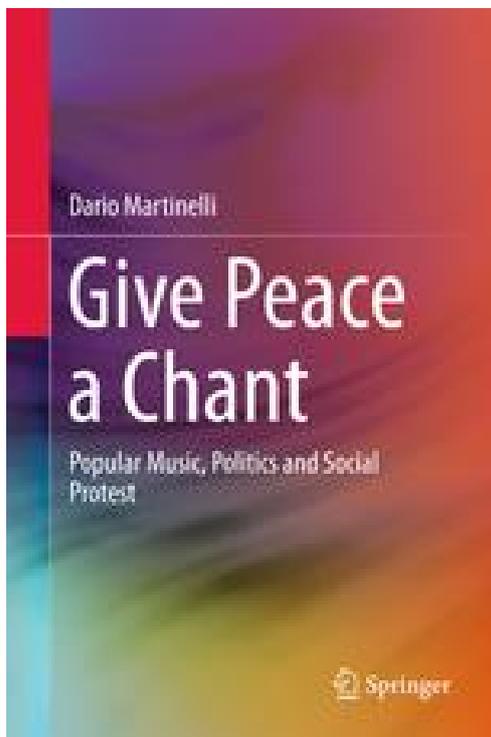**Dario Martinelli (2017).** *Give Peace a Chant: Popular Music, Politics and Social Protest*. **Springer, 161 pgs.**

Give Peace a Chant promises to carve a new genre in popular music studies, namely songs of social protest (SSP). Martinelli invents a new genre by positing ideology as the main platform on which songs from various strictly musically speaking genres (e.g. folk, punk etc.) may be hypertextually stringed. Thus, he prioritizes the contextual use of music and its pragmatic contours as the springboard for venturing into a retheorizing of the social function(s) of music, beyond lyrical disposition and musical orientation while considering the latter as essential complements of SSP.

As highlighted by the author, contrary to the simpler descriptor 'protest songs', SSP underlines the equally important aspects of the 'explicit disapproval' of a given state of things (protest), and the 'social' dimension of the latter. As it turns out throughout the analysis of a variety of SSP, chronologically, geographically, culturally and thematically-wise, ranging from anti-slavery tunes to Lennon's (Ono's and friends') 'Give peace a chance', these musical compositions concern both protest songs and songs for protest. The difference lies in songs that have been written with the express aim of being sung during protests, as against songs that, although not intended primarily for protests, were appropriated by social groups as musical investment of protests.

Although an ongoing dialogue has been raging in popular music studies as to whether a thematic analysis and an analysis of audience-effects should be accompanied by a formal analysis, i.e. an analysis of a song structure from a musicological point of view, the argumentation remains largely inconclusive. Certainly the former are a prerequisite, as at the end of the day audience effects are couched in a string of metaphors and aesthetic judgments that bear little objective resemblance to the musical structure as such (although quite a few studies have demonstrated eloquently the incidence of a patterned congruity and at least consistent correlations between acoustic properties and emotive connotations). Nevertheless, the combination of both descriptive approaches with musicological ones does attain to furnish a more comprehensive outlook to the structure and function of music. Martinelli, while wearing both the semiotician's and the musicologist's hats, adopts this dual orientation in this book, albeit with the employment of a largely non-technical language (i.e. involving notation) that renders even the musicological part accessible to a wider audience.

The conceptual kernel of *Give Peace a Chant* consists in a triadic model comprising three axes, context, music, and lyrics. Each axis is discussed separately in individual chapters prior to being synthetically addressed in the context of four empirical studies, each concerned with a specific song (with pleasant cross-references to other songs). Each axis includes a typological framework that seeks to encapsulate salient nuances of SSP.

In greater detail, context concerns the relationship between SSP and the sociohistorical and cultural context wherein they were conceived. Context is thematized according to Von Uexküll's semiotic theory of Umwelt (life-world). Lyrics concern primarily the political orientation of songs, while a rhetorical angle is offered occasionally at the level of tropes/figures (e.g. epistrophe: "War war is stupid and people are stupid…" in Culture Club's "The War Song"; alliteration: "With all the will in the world…" in Elvis Costello's "Shipbuilding").

Music concerns the compositional aspect in strict terms, but also performative strategies. Context comprises five types, namely specific relations as regards the circumstances that spawned an SSP; general relations concerning broader thematic aspects; indirect relations concerning the relevance of SSP to a wider axiological framework; phatic relations (by recourse to Jakobson's phatic function) whereby a song may be appropriated as SSP although not strictly intended as such; paratextual relations suggesting the adaptability of a song to the practice of demonstrating. Lyrics comprise four types, namely the analytical, the spiritual, the universalistic and the satirical ones. The analytical type provides a thorough description in the verses

and a tagline-style description in the refrain; the spiritual type (e.g. gospel) is emotionally involved, but operationally passive; the universalistic type usually adopts a non-ideological stance while being adaptable to various topics; the satirical type employs irony and parody to convey messages of social protest.

Although the author makes it clear in the introduction that some of the introduced types are not mutually exclusive and that overlaps do exist among types, for the sake of ensuing scholarly research and clarity it would be optimal if the types were mutually exclusive while opting for sub-types in instances of overlaps, instead of full-fledged types. For example, as regards context related types, phatic and paratextual relations could be accommodated under indirect relations, as more nuanced sub-types. This holds both for types within each conceptual prong's framework (e.g. as regards context), as well as between strata (e.g. the relationship between the general relations type in the context prong and the universalistic type in the lyrics prong, especially given that both context and lyrics ultimately boil down to the thematic orientation of the lyrical content). Finally, the music prong comprises the simple type that is characterized by simple instrumentations, usually with a folk inclination; the solemn type that is charts-friendly with a poppy feel; the aggressive type that is identified by the author with rock or hip-hop; the manneristic type that is particularly reminiscent of periods of intense social turmoil coupled with protests; the X type comprising any type not strictly accommodated under any of the rest types.

Give Peace a Chant is not only analytical in scope, but offers constructive directions for the composition of SSP. As stressed by Martinelli, "a successful, effective SSP needs to take into account: (i) The use of a common and easy-to-carry instrumentation (ii) The use of simple and accessible harmonic structures; (iii) The use of basic rhythmic structures (from the supreme synthesis of the hand-clapping on the upbeats, to an almost untouchable preference for 4/4 not-syncopated tempos); (iv) Catchy hooks and/or refrains; (v) Culturally-connoted (and recognizable) sound (for instance, and typically, "acoustic" feel, an "ethnic" atmosphere, etc.)." Most interestingly, the author seeks to revitalize a perhaps sedimented, as he acknowledges, ideological reading of SSP in what has been heralded as the 'post-modern condition' coupled with a ubiquitous skepticism against metanarratives. Yet, politically fuelled SSPs alongside left/right political denominations have been prominent in distinctive sociohistorical settings and to a certain extent are still relevant among some audiences. Hence, this extra focusing is worth the effort, even if in retrospect (and surely not out of context) while attending to elements that relate to the lyrical content and musicological direction of select songs, inasmuch as to broader lifestyle aspects of their core audiences (e.g. fashion).

Overall, the way the SSP perspective is delineated as a new genre does resonate positively with the identified gap while the individual types that make up the three typological frameworks are well supported by recourse to fruitfully diverse protest songs. My feeling is that there might be merit if the analysis focused at greater length on more recent genres and concomitantly on the ways whereby SSP have been articulated by younger generations. The analysis appears to be reaching its apogee in the 80's, with random references in passing beyond that temporal point to a song by Rage Against the Machine, and to the genres of grunge (largely fashionable in the 90s) and grindcore (which despite having surfaced in the 80s has progressively been rising to prominence while retaining its underground pedigree). More up-to-date genres and bands that put social protest in various forms and with variable intensity at the kernel of their artistic output, either as an expression of social or racial inequalities (e.g. gangsta rap) or as a latent critique of the very structure of everydayness (e.g. grunge), occasionally tinged with a gender-specific bend (e.g. Hole, Babes in Toyland), might merit greater focus within the broader thematic outlined in this monograph. Greater emphasis on these, among many other genres that have been consolidating ever since the late nineties (e.g. post-rock that has been in a sense 'protesting' silently and mostly musically against traditional rock), might afford to render this study more relevant to a younger generation and to spark interest in furthering study within the invented genre.

Evidently, mapping out how meaning in music is produced (regardless of genre) has been a major preoccupation among semiotic scholars, while more than a handful of conceptual models have been furnished over the past 50 years, most prominently of Greimasian persuasion, but also of sociosemiotic orientation. A potential issue that might be pinpointed in Martinelli's model is that it doesn't engage with the extant literature, either in the context of at least an overview or critically with a view to positioning it more succinctly. This would afford to demonstrate sensitivity to the irreducible polyphony in academic perspectives, but also to highlight the competitive competencies of the offered model that is stretchable and applicable across idioms. On a broader level, the offered triadic model adopts largely a descriptive approach with a latent intent on dislodging it from entrenched disciplinary terminology. It appears (to me) that although Martinelli is well-versed in musical semiotics, his engagement with the relevant semiotic literature, inasmuch as the discourse analytic one, is outright absent. This does not concern merely models and ways of conceptualizing music as multifaceted cultural artifact that have been voiced within the stream of musical semiotics, but also the application of standard concepts by the likes of Von Uexkull, Greimas and Jakobson that emerge as add-ons to a

largely descriptive analysis, rather than as fundamental building blocks in the process of theory building (perhaps with the exception of how Umwelt has informed the fourfold typology of space). Perhaps this is attributed to an underlying objective of reaching a wider audience with a more commercially oriented title. However, in this case, coining a conceptual model and then applying it to a genre might be superfluous, as against drawing on one or more available models and then highlighting their pertinence for the invented genre which is the focal point of the book anyway. This is also reflected on a methodological level, that appears to be unaddressed in this monograph, especially given that it is case-study oriented. For example, a grounded theoretical approach and a more systematic employment of a corpus for each type would attain to demonstrate how the principles underpinning each type came to be consolidated as thematic territories. Alternatively, a discourse analytic approach, especially pertinent for the project at hand, would attain to demonstrate how micro-aspects concerning lyrical content and musical composition reflect the context of production and are reflected in the social practice of protest.

Again, the above should be viewed as potential 'positioning' issues, rather than criticisms and perhaps as complementary territories to be considered in future editions. *Give Peace a Chant* does perform the task of laying the foundations for a new genre that it canvasses effectively by recourse to a multifarious roster of artists and ideologemes, thus paving the way for further research.

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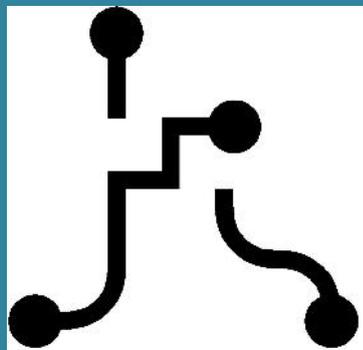
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