

SoundEffects



An Interdisciplinary Journal of Sound and Sound Experience

Artur Szarecki

Violence and post-hegemony

Theorising affective resonances between voice and habit memory

www.soundeffects.dk



SoundEffects | vol. 7 | no. 2 | 2017

issn 1904-500X

ABSTRACT

The prevailing accounts of voice within cultural studies often centre on issues of political representation and authority, bypassing the material aspects of voice and ensuing political effects thereof. By analysing a violent incident during a hip hop concert in Poland, this paper attempts to provide a post-hegemonic account of the politics of voice. It traces the circulation of sonic intensities comprising the event – including the sonority of voice, its electric amplification and the rhythmic organisation of verbal interactions – arguing that they directly modulated the behaviour patterns of the audience via affective transmission. Furthermore, the concept of habit memory is employed to indicate the limits of contagion. The paper thus re-reads the outbreak of violence in terms of resonances that occur beneath the level of discourse, immanently restructuring the encounters between bodies.

Introduction

In 2010, the Polish rapper Ryszard ‘Peja’ Andrzejewski was found guilty of incitement to violence after he instructed the audience at one of his shows to take care of an individual who made offensive gestures towards him. Both the event and its aftermath were extensively covered by the media. However, the discourses surrounding the incident consistently invoked a grossly simplified relationship between the act of vocalisation and the arousal to violence. Substituting a linear causality of incentive-emotion-action in place of multiple affective forces that traverse the social order, they failed to adequately explain the unfolding of the sonic event.

Therefore, in this paper I want to argue for a post-hegemonic analysis that investigates the incident primarily in terms of immanent processes that pass through and between bodies. Post-hegemony theory advocates the view that power operates initially not by constructing discursive identities, but through affect and habit (Beasley-Murray, 2010). Accordingly, the formation of collective arousal is not dependent on shared ‘common sense’; rather, it is immediate and corporeal, emerging directly from transitional encounters between bodies.

In what follows I want to argue that in covering the event both the media and the juridical institutions employed representational logic, obscuring intensive processes that involve neither consent nor coercion, but act directly on affective resonances and habitual movements of the multitude. Consequently, I attempt to re-read the event by focussing on the materiality of Peja’s voice and how it mobilised the audience to action, not by conveying a message of violence, but through affective transmission that resonated with embodied habit memory, immanently modulating behaviour patterns of selected participants. This requires a particular Spinozist-Deleuzian notion of affect that accords primacy to relational encoun-

ters between bodies and focusses on the differential of forces that precipitate their emergence. Affect is thus conceived as a pre-individual intensity that immanently modulates the potential to act and be acted upon inherent in each encounter (Masumi, 2002). By applying this framework to Peja's concert, it is possible to map out how the embodied capacities of participants were inflected by intensive forces like sounds, the atmosphere of the place, sensual contact between people etc.

My analytical strategy, therefore, focusses on 'body-text-assemblages' by collecting and investigating audio-visual and textual materials that contain traces of affectivity during the event in question (Knudsen and Stage, 2015, p. 18). The sources include a leaked video made from the audience during the concert, the recordings of security cameras at the stadium subsequently broadcasted on television and recollections of the experience in interviews with Peja and statements from various parties made in the aftermath of the incident. However, inferring intensive processes from the empirical material also requires new ways of being attentive and noticing how things might be happening differently (Blackman and Venn, 2010; Coleman and Ringrose, 2013). Consequently, my approach relies on speculative and critical thinking oriented towards mapping potential connections between bodies as they come together in mutual becoming. I pay particular attention to the rhythms of interaction between bodies moved by sonic vibrations and to the materiality of Peja's voice as he addresses the audience in order to go beyond the linguistic and develop new insights concerning the affective capacities that shaped the unfolding of the event.

Hip hop and moral panics in Poland

The incident took place during the second 'Rap Gra' festival in Zielona Góra held in connection with the annual wine tasting event endorsed by the city's mayor. Extending over nine hours of live hip hop music, the festival featured some of the most popular and influential acts on the Polish scene. One of the headliners to perform in 2009 was Peja, a veteran rapper notorious for turning his uncompromising 'street style' into a mainstream success. That night, however, his performance turned violent. During the concert Peja spotted an audience member flipping him off, which provoked a long and offensive rant by the rapper that ultimately led to a brawl. The incident was recorded on mobile phones by other members of the audience and quickly proliferated in the media, incurring a public outcry.

The recorded footage shows the rapper on stage angrily insulting someone in the audience with a rapid-fire series of expletives. Eliciting a loud cheer from the crowd, he continues: 'You know what to do, eh? You know what to do with him, eh? Fuck him up!' The camera then turns to show several men exchanging blows, as the encouraging shouts from the audience are gradually replaced by screams of terror. Peja, however, seems to be satisfied with the turn of the event. 'This is what happens

to douchebags', he exclaims with content, and when his hype man tries to warn him about igniting a riot, he playfully responds: 'Everything on my cost' (Waldemar951, 2009).

Over the next week the images were circulated endlessly in the mass media. In particular, the largest commercial television channel in Poland, TVN, and the most influential newspaper, *Gazeta Wyborcza*, extensively covered the incident. Both had an uneasy relationship with hip hop, having previously produced sensationalist accounts in which they condemned prominent rappers, including Peja, for their allegedly deviant and delinquent behaviour. Their coverage of the incident in Zielona Góra, therefore, resorted to a familiar pattern of moral panics (Cohen, 1972).

The emergence of hip hop music in Poland coincided with far-reaching transformations that shook the country after the fall of communism in 1989. The rapid transition to free-market economy caused a dramatic increase in social inequality, bringing unemployment and poverty to a large section of society. Hip hop came to be regarded as the voice of the new subaltern – those who were affected the most by the transition and lacked prospects in the new economic reality. In particular, it was associated with a group called *blokersi* with reference to the blocks of flats in which they lived. Those poor urban neighbourhoods were portrayed in the media as the spawning ground for all kinds of social pathologies, and the young people who lived there were often associated with hip hop (Piasecki, 1999). In fact, the formation of hip hop music in Poland was heavily influenced by gangsta rap, which peaked in popularity from the mid-1980s to the early 1990s (Keyes, 2004; Chang, 2005). Impressed by the 'thug' lifestyle of their forerunners from the mythologised West, many rappers in Poland attempted to provide a similarly bleak account of reality. Bluntly boasting about their life on the streets, they shocked the public with extreme language and an uncompromising attitude. The lyrics, occasionally backed up by violent behaviour, contributed to the prevailing image of hip hop as a deviant subculture linked with vandalism, alcohol abuse, drug addiction, violent crime etc. Consequently, it was perceived as the music made by and for *blokersi*, the frustrated youth disillusioned with capitalism and explicitly questioning the social effects of economic transformation.

Described as 'one of the most important and most controversial figures in the history of Polish rap' (Węclawek et al., 2014, p. 371), Peja was raised in one of those poor urban neighbourhoods in Poznań. Hailing from a working-class family, he suffered a personal tragedy when he lost his mother at the age of 12 and his father only seven years later. Throughout his life he struggled with aggressive behaviour and alcoholism, finding opportunities to unload through his engagement in martial arts and rapping. Peja first became interested in hip hop in 1987, and six years later he launched his career with *Slums Attack*. By the end of the decade he released a string of albums in the gangsta rap style, gaining a cult following in the underground.

The turning point, however, came when he starred in a documentary about hip hop culture in Poland. Peja showed the director, Sylwester Latkowski, and his film crew around his neighbourhood and talked about his music and life, touching on issues of unemployment and poverty that force young people to seek illegal means of earning a living. The documentary, called simply *Blokersi*, established Peja as a singular voice in the Polish hip hop community. Its premiere in 2001 coincided with the release of Slums Attack's fifth album, *Na Legalu?*. The album sold in over one hundred thousand copies turning platinum and winning the 'best hip hop album' award at the annual music industry gala. However, while the success of the album effectively introduced Peja into the mainstream, he never forsook his roots. 'Do you think that my social position could ever make me forget the people with whom I was raised? I will always side with them and do my thing', he said in an online chat session soon after his success (Peja, 2002). Consequently, Peja remained unequivocally critical of the commercialisation of the genre and kept writing about poverty, social exclusion and pathologies of life in Poland, persisting as the voice of the subaltern class.

Perhaps the most genuine expression of his 'street consciousness', however, was the number of 'beefs' and 'disses' he was involved in. Peja fought verbally with almost everyone in the hip hop community, which occasionally escalated into violent conflicts. In 2002 he was charged with assault and battery for hitting another rapper with a beer bottle, while already serving a suspended sentence for a similar episode (Buda, 2013: 319). The judge dismissed the case due to lack of evidence, but in popular imagination Peja figured primarily as a posterchild of the dangerous potential of hip hop music.

Therefore, the coverage of the incident in Zielona Góra merely revived familiar clichés. Peja was portrayed as the representative of a musical subculture associated with violence and, consequently, as posing a threat to prevailing social and cultural values. The coverage was riveted with stylised and stereotypical images. Soon after the incident, TVN screened a special feature on Peja that focussed on his social background, emphasising poverty, lack of parenting and substance abuse (uwaga.tvn.pl, 2010). The moral panics were further exacerbated when other hip hop artists, most notably Liroy who was one of the pioneers of the genre in Poland, blamed the victim for bringing the violence upon himself. Referring to the 'code of the street', Liroy justified Peja's reaction as an appropriate response to aggression: 'The guy wanted to act tough and he got his ass beaten, and now the whole situation is twisted around. [...] If he chose to enter the street and behave in a street-like manner, he got a street style response', Liroy said in an interview to the dismay of the public (Policyjni.pl, 2009). And although some other prominent rappers had explicitly condemned Peja's behaviour, it was Liroy's statement that echoed throughout the media. Once again, hip hop became a potent emblem of everything that had gone wrong in Poland.

The response from the authorities was fairly predictable. The president of Zielona Góra issued an open letter in which he warned other officials against organising Peja's concerts, because the rapper posed a threat to public safety. Additionally, an investigation into possible incitement to battery was launched by the regional prosecutor's office, after the father of a young boy who was injured during the concert notified the police about the incident. As a result, six months after the events in Zielona Góra Peja was found guilty and fined. The judge ruled that the rapper was directly responsible for initiating the violent behaviour: '[I]f it wasn't for him, if it wasn't for the words he uttered on stage, the battery and the resulting bodily harm would not have happened', she said in validation of the sentence (GazetaLubuska, 2010).

The ruling marked the decline of moral panics. Peja continued to tour and record albums, developing his career without further incidents. Several years later he was even recognised by state institutions for his contributions to Polish hip hop, now regarded as part of the national 'cultural heritage' (Węclawek et al., 2014).

Accounting for concert violence

The moral panic following Peja's concert has been, at least to some extent, exacerbated by the prevailing image of hip hop as a violent subculture. In that respect, it paralleled wider trends associated with the birth of the genre in the United States. Emerging from urban ghettos afflicted with institutionalised poverty, unemployment, drug addiction and crime, hip hop developed amidst violent rivalry and turf wars between gangs (Keyes, 2004; Chang, 2005). In the media this coincidence was often represented in terms of causality. The missing link has been found in the lyrics, which appeared to explicitly incite the listeners to violence and encourage antisocial conduct. In popular imagination, therefore, hip hop has been presented as the primary cause of violent and criminal behaviour among youths (Rose, 2008).

The same kind of logic can be found in Peja's case. In the media the rapper was constantly urged to assume responsibility for his statements and how they affect his listeners. In addition, the judge repeatedly pointed out that it was the words uttered by Peja that caused the crowd to react the way it did. Underlying both arguments is a presupposition of spontaneous consent given by the audience to the general direction of action suggested by the rapper. The institutional account of violence, therefore, is contingent on representational logic that conceives of emotions and actions as culturally mediated and, as such, dependent on hegemonic articulations (Laclau, 1977; Laclau and Mouffe, 1985). In other words, it imagines power as dependent either on coercion or consent, the latter achieved by forging connections between different meanings in order to establish a temporary unity of discourse. This emergent consensus allows people to make sense of the world around them, informing their experience and guiding their social conduct. Accordingly, Peja's actions were

portrayed by the media and juridical institutions predominantly in terms of verbal and discursive incitement to violence. He was presumed to invoke an alternative set of ideas, beliefs and values, implicit in the concept of 'street life', persuading the audience to violate the norms of socially accepted conduct. The violence, therefore, ensued because the audience partly consented to Peja's instigation on the grounds of a shared set of cultural dispositions. These, in turn, were derived from a hegemonic articulation of hip hop as a genre of music associated with violence.

According to Johnson and Cloonan (2009), however, the notion of a direct causal relationship between any genre of music and violence should not be taken for granted. To start with, music that explicitly incites to violence may fail to arouse particular individuals or groups. Conversely, music may not seek to arouse violent conduct, but become complicit in it nevertheless. This is because music is, to a certain extent, affective, meaning that it impacts and alters our bodies on a pre-cognitive level, triggering a set of involuntary physiological and neurological responses (Koelsch, 2013). However, in contrast to emotion, which indicates a state of the body, the notion of affect that informs this analysis stands for the aggregate of impersonal forces that circulate between and across bodies, augmenting or diminishing their capacities to act. Consequently, affect is not individual; it pertains to events rather than to persons (Massumi, 2002, 2015). This implies a thoroughly relational ontology concerned not with the impact of musical stimuli on already formed bodies, but with the co-emergence of actual sounds and bodies from the virtual flux of matter and energy via affect (Deleuze, 1994; DeLanda, 2001). In this sense, embodied responses to sound reveal only traces of affective forces which are prior to them. Consequently, they are not determined by our biological make-up, but unfold through various encounters.

Sound, for instance, effectuates the transmission of energy through and across material. As a vibrational force, it permeates everything, bringing different bodies into contact and interaction (Eidsheim, 2015; Kapchan, 2015). Consequently, sounds can be thought of as complexes of felt intensities integral to the ongoing process of continuous forming and reforming of the physical environment in which they are emitted and propagated. These sonic forces and intensities operate at a level beneath cognition and signification, immanently modulating the potential of any entity or event to affect and to be affected by another entity or event (Goodman, 2010).

The inter-corporeal affective processes, then, provide grounds for cultural framing. In other words, music must first be felt to become intelligible and invested with emotions and meanings. Following Massumi, however, this is more 'a statement of ontological priority than the assertion of a time sequence' (2002, p. 8). Thinking music in terms of sonic intensities has to do with the field of emergence, while symbolic attributions concern what emerges. For that reason, lyrics are the least important component when it comes to arousing violence. It is rarely about the

message or intent of incitement; rather, in most cases, violence results from sonically transmitted affects in particular social contexts (Johnson and Cloonan, 2009, pp. 139-140).

Therefore, instead of invoking the logic of representation with its depiction of *blokersi* as a musical subculture inherently linked to deviance and violent behaviour, I want to advocate a post-hegemonic analysis that investigates the incident involving Peja in terms of the (re)composition of bodies and energies comprising the event (Beasley-Murray, 2010). In particular, I will attempt to uncover the micropolitics of affect inherent in the imbrications of the sonic and the somatic, arguing that it can significantly contribute to our understanding of the outbreak of violence. This entails focussing primarily on the affective resonances between the materiality of voice and the reflexes accrued in habit memory.

The materiality of voice

In the humanities voice is usually positioned as a metaphor for the self: It is what projects a transcendent, sovereign subject by affording individuals with presence and agency. In other words, voice articulates personhood. This line of thinking leads to privileging the linguistic over the material and sonic aspects of voice (Schlichter and Eidsheim, 2014). Even when such qualities are considered, they are often subordinated to the logic of representation. As Mladen Dolar puts it, 'the non-articulate itself becomes a mode of the articulate; the presymbolic acquires its value only through opposition to the symbolic, and is thus itself laden with signification precisely by virtue of being non-signifying' (2006, p. 24). Therefore, in accordance with the hegemonic approach, the material and sonic aspects of voice are positioned as the 'constitutive outside' that simultaneously operates as its defining principle and potentially disruptive externality (Laclau and Mouffe, 1985, pp. 127-134).

However, the vibrational force of sound points to the material and relational contingency of voice; it dissolves the sovereignty of the subject by challenging the distinctions between 'culture and nature, human and nonhuman, mind and matter, the symbolic and the real, the textual and the physical, the meaningful and the meaningless' (Cox, 2011, p. 157). Therefore, considering sound as affective matter which is immanent, differential and ever in flux, provides an alternative framework, shifting the focus on how material bodies resonate with each other and the environment, transmitting affects through the sonority of voice.

Nina Sun Eidsheim (2011, 2015) considers voice in terms of 'intermaterial practice' embedded in the flow of sound conceived as affective and open-ended processes of movement and touch. Vocalisation, then, as a transmission of affect, leaves a material trace on the bodies involved in the sonic encounter: '[T]he physical unfolding of words – or even a timbral modulation in their pronunciation, or even a timbral

modulation that is not attached to a recognizable word – causes physical changes in the speaker or vocalizer, and it is from the sensation of that changed corporeal environment that we build meaning’ (Eidsheim, 2015, p. 124). In other words, any act of meaning-making is contingent on material-relational dynamics involved in the emission and propagation of sound. This establishes voice as directly affective, operating below the level of signification and pertaining to the event with its multiple potential unfoldings, rather than to autonomous subjects.

In Peja’s case, the direct incitement to violence comprises only a small fraction of the whole speech. In fact, it consists of one sentence: ‘Fuck him up!’, while most of his speech simply contains a stream of insults and profanities. As Kate Brown and Howard Kushner note, in cursing ‘the body verges toward utterances that are culturally aware and responsive to circumstance, yet unattributable to any autonomous speaking self’ (2001, p. 539). Voice becomes eruptive rather than expressive, carried on by the affective flow that bypasses individual subjectivity. Consequently, the force of the speech results not from the literal meaning of the words, but – for the most part – from their capacity to arouse. In fact, swear words are said to induce greater skin conductance responses than other words, even emotionally evocative ones (Mohr, 2013). Swear words, then, act as intensifiers, directly affecting the surface of bodies and augmenting the strength and duration of voice’s material effects.

What induces those effects, then, is not so much *what* is spoken, but *how* it is spoken. The material effects of voice may pertain to the variations in intonational patterns and other ‘prosodic’ features such as timbre, pitch and volume (Weidman, 2015, p. 235). In hip hop, capturing the audience’s attention requires a display of impressive verbal dexterity and performance skills (Rose, 1994, p. 5). During the incident in Zielona Góra Peja certainly demonstrated a considerable level of mastery over his voice. Take, for instance, one of the earliest recordings of him performing at Ice-T’s concert in Sopot in 1995. Invited on stage from the audience, Peja – then a 19-year-old boy – raps a short bit he claimed to have prepared in advance (Dominik WuWu, 2010). However, before the approximately one-minute performance comes to a close, his voice starts to crumble. The intensity of the execution makes him hoarse and out of breath, releasing a series of uncontrolled pitch shifts. 14 years later Peja’s technique is of a much higher quality. He shouts insults at a rapid pace and with great ferocity, maintaining control over his intonation patterns. He projects confidence which, according to Massumi, consists in the ‘emotional translation of affect as *capturable life potential*’ (2002, pp. 41-42). In other words, Peja modulated the energy of the performance by channelling the vitality of the multitude into the sound of his own voice. And his speech doubled the flow of sonic affects on another level, creating a resonance that played up the intensity of the event.

In addition, Peja’s voice was deployed via the technological apparatus of amplification. This entails several transductions, as a relatively weak sound of his vocal

cords is converted into an electric signal and then amplified and converted back into a much more powerful sound (Doyle, 2015). While the event unfolded, Peja kept shouting directly into the microphone, using it to augment the volume of his voice and, consequently, to immanently alter social relationships within the concert space. Coming through the loudspeakers, his voice 'enveloped' people in sound, creating an experience of participatory immersion. Accordingly, the sonic pervasiveness of Peja's voice effectively dissolved the distance between the performer and the audience, positioning him as, at the same time, one with the audience and the focus of everyone's attention. His voice became a catalyst, inducing people into inhabiting the same affective environment and augmenting previously unfelt potential to the point of perceptibility (Massumi, 2015). However, it did not determine the outcome of the event, as the sonic effects introduced by the technological apparatus alert us to the multiplicity of material forces involved in its unfolding. The impact of Peja's voice, therefore, should be considered as embedded in a field of potential, replete with various tendencies to act, on which it fed. In fact, just a handful of attendees commenced the violence, and it is crucial to understand why.

I want to argue that the material properties of Peja's voice and the deployment of amplification technology afforded the subsequent translation of affect into emotions and meanings. In other words, attributing the responsibility for the outbreak of violence involved retrospective positioning of Peja's speech within the signifying scheme in which his amplified voice was equated with a sovereign, masculine subject. This entailed imposing the linear logic according to which a verbal incentive aroused emotional responses and, in turn, led to violence. The act of vocalisation itself, however, involves an immanent modulation of non-linear interactional dynamics via the power of sound to intensify or dissipate collective energies (Goodman, 2010). To account for the outbreak of violence, therefore, we need to shift the focus of enquiry from the material properties of Peja's voice to its affective capacities, which are always relational, contingent on collective modes of sensation, perception and movement.

Differential attunement and habit memory

A musical concert is a singular event with many potential unfoldings, yet most follow, to a large extent, the same routine. This is because we accrue over time an embodied set of dispositions immanent to the practice of participating in the live music event that tends to structure the flow of affects into a low-intensity resonance, which preserves and reproduces the social order. The presence of security procedures and personnel, however, is a reminder that something always escapes – that the affective excess constantly threatens to reappear and take over (Beasley-Murray, 2010, p. 132).

According to Teresa Brennan, the transmission of affect occurs via entrainment, a process whereby 'one person's or one group's nervous and hormonal systems are brought into alignment with another's' (2001, p. 9). This can involve affective attunement to sound, as the endogenous rhythms of interacting human bodies – including heartbeat, blood circulation, respiration, limb motion etc. – lock in a common periodicity. In fact, the experience of a popular music concert primarily consists in losing self-consciousness and surrendering oneself to the beat of the music. As they habitually adjust their movements, the participating bodies start to resonate with collective energy, and this spontaneous emergence of sync creates mutual feelings of agitation and joy.

The cameras installed in the stadium during Peja's concert in Zielona Góra show a crowd concertedly moving to the beat of the music. People are jumping and waving their hands in sync. A person can be spotted, though, standing still with both his hands raised in the air. The quality of the image precludes determining whether, in fact, there was a raised middle finger, but in a post-incident interview Peja admitted that it was primarily the lack of movement that attracted his attention: 'You immediately notice such person, because he is standing still and everybody else is moving. [...] He is proud, aware and content that he gets through to you, that you see him; and he fucks the whole fun up for you' (tvn24.pl, 2009). The encounter, therefore, introduced an interruption in the unfolding of the event and opened it up to other outcomes afforded by the modulations in and through affect. The footage further demonstrates that Peja initially jumped off the stage and started to insult the offender from the ground. Cut off by the metal barriers separating him from the audience and restrained by security personnel, however, he returned to the stage from where he uttered the fatal words. Yet, just before the incitement to violence, something interesting happened: Peja initiated a vulgar chant that was immediately picked up by the crowd. Singing expletives and insults brought the participants back in sync. People were acting in concert again, allowing them to re-attune to the event. But this time the prevailing feelings were oriented antagonistically and focussed on one person amongst the audience.

Contrary to media and juridical discourses which employed representational logic with their insistence on direct causality of the content of Peja's speech, it was, in fact, the disturbance and re-emergence of rhythmic regularity that restructured the affective field towards the outbreak of violence. Entrainment can also occur via the rhythmic organisation of both verbal and gestural communication, and we have already seen how it may have contributed to augmenting the intensity of the event. The important thing is that acoustic entrainment occurs in the direct encounter between the sonic and the somatic. As Deborah Kapchan (2015) notes, sound can change the way we interact with others and the environment, as it is both felt and creates a feeling. In other words, it has the capacity to introduce a difference in the

flow of affect that moves the multitude towards a threshold where their behaviour patterns may change.

On that account, even when bodies implicated in the event become attuned to the same affective modality, there is no certitude that they will act alike. This is because their capacity to affect and be affected is contingent on the lived past of each body, encompassing a whole history of previous interactions (Massumi, 2015). In other words, as affect passes through bodies, it leaves a residue which – over time – coagulates into patterns of behaviour. This process can be thought of in terms of habit memory, conceived of as a dynamic set of predispositions to act in certain ways, which become engrained in the body through repeated sensorial interactions with other bodies (Beasley-Murray, 2010). Habit memory as an embodied residue of past experience is non-representational and needs never rise to consciousness. And yet it is crucial in determining a critical threshold at which intensive processes that produce patterns of behaviour can shift. Massumi refers to the impact of habit memory on the unfolding of the event in terms of ‘differential attunement’ (2015, pp. 95, 115). That is to say, even when bodies inhabit the same affective environment they do it differently, because each comes with a distinctive set of tendencies and capacities to act, i.e. habit memory. These potentials resonate and interfere with each other, modulating what actually eventuates.

The outbreak of violence during Peja’s concert can, therefore, be re-thought in terms of patterns, thresholds and triggers of behaviour of the collective body involved in the incident (Protevi, 2009). Initially, the event was driven by a low-resonance affect that brought the participating bodies in joyous synchrony. However, an interruption of the rhythmic regularity restructured the affective field, and Peja’s response channelled the accrued potential by playing up the intensity of the event. Consequently, the critical threshold at which a new set of tendencies is triggered was exceeded. But even activated tendencies to violence need not result in actual violence. This is because the impact of one body’s actions on another’s is dependent on what other influences the latter has been exposed to. While it is impossible to account even for a partial history of the previous encounters of each person involved in violent behaviour at that particular event, the concept of ‘differential attunement’ allows us to explain why the affective contagion did not catch on.

It also indicates that the outbreak of violence was triggered not by Peja’s actions alone, but by a combination of forces emerging from multiple encounters comprising the event. In other words, the trigger mechanism was not in the message, but in the sonic flux that mobilised people through affective transmission, beneath the level of discourse. Therefore, the event primarily involved induction, modulation and circulation of sonic intensities – including the sonority of Peja’s voice, its electric amplification and the rhythmic organisation of his verbal communication – acting directly on the multitude of participating bodies and shifting their behaviour dif-

ferentially, according to the patterns engrained in their habit memory. This does not mean that Peja's words had no effect whatsoever; rather, it suggests that their effectivity was contingent on people's receptivity to being affected. The violent altercation, therefore, emerged via intensive processes that were, in turn, modulated by Peja's call to action. In other words, affect is not opposed to language (Masumi, 2015, p. 212). Since affective traces accrue in bodies over time, meaning is always already present in sonic encounters. However, it primarily informs intensive processes that modulate the event from within (Lash, 2007). Thus, Peja should not be exempt from responsibility for the outcome, as his actions contributed to the actualisation of violent tendencies already inherent in the event. While he did not command the crowd from the position of transcendent subject, he acted as a conduit for affective forces, immanently tweaking the field of potential towards the violent resolution.

The focus on immediate encounter between the sonic and the somatic, therefore, allows us to better understand how power operates not through persuasion and ideology, but through the mobilisation and impediment of bodies' movements and intensities (Beasley-Murray, 2010). The emergence of violent behaviour was not dependent on a 'metaphorical surplus' authorising equivalence between different people or groups, as theory of hegemony would have it; rather, it was immediate and direct, occurring at non-conscious level of corporeal predispositions. A heterogeneous collection of bodies coalesced briefly around a particular affect and acted in unison without forming a coherent political subject. In this context, determining the originators and causality is secondary to the affective flows that traverse the social. It constitutes a retrospective imposition of order by ascribing bodies with predetermined subjectivities and emotions. In the media and juridical discourses the relentless affective flux came to be represented as interactions between fixed individuals, endowed with recognisable emotions and identities, allowing for clear-cut attribution of guilt.

Conclusion

In post-hegemonic terms, sovereignty is established by folding the constituent power of the multitude back on itself to produce the illusion of transcendence. Affect's primacy and excess is thus translated into a secondary residue and represented as emotion, while singular collectives become identifiable individuals. Exclusions and classifications follow and the state arises, imposing its order upon society (Beasley-Murray, 2010). In this context, the violent incident involving Peja demonstrates how sound can be implicated in producing, maintaining and dissolving the relations of power. For it was through the sound of his voice that the intensities circulating between bodies were translated into questions of personal agency, authority and

responsibility. Furthermore, it was his amplified voice that activated the dialectic of the one and the many, subsuming the multitude under a sovereign individual. Consequently, in the media and juridical discourses Peja was perceived as transcendent to the audience and solely responsible for orchestrating its actions. He had a voice, and he used it to incite people to violence. The attribution of linear causality, therefore, established a sovereignty of a higher order, as the state affirmed its power by finding Peja guilty and executing a fitting punishment.

However, the current research on voice suggests that ‘speakers are not unified entities and their words are not transparent expressions of subjective experience’ (Keane, 2000, p. 271). Therefore, the assumed connection between voice and subjectivity overlooks that, as Deleuze once remarked, ‘[i]t is always a multiplicity, even within the person who speaks and acts’ (in: Bouchard, 1977, p. 206). In fact, when the judge asked Peja why he did not let the security deal with the offender, he answered that ‘there is a certain hip hop ethos, and calling security could have been interpreted as snitching’ (in: Sałwacka, 2010, p. 2). In another interview he also claimed that he knows how to ‘earn the respect’ of his fans and tries to act accordingly (uwaga.tvn.pl, 2010). Voice, then, is always embedded in a dynamic affective web on which it feeds. It is not transcendent, but arises from a field of emergence that includes it. Therefore, voice cannot impose a message; rather, it performs a ‘micro-gesture of offered contagion’, modulating the affective flows between interacting bodies (Massumi, 2015, p. 105).

This suggests that hegemonic projects will always fail to fully represent immanent processes upon which they are founded. In fact, it is only by excluding the materiality of voice that ideology can maintain the illusion of sovereign subject. Therefore, presenting hegemony as the only conceivable form of politics actually obscures the underlying mechanisms through which power is exercised. Peja’s reaction should be understood not in terms of an imposition of prescribed intention, but the inflection of tendencies inherent in the event, resulting from multiple encounters between bodies. Accordingly, the outbreak of violence was not about sovereign subjects willingly giving their consent, but a multitude immanently connected through affect and organised by habit as ‘the repository of an embodied historical memory’ (Beasley-Murray, 2010, p. 177). A post-hegemonic approach, then, allows us to go beyond representational accounts of the politics of voice by analysing how sonic intensities that produce the voice resonate or interfere with habit memory to modulate the affective dynamics of bodies and populations.

Acknowledgements

This paper was supported by the National Science Centre, Poland (grant no. 2014/13/D/HS2/00898).

References

- Beasley-Murray, J. (2010). *Posthegemony: Political theory and Latin America*. Minneapolis, MN and London: University of Minnesota Press.
- Blackman, L. & Venn, C. (2010). Affect. *Body & Society*, 16(1), 7-28.
- Bouchard, D. (Ed.). (1977). *Michel Foucault: Language, counter-memory, practice. Selected essays and interviews*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.
- Brennan, T. (2001). *The transmission of affect*. Ithaca, NY and London: Cornell University Press.
- Brown, K.E. & Kushner, H.I. (2001). Eruptive voices: Coprolalia, malediction, and the poetics of cursing. *New Literary History*, 32(3), 537-562.
- Buda, A. (2013). *Historia kultury hip-hop w Polsce 1977-2013*. Głogów: Andrzej Buda – Wydawnictwo Niezależne.
- Chang, J. (2005). *Can't stop, won't stop: A history of the hip-hop generation*. New York, NY: St. Martin's Press.
- Cohen, S. (1972). *Folks devils and moral panics*. Oxford: Basil Blackwell.
- Coleman, R. & Ringrose, J. (Ed.). (2013). *Deleuze and research methodologies*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.
- Cox, C. (2011). Beyond representation and signification: Toward a sonic materialism. *Journal of Visual Culture*, 10(2), 145-161.
- DeLanda, M. (2001). *Intensive science and virtual philosophy*. London: Bloomsbury.
- Deleuze, G. (1994). *Difference and repetition*. New York, NY: Columbia University Press.
- Dolar, M. (2006). *A voice and nothing more*. Cambridge and London: MIT Press.
- Dominik WuWu (2010, January 24). Ice T i Peja Slums Attack Sopot 1995 (HQ). Video file. Retrieved from: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=77gqGApX_w.
- Doyle, P. (2015). Ghosts of electricity: Amplification. In: A. Bennett & S. Waksman (Eds.), *The SAGE handbook of popular music* (pp. 532-548). Los Angeles, CA: SAGE.
- Eidsheim, N.S. (2011). Sensing voice: Materiality and the lived body in singing and listening. *Senses & Society*, 6(2), 133-155.
- Eidsheim, N.S. (2015). *Sensing sound: Singing and listening as vibrational practice*. Durham and London: Duke University Press.
- GazetaLubuska (2010, April 6). Peja winny zadek wygrał sąd. Video file. Retrieved from: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PYw1vL9U6aE>.
- Goodman, S. (2010). *Sonic warfare: Sound, affect, and the ecology of fear*. Cambridge and London: MIT Press.
- Johnson, B. & Cloonan, M. (2009). *Dark Side of the Tune: Popular Music and Violence*. Farnham: Ashgate.
- Kapchan, D. (2015). Body. In: D. Novak & M. Sakakeeny (Eds.), *Keywords in sound* (pp. 33-44). Durham and London: Duke University Press.
- Keane, W. (2000). Voice. *Journal of Linguistic Anthropology*, 9(1-2), 271-273.
- Keyes, C.L. (2004). *Rap music and street consciousness*. Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press.
- Knudsen, B.T. & Stage, C. (2015). *Affective methodologies: Developing cultural research for the study of affect*. Houndmills: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Koelsch, S. (2013). *Brain and music*. West Sussex: Wiley-Blackwell.
- Laclau, E. (1977). *Politics and ideology in Marxist theory*. London: New Left Books.
- Laclau, E. & Mouffe, C. (1985). *Hegemony and socialist strategy: Towards a radical democratic politics*. London: Verso.
- Lash, S. (2007). Power after hegemony: Cultural studies in mutation? *Theory, Culture & Society*, 24(3), 55-78.
- McNeill, W. (1995). *Keeping together in time*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
- Massumi, B. (2002). *Parables for the virtual: Movement, affect, sensation*. Durham: Duke University Press.
- Massumi, B. (2015). *Politics of affect*. Cambridge and Malden, MA: Polity Press.

- Mohr, M. (2013). *Holy sh*t: A brief history of swearing*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Peja. (2002). *A chat session with Peja*. Retrieved from: <http://pejaslumsattack.pl/index.php?go=czat2>.
- Piasecki, M. (Ed.). (1999). *Młodzi końca wieku*. Warsaw: Agora.
- Policyjni.pl. (2009, September 16). Liroy: Peja dał mu uliczną odpowiedź. Video file. Retrieved from: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WUSeff9VncA>.
- Protevi, J. (2009). *Political affect: Connecting the social and the somatic*. Minneapolis, MN and London: University of Minnesota Press.
- Rose, T. (1994). *Black noise: Rap music and Black Culture in contemporary America*. Middletown, CT: Wesleyan University Press.
- Rose, T. (2008). *The hip hop wars*. New York, NY: Basic Books.
- Sałwacka, M. (2010, March 31). Raper Peja: ja też jestem ofiarą. *Gazeta Wyborcza - Zielona Góra*, 76, 2.
- Schlichter, A. & Eidsheim, N. S. (2014). Introduction: Voice matters. *Postmodern Culture*, 24(3).
- Stewart, K. (2007). *Ordinary affects*. Durham: Duke University Press.
- tvn24.pl. (2009, September 27). Peja mówi o incydencie w Zielonej Górze. Video file. Retrieved from: http://www.tvn24.pl/wideo/z-anteny/peja-mowi-o-incydencie-w-zielonej-gorze,239975.html?playlist_id=20011.
- uwaga.tvn.pl. (2010, July 4). Peja przerywa milczenie. Video file. Retrieved from: <http://uwaga.tvn.pl/reportaze,2671,n/peja-przerywa-milczenie,138199.html>.
- Waldemar951. (2009, September 17). Peja Pobicie na koncercie Winobranie 2009 Zielona Góra. Video file. Retrieved from: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MNbXLaEXXvQ>.
- Weidman, A. (2015). Voice. In: D. Novak & M. Sakakeeny (Eds.), *Keywords in sound* (pp. 232-245). Durham and London: Duke University Press.
- Węclawek, D., Flint, M., Kleyff, T., Cała, A. & Jaczyński, K. (Eds.). (2014). *Antologia polskiego rapu*. Warsaw: Narodowe Centrum Kultury.