Dutch punk with eastern connections: Mapping cultural flows between East and West Europe

Kirsty Lohman, University of Warwick

Abstract

This article provides an understanding of complex cultural flows between Eastern Europe and 'western' punk music. This flow is investigated through examples of East–West interactions that take places within the punk subculture in The Netherlands. The article argues that these exchanges complicate the notion of mimesis of 'the West' by the rest of the world, whilst highlighting a continued structural inequality in this relationship. In doing so this article builds upon debates that appear in the special edition of *Punk and Post-Punk*, 'Punk – but not as we know it: Special issue on punk in post-socialist space'. Drawing on interview data from fieldwork conducted in The Netherlands, the article highlights aspects of cross-cultural exchange: the circulation of political ideas amongst Europe's left wing, the migration out of Eastern Europe following the fall of communism, and the political economy of punk as illustrated through bands' touring practices. These aspects are situated within debates around the local/global in a punk scene, centre/periphery inequality in Do It Yourself (DIY) culture, and rhizomic forms of influence within cultural flow.

Keywords

punk

the Netherlands

Eastern Europe

subculture

cultural flow

global/local

'Musical creativity at the end of the 1970s and into the post-punk scenes of the 1980s drew extensively on Eastern European iconography and personal engagements with its material structures, art and literature' (Pilkington 2012: 10). This was especially the case within punk. References to Eastern Europe or the Cold War abound in The Clash's 'Ivan Meets G.I. Joe', Sex Pistols' 'Holidays in the Sun', and Dead Kennedys' 'Kinky Sex Makes the World go 'Round'. This influence raises questions about the movement of cultural flow. It is not necessarily the case that those beyond the United Kingdom and United States mimic 'authentic' western punk; often the 'core has much to learn from the periphery' (Pilkington and Johnson 2003: 272).

This article aims to build on the debate started in the special edition of *Punk and Post-Punk* 'Punk – but not as we know it: Special issue on punk in post-socialist space'[i] This called for a greater depth of understanding of the 'multilateral flows between Eastern Europe and punk music in "the West"' (Pilkington 2012: 10). The example of punk in The Netherlands will form a case study with which to examine the complex flow of culture possible between Eastern Europe and the Dutch scene. The article will revisit post-subcultural models of 'glocal' and 'translocal', but concludes that these do not allow a nuanced enough understanding of the situation. It draws instead on G. Deleuze and F. Guattari ([1987] 2003) and U. Hannerz (1992) in order to provide an analysis of the complexity of cultural influence, coupled with a recognition of the structural inequalities inherent in relations between Eastern and Western Europe. It will highlight three examples of this by drawing on travelling ideas, people and bands.

Global/local and cultural flow

Debates over the nature of global/local influences on culture stem from globalization theories that draw on the relationship between 'centre' and 'periphery' (Wallerstein 1974; Shils 1975). Within punk scholarship, the United States or United Kingdom scenes are often seen as the most influential around the world; the United States/United Kingdom are thus positioned as the 'centre' to the rest of the world's 'periphery'.A. O'Connor has recognized the need for a more complex model in his study of punk scenes in Mexico City and Barcelona: he calls for a three tier model with the United States positioned as the centre, Europe as 'semi-peripheral', and Latin America as peripheral (2004: 176). Although this recognizes that the 'flow' of cultural influence is more complicated than a simple centre/periphery model suggests, it remains too simplified a model.

In reassessing the link between the local and the global in subcultures A. Appadurai's (1996) *Modernity at Large* is useful as it complicates traditional notions of centre/periphery. Appadurai recognized that, for the majority of the twentieth century, the United States formed a cultural centre to which much of the rest of the world was peripheral. However, he argued, the rise of mass media and increases in migration resulted in a change in the modern experience of culture. Mass media 'tend to interrogate, subvert, and transform other contextual literacies' (1996: 3). The immediacy of these new media possibilities, taken together with the mass migration of people, 'create diasporic public spheres' (Appadurai 1996: 4). He argued that the centre/periphery model cannot accurately explain the way that cultural artefacts 'flow' around the world. These movements are exceedingly complex, and 'the United States is no longer the puppeteer of

4

a world system of images but is only one node of a complex transnational construction of imaginary landscapes' (Appadurai 1996: 31).

Deleuze and Guattari offered an understanding of the social world that moved beyond centre/periphery, towards a model of 'rhizomes', which 'ceaselessly [establish] connections between semiotic chains, organizations of power, and circumstances relative to the arts, sciences, and social struggles' ([1987] 2003: 7). A rhizomic structure, based on biological rootstocks, allows us to break with linear, hierarchical progressions of influence in cultural production. Cultures, in a manner similar to complex root structures, are highly interrelated whilst retaining the possibility of resulting in multiple individual iterations; '[t]he wisdom of the plants: even when they have roots, there is always an outside where they form a rhizome with something else' ([1987] 2003: 11). Although a rhizomic model allows for an in-depth understanding of the complexity of cultural interactions, it reduces the possibility for inequality in the 'flow' and production of culture which this article will argue is part of the DIY punk scene under investigation. Hannerz (1992) recognized complexity in the flow of culture, but argued that there remained potential value in the centre/periphery conceptualization. The worth of the model lies in recognizing the inequalities present in a globalized world: 'when the center speaks, the periphery listens, and mostly does not talk back' ([1987] 2003: 219). Hannerz suggested that any sphere of culture has its own centre, or potentially multiple centres of influence. This multiplicity enables a deeper understanding of cultural 'flow' whilst maintaining a theoretical framework which allows this 'flow' to be unequal.

People from both center and periphery, and from different centers and different peripheries, engage in the ongoing management of meaning within them to a greater extent as both producers and consumers, in a joint construction of meaning and cultural form. Although a relatively even distribution of knowhow among them provides the basis for some degree of symmetry in the management of meaning, however, elements in the organization of these cultures still draw them into the center/periphery framework. (Hannerz 1992: 249)

Debates over the mechanism of cultural influence have also been present within subcultural studies. Discussions focus on interactions between the 'global' and the 'local', giving rise to a number of conceptual frameworks inducing 'glocal' and 'translocal'. These debates take place in the context of the 'post-subcultural turn' (Muggleton 2000) in which a number of researchers dropped 'subculture' as a theoretical framework as it did not sufficiently reflect postmodern fluid identities and the range of cultural affiliations open to young people with increased participation in consumer culture. A succession of alternatives have been posed, including 'scene' (Shank 1994; Straw 2001), 'neo-tribe' (Bennett 1999; Malbon 1999), or 'post-subculture' (Muggleton 2000), whilst others argue for retaining 'subculture', reconceptualized, as a framework (Hodkinson 2002).

There has recently been a move away from this 'subculture debate', towards a regrounding of theories of cultural practice (Pilkington and Omel'chenko 2013). The work of the post-subculturalists lacked an 'in-depth analysis of the dynamic interplay between structural experience and cultural consumption in the formation of local

instances of youth cultural practice' (Bennett 2011: 502). The present article is broadly situated within this sphere, highlighting the structural inequalities present in specific interactions of cultural 'flow' between Eastern Europe and The Netherlands. As such, a brief consideration of the uses of 'glocal' and 'translocal' is necessary.

R. Robertson (1995) applied 'glocal' to sociological discourses of globalization, borrowing the term from the business world in which it is used to describe techniques of (near) global advertising to multiple localized markets. He argued that discussions about the globalization/westernization of the world had lost sight of the 'local'. Historically, the construction of 'local' identities (such as nations) occurred in parallel with developing understandings of the 'global'; the two are inextricably linked. Robertson states that favouring the term 'glocalization' would reassert the place of the local in these debates.

H. Pilkington (2004) situated 'glocal' in the centre/periphery model, and argued that 'glocal' allows a more accurate depiction of subcultural affiliations on the periphery. She stated that conceptualizations of a globalized youth culture in which practices on the periphery reflect those of the centre were not applicable in Russia. Instead, 'the 'global' and the 'local' are resources drawn upon, differentially, by young people in the process of developing youth cultural strategies that manage 'glocal' lives' (Pilkington 2004: 132). 'Glocal' highlights the interplay between different global or local influences but does not allow for the multiplicity inherent in 'rhizomes' or Hannerz's (1992) understanding of centre/periphery.

'Translocal' illuminates a different interplay between 'local' and 'global'. Numerous local scenes have come to be constructed along similar lines, connecting 'groups of kindred spirits many miles away' (Bennett and Peterson 2004: 8–9). P. Hodkinson (2004)

7

applied 'translocal' to his research on the UK goth scene. He understood the scene to be a 'singular and relatively coherent movement whose translocal connections were of greater significance that its local differences' (Hodkinson 2004: 144). Yet, the day-to-day experiences and infrastructure of the scene were local.

A. Bennett and R. A. Peterson (2004) discussed three applications for 'translocal'; transregional music, the music festival, and the music carnival. Transregional music refers to global forms of culture that have been appropriated into many diverse local scenes, such as hip hop. Music festivals serve as a 'local' scene that draws people from all over the world together for an event. 'Music carnival' is a label given to a group of a band's fans who follow them on tour, for example the Grateful Dead's Deadheads whose presence at each performance 'energize[s] local devotees' (Bennett and Peterson 2004: 10).

These understandings of 'translocal' provide a more nuanced view of complex patterns of cultural flow. However, they do not account for the power inequalities inherent in cultural exchange.

Drawing on multiple facets of Dutch punk, this article will highlight the need for a nuanced understanding of the relationship between the local and the global. It will take as an example the relationship between The Netherlands and Eastern Europe from the point of view of participants in the subculture. The hope is that this case study will provide an initial argument for this re-evaluation, which can be built upon by further examples.

The Netherlands and the countries of Eastern Europe are non-originator countries for punk and do not have high profiles on the global punk scene, although a number of Dutch bands have enjoyed some success (The Ex, Balthasar Gerards Kommando (BGK), Lärm,

De Heideroosjes, Vitamin X). The location of The Netherlands' punk scene (both geographically and ideologically), coupled with higher affluence relative to Eastern Europe sets up a structural inequality similar to that described in Hannerz's (1992) understanding of centre/periphery relations. Simultaneously, the close relationship that some participants have with Eastern Europe highlights the cultural complexity. Despite structural inequalities, influence may flow in the 'reverse' direction: from 'periphery' to 'core' (Pilkington and Johnson 2003: 272).

Introducing the Netherlands' punk scene

The subculture that forms the empirical basis of this study is that of 'Dutch' punk. Punk has taken many forms in the Netherlands and some bands have become highly regarded in global underground and commercial spheres. It first emerged out of the artistic/anarchist milieu characterized by Provo and the Kabouters. Provo was a Dutch movement in the 1960s perhaps most famous for the 'white plans'. These included 'white bicycles' (which were left unlocked on the street and available for anyone to use) and 'the white house plan' designed to combat the housing shortage in Amsterdam caused by market speculation (doors of empty houses were painted white to indicate their availability) (Kempton 2007). More than being a socially minded activist group, they were also central to the artistic community of the time, their 'happenings' became a focal point of the global counter-culture. The Kabouters were founded in 1970 from the remains of Provo; they continued the heritage of political activism and won seats on city councils nationwide. In order to 'create' new housing in Amsterdam they 'cracked' or squatted buildings (Kempton 2007). This technique has had a lasting influence on Dutch

culture, especially the punk scene for which squats have provided both living spaces and venues for gigs.

There were concrete links between early Dutch punk and art (Jonker 2012). Stencil-artist Hugo Kaagman and poet Diana Ozon ran the zine 'KoeCrandt' from their squat/meeting-space/punk-art 'Gallerie Anus' in Amsterdam. Rotterdam band Rondos' members were all artists and had a zine called 'Raket', which The Ex, arguably the biggest band to come out of the Dutch punk scene, were also involved with.

Hardcore punk arrived in the 1980s, and has remained one of the most popular styles of punk in The Netherlands, producing well-known bands such as BGK, Lärm and Vitamin X.

All fieldwork for this project was collected within the geographical boundary of The Netherlands. However, during the course of the research it became clear that this was an artificial boundary in regards to the workings of the subculture itself. Connections between individuals and bands stretch over the border into neighbouring countries and beyond. The affluence of many of those involved with punk, coupled with the common European currency, good transport connections and open borders have allowed a high level of movement that facilitates these transnational connections.

The data used is a subset of that collected between July 2010 and April 2011 for an ethnographic research project into Dutch punk. Semi-structured and unstructured interviews were conducted with 33 individuals, connected both contemporaneously and/or historically to punk. Ages of interviewees ranged from 21 to 65 and included five women, and 27 men. This data set was augmented with participant observation and

archival documents. Names of bands are retained, but individual participants will be referred to by pseudonyms.

Travelling ideas

The first aspect of cultural flow examined in this article is the transmission of political ideas. Politics has a complex role within punk, affiliations are varied and range from left to right, encompassing anarchism and apoliticism. This multiplicity is one facet of the 'notoriously amorphous' (Sabin 1999: 2) nature of punk. However, politics in some form has always been present in punk. This includes engagements with more 'traditional' forms of politics including politically motivated lyrics, benefit gigs for particular causes, or more broadly a DIY-ethic to the organization of bands or events. Political engagement is also present in the many 'individual' choices a punk might make, for example, squatting or veganism. This section seeks to uncover how a range of engagements with Eastern Europe by the participants of this research project have altered their political ideas.

The latter part of the twentieth century was a time of crisis for the left throughout Western Europe (Bull 1995; Sassoon 1996). This was, in part, attributable to the trajectory of State Socialism in Eastern Europe; the ideals of the 1917 revolution had been subverted by successive dictatorships characterized by repression and paranoia. Revelations about the realities of life in Stalinist Russia had led to a divide amongst the left in Western Europe; the 'old left' communist parties, and the 'new left' groups focused on identity politics over class politics. The Netherlands' most prominent 'new left' groups, Pacifist Socialist Party (PSP), New Left (a faction of the Labour Party), in addition to Provo, enjoyed moderate successes in the 1960s but their popularity waned by

the 1970s. The Communist Party of The Netherlands (CPN) followed the wider European trend in distancing itself from the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (Bull 1995), but despite successive restructurings its popular support declined rapidly (Voerman 1991) until it disbanded in 1991. The Green Left subsumed the CPN, the PSP, the Evangelical People's Party and the Political Party of Radicals.

It was in this political context that punk emerged in the Netherlands. According to one participant, it 'was normal' for young people to align to the left, this is reflected in a number of early punk bands who expressed leftist or anarchist sentiments, for example Rondos, The Ex, De Sovjets ('The Soviets').

INSERT FIGURE 1

Figure 1: Red Rock collective promotional artwork, featuring logos for the bands Rodeweg ('Red Wedge'), Tänstickorshocks, Rondos, De Sovjets (Rondos 1979a).

Rondos labelled themselves a 'communist' band, using the hammer and sickle as a band motif. This was intended as bait for those on the left who were trying to distance themselves from the Soviet Union. They saw themselves as better organized, and more politically militant than the drunken anarchist punks; '[we had] a more community-minded manner, for example they fucked themselves up with alcohol, and were very anti-social … we were more organised, we didn't drink or smoke and we worked very hard' (Menno). Moreover, they enjoyed the reaction that their political affiliation attracted.

[C]ommunism as a symbol turned out to be a good provocation too, both towards the bourgeoisie and the self-proclaimed anarchist punk scene. We sewed a yellow hammer and sickle on to the top left corner of a large Dutch flag and used it as a backdrop to our gigs. (Van De Weert 2009: 59)

Figure 2: Rondos poster insert with 'Fight Back' EP (Rondos 1979b).

Menno had first identified as a Maoist, in search for something 'radical', but said that group was 'uninteresting'. On forming the band he developed a communist affiliation, but in opposition to Soviet communism; as anti-state, promoting grassroots cooperation and a DIY ethic. These politics influenced many of Rondos actions as a band. They would let anyone use their rehearsal room and their shared house, Huize Schoonderloo, became a social centre of sorts for punks, activists, or artists from throughout the country and beyond. Many of their concerts were benefits, for example helping to raise money for striking dockworkers. This political activism extended beyond the band; members produced a variety of literature and other artwork, including the fanzine 'Raket' for which they took submissions from anyone and were proud not to censor any content. Some members of the band conducted a research project into the history of the worker's movement in Rotterdam.

Man Lifting Banner, a band who formed in 1990, also labelled themselves communist. Daan recalls being appalled by western media discourses at the time that the Berlin Wall fell. Claims of 'victory for the West/capitalism', or that 'communists were no better than

fascists' led to Daan's desire to better understand Eastern European history and communist philosophy in order to make sense of what had happened. Daan submerged himself in the writings of Marx, Lenin, Trotsky, Luxembourg, and Kerensky, and developed his own theories on the potential offered by communism. 'It gave me the self-confidence to continue on the left and to see that you could also be a communist in another manner. And then I became a member of the International Socialists' (Daan). These influences fed directly into the band with album titles such as 'The Workers United Will Never Be Defeated' (AHC Records 1995) and lyrics such as those in 'New October' (below). The quote on the album cover for 'Ten Inches That Shook the World' (below, Crucial Response Records 1992) was drawn from a communiqué between the May 1968 occupation of the Sorbonne and the Kremlin.

New October

Sometimes, the tears beat my eyes

When I see truth digging the lies

(For a moment)

When I see hope stifled in blood

Unaware of defeat until that last shot

When I see those desperate eyes

I cry

Sometimes I clench my fists

Because the fight was waged

But the battle had been pitched

When I look at the past

I hold one dream

A new October 1917

When I feel that desperate wish

I clench my fists

'New October' by Man Lifting Banner on 'Ten Inches That Shook the World'

(Crucial Response Records 1992).

Figure 3: Man Lifting Banner cover for 'Ten Inches That Shook the World' (Man Lifting Banner 1992).

As discussed, the role of politics in punk goes beyond *P*olitics to the political choices that inform punks' lives. Neither Menno nor Daan drink, and see this as inherently linked to their political ideas: in order not to 'bring their comrades into discredit' (Daan). Daan identified as 'straight edge', a strand of punk which grew out of the US hardcore scene in the 1980s. 'Edgers' have a variety of understandings of what it means to be straight edge, but generally they do not drink, smoke, take drugs, or have casual sex, and are often vegetarian or vegan (see Haenfler 2006).

In 1991–1992 Daan went on study trip to Russia, and had his preconceptions and lifestyle politics challenged. Economic turmoil in the early 1990s resulted in widespread poverty in Russia. Affected by this, Daan no longer saw vegetarianism as a cure for worldwide hunger. For those in need of food, he found he 'was happy if someone there had a piece of meat to eat' (Daan). Daan became embarrassed by 'sitting here in my middle class

15

ivory tower, watching people and judging them'. In a similar way his views on alcohol, as detrimental to the workers' struggle, were altered. He experienced Russian drinking cultures, which were very different to those in the Netherlands, and were exacerbated by post-soviet alienation and poverty. He saw that people used alcohol or drugs 'to cope a bit better with the alienation, the pressure, the misery of everyday life in that terrible system … you've really got to accept that people should have the choice to do that'. Daan returned home and told his bandmate that 'straight edge is dead', although he continued to adhere to the lifestyle himself.

Another instance of contact with Eastern Europe resulted in a different outcome. Another participant, Maxim, is also a member of the International Socialists, and also straight edge. He grew up in Russia, leaving with his family to emigrate to Amsterdam in 1993. He witnessed the same Russian drinking culture as Daan did, but rather than viewing this as individuals' necessary coping mechanisms, he saw the destructive aspects of drinking. He cites this as part of his reasoning in becoming straight edge, saying that 'maybe because I'm coming from Russia and have seen what alcohol can be like, I was never attracted to that' (Maxim).

For Menno, Daan and Maxim, previous experiences of, and ideas about life and politics in Eastern Europe have had a profound effect on their lives. Moreover, this impacted the development of Dutch punk; cultural flow can be seen to be moving in more than one direction with influences drawn from disparate aspects of participants' lives. Rondos' political affiliation was replicated with later bands such as Man Lifting Banner, Daan's exclamation that 'straight edge is dead' came just as a number of straight edge punks abandoned the label and lifestyle. Maxim's band, the only straight edge band left in

16

Amsterdam at the time of my fieldwork, has become relatively well known around the world.

Travelling people

The examples of Daan and Maxim introduce a second aspect of 'cultural flow'; that brought about by the movement of people. This may be a permanent relocation, as is the case for Maxim, who arrived in The Netherlands as an migrant, or may take the form of a short trip, such as Daan's to Russia. Much has been written on the effects of immigration on culture (Hannerz 1992; Appadurai 1996), however this has often focused on music that reinforces migrant or diasporic identities, particularly in a new locale. For example, D. Hebdige (1979) discusses Rastafarian culture in the United Kingdom, and R. K. Dudrah (2002) focuses on British Bhangra. Little research has focused on migrants whose cultural participation is not related to their heritage. D. Miller's (2010) study of migrants' adoption of blue jeans as a marker of 'post-identity' is an exception. This forms an important aspect of the complexity of cultural flows, by suggesting that migrants do not necessarily seek to maintain/adopt an identity and may instead choose other cultural markers. This section will discuss three examples of relocation from Eastern Europe to The Netherlands.

Maxim's formative experiences were in Russia, but his teenage years were spent in Amsterdam. He attended a school to learn Dutch for the children of migrants from all over the world, and it was through this international group of friends that Maxim first discovered punk. As a group they became involved with the local Amsterdam scene. Luka moved to Amsterdam during the break-up of Yugoslavia. He was 19 when he moved, and had first discovered and become involved with punk seven years earlier in

his home town of Belgrade, which had a very active hardcore scene. Thus, when he became involved in Dutch punk, he was drawing on years of punk experiences including organizing gigs and making fanzines. He talks of being disappointed that when he first moved to Amsterdam there was relatively little going on compared both to Belgrade and to his expectations.

> I kind of thought like, oo you know, Amsterdam, the BGK and all those old bands were from here and with all the squats it must be like a lot of things happening, a lot of shows, a lot of people going on in this music. When I moved here there was like nothing going on, there was a few people doing a few things, a few people from the older generations you know. Very few younger kids. (Luka)

However, within a few years he was part of a highly active and young punk scene in Amsterdam. Vitamin X, the band he formed with Maxim has become one of The Netherlands' foremost hardcore bands.

Kosta, like Luka, was a little older when he left Serbia in 1991. He had been involved in punk in Serbia for twelve years before he left for a short stay in Berlin, followed by ten years in Groningen, and had been in Amsterdam for almost ten years when this research was conducted. He also described encountering very different forms of punk on moving to The Netherlands. The scene in Serbia in the 1980s was characterized by the wider state socialist context in which openly displaying a 'punk identity' (or indeed any subcultural affiliation) carried with it a risk that was not part of the western punk scene. The threat of

trouble with the authorities required a greater dedication on the part of those who were involved.

For these three participants, punk has played a significant role in helping them integrate into their new community. For Maxim it was through his identity as a migrant learning the local language that he discovered punk, and through punk that he got to know others with similar experiences. For Luka and Kosta, punk formed a constant in a time of upheaval, although they both talk of marked differences in their experiences in Serbia to The Netherlands. Having already acquired the knowledge of 'how to be a punk', and therefore already possessing 'subcultural capital' (Thornton 1995), they were quickly accepted in their new social groups. These participants all became actively involved in the Dutch punk scene, bringing to it their own understanding of what punk is. This illustrates Deleuze and Guattari's ([1987] 2003) argument that cultural rhizomes allow for individually specific iterations of punk whilst drawing on a common 'root structure'. The continued contact that participants have maintained with people who remained in Russia or Serbia adds yet another level of cultural flow. These contacts have enabled bands such as Vitamin X to tour Russia. Moreover, Kosta now regularly organizes cultural exchanges between Serbia and The Netherlands and has used his connections to promote transnational music and art events for the Anti War Action Foundation for Former Yugoslavia.

Travelling bands

Hannerz (1992) and Appadurai (1996) agree that modern patterns of migration form a key component of complex cultural flows, however Hannerz calls for a more nuanced

understanding of the movement of people including short trips as a point of cultural exchange. As examples of these 'footloose' individuals he describes the 'beento': the returning migrant, tourists, and regular business travellers. Hannerz (1992) argued that each of these affect culture in both the places they travel from and to. The exchange that occurs when bands tour can be viewed in a similar vein.

Given that this research was based in the Netherlands, the discussion that follows focuses largely upon instances in which Dutch punk bands have toured in Eastern Europe. Although the reverse does occur, it is not often that bands from Eastern Europe have the opportunity to play in the Netherlands. There is a great emphasis in the punk subculture on events being non-profit or run as benefits. This results in very little or no money with which to pay bands (although it is customary to help towards their travel costs). For bands from Eastern Europe, where the average income is significantly lower than in The Netherlands, it becomes harder for bands to cover the costs of touring abroad. During fieldwork the researcher did not see a single band from Eastern Europe; conversely she saw a number of bands from Scandinavia, Western Europe, and a handful from the United States. For a Dutch band on the other hand, it was not unusual to have toured in Eastern Europe. The Dutch scene is too small to allow for many gig opportunities, and the level of contact and exchange between individuals in (Western) Europe allows a band to quickly be touring internationally, with ease of entry to Eastern Europe improved by the expansions to the European Union in 2004 and 2007.

In 1987 The Ex went on a six-week tour in Eastern Europe. Menno's experience of this was somewhat different to bands touring today. The band required an official invitation to play by the Polish Socialist Youth Union in order to cross the 'Iron Curtain'. However,

not all of their gigs were legal; two were organized by the opposition movement Charta 77 in Czechoslovakia. The band had told the authorities that they were driving through the country on their way to Hungary, however police suspicion led to a search of their vehicle and a hold up of six to seven hours. The gig they were on their way to was held under the guise of a classical concert with the audience dressed in suits to avoid suspicion. During those six to seven hours the audience sat listening to a piano recital before enjoying a frantic twenty-minute punk set when The Ex finally arrived. Both gigs in Czechoslovakia had their set length determined by the distance of the venue to the police station: how long it would take the police to arrive should they be reported. The other gig took place in the countryside at a collective farm on 1 May (International Labour Day – the Communist Holiday), this time they could play for an hour. Menno described these gigs as the best in his life. He reported that the energy from the crowd surpassed anything else he had experienced. He suggests that the rarity of gigs at that time, in addition to the added danger of holding illegal gigs contributed to this heightened enjoyment for the audience, as did the fact it was a foreign band playing, especially at that time.

More recently the practicalities of travelling to Eastern Europe have improved. Participants have toured in Slovenia, Hungary, Poland, Romania, Slovakia, The Czech Republic and Russia. A theme that regularly occurs is how much everyone enjoys these experiences.

INSERT FIGURE 4

Figure 4: Flyer for a gig in Saint Petersburg, Russia on 02/05/2011 with Dutch band Antillectual playing. Artist unknown (Antillectual 2011).

INSERT FIGURE 5

Figure 5: Flyer for a gig in Cluj-Napoca, Romania on 25 May 2009 with Dutch band Smash the Statues playing. Artist Unknown (Smash The Statues 2009).

Larry said that 'people in Romania were really enthusiastic seeing bands, and us playing', though lamented that 'the biggest [difficulty] in East[ern Europe] is they don't have that much money, it's always a problem to get the band paid. But I can understand that, the wages are much lower there and stuff'. Gregor agrees, adding that even though bands know that they will most likely lose money by touring Eastern Europe, it is worth it as they always have a really good time, he also picked out Romania as particularly enjoyable. He said that he saw it was more unusual to have gigs, and especially when a foreign band plays it becomes more of an event, audiences 'do their research' and learn the lyrics to songs.

Maxim discussed shows in Russia on tour with Vitamin X fifteen years after he had moved from Russia to the Netherlands in 1993. This trip was his first return to Russia so he had personal reasons for his fond memories. He describes the shows as 'busy' and the crowd as 'wild' and 'enthusiastic', like Menno he explains this was due to the (continued) rarity of western DIY bands going on tour to Russia, limited by the need for a visa and the cost of travel. Maxim had the connections and knowledge to do it affordably. The inequality that is afforded to bands in terms of opportunity to tour throughout Eastern and Western Europe highlights the need to regards structural inequality as an element in

cultural flow. This is exacerbated by the DIY ethos of the underground punk movement: the desire to produce punk without relying on elements of a capitalist entertainment industry does not remove the scene from the capitalist economy entirely. A degree of economic capital remains a significant element of the structure of the DIY punk scene.

Conclusion

This article has argued for a more nuanced understanding of the ways in which cultural influence may 'flow' in a subculture such as punk. By drawing both on Hannerz's (1992) understanding of a centre/periphery model, and Deleuze and Guattari's ([1987] 2003) 'rhizome' we are able to gain a better understanding of the complexity with which cultural exchanges affects the development of cultural practice, whilst maintaining a view of the inherent inequality of the system. Contact between Eastern Europe and the Dutch punk scene has been used as an exploratory example, highlighting a variety of points of contact, including the movement of political ideas and lifestyle choices, migration from the East to The Netherlands, and bands' touring practices. Whilst this remains highly specific, it is suggested that wider lessons can be learnt about the way in which personal exchanges and movements may affect cultural flow. The article argues that this 'centre' has been influenced by interaction with a periphery, however ultimately concludes that this does not level the power imbalance that stems from deeper social structures.

References

Antillectual (2011), 'Antillectual at Vegan Club',

http://www.last.fm/event/1896338+Antillectual+at+Vegan+Club+on+2+May+2011%20accessed%2027-11-2012. Accessed 28 November 2012.

Appadurai, A. (1996), *Modernity at Large: Cultural Dimensions of Globalization,*

Minneapolis and London: University of Minnesota Press.

Bennett, A. (1999), 'Subcultures or neo-tribes? Rethinking the relationship between

youth, style and musical taste', *Sociology*, 33:3, pp. 599–617.

_____ (2011), 'The post-subcultural turn: Some reflections 10 years on', *Journal of Youth*

Studies, 14, pp. 493–506.

Bennett, A. and Peterson, R. A. (2004), 'Introducing music scenes', in A. Bennett and R.

A. Peterson (eds), *Music Scenes : Local, Translocal and Virtual*, 1st ed., Nashville:

Vanderbilt University Press, pp. 1–15.

Bull, M. J. (1995), 'The West European communist movement in the late twentieth

century', *West European Politics*, 18:1, pp. 78–97.

Deleuze, G. and Guattari, F. ([1987] 2003), *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and*

Schizophrenia, London, New York: Continuum.

Dudrah, R. K. (2002), 'Drum'n'dhol 1 British bhangra music and diasporic South Asian

identity formation', *European Journal of Cultural Studies*, 5:3, pp. 363–83.

Haenfler, R. (2006), *Straight Edge : Clean-Living Youth, Hardcore Punk, and Social*

Change, New Brunswick, New Jersey and London: Rutgers University Press.

Hannerz, U. (1992), *Cultural Complexity: Studies in the Social Organization of Meaning*,

New York: Columbia University Press.

Hebdige, D. (1979), *Subculture : The Meaning of Style*, London and New York: Routledge.

Hodkinson, P. (2002), *Goth: Identity, Style and Subculture*, Oxford and New York: Berg.

_____ (2004), 'Translocal connections in the goth scene', in A. Bennett and R. A. Peterson (eds) *Music Scenes : Local, Translocal and Virtual*, 1st ed., Nashville: Vanderbilt University Press, pp. 131–48.

Jonker, L. (2012), *No Future Nu: Punk in Nederland 1977–2012*, Amsterdam: Lebowski.

Kempton, R. (2007), *Provo: Amsterdam's Anarchist Revolt*, Brooklyn: Autonomedia.

Man Lifting Banner (1992), 'Man lifting banner – Ten inches that shook the world', http://www.crucialresponse.com/label/en/bands/release/Man-Lifting-Banner/Ten-Inches-That-Shook-The-World.html?task=view. Accessed 27 August 2012.

Malbon, B. (1999), *Clubbing: Dancing, Ecstacy, Vitality*, London and New York: Routledge.

Miller, D. (2010), Anthropology in blue jeans, *American Ethnologist*, 37:3, pp. 415–28.

Muggleton, D. (2000), *Inside Subculture : The Postmodern Meaning of Style*, Oxford and New York: Berg.

O'Connor, A. (2004), 'Punk and globalization: Spain and Mexico', *International Journal of Cultural Studies*, 7:2, pp. 175–95.

Pilkington, H. (2004), 'Youth strategies for glocal living: Space, power and communication in everyday cultural practice', in A. Bennett and K. Kahn-Harris (eds), *After Subculture : Critical Studies in Contemporary Youth Culture*, Basingstoke and New York: Palgrave Macmillan, pp. 119–34.

_____ (2012), 'Punk – but not as we know it: Punk in post-socialist space', *Punk and Post Punk*, 1:3, pp. 253–66.

Pilkington, H. and Johnson, R. (2003), 'Peripheral youth: Relations of identity and power in global/local context', *European Journal of Cultural Studies*, 6:3, pp. 259–83.

Pilkington, H. and Omel'Chenko, E. (2013), 'Regrounding youth cultural theory (in post-socialist youth cultural practice)', *Sociology Compass*, 7.3, pp. 208–24.

Robertson, R. (1995), 'Glocalization: Time–space and homogeneity-heterogeneity', in M. Featherstone, L. Scott and Robertson, R. (eds), *Global Modernities*, London: Sage, pp. 25–44.

Rondos (1979a), 'Red Rock: Inleiding', http://www.rondos.nl/redrock/. Accessed 24 November 2012.

____ (1979b), 'Rondos Discografie: King Kong Records',

http://www.rondos.nl/rondos_discografie/index.php?id=king_kong_records. Accessed 24 July 2012.

Sabin, R. (1999), 'Introduction', in R. Sabin (ed.), *Punk Rock: So What?: The Cultural Legacy of Punk*, London: Routledge, pp. 1–13.

Sassoon, D. (1996), *One Hundred Years of Socialism: The West European Left in the Twentieth Century*, London: IB Tauris Publishers.

Shank, B. (1994), *Dissonant Identities: The rock'n'roll scene in Austin, Texas,* Hanover: Wesleyan University Press.

Shils, E. (1975), *Center and Periphery*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Smash The Statues (2009), 'Smash The Statues', Roland Garros, Cluj, 25 May,

http://www.myspace.com/smashthestatueshc/photos/62892829#%7B%22ImageId%22%3A62892829%7D.

Accessed 28 November 2012.

Straw, W. (2001), 'Scenes and sensibilities', *Public*, 22–23, pp. 245–57.

Thornton, S. (1995), *Club Cultures : Music, Media and Subcultural Capital*, Cambridge: Polity.

Van De Weert, J. (2009), *Biografie – Rondos A Black & White Statement*, Rotterdam: King Kong Records.

Voerman, G. (1991), '"Away With All Your Superstitions!": The end of communism in the Netherlands', *The Journal of Communist Studies*, 7:4, pp. 460–76.

Wallerstein, I. (1974), *The Modern World-System*, New York: Academic Press.

Contributor details

Kirsty Lohman is a Ph.D. student at the University of Warwick. Her thesis is an ethnography of the punk scene in The Netherlands focusing particularly on political and lifestyle choices of participants as they negotiate ageing as a punk. This work is funded by an AHRC studentship attached to the project entitled 'Post-Socialist Punk: Beyond the Double Irony of Self-abasement'. Her background is in cultural history during the Cold War period. She currently teaches in the Department of Sociology at Warwick and organizes the Graduate Seminar Series for the Centre for the Study of Women and Gender. She plays in the Midlands-based punk band Not Right, and helps to run Coventry's punk night Revolt.

Contact:

Address: Department of Sociology,

              University of Warwick,

              Coventry,

CV4 7AL,

United Kingdom

E-mail: Kirsty.Lohman@warwick.ac.uk

Notes