

Music and 'Re-education' in Greek Prison Camps: From Makronisos (1947–1955) to Giaros (1967–1968)

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Abstract

This paper examines the policy of 're-education' for left-wing political prisoners in Greece during the military Junta (1967–1974) at the prison camp on the island of Giaros from 1967 to November 1968. Taking as its starting point the ways folk culture was used to substantiate the Colonels' ideological discourse and to give their rule aesthetic roots as a strategy of legitimization, the paper investigates how this kind of music was instrumentalized as a way of breaking political prisoners in exile. Music from loudspeakers was part of an attempt to make detainees sign Declarations of Loyalty, renouncing their values and their comrades. The 're-education' programme of Giaros is examined here as a remainder of the Greek Civil-War legacy (1946–1949), and particularly of the institutionalized 're-education' and 'rehabilitation' programme of the infamous prison camps on the island of Makronisos (1947–1955). Interviews with former detainees from both historical periods underline the damaging effects of the use of music, highlighting the need to understand music's capacity to degrade, but also torture, individuals instead of uplift and ennoble the soul.

Key words: Music, detention, re-education, torture, greek military junta, greek civil war

Introduction

The first half of the twentieth century is marked by the extensive use of mass detention camps in many countries of Europe, such as Germany, Italy, Hungary, Finland and Greece. These reflect the intensification of political conflict and growing numbers of political prisoners.¹ During the interwar period and World War II (hereafter WWII), authoritarian and fascist regimes hunted down left-wing political opponents, detaining them in concentration camps; some of these camps introduced forced labour (for example, in Nazi Germany and Franco's Spain).¹ (pp 22-32) Other camps functioned as indoctrination stations (for example, post-WWII British camps for German prisoners), while several combined the two (for example, the prison camps of Makronisos and Giaros in Greece during the Civil War, 1946–1949). Music was invariably present in those camps that attempted to 're-educate' prisoners; typically it took the forms of forced singing, music from loudspeakers, and camp choirs and orchestras. Greece was no exception. The first prison camps were established during the Metaxas dictatorship (1936–1941), primarily on barren Greek islands. These reappeared in a far more brutal form in the aftermath of WWII. In contrast to other European countries, where Nazi collaborators were detained in internment camps (for example, France), in Greece it was left-wing resistance fighters who were detained, abused and

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tortured in internment camps during the Civil War. Left-wing individuals continued to be imprisoned in camps and other facilities long after the Civil War ended, throughout the 1950s and early 1960s, and again during the Colonels' military Junta (1967–1974).

This paper examines the use of music played from loudspeakers in the prison camp on Giaros, the so-called 'Greek Gulag', from 1967 to 1968, during the military Junta. Music, especially folk music and so-called 'patriotic' songs, was one among other means employed to 'cure' these 'fallen' Greeks from the disease of Communism, and to return them to the national path of Hellenism. The use of music in Giaros prison camp is read here in light of the legacy of Makronisos (1947–1955), a model indoctrination camp of the Civil-War and post-Civil-War period in Greece. As I show, in many respects the operation of Giaros prison camp under the Junta continued the practices of the Civil-War past. The article draws on interviews with former detainees from both camps and historical periods. Pseudonyms are used to protect the identity and privacy of interviewees. The interviews consisted of open-ended questions allowing survivors to tell their stories at their own pace and control how much information is shared.^{2,3}

The Colonels' Military Junta (1967–1974)

On April 21, 1967 a military Junta led by a group of Colonels seized power in Greece, suspending the Constitution, imposing censorship, restricting personal liberties and perpetrating widespread violations of human rights. Like all repressive political regimes, the Colonels appropriated culture in general, and music in particular, for ideological purposes. During the dictatorship, music was closely linked to the regime's nexus of power, its ideology and policies. The Junta's ideology

combined anti-communism and the assertion of cultural and national continuity with a purportedly heroic Greek past. Folk music especially was used by the Colonels to substantiate their ideological discourse of national continuity. This attempt to give their rule aesthetic roots, so to speak, in folk culture was a strategy of legitimization. The Colonels positioned and projected themselves as the true heirs of the nation's authentic culture and heroic traditions, who would now restore Greece to its rightful path. Official representations of the coup claimed and stressed a very selective historical continuity. Greeks were encouraged to see the military takeover as a renewal of the glories of classical Greece, Alexander the Great, and the 1821 Greek Revolution against the Ottomans, the latter leading to independence and the formation of a Greek state. This narrative of national self-celebration would inspire and guide the nation back to progress and glory. The idea of Greece and Greekness as a cultural and historical continuity, a unified and unbroken experience reaching from classical Greece to modern times, emerged at the end of the nineteenth century. According to this notion, tradition was transmitted organically and in a linear manner from antiquity to modern times.⁴ Such assumptions problematically play down contradictions, for example the antagonistic relation between Byzantium and ancient Greece. As Stathis Gourgouris has argued, the nation in this view becomes an imaginary institution that shares the timeless quality of a dream.⁵ This nineteenth-century ideological construct remained prominent and influential in the twentieth century. It was central to the Metaxas dictatorship, on whose rhetoric the Colonels drew heavily, and featured in the Civil War that followed WWII. Greek folk music was one of the resources by means of which this historical

continuity was constructed and propagated. An available link to the nation's heroic past, folk music was also, according to Colonel Ioannis Ladas, General Secretary of the Ministry of Interior, a moral art form extolling love, friendship, heroism, and all noble emotions important to man and society.⁶ Along with marches, folk music became a main acoustic marker of the Colonels' regime and cultural politics.

Music as 'Healing':

Giaros Prison Camp (1967–1974)

Probably the most damaging use of folk music under the Junta took place on the barren, uninhabited island of Giaros. Eighteen-square kilometres, Giaros belongs to the Cyclades island chain. Since Roman and Byzantine times, it had been a place of exile and imprisonment.⁷ (p 195) Its facilities were constructed by the hard labour of the 6,000 (approximately) political prisoners exiled there in the late 1940s during the Civil War. The camp operated from 1947 to 1952, and again from 1955 to 1962. When the Colonels seized power in 1967, one of their first moves was to reopen Giaros, imprisoning and displacing thousands of their political opponents. According to a 1977 report by Amnesty International, already in the first few months, 6,000 people were held in prison camps on Greek islands. Even though this number had decreased by January 1968, the report notes that there were still 2,777 people held without trial on Giaros and Leros.⁸ (p 10) Left out of the Amnesty report, however, were several other places of exile, as well as the prison facilities and detention centres of the Greek Military Police (Elliniki Stratiotiki Astinomia) and Security Forces (Asfalia). My research so far indicates that Civil-War-camp 're-education' practices, including the use of music, reappeared mainly on Giaros, during its first

phase of operation: that is, from 1967 to 1968. The Giaros camp was closed in November 1968, following international pressure from the Red Cross and worldwide condemnation for its appalling conditions.⁹ It reopened in February 1974 and held 44 detainees until the fall of the dictatorship in July 1974. There is no evidence that music played from loudspeakers was used at that time.

During the first phase of the Giaros prison camp under the Junta, music and speeches heard over loudspeakers throughout the day were part of the offered 'cure' for the illness of Communism. In the nationalist discourse of the Junta, communists were 'Slavs' who lost or forfeited their Greekness; 're-education' was needed to restore them to Greekness. This designation was not something new but went back a long way, pointing to the alleged separatist agenda of the Greek Communist Party (Kommunistiko Komma Elladas or KKE). According to historian Polymeris Voglis, this denigrating label appeared following the KKE's 1925 call for an autonomous Macedonian state in the context of a Balkan confederation.¹ (p 65) Although this position was abandoned by 1935, the accusatory term remained and was used repeatedly by anti-Communist governments from Metaxas to the Colonels.

On Giaros the prisoners were bombarded with folksongs, so-called 'patriotic' songs, marches and speeches. An article in the U.K. newspaper *The Guardian*, dated March 29, 1974, reports on the 'Terrors of the Greek Gulag', noting that after the coup, 'seven thousand Communists were shipped to Giaros', where 'loudspeakers were used throughout the day to turn these beasts, as the then Deputy Brigadier Patakos described them, into "good Greeks"'.⁹ According to interviewee A, music was the worst torture she had faced during her one-year exile

there. When most of the exiles were moved to Leros and other locations, A was among those who remained on the island. It is this group of people, rather than those who left early, who vividly recall the use of music. The women who stayed behind had a particularly difficult time, as they were locked in a space intended for 60 people and suffered most from exposure to the loudspeakers. As A recalled:

Music was played non-stop for 12 hours at a time. It was something terrible. We were down on the ground, on mattresses made of hay. Locked in one room all 150 women [...]. We would sleep head across legs like sardines [...]. A room five-metre-high, no windows. Up at the top there were openings and on the outside a parapet from where the guards would pass and look inside. No privacy, no nothing. Life there was tragically difficult. [...] We did not sleep or wake up like normal people. In our sleep we heard screams, women having nightmares, ... that kind of thing. But what was terrible was the morning wake-up call with loud, blasting music: folksongs and national-liberation songs. 'The Enemies' Troops Have Passed' [march] and 'Famous Macedonia, Country of Alexander' [folksong]. And from then on, the 'Gerakines' [folk dances] and all that would start. Essentially they played what we loved. I can still dance 'Famous Macedonia'. I come from Macedonia. We had learned the dance at school and I loved it. But when this was taken by them... they appropriated it as if they were the Greeks and we the non-Greeks. [...]

The music... It started in the morning as a wake-up call and continued... It did not stop... it did not stop. Throughout slogans would also be heard. A song would be interrupted by 'this country will be saved because of the patriots who were sent by God' and so forth. And 'Don't forget that you are under the protection of Greek officers who will transform you into real Greeks'. In other words, there were slogans and then again

the music. Then the announcement of names. Who was leaving [having denounced their beliefs and signed a statement]. 'Follow them. It's not hard. It's only a signature...' And all this unravelling with a music that began to make us physically sick. When we would hear the loudspeakers, we did this [interviewee covers her ears].

The folksong 'Gerakina' and the march 'Greece never dies' mentioned here were used heavily by the regime. This pairing of marches with folk music, broadcast on the radio from the very first day of the coup and recalled by several resistance fighters, was the abiding acoustic marker of the regime. The aim of music in 're-education' was to break the prisoners, to make them so demoralized, confused, shattered and desperate that they would sign declarations of loyalty to the government. The KKE denounced members who, unable to withstand torture and other pressures, broke down and signed declarations. Thus, the aim of 're-education' was to attack and destroy an established political identity and subjectivity, cutting it off from its basis in the solidarity of a political party.

Remarkably, we find the moral, pedagogical and healing role of music discussed at length in a talk given by Colonel Ioannis Ladas, the General Secretary of the Ministry of Interior and one of the regime's most important ideologues. During the inauguration ceremony of a Music Centre in Kalamata, in February 1970, Ladas spoke extensively about music and its Greek origins. An account of his talk was published in *The New York Times* on February 4, 1970, under the title 'Greek Official Urges Penalties for Music Aping Hippie Tunes'. Stressing the idea of continuity from antiquity until the present day, Ladas exalted the 'patriotic folksong' which 'sprang from pure and

authentic emotions' and 'was not composed by drug-addict hippies'.⁶ He rebuked 'certain artistic circles whose works harm art and pollute society'. Most importantly in the context considered here is his emphasis on the purported 'healing' properties of music, and hence its ability to reform society:

*Our forefathers, and first and foremost Aristotle, believed that music ennobles the soul. For this, in the third century BC Aristoxenos wrote a treaty which explains how music influences one's character morally. At that time, music was recommended as a medium of psychotherapy. Theophrastos held that through music one can forget the pains of arthritis and sciatica. All these theories by Greeks have been confirmed in the medically advanced countries, using the so-called music-therapy in their hospitals.
[...]*

*And I ask: Does art serve society when it gives rise to immoral ideas, reactionary situations? Does art serve society when it praises pessimism and obscenity, when it brings lewd thoughts to the mind, or when it extols the deniers of values such as the Communists? [...] All these harm the arts. [...] Today the state also intervenes. If some people do not want to consider the education of society as the aim of the arts, then the state cannot allow them to set as its aim the corruption of society. It will stop them and stamp them out to protect both society and the arts, because arts are there to bring benefit and not to harm.*¹⁰ (My translation)

Indeed the regime did its best to 'stamp out' its opponents through imprisonment, exile and torture, aiming both at the prisoner's body and psyche. In Ladas' words, 'art is for man, and by inference art is for society. It is art's destiny to educate society'. In this sense the choice of songs, whether folk music that underlined the Junta's rhetoric of usurping

tradition or love songs aiming to remind them of life beyond the camp walls, was not accidental, nor was it perceived as such by prisoners.

The Makronisos Legacy (1947–1955)

In the Greek context, the use of music to break prisoners and shatter subjectivity precedes the Junta. This kind of instrumentalization was already deployed extensively in the Greek Civil War. Although there were several places of exile, what is of interest here are the camps on the barren island of Makronisos. It was in this island that 're-education' was institutionalized. Created in 1947, Makronisos was used as a rehabilitation station for Greeks 'infected' with the virus of communism. The Makronisos camps were initially conceived as barracks where tens of thousands of soldiers suspected of communist convictions were to be re-educated through hard labour, lectures, music and speeches played from a radio station, but most importantly through brutal torture. In its initial stage Makronisos consisted of three barracks: First Battalion for soldiers who had not repented, Second Battalion for those allegedly on the way to rehabilitation, and Third Battalion for soldiers who had signed declarations of repentance. Once 'rehabilitated', the soldiers would be used as torturers against their former comrades, and sent to the front to fight on the side of the National Army. Seen as an enormous success, the Makronisos camps were expanded in 1948, with the addition of camps for political prisoners, including women. By 1955, when it officially closed, about 100,000 people had been detained there.

The Makronisos camps were widely publicised both in Greece and internationally. High officials and international guests were given tours of the great rehabilitation

experiment of Makronisos. The brutal physical and psychological torture and inhumane living conditions were obscured by a full-blown propaganda campaign. Lieutenant Colonel Strangeways of the British Military Mission to Greece had no trouble seeing the reality behind the sales pitch. Visiting the camps in 1950, he noted that on Makronisos there is 'a state of affairs which is contrary to the British and American conception of humanity and justice'.¹ (p 105) For the most part, however, the national and international media were satisfied to reproduce the official line. American journalist Dorothy Thomson expressed her enthusiastic approval of the Makronisos experiment, seeing it as a rare model of rehabilitation. In an article in the Greek newspaper *Ta Nea* in May 1949, she notes that Greece's old love for music was reborn there.¹¹ The camp, she writes, had one of the best male choirs she had ever heard, as well as an orchestra with popular-music instruments such as mandolin and accordion; she goes on to extol the patriotic singing of reformed young communists. The male choir of the Second Battalion was also remarked in an article in *The Guardian* by Steven Runciman.¹² Runciman describes his wonderful experience visiting Makronisos, where 'the old Greek spirit is being reborn, vital, eager and full of faith and hope':

Visitors are welcome... Their reception is marked by speeches and parades, then the playing of bands and the shouting of slogans [...]. No one who watches the men's faces can doubt that they are thoroughly and genuinely enjoying themselves. [...] The third [battalion] runs the radio station, which puts out a programme of music chiefly of local talent, and talks which are known to be heard by the rebels in the mountains. It also runs the press, producing a well-printed monthly magazine.

The military radio station mentioned here went on air in November 1948, shortly after the establishment of the Central Radio Station of the Military Forces in May.¹³ It was, in fact, built by the same people it targeted, the detainees themselves.¹ (p 104) The Makronisos military radio station was one of the first to be established, preceding that of Athens (inaugurated in December 1948); played over loudspeakers in the camps, its importance in the development of 're-education' programs is clear. Interviewee B, now a left-wing historian, was detained there from 1948 to 1949. He explained to me how music was an integral part of the so-called 'national university', consisting of a steady syllabus of nationalist songs and speeches. For him, it became one of the worst experiences of exile. He recalls:

In Makronisos the loudspeakers would begin in the morning with the wake-up call. In all the barracks they had put columns with loudspeakers. From a central station they played national songs, nationalist speeches and so-forth. In other words, from the moment you would wake up, from six in the morning you would hear all this music and the speeches. To escape you would have to go in the sea. In order to avoid this music [...] I enrolled to the rubbish collection service. Because... we were away from all this. Of course we had to chase mice, gather the trash and throw them in the sea. But this was better than listening to this music. It would be played until nine in the evening. Of course this was the general tactic of breaking prisoners, to make them sign declarations and so forth. They played songs like 'Paul the King', 'We will Crush you Bulgarians', 'You will Never See Again Thrace and Macedonia'. [...] A fellow detainee, who had been in Buchenwald during World War II, used to say that Makronisos was worse. [...] He would say that in Makronisos they try to take away your soul, which makes it worst. There [Buchenwald] they had

you for your labour. They did not mess with your psychological state.

Autobiographical accounts in the form of testimonies, short stories, and novels written by former exiles testify to the repeated use of music, recalling a wide-range of repertory of songs. The different repertory here may reflect the different periods during which exiles were kept on the island. It may also be due to the fact that certain songs became anchored more firmly in the memory; for various reasons the use of music was more significant, damaging or altogether noteworthy for certain exiles. Drawing on autobiographical experience, Panagiotis Economopoulos' novel *The Exiles* gives a central role to music played from loudspeakers.¹⁴

Recollecting his first two days at the First Battalion (that is, the battalion of the unrepentant communists) in October 1948, the main character's narration is dominated by music references. Music was used as a wake-up call, beginning at 7 am with marches,^{14 (p 278)} but most importantly, music was used as an instrument of terror. Upon their arrival at the First Battalion's camp, the soldiers were chased by the 'Alfamites', that is, by repented soldiers turned torturers of their former comrades. Their attack was marked by the sudden playing of the march 'Greece Never Dies' from the loudspeakers.^{14 (p 268)} During a frightening chase, the loudspeakers continuously played songs ('now there was a little waltz, "For us the Birds Are Singing", and "Do me my Favour"', while their persecutors shouted: 'Commies you're going to die'. Economopoulos continues:

We left from the road so as not to bump into them, and headed for the sea. It was downhill. The loudspeaker was now playing the march 'The Enemies Troops Have Past', so loud it

would break your eardrums, so you would not be able to focus your mind. I and the others were sliding down the hill without feeling my legs, my head was about to break from the heat, as if they had locked me in an iron-barrel fired by the sun. And then the loudspeaker, a heavy threatening voice 'attention, attention, the citizens running toward the sea to return immediately to the assembly point'. An eye that sees everything. [...] Now there were light-popular songs, one sung by ... Elias with Jimmy, 'Black Lustful Women', 'Give me the Most Expensive Drink to Drink'. But my fatigue and the volume of the sound were such that it was as if they were hammering the tune on sheet metal by my head.^{14 (p 271)}

Cheerful tunes played continuously at certain times are also mentioned later in the narration. Such music is also recalled by Ourania Staveri who was transferred to Makronisos from Trikeri in autumn 1949. Staveri recalls the loudspeakers in top volume, starting off with the prayer, followed by anticommunist propaganda, urging them to save their souls from communist propaganda. This, she writes, was followed by old love songs, aiming to awaken in their 'hearts the nostalgia for life and love. You see "psychology" is needed everywhere'.^{15 (pp 94-95)} Indeed they seem to have been successful to the extent that she returns to the love songs time and time again in her narration. Last but not least, as Voglis has shown, music accompanied the hard labour endured by the prisoners in Makronisos: they had to work with the sound of nationalist songs such as 'Modest Makronisos, the embrace of the pioneers / a fatherland of heroes with great glory / a fatherland great and well-known, not one of slaves / the menace and the grave of the barbarian Slavs'.^{1 (pp 102,103)} Additionally, according to a letter to the Communist newspaper *Rizospastis* (25 June 1947) by

prisoners of the Second Battalion, hard labour was accompanied by the sound of clarinets and violins, played continuously.¹⁶ This use of music, they write, was introduced after the authorities failed to make them yield, and reminded them of the practices of Hitler's Nazi regime.

Bridging these two historical periods is the testimony of C, a writer and left-wing fighter who spent three decades in and out of prison and exile on remote islands such as Makronisos and Ai Stratis. During the Junta, he was held in several prisons in Athens and Corfu from November 1967 until the general amnesty of 1973. He was also detained, interrogated and tortured at the Security Forces Headquarters of Piraeus infamous for its use of electric bells played continuously in the tiny isolation cells.¹⁷ (pp 71–72) Discussing his experience of abuse and torture under the Junta, C told me: 'I am so fed up with the clarinet... had they put a clarinet player inside the isolation cell [...] I would have said everything. They would not have to torture me, I would surrender myself entirely, so much I can't take it.'

The reference to the clarinet here is no coincidence. Favoured by the Colonels along with the folk dance *tsamiko* to which the clarinet is central, folk music with clarinets became a common topos for the Junta in collective memory. In modern Greek history, *tsamikos* has been associated with the 1821 struggle for freedom from the Ottomans. According to *Dances and Costumes of our Country*, a series of documentaries aired on National Television in 1972 under the Junta, *tsamiko* is singled out as the best known and bravest of all Greek dances, 'passing through the heroic struggles of the race'. 'During the holy uprising for the Nation's liberation,' the narrator tells us, '[*tsamiko*] was danced by brave warriors before or after the intoxication of battle.'¹⁸ The Junta dictators and particu-

larly their leader George Papadopoulos never missed an opportunity to lead the dance in public, during televised national celebrations. In this way, they actively and publicly performed their claimed role as carriers of tradition and the nation's brave redeemers.

C was detained in Makronisos in 1953. In order to ascertain whether his traumatic aversion to the clarinet went that far back, I asked him if the radio in Makronisos played folk music with clarinets. 'Oh my god, of course!', he said, 'All the time!', recalling the *tsamiko* 'Papalambraina' as a usual choice, but also military marches. Contrary to B, C remembers the radio playing during certain hours and not all day. This is not surprising, however, because by 1953 the 're-education' agenda of the island was not as strict as in the camps' early years. In fact, by 1953 the number of detainees in Makronisos had fallen greatly. After the 1950 elections, in which a striking majority of the Makronisos exiles voted for the Democratic Party supported by the Left, it was clearly evident that the experiment was not successful as previously supported by the Makronisos authorities. Given the national and international outcry, most of the exiles were sent to other destinations and the barracks were used solely for soldiers who were thought to have come under the influence of communist ideology.

C's testimony underlines how music torture can be as damaging as physical torture, or in this case even more. On death row at the age of 16, C had been brutally tortured on a regular basis over the more than two decades which he had spent in detention before the Colonels' coup. In fact, in a past interview in 2006 he noted that his pain tolerance and his indifference with regard to dying was known to the most notorious torturers of the Athens Security Forces, where he was kept for a month in

isolation under the Junta. Unlike the Security Forces of Piraeus, the infamous Athenian torturers chose not to interrogate C, but sent him straight to prison. This, he argued, was done precisely because they were aware of his tolerance to pain.¹⁹ In this light C's description of music as his ultimate breaking point is very important, underscoring the damage caused by the exposure to music on a regular basis during conditions of detention.

The shattering effects of this practice seems to fall in line with the so-called 'brainwashing' that was so widespread in the aftermath of WWII and at which the Soviets were thought to have excelled. To counter this in the aftermath of WWII the U.S.A., Canada and Britain engaged in research funded by the CIA which aimed at developing similar 'brainwashing techniques' to break political opponents.²⁰ (pp 21–59) This research later gave way to a combination of techniques which included isolation, stress positions, noise/music, sensory deprivation for the breaking of prisoners' subjectivity. Although in the aftermath of WWII, it seems that internment camps used music primarily as a so-called 're-education' tool, music and sound were soon deployed within a more complex understanding of torture as an attack of all the senses. As I have shown elsewhere, these practices, including music, were also used by the Colonels' regime and in particular by the Special Interrogation Unit of the Military Police (Eidiko Anakritiko Tmima Ellinikis Stratiotikis Astinomias)¹⁷. The damaging effect of such strategies is highlighted in *Political Propaganda* (1968), used as a textbook in police and military police academies during the Junta, written by far-right lawyer Constantine Plevis.²¹ (pp 228–229) In discussing 'brainwashing', the author explains that what he calls psychological torture can be far worse than physical

torture. Noting the danger of losing the subject beyond the point of no return, he emphasizes that it is important not to destroy the subject but rather to liquidate the personality and replace it with a radically different one. The process is similar, he offers revealingly, to what happens with soldiers during their initial training in boot camp.

To conclude, originating in the Greek Civil War, the 're-education' legacy continued in the early years of the Colonels' military dictatorship on the island of Giaros. Interviews with persons detained during the Junta and the (post) Civil-War period, as well as autobiographical accounts, testify to the damage inflicted on detainees by the means of music during detention. Both the choice of songs and their continuous playing from loudspeakers were deliberate. The practice has left its mark on former detainees who recall its traumatic nature even today, when some of them have reached 80 years of age. Such testimonies bring to the fore the need to re-examine our understanding of music's damaging potential when used as an instrument of terror, and to discuss the broadening of the definition torture. This discussion is both crucial and timely given the institutionalization of music in current forms of detention, interrogation and torture.

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