanings?

Gozo, as well as its sister island Malta, are in a state of identity crisis. As a recent member of the European Union, a struggle exists between the notion of Maltese-ness and a pan European collective identity on top of an already complicated struggle between Gozitan-ness and Maltese-ness. This struggle can be seen manifested in many physical realms, media and soundscapes being a large constituent of these. As the European Union forwards Gozo and Malta as tourist economies, the soundscapes are transforming. New sounds have entered, while other sounds echo the near and far past. The question for the anthropologist becomes not whether sounds identifiable as pertaining to the symbolic repertoire of other identities have dominated the spaces of the Gozitans and Maltese, but what the “Gozitan owners” of these sounds themselves think they represent.

### ***Methodology***

The research for this article was done in a little over one month. Five days were spent on Malta proper, in the city of Valetta, experiencing Malta’s tourism industry at its full force. The remaining three weeks were spent in Xlendi Bay, located on the south shore of the island. It was in this small fishing village-turned-tourist-resort, in addition to the capital city Rabat, where most of the research took place.

Although it can be contended that numerous methodologies were utilized in my research, my conceptualization was such that the method of information acquisition was not one of gathering, but one of absorbing through interaction and witnessing. I learned about Gozitan places and sound by living and experiencing with Gozitans, who I frequently consulted with over my observations. Similarly, I discovered and participated in Gozitan places as tourists discovered them by being non-local and occasionally participating so. It was from this betwixt and between state of being a non-local temporary local that I modeled a phenomenological approach after that of Thomas Belmonte (1979). My approach was not to dig and hunt, nor prod and pry, but to watch and wait for information as I navigated what I perceived initially as an exotic milieu with the help of my Gozitan and non-Gozitan friends.

### ***What are Soundscapes?***

Much like landscape, a soundscape is a medium for human expression. People inscribe it with meanings by marking it with instrumental, vocal, and ambient sounds, as well as using- or avoiding as will be seen- certain aural representations. The process is one of world building; in these ways people audibly carve the culturally meaningful arenas in which human actions take place, and thus embed their multi-faceted identities into its architecture.

Of course, all members participating in this sound-built world will not share the same interpretation of aural symbols. “Traditional sounds,” for example, are contested aural representations where various ideologies argue for dominance. These sounds are often intentionally taken from the context of various social constructs (i.e. class, race, religion, etc.) in which sound both serves, and is served, the appropriation of power. They are then ascribed the role of “authentic” by both an observer and a producer to serve a specific means, although these means may be totally different. For this strategy to be effective, the producing audience must be culturally informed and ideologically receptive to the intended message, while the observing audience must perceive the sound in their own terms. Furthermore, each group must arrive at the same contextual “translation”. It is unlikely, however, that any two people will “read the text” of soundscape in the same exact way, and thus, unlikely that any one “traditional” or “authentic” exists. People inevitably form their own unique interpretations of place-oriented sounds. Further complicating this ideology of authentic perception is the role of the contemporary-traditional, or the traditional-contemporary elements of culture; more simply, the popular culture “comeback”.

It should be noted, though, that soundscapes are not void of initial meaning- that is, they are not tabula rasa, but affected by the landscapes in which they exist. The soundscape, however, is simultaneously a construct and constructed of landscape. While the landscape is embedded with meanings, which may or may not affect the meanings of soundscape, it is worthwhile to examine how the soundscape is used to affect the landscape, as it is by far easier to manipulate by people in re-symbolizing a place that changing the landscape.

On the island of Gozo specifically, numerous soundscapes exist, each replicated in various places. These soundscapes can be divided into numerous categories and sub-categories; although this may be in some sense useful, such pigeonholing also detracts from the individual nuances of each. For this reason, this paper examines three different soundscapes on the island- “ambient” (containing only incidental noise), contemporary (harkening to the music familiar in time to the anthropologist), and non-contemporary (places in which sounds are reminiscent of times far-past). The ideas of local and non-local are purposefully avoided for the reason that although items may not be produced locally, they are consumed locally and thus given local meaning. Although, ideally, placing a soundscape in a “time” is undesirable as they are read from the contemporary, it is beyond the scope of this paper to define the music more complexly. It is these downfalls that will render this paper a less than perfect example of modern sound critique in globalization, but such is not the focus. The consumption of these soundscapes is more important than the sounds themselves, although they do take a role in why they are consumed (as will be later discussed).

Each of these soundscapes can be divided into two categories, which can be seen more as two sides of a spectrum than as absolute points: actively consumed and passively consumed. Active soundscapes are those that are consciously chosen as the primary purpose of consumption and include a visual element (which is arguably the reason for consumption), such as concerts, live street performances, and restaurant performances. A spectrum exists in that although one of these may exist to an audience as an active consumption, people can also passively receive this as residual noise through being in the vicinity of the sound. Most restaurants with live music purposefully create this residual noise to move possible consumers from a passive consumption to an active. Passively consumed sound can be defined as noise that is the result of the atmosphere in which a body is actively engaged in some-

thing which results in sound but is not performatively musical. It becomes obvious that some sounds, such as ambience, lend more to passive consumption than active. It is the passive soundscape this paper wishes to examine.

Through an exploration of the current state of soundscapes in restaurants of Gozo, the focus of this paper now shifts to examining the effects of globalizing forces, such as tourism, on both the local and non-local perception of authentic soundscapes, and how these sounds in turn affect the authenticity of place. Through an examination of how soundscapes are used in a sociological sense and what they mean in a hermeneutic sense, the voices of both locals and non-locals come to equally represent the construction of place as only they can.

### ***Authenticity and Sound***

*“Real Gozitan music? There’s Johnny Cash and band at Xewkija for the beer festival in some days....”*

*“I don’t know, is that ‘authentic’ (uses horned quotations gesture) Gozitan music?”*

*“It’s played by people, and the lyrics are here. That’s as ‘authentic’ (mocks horned quotations) as it gets.”*

Authenticity, as a general concept, has eluded a standardized definition in the discipline, and will continue to do so. More important than what the concept means is the way in which it is constructed and utilized in social situations, specifically place in this paper.

When asking tourists how they have come to define authentic sounds, most point to the media: mainland Maltese mediatizations of Gozo and tourist brochures. Upon deeper probing, most of these sources depict Gozo as a tropical place, littered with silence and exotic bird sounds. Upon asking a specific tourist from the United States about authentic music, he stated that he knew it because of its locale, “Mediterranean is where it is, so it sounds like most Mediterranean folk music, there’s a place [restaurant] that has real Maltese music down Liberty Street.” When asking how he knew what Mediterranean music sounded like, he stated that you could hear it on all of the videos about the island. Surprisingly, he then elaborated that this includes both tourist videos and World War documentaries about the island.

Social theorists like those after Walter Benjamin (1939) and Theodor Adorno (1944) would argue that this is a false idea of authenticity, that it is not truly authentic in that the man

has been misguided by mass consumption. An argument can be made that there is an authentic music separate of the Mediterranean and related to the island's past. This "authentic" however is not part of the Gozitan social memory with which I am concerned.

Popular definition of authenticity, such as the historic music being more "authentic", is tied to a congruency of local and traditional. This, however, is a dangerous notion in that it connects culture to the geographic and chronological boundaries of which it has proven independent in recent anthropological research. Instead, authenticity, as it operates in this paper, exists as a spectrum that is built of multiple perspectives and identities. Authenticity thus gives any actor in a cultural context the agency to define a soundscapes as non-arbitrary to their own identity or one constructed for those outside of themselves, and thus constructing their own "authentic". Furthermore, it is not the place of the anthropologist to author the world of the people he is around, but to observe and take note that he may be a lesser authority on what it means to be Gozitan.

When asking life-long occupants of Gozo about what they held as authentic sounds, most replied to the sounds that existed in the contemporary now. After being told this, I asked one gentleman, "Like autos, people talking, and that stuff?". "Well yes," he replied, "and all of the music you hear in the streets from various places...American, European, Folk, anything you want to [hear]". After asking about Maltese music, the he paused and then answered "There are songs that they sing in church in Maltese...". When asking about Gozitan folk music, music only found on the island, his answer resembled that of many men and women from Rabat: "Oh no- we are just like Malta, we are the same,".

Taken in context with the opening quote, it appears that the concept of authentic to Gozitans is related to the idea of real (occurring in space) sounds. When asking if these concepts were the same, all locals told me that this was not the case, that they are modern, not old. This shows the way in which Gozitans are both aware and fearful of temporal representation. One woman specifically told me that, "Most people see and hear about us in Malta. They make us sound like we're dumb, like we are the past of what Malta is now. But look in the street, we have a cinema and autos and malls... We're just as new as them, we have all the same buildings and cities."

This instance, again, challenges the popular definition of authenticity. To the local Gozitan, authenticity is a marked by modernity, by being modern, not the fake Gozo seen in the media on Malta. Authenticity is a description of what is now,

happening in the present, not the "idealized past" of media about Gozo. In this case, an issue of representation arises in claiming what is and is not authentic- who has more authority in authenticity- the Gozitan or the researcher?

After an evaluation of these, we can see that authenticity has two different meanings, thus what is authentic is two different things. While "authentic" status to the Gozitan is idealized as a state of here and now as being modern; authentic to the tourist is a place-based nostalgia of the past of "here and then"- the way we used to be before we became us. Thus, authenticity is a process whereby the consumer is simultaneously the producer as a means of constructing the self in the current cultural context. It's utilization by many institutions resembles these definitions as shall be seen.

### ***Soundscape as Expression***

In a very focused sense, there is no possibility of music meaning the same thing to all observers, as Bruce Bain (1983) has revealed that not even people of the same linguistic cohort share semantic meaning, let alone people from multiple linguistic cohorts. It is thus unlikely that a community, let alone multiple communities, could share referential meanings. There are, however, common trends shared amongst people to whom authenticity is used in aiding the building of both individual and imagined collective identities. This is not to say that music does not possess meaning, but that the listener is the creator of this meaning, not the recipient.

Restaurants in Gozo and the surrounding Maltese islands have realized this, and thus exploit it through two primary soundscapes- the folk and the silent. The former was observed only on Malta proper, while the latter existed only on Gozo. Although outside of the geographic scope of this paper, an examination of the Maltese soundscape lends itself to an easier explanation of the silent Gozitan one.

In Malta's capital city of Valetta, tourism is arguably the primary industry, and is built on tourism from other European Countries. After speaking to many of these tourists, the overall consensus was that people come to the island to explore the "Mediterranean". This Mediterranean is not the physically existing body of water located between Europe and Africa, but an idealized community of the past, where Europeans experience a style of colonial nostalgia of the past. As one man went on to elaborate, "...this is the way Europe was before it became trendy. We came here to get away from all of the argy-bargy (noise, possibly hectic) of London. It's like we're returning to our history." For this

reason, many people considered Gozo the “Mediterranean” at its earliest stage, but were more interested in Malta as a “first real civilization” and thus spent the majority of their time there.

From this view, many motivations exist for restaurants focused on tourist industry to employ the use of folk music. The first, more obvious, is in presenting their place as “authentically” Mediterranean. As stated, soundscape assists in the construction of visual landscape, and because you’re “in Malta” it only goes to assume that the restaurant would sound “like Malta” to complete the symbolic circle of here-ness. Based around the idea of tourism as a search for the self through the other, the fact that a place looks and sounds “not me” is attractive in helping define the self in non-local surroundings.

Essentially, tourism is a form of globalization, as it is a means by which one of the four primary factors of production (ideas) becomes situated in a stream of elements outside of the originator’s culturally defined space and place. Although most literature would go on to explain how this process is bringing popular music to Malta, this article is more interested in what tourism is creating- a geopolitical marginality through the occupation of space by European tourists. This marginality also affects the idea stream, as both Gozitan-ness and broader Maltese-ness become marginalized by European-ness. In addition to the marginality created by tourism, Malta, and consequently Gozo, are further forced to re-invent themselves as non-Europeans in light of accession to the EU.

Accordingly, there is also a more visceral motivation to the employment of “authentic” sounds than just economic benefits. From informal conversations with restaurant staff and managers in Valetta, it became apparent that the music was not just an economic tool, but also a marker of identity. Many workers agreed in that it was a part of “who we are,” as put by a college-educated man in his 20’s working as a server. To the Maltese, the folk soundscape becomes a way of declaring an identity that is non-European. The effect of tourism is creating environments in which European identity becomes dominant in Maltese spaces. In order to fight this marginality, soundscape is being employed in tourist-Valetta in an attempt to re-affirm the “otherness” of the Maltese identity from that of a pan European identity.

In Gozo, one finds the authentic soundscape not in music, but in silence. These soundscapes, although labeled as silent, there are audible happenings that merge in the soundscape. These soundscapes merely lack a purposeful noise of place. The economic motivations behind this can be found

by merely asking a restaurant owner in Gozo’s capital Rabat: “Most tourists don’t come here for a long time, not like you, you know? Most don’t even know about the island until they see us on the telly. And you know what they say? That we’re not with the times, that this is a living history of what life used to be like. Most people only stay for a day to see the sites, and then it’s back to Malta they go. They don’t want to sit and eat, they want cart food.”

For this reason, local restaurants serve as either local eateries, or as hybrids of local and tourist establishments. Economically, Gozitan restaurants avoid ‘traditional’ sounds because many local patrons would not come because of reasons made relevant below.

In terms of identity, the “silent” soundscape functions much like the folk soundscape, but in a different social context. Because tourists do not end up eating in restaurants en masse, a lower degree of microlevel geopolitical marginality in terms of the number of bodies (and consequently ideas) occurs in these spaces, thus the amount of identity exertion needed to keep spaces “Gozitan” is inherently less. For the tourist, the silence emphasizes the eclectic visuality of many tourist restaurants, and further positions it as a more ancient past than Malta. Adding to this “space of the ancients” is what the soundscapes mimic: places of sacredness. The silence of restaurants mimics many of the Cathedrals located on the island, where silence is golden; it is valued as being natural and untainted by humanity.

To understand why Gozitans would employ a silent soundscape for themselves rather than one of folk music, one must understand the relationship between Gozo and Malta, particularly in terms of representation. Most tourists are marketed Valetta, the capital of Malta when looking for vacation packages. As a side to this exotic location, the even more exotic island of Gozo is offered as a more natural and pristine past than Malta. Further, the local media of Malta frequently encourage this image by painting the Gozitans as a backward and primitive people in commercials, comedy’s, and cuisine (one menu read “the authentic and primitive dish of Gozo, Malta’s exotic and traditional cousin to the north west”). Because of this, the people of Gozo are locked in a paradoxical struggle to define themselves to tourists as being “modern, but not like you,”

Thus, for the Gozitans marketing to tourists, the silent soundscape is a lesser evil than its folk counterpart. For many on the island, there is a fear that playing traditional sounds would further encourage the idea of Gozo as a living history. For this reason, for restaurants to market to both

locals and non-local, traditional music must NOT be played, otherwise no local would step foot in the place for sake of his own modernity. Thus, this soundscape serves as a way of displaying non-contemporaneous-ness to tourists while not representing the Gozitan space as residing in an idealized history. For tourist, the space becomes neither Maltese or European, but a Gozo with no temporal reference. As I was told by a local tour guide eating at the Citadella Café, “I know that I’m in Gozo, because this is the Citadella Cafe and it (the citadella) is the center of the city, know? The architecture looks old, but you can’t say it has a sound. It’s just here,”.

This is not to say that modern soundscapes do not occur in Malta or Gozo. One is able to listen to everything from American classic rock to the latest in Euro-trance and house music. These soundscapes are available in two places- most restaurants occasioned by the “everyday Maltese or Gozitan” and nightclubs. Much like its folk counter-part, this music serves two primary purposes. In an economic sense, it attracts much of the youth of today and the last generation to restaurants as a status symbol. To know the newest and the latest is, as I was told by a father and son at a bar in Gozo “...how you know who is here and who is not.” It later became clear that “here” in this sense does not denote a physical space, but a temporal one. These soundscapes also serve as a note to tourists. In nightclubs, where this soundscape is most heavily marketed to tourists, it serves the purpose of showing that “we’re not stuck in the past, but we’re here just like everyone else,”. To the tourist, the modern soundscape serves as a way of escaping the constant presence of “otherness”. It becomes a comfort zone, a non-place, which comes to represent not a club in Gozo, but a club in their home. The club serves as a means of nostalgia for “home”.

In most local-focused Gozitan establishments, modern music is divided between the latest in European pop music and American pop and Classic Rock. This soundscape is divided between the two generations, the younger omnivorous in its consumption of American and European music, while the last generation shows preference for American rock.

It seems that the age at which people’s preference for the European music of “now” is between 28 and 33. Initially, it is possible to breakdown the preference for American classic of older generations is caused by their tastes not evolving, much like many generations in America have seen. However, with an emphasis on Gozo being in the “here”, that the distaste is not aesthetically based in the music, but based in meaning it is given by this older generation. European music, associated politically with the European Union, represents the penetration of Euro-identity into Maltese space.

This age group, concerned with the Maltese-ness of Malta and Gozo, sees the modern European music as the abandonment of authenticity for a brighter European future, causing unease in the national identity that their generation worked to build. For this reason, the Johnny Cash band changed words and meanings that conjured a nostalgia for an ideal and imaginary pre-present (not past, but not now), which eventually resulted in the transformation of lyrics to better address topics of Gozitan life.

Simultaneously, modern European music, broadcast on the radios by Maltese DJs speaking Maltese, serves as a means for younger generations, secure in their identity, to thwart media portrayal of backwards-ness in Gozo. This music is made audible (and visible) to tourists. Through the residual noise on streets coming from vehicles, restaurants, houses, and street musicians, non-locals are constantly shown a display of modernity by local peoples. there are even live concerts by modern Maltese rock bands (heavy metal, grind-core, and punk) almost once a month on stages located in the center of town and citadella, which could be a way in which the younger generations are “taking back the soundscape” from the oppression of imposed authenticity.

### ***Soundscape as Cultural Texts***

Gozitans, Maltese, and non-locals all utilize the soundscape; it is implausible to claim, however, that each of these groups utilize the soundscape in the same way. Cultural context leaves an indelible mark on soundscapes, which act as temporal palimpsests upon which social commentary on the current state of identity is written over previous contextual identities. Gozitans use the soundscape to simultaneously market themselves to tourists and re-affirm their separateness from the pan-Euro identity established by their membership in the European Union. For non-locals, soundscapes are ways of judging the authenticity of the places they seek out as part of the imagined Gozo and Malta that they have built in their minds.

Like any atmospheric aesthetic element, soundscape renders identities and experiences comprehensible by creating association with previous identities and experiences in a concrete manifestation. Non-locals see those places playing rock and pop as less authentic experiences because experiential memory harkens back to places which are not Maltese or Gozitan. For the Maltese, traditional music serves to separate Malta from Europe as they have either 1) never left the country and thus never heard this music as being of anywhere else, or 2) have experienced this outside of Europe as a symbol of exoticism and “non-European”-ness.

For the Gozitans, silence serves the function of marking a place as Gozitan to tourists by using sounds predicated on the experience of Gozitan sites that are silent for divine purposes or natural existence (the divine silence of environmental tourism). For themselves, silence is a way of showing a place as non-European in the geo-political marginality that may occasionally occur at tourist restaurants while remaining not “of the past”. Although silence occurs everywhere, the utilization by the Gozitans show how the soundscape and landscape are as two sides of a piece of paper- inseparable. Soundscape is a means of expression: its function is neither to decompose social identities nor to encourage them, but in a medium of sound, a way to display identities.

With this in mind, it can be said that soundscapes exist as a palette onto which ideas of identity, both internal (us) and external (them) are being written. This palette is not, however a *tabula rasa*- it is deeply affected by the aesthetics of the physical context and the original intent of this environment as can be seen in the two soundscapes of Gozo.

The silence of the Citadella Café in Rabat is only Gozitan to non-locals as it is based on the aesthetic environment, which recalls experiences of Gozitan places and is arrived at by traversing various Gozitan sites. Locals, on the other hand, see it as existing in Gozo strictly on a physical basis. The Citadella Café is not “here” as the Gozitans say, but is located in tradition- to them, it is not authentic, yet more authentic than if it existed in a discernable history.

Likewise, popular music is not void of meaning before cultural meaning is assigned to it, as it would be ignorant to assume that popular music entered the Maltese and Gozitan social life void of context to the original social use under which it left. This is not to say that no agency exists in the painting of identities through non-local music, just that there is a level of determination previously existing. How this determination is manipulated is at the hands of the observer, who exists as the ultimate author of authenticity. Further, much like the silent-scape, the places that play popular music also have meaning based on the components of their environment: customers, location in social geography, and the décor of the inside. It should be noted, however, that the soundscape, as a component, is used in “building” meaning actively, places are not ascribed a specific soundscape. This at least true in restaurants on Gozo, whereas it is the belief of some local restaurant owners that one can receive “...extra money for being who they (Malta Ministry of Tourism) want us to be,” on Malta, according to folklore.

After speaking with the ministry, however, I was told that this simply is not true (but according to other folk stories, “...this ministry can’t be trusted, they just want to be European,”). Regardless, there are no stories where the choice of popular music is being institutionalized, folk or otherwise. Observing soundscape, to an end, becomes a type of social education. What the observer learns through listening is the way in which the culture defines itself spelled out in an external text: for the local, the culture is a contemporary culture which, despite its position in the European Union, is still an autonomous collective, whereas to the non-local, Malta and Gozo are places of tradition and history where exotic life is ideally simple. Paradoxically, soundscapes are not merely reflections of current identities, but also a positive agent in the creation and maintenance of such identities. Through soundscapes, occupants of the Gozitan and Maltese landscapes form and discover themselves and other-selves by relation of sound to self, or more accurately, sound to place to self.

### **Conclusion**

To quote Clifford Geertz (1973: 452), “The culture of a people is an ensemble of texts, themselves ensembles, which the anthropologist strains to read over the shoulders of those to whom they properly belong.” Whereas Geertz focused on a singular event in the context of a single culture, this article seeks to examine soundscape as a cultural text that is being simultaneously written and read in the context of cultural plurality. This plurality is further complicated by the fact that they are not oppositions, but polar opposites between which a spectrum exists. Despite this, soundscape still serves a hermeneutical purpose in that, as a palette, it expresses identity for multiple people who write different meanings to this palette simultaneously.

There is an inextricable link between soundscape and landscape, much like that of two sides of a piece of paper. Neither can be separated from the other. These are then quite strongly linked to notions of authenticity of place. Although it is not within the capacity of the anthropologist to define what “is and is not” authentic, it is within his realm to seek how and why authenticity is being constructed in various contexts.

In the context of place, soundscape is not meaningful when perceived of as a battleground of social identities and hierarchy. This view situates local and non-locals as opposing forces where they exist in a symbiotic relationship. The soundscape is not a battleground, but a palette onto which local and non-local communities are authoring meta-social commentary on identity.

For restaurants, soundscape is being used as a means of establishing identity in the context of Maltese and Gozitan space. It works to establish the Gozitans as a modern people in Maltese space, fighting notions of “backwardness” posited by Maltese media. In regards to pan-Malteseness, soundscape is a way in which Gozitans and Maltese have re-invented themselves to remain separate from the pan-Euro identity established through political membership in the European Union. To non-local communities, soundscape is a means by which they construct their own identities by defining an “other” by aurally enhanced visual landscape.

Music is often held by ethnomusicologists to be a universal trait of societies and cultures. Often debated is how this has come to be- is globalization stamping out all indigenous forms of expression, or are these global medias being manipulated to resemble and enhance pre-existing notions of identity? As groups seek to redefine themselves, they alter many globalized mediums to fit their uses. In this sense, music is being globalized everyday; what fails to carry, however, is the meaning and associations with which music is constructed, leaving room for an “other” to always be written from the text of the “us”. Societies, like literature, contain their own interpretations, and it is the anthropologist’s job to imagine and read their texts.

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