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Stellingen bij het proefschrift

Phónè and the Political Potential of Metal Music: A Scholarly Intervention

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1. Metal music carries a particular political potential. As a result of its use of amplified and distorted *phónè* (voices and sounds), which test the limits of comprehension, metal can counteract forms of politics that essentially function by discerning a meaningful collective voice of a people from sheer sound.
2. The political potential of metal and its *phónè* lies in the capacity to embody, resist, and modify—to attack and affect—the distinctions between self and other, inside and outside, the positive and the negative.
3. In metal, two methods of meaning-making coexist: through the over-stretched human voice and through over-stretched musical sound. The former relates to a political construction of a collective of people; the latter relates to an alternative subcultural empowerment. As a consequence of this, the human voice in metal is a political problem per se.
4. Metal is often negatively viewed as noise that will endanger social norms, while maintaining alternative subcultural politics that is still predominantly white, masculine, and heteronormative. Yet still it provides a fertile ground upon which to address power relations within and beyond metal.
5. To better understand metal, it is productive to jointly consider metal's interrelated musical, thematic-narrative, visual, discursive, and scene components, rather than fixating on one of these aspects, e.g. the guitar part or the videos. Combined analyses help to bring together metal scholars from diverse disciplines (e.g. subcultural studies, music theory, or literary criticism).
6. Metal's *phónè* enlivens as well as exhausts one's self-identity and subjectivity, and calls for people to listen to each other's desires and struggles. It is where dialogues might emerge from contestations, consensuses from arguments.
7. The extremity of the Taiwanese context—with Taiwan being politically voiceless on an international plane and domestically a noisy socio-cultural entity— gives rise to Taiwanese metal's political activism. The use of Taiwanese folk instruments and the search for a Taiwanese voice demonstrate the political potential of metal and its *phónè*.

8. Whereas politicization of metal is not without its problems, what marks Taiwanese metal out is members' alertness to their becoming an unintended accomplice to oppression, and their willingness to address and rectify these problems.
9. Members of metal communities, whether in the metal scene or in scholarly circles, need to recognize the power flows within which they are enmeshed, critically reexamine the notion of metal empowerment, and work hard to address sexism, racism, and homophobia within the scene.
10. Following the lead of Su Beng, I would like to repeat that "the democracy the Taiwanese people enjoy is nothing but an illusion without Taiwanese independence."