

Sonic Contagions: Bird Flu, Bandung, and the Queer Cartographies of MIA

Ronak K. Kapadia

University of Illinois, Chicago

This article explores the complex relation of image and sound in the work of Sri Lankan diasporic musician, producer, and designer Mathangi Maya Arulpragasam (a.k.a. MIA). With her eclectic visual style and synthesis of hip-hop, electronica, dance, and global pop music, MIA has now been a trailblazer in music, fashion, and political culture for a decade. Recently named one of *Time Magazine*'s "75 Most Influential People" of the 21st century, MIA is the first artist of Asian descent to be nominated for an Academy and Grammy Award in the same year. This article introduces the concept of "queer cartographies," a critical listening to MIA's beats, which allows us to grasp not only the nexus of race, gender, and globalizing security in the context of US warfare, but also the unlikely intimacies between diverse histories of terrorism and the political agendas of social movements and radical uprisings across the globe. "Sonic Contagions" is motivated by the emergent articulation of global public health surveillance programs with recent security panics over bird flu and swine flu. Together, these biopolitical developments provide the discursive terrain in which to ask how existing US security apparatuses are being reconfigured to shape new assemblages of organizations, techniques, and forms of biopolitical expertise. At stake here, and in contrast to this emergent "biosecurity" framework, are the aesthetic practices of artists like MIA, which provide a critical moment of refreshment—an opportunity to reactivate our political imaginations and conceptualize "contagion" anew. After a brief elaboration of her complex visual performances, I prioritize an account of the sonic realm in MIA's work to argue that sonic processes of affective contagion, or "sonic contagions," make available alternative utopian possibilities that offer other ways of hearing and conceptualizing queer collectivity, belonging, and pleasure in the midst of the devastations wrought by security panics and warfare.

Irresistible forces have swept the two continents. The mental, spiritual and political face of the whole world has been changed

and the process is still not complete. There are new conditions, new concepts, new problems, new ideals abroad in the world. Hurricanes of national awakening and reawakening have swept over the land, shaking it, changing it, changing it for the better.

—*Indonesian President Sukarno, Asian-African Conference, Bandung, Indonesia, 1955*

Nonalignment produces a queer effect.

—*Sara Ahmed*

From Outbreak to Dance Break

MIA has caught something fierce. The Sri Lankan diasporic rapper and international hipster icon's music video, titled "Bird Flu," captures a feeling. Shot in a Tamil Nadu fishing town still reeling from the 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami, "Bird Flu" drops the artist into a seemingly idyllic rural setting. Clad in Punky Brewster-esque tie-dye, police cap with pink feather accents and cropped denim shorts to match, MIA prances amidst a sea of other brown folk: village elders in traditional garb, endless rows of teenaged men sporting militant fashions, and tiny children gyrating alongside chickens and swine. Released in November 2006, the single packs lethal *urumee* drum beats, syncopated poultry squawks, and chanting children into a frantic, disorienting, and equally mischievous set. The track was the first off her highly acclaimed second solo album titled *Kala*. It takes up the "bird flu" dance craze that has spread from sites along the Ivory Coast and Jamaica to the United States and now southern India. The dance involves imitating a dying chicken, and a quick scan on YouTube reveals endless illustrations from across the globe. In a highlight from her video, a tiny boy leads a spirited parade of dancing villagers, flapping arms like wings: "*Bird flu gonna get you/made it in my stable/from the crap you drop/on my crop/when they pay you.*"

This article explores sonic processes of affective contagion in the beats of MIA. I will argue that "bird flu," as a mode of affective transmission, makes audible alternative models of queer relationality that point to other ways of being connected in the world (Brennan 2004). Hence, bird flu as "outbreak" becomes bird flu as "dance break," which then becomes bird flu as "structure of (revolutionary) feeling." We might even "freedom-dream" not of José Esteban Muñoz's "brown feelings," but *bird flu feelings*:

infection, pathogen, illness, and disease remade (Kelley 2002; Muñoz 2000). All promiscuously revised and dropped with a salty, postcolonial beat. As my analysis of MIA will show, “bird flu feelings” offers a way of describing forms of affect and affiliation that are unbridled by the strictures of the nation-state and its terrorizing logics of security paranoia and permanent war.

By critically listening to MIA’s sounds, I aim to depart from contemporary narratives of avian flu outbreak and the transmission of related diseases. These discourses interpret global interdependence as a problem in need of aggressive regulation. The governing logics, institutions, and social forces that generate these pathologizing discourses express profound anxieties over contemporary globalization, including the perceived erosion of national boundaries and the unsteadiness of US political, corporate, and moral hegemony (D’Arcangelis 2008; Albertini 2009). These concerns in turn are expressed and articulated both as imperial paranoia (McClintock 2009) and vulnerability to unanticipated outbreaks of illness, terrorism, and an endless array of underground economies where racialized and sexualized populations are primed as security “risks” in need of management, containment, or elimination (Shah 2001; Anderson 2006; Wald 2008). More specifically, my use of “bird flu” channels the affective dimensions of US security panics around epidemiological crises and global pandemics, as well as concerns over post-9/11 threats of bioterrorism and “late” capitalist anxieties on global climate change (to say nothing of AIDS).¹ In this context, we benefit from engaging the unlikely work of diasporic cultural producers whose projects offer more expansive, imaginative, and critical accounts of these material logics and conditions. An analysis of MIA’s sonic performances helps to build the critical vocabulary necessary to begin to challenge the prevailing epistemologies and geopolitics of US global warfare.²

In particular, I will trace the sonic trajectory and global movement of the figure of MIA—subcultural icon, state security threat, diasporic child of Tamil militancy, and transnational feminist theorist—as she metaphorically catches and spreads “bird flu” from the global South, packing it with an infectious beat on her way through various sites in the North. MIA is not only an exemplary product of global networks of sonic technologies (Weheliye 2005) but also a vibrant producer of them. Her playful and highly stylized inhabiting of “bird flu” resists the dominant interpretation of viral outbreaks as dire, disastrous, terrorist plagues with a propensity for mass destruction and refashions it instead as a lush site of subalternist splendor

and struggle. In the sonic universe she constructs, the relations of force cultivating and unevenly distributing militarized warfare, human insecurity, and global dispossession do not suddenly disappear. Instead, her music captures the affective dimensions of these experiences of forced migration and warfare, rearticulating them as collective resources for “imagining otherwise” (Chuh 2003). By actively aligning her sounds with differently racialized populations marked as epidemiological “risks,” MIA further invites us to “catch bird flu” as well, recharting our own affective maps to be *sonically interested* in the world.

However, this concrete utopian project of affective transmission, which takes flight when we think with the sounds of MIA, is not seamless. Indeed, as I will show, it is rife with failure. By tracing the affective contagion at work in MIA’s sounds, I also do not mean to suggest that this popular music icon represents an effortlessly oppositional diasporic figure whose sonorous marks simply resurrect the meaning of radical struggles that spread across the decolonizing world. Instead, in the unruly beats conjured by MIA, we can perceive the faint echoes of another time and place—a queer utopian echo where alternate sets of connections across these spaces and populations are made not only audible but irresistibly contagious as well. We therefore can divine in her aesthetic strategies a mode of contagion, distinct from simple transmission, which resonates with (while simultaneously critiquing the limits of) those older political formations from which we might conjure less hostile, more hopeful futures.

Queer Cartographies of MIA

In order to unpack what I dub the sonic contagion of MIA, I first introduce the concept of “queer cartographies,” which is a theoretical strategy to identify intimacies connecting differently racialized populations across disparate affective sites. Queer cartographies provides a methodological antidote to what postcolonial feminist scholar Ella Shohat has diagnosed as the “disciplinary and conceptual boundaries that continue to quarantine interconnected fields of inquiry” by placing “often ghettoized histories, geographies, and discourses in politically and epistemologically synergetic relation” (15). I ask what “relational maps of knowledge” would illumine and make audible the creative interventions networks of diasporic cultures produce within and across national boundaries. This concept helps to align seemingly incongruous fields of inquiry to locate similar configurations across disparate temporal-spatial sites, without flattening out the historical

or geographical specificity of their content. A queer cartographic listening of MIA, for instance, pitches our attention to a multiplicity of unlikely spaces—Jaffna, Bandung, London, Kingston, Chennai, and New York City among them—an expansive circuit of auditory sites and sounds that enacts a mode of critical inquiry prioritizing cross-racial affiliations and transcolonial connectivities produced in times of war.

Queer cartographic critique is in dialogue with two dynamic strands of recent interdisciplinary scholarship. First, it contributes to emergent works in postnational, interregional, transnational, and oceanic studies that elaborate conceptual frameworks to displace the primacy of the modern nation-state model while generating responses to the stultifying present (Lowe 2006; Shohat 2006; Stoler 2001; Lionnet and Shih 2005; Johnson et al. 2000; and Aravamudan 2006). For two decades, these scholars have mapped the complex interactions, identifications, circuits of movement, and intimacies of seemingly discrete populations, phenomena, and regions within, beyond, and below nation-states.³ In this article, I argue that the interdisciplinary field of postcolonial queer studies itself contributes to this collective project of thinking, sensing, and hearing beyond the nation-state and its repressive logics of belonging. It should be made clear that the mode of queer studies I invoke here understands queerness not simply as an identitarian category (to describe LGBTQ populations), but as a critical set of interpretive strategies that makes possible the production of alternative knowledges, affects, and affiliations. Queer cartographic critique thus not only allows us to examine how knowledge is secured under the conditions of late modern imperialism, but also prioritizes the affective, sensorial, and everyday visions, sounds, and practices of diasporic and minoritarian life.⁴

Second, a queer cartographic analysis of MIA draws on emergent works in affect studies to prioritize relational and alternative modes of thinking. Literary scholar Jonathan Flatley's influential concept of "affective mapping" is a formative source for my analysis of MIA's oeuvre (2008). As he demonstrates in his study of the unlikely power of melancholia to forge historical collectivities, "social forces of modernity work *through* emotions, the ways we become the subjects that we are is by the structuring of our affective attachments" (4). Flatley explains that an affective map is a map less for its delineation of territory and more for its capacity to provide "a feeling of orientation and facilitating mobility . . . a technology for the representation to oneself of one's own historically conditioned and changing affective life" (7). Although maps regularly function as instruments of centralized surveillance, as tactics of information retrieval and war-making

(Chow 2006), the endlessly revisable queer cartography that MIA embodies “not only gives us a view of a terrain shared with others in the present but also traces the paths, resting places, dead ends and detours we might share with those who came before us” (Flatley 7). This impulse to “touch the past” by charting the “dead ends and detours” shared with those who came before us becomes crucial in specifying MIA’s auditory interventions (Dinshaw 1999; Love 2009; Muñoz 2009; Walcott 2009; Freeman 2010). By focusing on the artist’s complex and contradictory audiotopic landscape, I take MIA “back to the future,” placing her soundtrack in dialogue with histories of transnational solidarity and their incompleteness as resources for imagining collective futures.⁵ My goal is thus not simply to fold her music into prior moments of lost internationalism like the Bandung Conference in order to recuperate them as nostalgic remnants of a mythic past. Listening to MIA’s phonic archive instead makes these fraught histories of otherworldly affiliation newly available to us in the service of different, we might say queer, futures. In short, the unlikely intimacies that I hope to catch—what I call “bird flu feelings”—exist not only across lateral spatial sites, but distinct temporalities as well.

From Seascapes to Soundscapes

We can begin to detect the queer cartographic impulse in MIA’s music by dwelling on the set location for her video introduced above. Directed by Kalyan Kumar and the artist herself, “Bird Flu” was shot in a fishing village on the Coromandel Coast of the Bay of Bengal near Chennai (formerly Madras), the capital city of the southern Indian state of Tamil Nadu. Chennai, like other major port cities in the region, continues to rebound from the devastating effects of the 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami. The massive displacement of ocean water triggered by a magnitude 9.2 earthquake off the northwest coast of Sumatra killed more than 250,000 people and destroyed the livelihoods of untold more across Indonesia, Sri Lanka, India, Thailand, Somalia, Maldives, Malaysia, Myanmar, Tanzania, Bangladesh, and Kenya. In the words of historian Sugata Bose, “The unity of the Indian Ocean world had been demonstrated in the most tragic fashion by a great wall of water moving at the speed of a jet aircraft” (1). As the deadliest tsunami on record, the crisis exposed the deep connections between the diverse peoples of the Indian Ocean rim. Those affective bonds across this “interregional arena” have an extensive history, as this space was defined by “specialized flows of capital and labor, skills and services,

ideas and culture” for hundreds of years (1). But as Bose beautifully expresses, the tsunami likewise laid bare the enduring relevance of the Indian Ocean rim concept for present and future forms of affective transmission: “Just as waves in one ocean produce fluctuations in sea levels in others, the human history of the Indian Ocean is strung together at a higher level of intensity in the interregional arena while contributing to and being affected by structures, processes, and events of global significance” (3).⁶

We might consider why MIA selected this particularly laden site to record “bird flu,” as it offers a profound *port of entry* into theorizing the sustained conditions of mutual vulnerability and interregional intimacy for diverse populations conjoined by the furious power of the natural world. Recently, postcolonial, feminist, and queer scholars have brought renewed attention to maritime spaces as allegories for the highly unstable confluence of race, nationality, class, sexuality, and gender. These scholars theorize ocean water as a dense borderlands site, with crosscurrents transmitting historical consciousness across space and time (Gilroy 1993; Connery 1996; Tinsley 2008; Fajardo 2008). By grasping the unique perils and possibilities of ocean water, MIA releases her present-day “bird flu” sound into these affective worlds, both ancient and futural. We therefore can identify the dynamic Indian Ocean world itself as one of the many queer diasporic cartographies MIA swims in and makes available through her work.

Yet the enduring intimacies shared between distinct but interrelated populations can be gleaned not only in seascapes, but in soundscapes too. If, for Sugata Bose, critical explorations of Indian Ocean history require imagining “a hundred horizons . . . of many hues and colors,” the queer cartographies of MIA asks that we suspend the visual metaphor of the horizon in order to better attend to sonic contagions across disparate spaces and temporalities (4).⁷ My interest lies in capturing the unique role sound plays in evoking the affective bonds and alternative relational maps that MIA both listens to and makes audible in her music. More than most artists, MIA is critically attuned to the uncommon sonic culture she creates. Born in Hounslow, London, England in 1975, Mathangi “Maya” Arulpragasam, a.k.a. MIA, is the daughter of Tamil activist-turned-militant Arul Pragasam. As a newborn, MIA and her family moved back to Sri Lanka where her father was a founding member of the Eelam Revolutionary Organisation of Students (EROS), a group later brutally subsumed by the larger Tamil independence movement. The artist’s production team has made much of these alleged patrilineal links to militant subnational resistance groups, most especially the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE). The LTTE is a Sri

Lankan revolutionary separatist organization that, beginning in the mid-1970s, waged a bloody and unsuccessful independence struggle against the Sinhalese-majority government to secure statehood for the ethnic Tamil majority regions in the north and east of Sri Lanka (Wilson 1999).⁸ The LTTE campaign that evolved into the Sri Lankan Civil War was the longest running armed conflict in Asia until its vicious defeat by the Sri Lankan military in May 2009. Because the images, sounds, and allied senses of this civil war critically haunt MIA's expressive archives, we benefit from careful investigations of her fraught if everchanging aesthetic relation to Tamil resistance.

“Hands Up, Guns Out, Represent the World Town”

The artist's autobiographical histories of loss and forced migration amidst seemingly endless political violence clarify the critical value of a queer cartographic approach. To escape escalating tensions from the civil war, MIA and her family left Jaffna for the relief camps of Chennai before ultimately fleeing back to London in the mid-1980s under refugee asylum protection, notably without her father, quite literally “missing in action.”⁹ As a gifted and creative student reared in the working-class council flats of South London, MIA displayed early signs of her distinctive visual sensibility. She enrolled in London's Central Saint Martins College of Art and Design where she crafted her own eclectic aesthetic, melding rap iconography, warfare photos, and British Asian and American new-wave filmmaking styles. In 2001, she had her first public exhibition of paintings nominated for the Tate's Alternative Turner Prize. This work featured spray-painted stencils of the Tamil freedom movement with graffitied tigers and palm trees in orange, green, and pink camouflage—crude iconography still somewhat central to her album art and visual aesthetics. Her first foray into music would soon follow, as online circulation of her earliest singles “Galang” and “Sunshowers” generated considerable underground buzz. In 2005, MIA's award-winning solo album *Arular* (named after the father) was released in North America. Its indie sound crisscrosses multiple geographies and histories through a dizzying array of dancehall, electro, jungle, funk, and world music. Like many others, I did not come into contact with her sonic orbit until a mix-tape of mash-ups by DJ Diplo, acerbically titled *Piracy Funds Terrorism*, began to blare from radio stations and nightclubs across the United States. *Piracy* features MIA's lyrics imaginatively remixed with

the sounds of Brazilian *baile funk*, Annie Lennox, the Bangles, and the theme song from *Rocky*—producing several electrosmash dance hits.

MIA's work expresses the profoundly contradictory ways in which diasporic cultural producers participate in radical resistance movements in the global South that, by definition, exceed the strict confines of the nation-state. Numerous scholars have documented the centrality of diasporic affects and affiliations to the success of multiple mid-century independence movements and wars of liberation across the "darker nations" (Young 2006; Redmond 2013). We might also include the case for the liberation of Tamil Eelam, except sovereignty remains suspended. Without condoning the violent practices of the LTTE or advocating a precritical alliance between MIA and this complex freedom movement, we can at least begin to gesture at the romantic evocation of radical resistance struggles in the global South by diasporic and refugee subjects. I call this a "romantic evocation" because even a cursory glance at MIA's oeuvre would reveal nothing intrinsically radical (or critically Left) about her affective politics. For instance, the artist has come under increasing fire of late for interviews where she self-identifies as the unequivocal Western "spokesperson" for the Tamil humanitarian crisis in Sri Lanka (*The Tavis Smiley Show*).¹⁰ Her frank, if at times untidy commentaries on increasingly sordid political terrain have infuriated international human rights activists and government officials alike.¹¹ In her public statements, MIA therefore walks a fine line between exercising her global platform as an informed and effective advocate for her native country and alternatively appearing like a sound-bitten provocateur profiting from the demand for a generic, rebel-outsider appeal. We could view this as a failure of her critical potentiality, of sorts, since these contradictory tendencies circulate simultaneously in her work. Nevertheless, for MIA as a member of the Tamil diaspora in postimperial Thatcherite Britain (and later Bloomberg's Brooklyn), bombs, guns, and freedom fighters were all best refashioned in glittery, cotton-candy-colored glam.

Of course, it is precisely this obsession with her disidentificatory visual style that lets most critics ignore the political conditions of possibility for her work and, even more urgently for my purposes here, allows them to displace the critical import of her auditory interventions. A particularly glaring example comes in a controversial, nine-page cover story in *The New York Times Magazine* where contributor Lynn Hirschberg assails MIA for her "child-of-Godard mix of politics, paranoia, and pop" (36). Published in anticipation of the artist's self-titled third album, the article's

subheading belies its angle: “Is the Sri Lankan Musician’s Political Rap More Than Just Radical Chic?” In it, the journalist attacks MIA for her perceived lack of substance while providing an inaccurate and incomplete characterization of the rapper’s actions. Hirschberg trivializes the political realities evoked by the musician’s celebrity, including the plight of Tamil communities at home and abroad, the complex relation between the LTTE and the larger freedom movement, and the respective roles of Sri Lankan government forces and diasporic populations over successive generations of civil strife. Rather than engage the complexities of her sound by tracing any of these important transnational circuits, Hirschberg instead surmises that MIA is only as interesting as her “unique tomboy-meets-ghetto-fabulous-meets-exotic-princess-look” (32). In sum, by trafficking in paradigmatic antifeminist and Orientalist tropes, *The New York Times* predictably works to contain, if not outright suppress the radical potentiality of MIA. Its wholesale dismissal provides sufficient evidence that something threatening, or perhaps better put, “virally compelling,” stimulates the artist’s affective and sonic performance.¹²

In order to dig deeper and mine the contagious elements at work here, we achieve better conceptual clarity by isolating sound and other modes of affective transmission that circumvent her visual field, that might even contradict the scopic altogether. My queer relation to MIA’s sonic archives is in keeping with Gayatri Gopinath’s call to ask “different questions of dominant, recognizable archives” that seek to represent South Asian diasporic public culture in order to “rethink what constitutes a viable cultural archive in the first place” (2005, 57). Gopinath’s queer diasporic critique furthers my study of MIA, a Sri Lankan Tamil refugee artist, to consider the ways in which she both inevitably falls out of conventional archives of British Asian sound and appears like an aberration or oddity in the North American mainstream press. Turning a critical ear to MIA’s sounds can stimulate alternative experiences with the popular music archive, or what Dipesh Chakrabarty has evocatively termed “other ways of being in the world” (qtd. in Gopinath 53).

The sonic landscapes traversed by MIA allow us to locate the affective signatures of several transcolonial solidarities left in her wake. When critically listening to *Kala*, we begin to perceive how the artist skillfully mashes up bits of hip-hop, grime, trance, Bollywood minor chords, house, dub, disco, Afrobeat, reggae, *baile funk*, and indie rock alongside brass horns and strings, squawks, chanting children, hand claps, and frenetic percussion—unruly hybrid sounds that together signal what Alex Weheliye

calls “the contained rhythmic chaos of the world” (204). *Kala* sounds the divergent spaces MIA inhabits, whether they be war zones, refugee camps, housing projects, art schools, fashion shows, dance clubs, or even SoCal mansions too. The electronic pulse emanating from this record is possibly better conceptualized as noise. A near constant cacophony of sirens, alarms, whistles, warplanes en flight, and explosions of all kinds comprise the buzzing core of her beats, which are synthetically arranged through an ensemble of computer technologies.¹³

The critical import of turning to the sonic realm itself stems from the scholarly hope that knowing through hearing might elicit an alternative, sometimes contradictory, conceptualization of social relations than offered by visually based epistemologies. In listening to *Kala*, we are invited to sonically traverse a global ensemble of sites and sounds brought together in the singular space of music. But this hybrid layering is not simply the result of MIA’s postmodern eclecticism. Instead, it is an effect of the material conditions under which the album was produced. More specifically, the artist’s inability to enter the United States as a result of documented visa issues and a host of censorship battles prompted her relocation once more, as she opted to record the majority of *Kala* outside the United States (Durbin 2007; Malkani 2007). For MIA, the visa debacle signaled an opportunity to be otherwise sonically interested in the world:

When I didn’t get into America, I really thought, ‘Okay, fine. I have five million other people to draw from.’ Obviously, the first place I could go back to was the place I knew best—which was Sri Lanka and India. Those were the “Bird Flu” and the “Boyz” drum sounds. I just wanted to go and learn and become more aware of musicality, I suppose. I know that in America at the time it was really disco-y and dance-y and minimal, more ass n’ titties. I wasn’t stupid—I knew that it was going to be a challenge and no one really wanted to hear something like that. Even in India they don’t want to hear shit like that because they want something really modern. I wanted to experiment with something organic. So I was like, Fuck it. I know I can do electronic music and make beats on a 505. Now I want to go and try something that’s weighty or older and traditional. It’s going to be a mission. It sounds so outsider, and that was going to be the hardest challenge for me—to go to America and say, Listen to this. It’s not Miami bass, but maybe it’s just as useful. (Wagner 2007)

In this direct outcome of US border paranoia, a unique sound is born—conceived, performed, and dubbed elsewhere and otherwise in countries like Trinidad, India, Liberia, Jamaica, Australia, Japan, and the United Kingdom. The album's aural repertoire clearly profits from and echoes these privileged, cross migratory relationships, as MIA mixes *soca* and chutney, rave culture, bootleg soundtracks off mid-1970s Bollywood films, and the *kuduro* sounds of Buraka Som Sistema.

These queer cartographies are felt most intensely on the “Bird Flu” track, as we hear MIA experiment with something “weighty or older and traditional” (Wagner 2007). While usually known for her synthetic hip hop or electronic beats, the rapper here samples the *urumee melam/ganaa* music tradition of southern India, featuring over thirty live drummers from the temples of Chennai performing with the *urumee* drum—a double-headed hourglass-shaped instrument associated with Tamil folk music. The thunderous clapping and whistling that accompanies the bass-like quality of the track resonates with *dappankutthu*, the informal, percussive-oriented dance and music genre of southern India widely featured in Tamil cinema. It is a regional sound now transported to the West Indies by MIA to be remixed on other album tracks, including “Boyz,” an apparent homage to the myriad security workers encountered on her endless journeys abroad. MIA's mash-ups thus synthesize these southern Indian beats with Caribbean hip-hop vocabularies for global pop consumption.

Of even greater interest than this queer cartographic frame demanded by MIA's sonic orbit is the various affective states her music evokes. Perhaps most salient about the trope of contagion is not only that it is illicit but also that it *elicits*. In others words, contagion signals both the precarious transmission of disease, with bodies in contact, as well as the diffuse interplay of emotions and their connected sensorial states. The layered beats of “bird flu” produce a feeling of being engulfed by surges of old and new. We hear shouts from children and elders, birds and humans, the rural and urban, the mutated sampling of high tech electronics with low-tech temple drums. The collective chants of *dappankutthu*, with its “haa! haa! ha-hoooo! haa! haa! ha-hoooo!,” transmit a rush that hurls the listener into the center of a tidal wave, a protest, a union of divergent forces that can only be affectively known by traveling to another time and place. As the drums rage on, we hear MIA, with her characteristically Cockney accent, yell: “*Village got on the phone, said the street is coming to town/They wanna check my papers, see what I carry around/Credentials are boring, I burnt them at the burial ground/ They order me about, I'm an outlaw from the*

badlands.” Rejecting the strict protocols of state surveillance and dominant security, MIA teleports us instead to the Tamil Nadu fishing village where we are free to be “an outlaw from the badlands,” thereby suggesting her total disavowal of the nation-form.

These unruly hybrid sounds likewise make space for multiple lyrical misapprehensions. For instance, what if we listen to “bird flu” and hear it instead as “bird *flew*”? This is a mishearing or slippage only if we favor the lyrical and textual. Yet if we bracket that reading and simply listen instead, which is to privilege the sonic realm itself, “flu” and “flew” are homophones. This slippage into “bird flew” resonates precisely with the disobedient flight pattern dictated by MIA’s queer cartographies. “Flew” as the past tense form of “to fly” asks us to dwell not on the perils of encroaching disease but on the power of “taking flight” amidst global conditions of border restrictions, forced migrations, and terror wars. We thus witness sonic processes of affective contagion here that do not take “contagion” to mean straightforward transmission but allow for processes of mutation and change, a critical aspect of “bird flu futures,” which are always en route but never yet arrived. In this way, MIA gives us an affective map that spreads as it soars, making audible the force of sonic contagion.¹⁴

By piloting MIA’s “paper planes,” we are able to bring into discursive proximity disparate geographic spaces and temporalities—London, Trinidad and Tobago, Jamaica, Mali, India, Jaffna, Sri Lanka, Hounslow, Liberia, Australia, Burma, Colombo, and various related sites allegorically primed for “bird flu” (or “bird flight”). MIA thus challenges conventional diasporic maps of cultural origins or mythic homelands. As expressed by Jayna Brown, “In this world, Sri Lanka and the Congo are neighboring states” (132). In short, MIA’s diasporic (and promiscuously influenced) affiliations lead to a plurality of sounds that “gives rise to an awareness of simultaneous dimensions, an awareness that—to borrow a phrase from music—is *contrapuntal*” (Said 186).

The rapper’s contrapuntal beats conceive of music as “a mode of relation, a point of contact” between seemingly discrete and disparate sites (Kun 14). As Josh Kun beautifully expresses, “music can be of nation, but it is *never exclusively national*; it always overflows, spills out, sneaks through, reaches an ear on the other side of the border line, on the other side of the sea” (20). In this article, I have sought to catch what spills out on the other side of the sea, namely “bird flu feelings,” forms of affect and affiliation that are unbridled by the strictures of the nation-state and its terrorizing logics of security paranoia and permanent war. Cultural studies

scholars have well documented how popular music effectively exposes and undermines various myths of cultural purity. As a live archive, MIA's sonic orbit is therefore a dense site to think through various "subjacent histories" and unlikely lateral convergences that will lead to new audiotopic maps. For as Tejaswini Niranjana reminds us in her ethnographic work on musical crossings between the Caribbean and the Indian subcontinent, affectively mapping the intimacy of unlikely sites is "a first step toward rewriting our histories as well as envisioning, and enlarging, our futures—together and anew" (13).¹⁵

The Spread and Failure of "Irresistible Forces"

Amidst our desire for these conjoined futures, we benefit from recalling that the queer cartographies of contagion taking flight in MIA's sound have several important historical precedents. While many of these past political projects often have proven to be as fleeting, frenetic, or failed as the works of the musician herself, I want to suggest that failure provides its own critical map. In J. Jack Halberstam's estimation, failure offers a "worthy alternative to the legacies of violent triumphalism that victory implies" (4). A succinct case in point can be felt in the stalled ambitions of the collective project that came to be known as the "Third World," or the mutual freedom dreams and utopian affiliations of diverse peoples across the "darker nations" (Prashad 2007). Amidst local struggles for liberation and decolonization, leaders of the newly sovereign nations of Asia and Africa convened a series of pivotal global meetings that defied the bipartite division of the globe after World War II.¹⁶ These meetings, which included the select participation of US Third World leftists, provided a space to recognize and imagine particular struggles for racial and economic justice as part of a vast network of solidarity bringing together the majority of the world's peoples against racism, colonialism, and imperialism (Daulatzai 2006; Young 2006).

In particular, the 1955 Asian-African Conference in Bandung, Indonesia has received renewed attention from a recent generation of global Cold War scholars who see it as a "symbol of international coalition and anticolonial resistance that challenged the very foundation of Western power" (Young 2).¹⁷ I return belatedly to Indonesia not to dwell again on the aftermath of earthquakes or tsunamis, but to reanimate what then-President Sukarno called "hurricanes of national awakening and re-awakening" (qtd. in Prashad, 48). Sukarno spoke of the "irresistible forces" sweeping two continents—what we might call "internationalist nationalist" affects that

compelled new nations on otherwise divergent trajectories to adopt joint criticisms of Western militarism and capitalist expansion. As Vijay Prashad imparts, the euphoria generated by the conference was contagious: “From Belgrade to Tokyo, from Cairo to Dar es Salaam, politicians and intellectuals began to speak of the ‘Bandung Spirit.’ What they meant was simple: that the colonized world had now emerged to claim its space in world affairs [. . .] as a player in its own right” (45–46). The gathering was thus a collective opportunity to imagine otherwise—a crucial step in securing postcolonial futures.

Yet, as we know now, the radiance of anti-imperial unity and transnational solidarity across Asia and Africa would soon fade. For a multitude of reasons in differing contexts, the exuberance around the Third World project dissipated, and the past half-century is, as they say, history. Bandung is thus a seemingly anachronistic moment that symbolizes the various “failures” of the postcolonial state and Asian African anti-imperial unity more generally promised by global decolonization struggles (Shohat 296). Yet even postcolonial queer and feminist scholars, who have long assailed these nationalist projects for their widespread exclusions and hierarchies, have begun to revisit the conference and the nonaligned movement that followed in order to unearth the historical trace of intimacies uniting these differently racialized populations. As Gayatri Gopinath elegantly states, “the memory of these apparently failed, ephemeral movements, marked as out of time and out of place, may still have a powerfully transformative effect on the present. Bandung may indeed be done as an explicit political platform, but there are other modes of Afro-Asian political relationality that can be gleaned if we produce alternative understandings of what constitutes the political” (2010, 164).

While therefore important to recognize those failures in order to interrogate the unequal terms of contemporary transnational cultural exchange, reactivating Bandung’s symbolic power, in spite of its analogous (and thus problematic) relation to the priorities of Third World male elites, further reflects what Anna Tsing advances with her metaphor of “friction.” This trope reminds us “that heterogeneous and unequal encounters can lead to *new* arrangements of culture and power” (5). Niranjana agrees, noting that, “critical engagements with other Third World spaces might help inaugurate for and in the South a *new* internationalism, different—in its motivations, its desires, its imagined futures—from the aggressive globalization set in motion by the First World” (13). This “new internationalism” does not mean “a simple return to the international politics of the Nehru era” but rather

enacts an opportunity to rethink “present possibilities by pointing to forms of solidarity obscured by the growth of the globalized economy” (13–14).

Together, these critical insights on the histories of shared risks and the prospects for shared futures lead me to wonder whether MIA’s disidentificatory treatment of “Bird Flu” offers the necessary engine to incite new moments of (antiracist, feminist, and anti-imperialist) exchange in multiple sites across the global South. In this article, I have argued that by reanimating the spirit of contagion, MIA’s music already begins to anticipate these conditions. Through the hybridity and cacophony of its sounds, “Bird Flu” transports us back to the feverous moment of possibility encompassing the Bandung era, not simply as failed anachronism, but as an index of a still felt and yearned for project of liberation. Stretching an ear back to Bandung thus allows us to hear something different in the sonic trace of MIA, even as we reframe Bandung from past failure to felt futurity. By hearing in “Bird Flu” what Jonathan Flatley might call the melancholic “dead ends and detours” of decolonization’s promise, we begin to forge the affective maps necessary to index already existing alternatives to Western capitalist expansion and, in the process, theorize “bird flu” as a mode of affective transmission that has inherited (or quite literally, “caught”) the “Spirit of Bandung.”¹⁸ In sum, “catching bird flu” is about a utopian inhabiting of the world and time, a restructuring of our relation to these complex histories and futures so that we can possibly “go somewhere that exists only in our imagination” (Kelley qtd. in Young, 197).

Conclusion: The Spread of Bird Flu Feelings

It is particularly painful, then, to learn that more than 50 years after the momentous Asian-African Conference, Bandung is known worldwide today as merely one of the most recent sites of avian flu outbreak. In October 2006, anxious media accounts described how a 67-year-old Indonesian woman living in the Cisarua area of Bandung tested positive for the H5N1 virus strand after an examination at the US Naval Medical Research Unit in Jakarta (Reuters 2006). As of her hospitalization, 52 Indonesians had already died of bird flu, the highest of any country in the world, with the majority of deaths occurring since 2006 (WHO 2011). The World Health Organization (WHO) notes that outbreaks of the highly pathogenic H5N1 strand of avian influenza that began in Southeast Asia in mid-2003 are the largest and most severe cases on record, having now spread expansively to parts of Europe and North Africa and finally to North America in early

2014 (Puzic 2014). Infected birds transmit H5N1 to other animals through their saliva, nasal secretions, and feces. Experts argue that human viral infection is linked to close contact with dead or sick birds. Especially risky behavior, the WHO continues, includes “the slaughtering, de-feathering, butchering and preparation for consumption of infected birds” (WHO 2011). Past outbreaks have “originated” in crowded conditions in Southeast Asia, where humans, pigs, and poultry share close quarters—not unlike the chaotic interspecies scene smartly depicted in MIA’s music video for “Bird Flu.” In urban theorist Mike Davis’s estimation, “avian flu is on the verge of mutating into a super-contagious form that could travel at pandemic velocity, killing up to 100 million people within two years” (Davis 2005). The alarmist threat of migratory birds haunts us all.

What does it mean, in closing, for Bandung to “host” the contemporary site of H5N1 influenza transmission and outbreak? By critically listening to MIA’s sounds, I have sought to refashion metaphors of plague, of infections that spread and precondition certain populations as irredeemably premodern and in need of biosecurity intervention. Yet, “bird flu” is a technology distinguished by its spatial and ethical abandon. It mutates and spreads—drifting ever closer to the safe havens of the postindustrialized Western world. To be sure, MIA is certainly not the only one riffing off of flu metaphors for creative gain. US political scientists, for instance, have long employed the rhetoric of disease to signal supposedly encroaching transnational phenomena like global insurrections and the revolutionary “nonstate actors” discussed here (not unlike the LTTE dubiously affixed to MIA) (Bloom 2007). These political realist accounts advance the notion of a “contagion effect” of suicide terrorism. Their use of the metaphor, as with the influenza virus itself, suggests a fast-approaching, virulent plague that needs to be contained, if not entirely obliterated to secure Western democratic-capitalist “freedoms.”

If historically “contagion” variously signified exclusion, impossibility, fundamentalism, disease, death, terror, and destruction, I have wanted to rehear the metaphor here instead, as I think MIA does, as a symbolic reservoir for queer feeling, shared risks, and above all else, pleasure in collective political struggles. The ideological hybridity and sense of political urgency emanating from MIA’s beats thus makes “bird flu” and its futures the immediate concern of not only affected but also *affective* communities worldwide (Gandhi 2006). I persist in collecting “bird flu feelings,” then, as a powerful source for alternative, yet-to-be-caught queer futures. I have argued that this queer cartographic reading practice

involves not only indexing alternative ways of inhabiting the world, but also acquiring an entirely different affective relation to the historical archive itself—whether we name those traces “queer,” “sonic,” “contagious,” or something else altogether unexpected and unknowable in advance. As we know too well, “queer” is but one name for identifying alternatives that don’t come readily. A focus on the sonic contagions of MIA thus foregoes easy resolution—hopefully resonating instead as a beginning, an invitation, the first notes of a collective project that soars and spreads because, as with sound, “there is always something yet to be heard” (Kun 94).

Acknowledgment

For JEM.

Notes

1. US global warfare encompasses not only military and penal regimes but also the incipient interarticulation of public health and medical systems with the projects of emergency management and national security defense (Lakoff and Collier 2008 and Price-Smith 2009).

2. MIA’s 2011 video for “Born Free” exemplifies the critical role of diasporic culture to intervene into these dominant discourses. Directed by Greek French filmmaker Romain Gavras and released in critical anticipation of her third solo album titled *Maya*, this minifilm features a dystopian universe where police raids, in what appears to be Los Angeles, lead to the systematic detention, rendition, and murder of dozens of young, red-haired white men. We do not see MIA throughout, but her warped sounds overlay the blatant images of violence against so-called “gingers.” While many panned this video as “terrorist chic” or “political naïveté,” MIA’s “Born Free,” which was quickly banned on YouTube, does offer an unusually stark rendering of the power and fantasy behind state terror and its biopolitical rationalities. It further provides a rare glimpse into how US popular media itself attempts to manage the implications of a wide set of contemporary political happenings related to state security, like the state-sanctioned repression and enduring detention of immigrants in Arizona and beyond, “overseas contingency operations,” and the racialized policing of terrorist networks worldwide.

3. While some of their projects respond to the ongoing “transnational turn” in American studies, others predate this gesture or extend their critiques far beyond the Americas to alternate geographic sites, tracing cross-currents from Aztlán and the Black Atlantic, to the Hemispheric and Pacific Rim. Taken together, this joint scholarly enterprise provides a deft counternarrative to knowledge projects aligned with the heterogeneous forces of globalizing capital and nationalist wars on terror.

4. Karen Tongson's (2011) incisive reformulation of Jennifer Terry's notion of "remote intimacies" offers a formative source for what I call queer cartographic critique.

5. Josh Kun's (2005) highly generative concept "audiotopia" provides an important correlate to my analysis here. I depart from his formulation by prioritizing queerness, understood as an alternative hermeneutic, to capture the insurgent, yet often illegible or inaudible forms of affect, erotic kinship, and collectivity produced by contemporary diasporic cultural workers.

6. See also Naomi Klein's (2007) discussion of post-tsunami neoliberal redevelopment in Sri Lanka and Thailand.

7. The horizon metaphor proves to be equally central to emergent queer utopian hermeneutics. This line of thinking has been elaborated most productively in the work of José Esteban Muñoz (2009). Inspired by critical theorists of the Frankfurt tradition including Ernst Bloch, Muñoz's theorization of queer futurity relies on the visual register. While the scopic may be integral to imaginings of futurity, the sonic is less generously mined, and it further provides its own tracks toward queer utopianism. For exemplary discussions of sonic utopias in the black radical tradition, see Moten (2003); Eshun (1999); and Weheliye (2005).

8. Deeper political and historical context for the Tamil struggle and the postwar aftermath in Sri Lanka can be found in the work of multiethnic diasporic and expatriate groups like the Sri Lanka Democracy Forum and Lanka Solidarity. See <http://www.srilankademocracy.org> and Lanka Solidarity, <http://www.lankasolidarity.org>, respectively.

9. In an interview about "Bird Flu," MIA recounts how the Tamil refugee camps in Chennai were not far from the video's set location—underscoring the material proximities of the affective worlds I discursively conjoin here. While key details on the whereabouts of MIA's absent-present father have been disputed by various media accounts, her familial migration pattern still reflects the major wave of forced displacement experienced by Sri Lankan Tamils following the events of "Black July." This date commonly refers to a series of violent anti-Tamil attacks by Sinhala mobs in July 1983 that precipitated the full-scale escalation of armed conflict on the island, a conflict that would last for more than 25 years.

10. While importantly contextualizing the crisis for a US audience (i.e., she differentiates the Tamil civilian population from the Tamil Tigers who, by claiming sole authority over the interests of Tamil communities, violently repressed dissent), MIA still erroneously refers to the "systematic genocide" of Tamils while restating

her singular activist status: “being the only Tamil in the Western media . . . the more successful I’m getting the more dire the situation in Sri Lanka is getting . . . [I’m] the only voice for the Tamil people . . .” (*The Tavis Smiley Show*).

11. These groups rely on carefully delineated statements for their authority in the court of international opinion, a practice that MIA generally appears to rebuff. For incisive criticism of her “definitive spokesperson” role, see Ganeshanathan (2010) and YaliniDream (2010).

12. I thank José Muñoz for helping me to articulate this point. See also Chambers-Letson (2006).

13. While the artist is credited for her work on all aspects of production, the quality of *Kala*’s sound clearly benefits from several collaborations with mega producers like Timbaland and Switch and legendary Indian composer A. R. Rahman, as well as lesser known artists like Portuguese electronic music ensemble Buraka Som Sistema and Afrikan Boy, the Nigerian-born Afrobeat MC from South London.

14. I thank Jodi Kim for generously enabling this critical listening of the “bird flu” track. As argued throughout this article, the sonic contagion released by MIA is in significant part an affective contagion. What we hear as “unruly hybrid sounds” generates the unruly affect (“bird flu feelings”) that I am calling a contagious structure of revolutionary feeling. For renewed discussions on affective contagion inspired by the writings of American psychologist Silvan Tomkins, see Ahmed (2004); Sedgwick and Frank (1995); Brennan (2004); Gibbs (2001); and Sedgwick (2003).

15. I gesture at these alternative spatial frameworks throughout this article to take seriously efforts within the field of American studies to decenter US exceptionalisms. Thinking “South Asia” through Sri Lanka likewise contributes to the decentering of hegemonic India within South Asian cultural studies. Thus, 1955 Bandung, postwar Sri Lanka, contemporary South East Asia, South London, New York City, Trinidad, Mali, Liberia, Toronto, and various other sites must all be accounted for in tracing MIA’s queer cartographies.

16. These conferences and the Nonaligned Movement that followed are often neglected, if not willfully suppressed in historical accounts of the Cold War period. “Forgetting,” as Lisa Lowe (2008) suggests, exemplifies a persistent disinterest in creative forms of multilateral solidarity that refuse to center the priorities of the global North.

17. The Bandung Conference, organized jointly by India, Pakistan, Ceylon (Sri Lanka), and Burma (Myanmar) and hosted by Indonesia, was a pivotal gathering of representatives from 29 newly sovereign nations. Notable countries

excluded include Israel, China, North and South Korea, and South Africa. For a discussion of the legacy of Bandung internationalism, see Prashad (2007) and Tan and Acharya (2008).

18. By shifting the theoretical optic from representation and signification to perception and affect, a newer generation of sound theorists and musicologists likewise prioritize biological processes of the body in the act of listening. They remind us that sound analysis elicits not just representational demands but also physiological questions about the affects of diverse soundings on the listening agent. See Birdsall and Enns (2008) and Goodman (2009).

Discography

MIA. "Bird Flu," *Kala*. XL/Interscope, 2007.

———. "Born Free," *Maya*. XL/Interscope, 2010.

Works Cited

Ahmed, Sara. *The Cultural Politics of Emotion*. New York: Routledge, 2004. Print.

Albertini, Bill. "The Geographies of Contagion." *Rhizomes: Cultural Studies in Emerging Knowledge* 19.1 (Summer 2009): n. p. Web. 28 July 2010.

Anderson, Warwick. *Colonial Pathologies: American Tropical Medicine, Race, and Hygiene in the Philippines*. Durham: Duke UP, 2006. Print.

Aravamudan, Srinivas. "East Indies and West Indies: Comparative Misapprehensions." *Anthropological Forum* 16.3 (Nov. 2006): 291–309. Print.

Birdsall, Carolyn, and Anthony Enns, eds. *Sonic Mediations: Body, Sound, Technology*. London: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2008. Print.

Bloom, Mia. *Dying to Kill: The Allure of Suicide Terror*. New York: Columbia UP, 2007. Print.

Bose, Sugata. *A Hundred Horizons: The Indian Ocean in the Age of Global Empire*. Cambridge: Harvard UP, 2006. Print.

Brennan, Teresa. *The Transmission of Affect*. Cornell: Cornell UP, 2004. Print.

Brown, Jayna. "'Buzz and Rumble': Global Pop Music and Utopian Impulse." *Social Text* 102 28.1 (Spring 2010): 125–46. Print.

Chambers-Letson, Joshua. "Reparative Feminisms, Repairing Feminism—Reparation, Postcolonial Violence, and Feminism." *Women and Performance: A Journal of Feminist Theory* 16.2 (2006): 169–89. Print.

- Chow, Rey. *The Age of the World Target: Self-Referentiality in War, Theory, and Comparative Work*. Durham: Duke UP, 2006. Print.
- Chuh, Kandice. *Imagine Otherwise: On Asian Americanist Critique*. Durham: Duke UP, 2003. Print.
- Connery, Christopher. "The Oceanic Feeling and the Regional Imaginary." In *Global/Local: Cultural Production and the Transnational Imaginary*. Eds. Rob Wilson and Wimal Dissanayake. Durham: Duke UP, 1996. Print.
- D'Arcangelis, Gwen. "Chinese Chickens, Ducks, Pigs, and Humans, and the Technoscientific Discourses of Global U.S. Empire." In *Tactical Biopolitics: Art, Activism, and Technoscience*. Eds. Beatriz da Costa and Kavita Philip. Cambridge: MIT P, 2008. Print.
- Daulatzai, Sohail. "To the East, Blackwards: Bandung Hopes, Diasporic Dreams, and Black/Muslim Encounters in Sam Greenlee's *Baghdad Blues*." *Souls* 8.4 (2006): 59–74. Print.
- Davis, Mike. *The Monster at Our Door: The Global Threat of Avian Flu*. New York: Metropolitan/Owl Books, 2005. Print.
- Dinshaw, Carolyn. *Getting Medieval: Sexualities and Communities, Pre- and Postmodern*. Durham: Duke UP, 1999. Print.
- Durbin, Jonathan. "Rebel with a Cause: M.I.A., Bona Fide Hustla." *Paper Magazine* 29 Nov. 2007. Web. 1 July 2010.
- Eshun, Kodwo. *More Brilliant than the Sun: Adventures in Sonic Fiction*. London: Quartet Books, 1999. Print.
- Fajardo, Kale Bantigue. "Transportation: Translating Filipino and Filipino American Tomboy Masculinities through Global Migration and Seafaring." *Spec. issue of GLQ: A Journal of Lesbian and Gay Studies* 14 2–3 (2008): 403–24. Print.
- Flatley, Jonathan. *Affective Mapping: Melancholia and the Politics of Modernism*. Cambridge: Harvard UP, 2008. Print.
- . *Time Binds: Queer Temporalities, Queer Histories*. Durham: Duke UP, 2010. Print.
- Gandhi, Leela. *Affective Communities: Anticolonial Thought, Fin-De-Siècle Radicalism, and the Politics of Friendship*. Durham: Duke UP, 2006. Print.
- Ganeshanathan, V. V. "Context M.I.A." *Columbia Journalism Review* 3 June 2010. Web. 5 June 2010.

- Gibbs, Anna. "Contagious Feelings: Pauline Hanson and the Epidemiology of Affect," *Australian Humanities Review* (Dec. 2001): n. p. Web. 30 July 2010.
- Gilroy, Paul. *The Black Atlantic: Modernity and Double Consciousness*. Cambridge: Harvard UP, 1993. Print.
- Goodman, Steve. *Sonic Warfare: Sound, Affect, and the Ecology of Fear*. Cambridge: MIT P, 2009. Print.
- Gopinath, Gayatri. "Archive, Affect, and the Everyday: Queer Diasporic Re-Visions." *Political Emotions*. Ed. Ann Cvetkovich, et al. New York: Routledge, 2010. 165–92. Print.
- . *Impossible Desires: Queer Diasporas and South Asian Public Cultures*. Durham: Duke UP, 2005. Print.
- Halberstam, Judith. *The Queer Art of Failure*. Durham: Duke UP, 2011. Print.
- Hirschberg, Lynn. "MIA's Agitprop Pop." *The New York Times Magazine* 25 May 2010. Print.
- Johnson, Mark, Peter Jackson, and Gilbert Herdt. "Critical Regionalities and the Study of Gender and Sexual Diversity in South East and East Asia." *Culture, Health and Sexuality* 2.4 (2000): 361–75. Print.
- Kelley, Robin D. G. *Freedom Dreams: The Black Radical Imagination*. Boston: Beacon P, 2002. Print.
- Klein, Naomi. *The Shock Doctrine: The Rise of Disaster Capitalism*. New York: Metropolitan Books, 2007. Print.
- Kun, Josh. *Audiotopia: Music, Race, and America*. Berkeley: U of California P, 2005. Print.
- Lakoff, Andrew, and Stephen J. Collier, eds. *Biosecurity Interventions: Global Health and Security in Question*. New York: Columbia UP, 2008. Print.
- Lionnet, Françoise, and Shu-Mei Shih, eds. *Minor Transnationalism*. Durham: Duke UP, 2005. Print.
- Love, Heather. *Feeling Backward: Loss and the Politics of Queer History*. Cambridge: Harvard UP, 2009. Print.
- Lowe, Lisa. "The Gender of Sovereignty." *The Scholar and Feminist Online* 6.3 (Summer 2008): n. p. Web. 13 July 2010.

- . “The Intimacies of Four Continents.” *Haunted By Empire: Geographies of Intimacy in North American History*. Ed. Ann Laura Stoler. Durham: Duke UP, 2006. 191–212. Print.
- Malkani, Bhavna. “British Rapper M.I.A. Denied Entry into US.” *All Hip Hop News* 26 May 2006. Web. 1 May 2007.
- McClintock, Anne. “Paranoid Empire: Specters from Guantánamo and Abu Ghraib.” *small axe* 13.1 (March 2009): 50–74. Print.
- “MIA Full Interview.” *The Tavis Smiley Show* 28 Jan. 2009. Web. 13 Sept. 2013.
- Moten, Fred. *In the Break: The Aesthetics of the Black Radical Tradition*. Minneapolis: U of Minnesota P, 2003. Print.
- Muñoz, José Esteban. *Cruising Utopia: The Then and There of Queer Futurity*. New York: New York UP, 2009. Print.
- . “Feeling Brown: Ethnicity and Affect in Ricardo Bracho’s *The Sweetest Hangover (and Other STDS)*.” *Theatre Journal* 52.1 (2000): 67–79. Print.
- Niranjana, Tejaswini. *Mobilizing India: Women, Music, and Migration between India and Trinidad*. Durham: Duke UP, 2006. Print.
- Prashad, Vijay. *The Darker Nations: A People’s History of the Third World*. New York: New P, 2007. Print.
- Price-Smith, Andrew T. *Contagion and Chaos: Disease, Ecology, and National Security in the Era of Globalization*. Cambridge: MIT P, 2009. Print.
- Puzic, Sonja. “Alberta Resident Dies from Avian Flu in North America’s First Human Case of H5N1.” *CTVNews.ca*. 8 Jan 2014. Web. 9 Jan. 2014.
- Redmond, Shana. *Anthem: Social Movements and the Sound of Solidarity in the African Diaspora*. New York: New YorkUP, 2013. Print.
- Reuters. “Hospitalised Indonesian Woman Has Bird Flu-Official.” 11 Oct. 2006. Web. 1 May 2007.
- Said, Edward. *Reflections on Exile and Other Essays*. Cambridge: Harvard UP, 2000. Print.
- Sedgwick, Eve K., and Adam Frank, eds. *Shame and Its Sisters: A Silvan Tomkins Reader*. Durham: Duke UP, 1995. Print.
- Sedgwick, Eve K. *Touching Feeling: Affect, Pedagogy, Performativity*. Durham: Duke UP, 2003. Print.
- Shah, Nayan. *Contagious Divides: Epidemics and Race in San Francisco’s Chinatown*. Berkeley: U of California P, 2001. Print.

- Shohat, Ella. *Taboo Memories, Diasporic Voices*. Durham: Duke UP, 2006. Print.
- Stoler, Ann Laura. "Tense and Tender Ties: The Politics of Comparison in North American History and (Post) Colonial Studies." *The Journal of American History* 88.3 (December 2001): 829–65. Print.
- Tan, Seng, and Amitav Acharya, eds. *Bandung Revisited: The Legacy of the 1955 Asian-African Conference for International Order*. Singapore: National U of Singapore P, 2008. Print.
- Tinsley, Omise'ke Natasha. "Black Atlantic, Queer Atlantic: Queer Imaginings of the Middle Passage." Spec. issue of *GLQ: A Journal of Lesbian and Gay Studies* 14 2–3 (2008): 191–215. Print.
- Tongson, Karen. *Relocations: Queer Suburban Imaginaries*. New York: New York UP, 2011. Print.
- Tsing, Anna L. *Friction: An Ethnography of Global Connection*. Princeton: Princeton UP, 2004. Print.
- Wagner, Alex. 2007. "Life in Exile: The Nomad Noise of MIA's *Kala*." *The Fader Magazine*. 7 Aug. 2007. Web. 13 July 2010.
- Walcott, Rinaldo. "Reconstructing Manhood; or, The Drag of Black Masculinity." *Small Axe* 28 13.1 (March 2009): 75–89. Print.
- Wald, Priscilla. *Contagious: Cultures, Carriers, and the Outbreak Narrative*. Durham: Duke UP, 2008. Print.
- Weheliye, Alexander. *Phonographies: Grooves in Sonic Afro-Modernity*. Durham: Duke UP, 2005. Print.
- Wilson, A. Jeyaratnam. *Sri Lankan Tamil Nationalism: Its Origins and Development in the Nineteenth & Twentieth Centuries*. Vancouver: U of British Columbia P, 1999. Print.
- World Health Organization, "Bird Flu Fact Sheet." April 2011. Web. 13 Nov. 2013.
- Yalini Dream. "Thoughts on MIA and Her 'Born Free' Video." 20 May 2010. Web. 28 July 2010.
- Young, Cynthia. *Soul Power: Culture, Radicalism, and the Making of a U.S. Third World Left*. Durham: Duke UP, 2006. Print.