1 Krautrock

Definitions, Concepts, Contexts

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Even five decades after its emergence, the term 'Krautrock' remains contested among artists affiliated with the music. In Christoph Dallach's 2021 oral history of Krautrock, Klaus Schulze called the term 'dreadful', while Wallenstein drummer Harald Grosskopf found it 'wonderful'; Mani Neumeier of Guru Guru thought of the term as 'not even unsympathetic', whereas Jaki Liebezeit rejected the 'rock' part even more than the derogatory 'kraut', and preferred to think of his band Can as a 'pop group'.[1] This diversity of opinions extends to heated discussions on social media by self-described Krautrock fans as to which bands should be included and excluded and how to rank the included ones as to their importance and significance.[2]

Generally, Krautrock is used as a catch-all term for the music of various West German rock groups of the 1970s that blended influences of African American and Anglo-American music with the experimental and electronic music of European composers. Many Krautrock bands arose out of the West German student counterculture and connected leftist political activism with experimental rock music and, later, electronic sounds. There are no precise dates for Krautrock, and while the heyday of the movement was roughly from 1968 to 1974, one could also argue that it lasted well into the 1980s. Krautrock was primarily a West German art form and differed significantly from East German *Ostrock*, with the latter's emphasis on more traditional song structures. Krautrock and its offshoots have had a tremendous impact on musical production and reception in Britain and the United States since the 1970s. Genres such as indie, post-rock, EDM, and hip-hop have drawn heavily on Krautrock and have connected a music that initially disavowed its European American and African American origins with the lived experience of whites and blacks in the United

[1] C Dallach, *Future Sounds: Wie ein paar 'Krautrocker' die Popwelt revolutionierten* (Berlin: Suhrkamp, 2021), pp. 15, 12, 11.

[2] A good indication is a list of fifty seminal albums in my 2016 monograph on Krautrock that generated a fiery exchange of opinions among subscribers to a Facebook group (265 comments in total, including a few by Amon Düül II singer Renate Knaup). The post on the Facebook Krautrock group is from 16 October 2016.

States and Europe. At the same time, while reaching for an imagined cosmic community, Krautrock, not only by its name, stirs up essentialist notions of national identity and citizenship.

Viewed as a genre, Krautrock seemingly points to a specific national identity, but it continuously transgresses spatial borders and defies rigid classifications. Therefore, even its one seemingly definitive component (its 'Germanness') is dubious. Historically, the term itself was only one among many describing West German popular music from the 1970s. Until about 1973, the music magazines *Musikexpress* and *Sounds* used *Deutsch-Rock* ('German Rock') to label the new groups from West Germany. Alexander Simmeth dismisses the theory that the British music press invented the term Krautrock and cites producer Konrad 'Conny' Plank's music publishing house Kraut, which was established in 1969, as well as an Amon Düül song from the same year, 'Mama Düül und ihre Sauerkrautband spielt auf' (Mama Düül is Playing with Her Sauerkraut Band), as early namesakes.[3]

Yet, it should be noted that the word 'kraut' is short for 'sauerkraut' only in its English definition – in German *Kraut* refers to, among other things, herbs, weeds, and even drugs (for Mani Neumeier, Krautrock referred to the *Kraut* 'that you smoke' rather than the *Kraut* 'that you eat'[4]). Arguably, the actual term Krautrock was introduced by British DJ John Peel and taken up by the British music press, which interchangeably also used other terms like 'Teutonic rock' or 'Götterdämmer rock'. In an ironic move in response to the popularisation of the term, the band Faust called the first song on their 1973 album *Faust IV* 'Krautrock'.

For a long time, the West German music press used 'Krautrock' as a term to dismiss specific artists. Even as late as 1982, a special edition on the 'Neue Deutsche Welle' (New German Wave) by the music monthly *Musikexpress* repeatedly invoked negative connotations of Krautrock as sounds that were considered passé: Hanover punk bands were countering 'pompous Kraut-Rock a la Eloy or Jane'; Düsseldorf bands like Kraftwerk and Neu! were developing innovative electronic music concepts, 'while musicians in the rest of Germany were still ploughing through Krautrock by the sweat of their brow'.[5] The dismissal of Krautrock was part of a more

[3] A Simmeth, *Krautrock transnational: Die Neuerfindung der Popmusik in der BRD, 1968–1978* (Bielefeld: Transcript, 2016), p. 54.

[4] Dallach, *Future Sounds*, p. 12.

[5] *Musikexpress Special: Neue Deutsche Welle* (Hamburg: Drei Sterne, 1982), pp. 5, 16.

general trend in the German music press to view domestic productions as less important than British or American ones.

Incidentally, it was Krautrock's success in Britain that made the term more acceptable in West Germany. In 1974, the Hamburg label Brain issued a triple-album compilation of West German music under the title *Kraut-Rock*. In his liner notes, Winfried Trenkler wrote: 'Rock from the Federal Republic [of Germany] doesn't have to hide behind Anglo-American rock, in particular when German musicians don't even try to sound like their famous colleagues from the USA and England.'[6] Apart from the musicians cited earlier, most of the German public, if aware of the term, does not seem to find it offensive and many music aficionados even embrace it as a seal of approval.

While German and American publications did not apply positive connotations of the term for a long time, the British music press gave it a more positive spin. The publications *Melody Maker* and *New Musical Express* soon raved about West German bands, some of which, like Faust and Amon Düül II, became more successful in Britain than in their home country; Tangerine Dream's album *Phaedra*, for example, even reached the UK Top 20 in 1974. It should be noted that the positive use of 'Krautrock' in Britain only became more common after an initial barrage of World War II stereotypes, as Uwe Schütte has shown for the example of Kraftwerk.[7]

Another term commonly used for some German music from the 1970s is *kosmische Musik* (cosmic music). It was introduced by Rolf-Ulrich Kaiser to market Krautrock artists like Ash Ra Tempel, Tangerine Dream, and Klaus Schulze. Although also rejected by many artists associated with it, *kosmische Musik* remains a useful term to describe the synthesiser-heavy, meditative anti-rock of some West German musicians of the 1970s since a cosmic, 'New Age' identity was one way in which Krautrock musicians conceptually and sonically re-imagined 'Germanness'.

Taken together, the ongoing debates about Krautrock among fans and scholars, the context of its musical diversity, and, in particular, its spatial ambiguity and conflicted expression of German national identity show the relevance of what I prefer to call a 'discursive formation' (rather than the more restrictive notion of 'genre') in re-imagining regimens of sound, space, and place in non-hierarchical ways.

[6] W Trenkler, liner notes for *Kraut-Rock: German Rock Scene* (Brain, 1974).

[7] U Schütte, From Defamation to Adoration: The Reception of Kraftwerk in the British Music Press, 1974–1981, *Angermion* 13:1 (2020), pp. 1–24.

The Reception of Krautrock

The reception of Krautrock inside and outside of Germany shows the instability of a musical formation that was generally only recognised as anything cohesively 'German' by non-Germans. Initially, Krautrock did not leave much of a legacy in its country of origin. Artists who had been commercially successful – like Kraftwerk, La Düsseldorf, and Michael Rother – gradually retreated from the scene, while other artists like Faust are still fairly unknown in their home country. Some groups – like Tangerine Dream – remained successful throughout the 1980s but were rarely associated with their 1970s output or any concept of 'Krautrock'. The term itself, which had never been accepted by most of the musicians associated with it, was increasingly used by publications like the German *Sounds* in the 1980s to classify music that was seen as overblown and outdated – the bloated progressive rock of bands like Eloy, Grobschnitt, and Triumvirat. German punk and Neue Deutsche Welle, in contrast, briefly appeared as a fresh alternative that responded to the trends coming from Britain and even to Germany's *Schlager* (literally 'hit') legacy.

Since the 1990s, Krautrock has been successfully re-branded as a genre in countries that include Germany and Britain, but also the United States and Japan. For instance, in April 1997, British *Mojo* magazine ran a thirty-page special under the title 'Kraftwerk, Can and the Return of the Krautrockers'. An instrumental figure in the 1990s revival of Krautrock was the British musician Julian Cope, who published the now out-of-print *Krautrocksampler* in 1995. In his thoroughly entertaining but highly subjective account, Cope argues that Krautrock 'was borne on the high East wind that soared above the rage of the 1960s British and American scenes' and comprises 'some of the most astonishing, evocative, heroic glimpses of Man at his Peak of Artistic Magic'.[8] As the first readily available discussion of something that could be recognised as 'Krautrock' and as an introduction to bands that proved to be influential afterwards, the book became quite popular among British and American music insiders and musicians. As Cope has pointed out, his main reason for writing the book was 'to introduce the word "Krautrock" in a more positive, pouting glamrock way'.[9] Partly as a result of Cope's book, entire genres of British and

[8] J Cope, *Krautrocksampler: One Head's Guide to the Great Kosmische Music – 1968 Onwards* (Yatesbury: Head Heritage, 1996), pp. 2, 3.

[9] J Cope, Q&A 2000ce: Krautrock, July 2000, www.headheritage.co.uk/julian_cope/qa2000ce/krautrock.

American popular music openly borrowed from Krautrock groups like Can, Kraftwerk, Neu!, and Tangerine Dream, including, but not limited to, punk, post-punk, post-rock, industrial, disco, various forms of EDM like techno, ambient, and house, hip-hop, and indie rock. Even bestselling groups like Radiohead and Wilco clearly indicated that they were indebted to West German music from the 1970s.

The renewed interest in Krautrock as subcultural capital specifically in American indie rock discourses is exemplified by the reception of the music in the online publication *Pitchfork Media*, founded in 1995. In 2004, *Pitchfork* published their 'Top 100 Albums of the 1970s'. With a disproportionate amount of German music, the list included three LPs by Can (*Ege Bamyasi*, *Tago Mago*, and *Future Days*), two by Kraftwerk (*Trans Europa Express* and *Die Mensch-Maschine*), and one each by Cluster (*Zuckerzeit*), Neu! (*Neu!*), Faust (*Faust IV*), and Giorgio Moroder (*From Here to Eternity*). Also included were the two Krautrock-inspired LPs by Iggy Pop (*The Idiot* and *Lust for Life*), as well as David Bowie's *Low*, which topped the list. In interviews conducted in 2013 with a number of the *Pitchfork* editors responsible for reviving Krautrock as an important influence on popular music, they described the appeal of the music as an alternative to standard Anglo-American and African American models and how for them it represented a certain coolness through being 'weird' and 'otherworldly'.[10]

In addition to 'popular' interest in Krautrock (in the sense of trickling out into popular consciousness after its subcultural value had been introduced by gatekeepers like Julian Cope), the past decade has seen a significant increase in scholarship on the music. Earlier English-language accounts by well-known musicians and journalists like Cope and Lester Bangs often suffered from a fascination with what they perceive as the Germanness of an exotic Other – for instance, although many Krautrock musicians explicitly distanced themselves from the past, the Germany chapter in Jim DeRogatis' seminal book about psychedelic rock from 2003 was entitled 'The Krautrock Blitzkrieg'.[11] Another early approach was to simply list all West German groups, no matter how obscure, as Stephen and Alan Freeman did in their 1996 compendium *Crack in the Cosmic Egg*.[12] Two non-scholarly German

[10] U Adelt, *Krautrock: German Music in the Seventies* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2016), pp. 170–4.

[11] Cope, *Krautrocksampler;* L Bangs, Kraftwerkfeature, *Creem* (September 1975), pp. 30–1; J DeRogatis, *Turn On Your Mind: Four Decades of Great Psychedelic Rock* (Milwaukee: Hal Leonard, 2003).

[12] S and A Freeman, *Crack in the Cosmic Egg: Encyclopedia of Krautrock, Kosmische Musik, & Other Progressive, Experimental & Electronic Musics from Germany* (Leicester: Audion, 1996).

books by Henning Dedekind and Christoph Wagner provided meandering and detailed histories of Krautrock with the inclusion of some groups deliberately excluded from Julian Cope's Krautrock canon, such as Missus Beastly, Kraan, Anima, and Checkpoint Charlie.[13]

Musical Context

Because of the music's stylistic diversity, a musicological definition of the term Krautrock is equally as difficult as a semantic or historical definition. The influence of music traditionally perceived as German, such as the compositions of Bach, Beethoven, and Brahms, on what would evolve around 1968 as Krautrock is negligible (the history of any distinctively 'German' music mostly dates back to the nineteenth century and is more a product of writers and politicians than of classical composers).[14] Krautrock also stood in stark opposition to popular forms like *Schlager*, German-language pop songs with simple melodies and sentimental lyrics, and *Volksmusik* ('oom-pah music'), traditional regional styles mostly from Bavaria. Finally, Krautrock rejected heavily Anglo-Americanised or African American–derived forms of post-war popular music like the toned-down German-language rock 'n' roll of Peter Kraus and the early 1960s German beat bands like The Rattles and The Lords, who merely imitated their Anglo-American models.

Despite its rejection of Anglo-American influences, Krautrock did pay tribute to some of the psychedelic rock bands and other countercultural artists from Britain and the United States, namely Pink Floyd, Frank Zappa, and Jimi Hendrix. Yet, instead of merely developing another replication of the major Anglo-American and African American styles that dominated the airwaves, Krautrock artists also drew from two distinctive musical developments that were outside of mainstream rock's framework, both geographically and structurally: experimental composition and free jazz.

The Darmstadt Summer Courses, 'instituted in 1946 to bring young Germans . . . up to date with music unheard under the Nazis',[15] became increasingly international over the years and involved composers like

[13] H Dedekind, *Krautrock: Underground, LSD und kosmische Kuriere* (Höfen: Hannibal, 2008); C Wagner, *Der Klang der Revolte: Die magischen Jahre des westdeutschen Musik-Underground* (Mainz: Schott, 2013).

[14] Compare C Applegate and P Potter (eds.), *Music and German National Identity* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2002), pp. 2–3.

[15] P Griffiths, *Modern Music and After* (New York: Oxford University Press), p. 35.

Edgar Varèse, Karlheinz Stockhausen, and Pierre Boulez. The Darmstadt school's embrace of total serialism and resistance to neoclassicism foreshadowed many of Krautrock's developments (as did musique concrète and minimalism). Stockhausen, who taught two of the musicians who later founded the Krautrock group Can, collaborated with the Studio for Electronic Music in Cologne as early as 1953 and began 'sampling' and electronically manipulating non-Western music and national anthems in his compositions *Telemusik* (1966) and *Hymnen* (1966–7). Another vital influence on Krautrock clearly outside of Anglo-American traditions were German free jazz musicians like Peter Brötzmann, Manfred Schoof, and Alexander von Schlippenbach, part of a central European (Scandinavian/German/Dutch) scene that was departing from the harmonic and rhythmic conventions still retained in American free jazz.

Sonically, Krautrock came to encompass a range of styles, from the electronic music of Klaus Schulze and the jazz rock of Kraan to the political songs of Floh de Cologne, the folk rock of Witthüser & Westrupp, and music that is even harder to classify but had a long-lasting impact, like that of Faust, Cluster, or Popol Vuh. Krautrock was influenced by African American music but also involved the conscious departure from blues scales, as those were the building blocks of Anglo-American rock music. Unlike psychedelic rock groups in the United States, many Krautrock performers had a background in European classical music and ties to the electronic music of 'serious' composers. Krautrock's embrace of the dilettante, abstract, and experimental contrasted with British progressive rock's focus on composition and Romantic themes. The early use of synthesisers, non-traditional song structures, and the employment of a steady, metronomic beat (generally referred to as *motorik*) instead of rock 'n' roll's backbeat also set Krautrock apart from Anglo-American music of the 1970s. Through their connections to the avant-garde art world, through their more intellectual approach, and through abandoning traditional song structures, Krautrock bands were in some aspects more daring and radical than comparative groups in Britain and the United States like Pink Floyd, the Beatles, or the Beach Boys.

As the music scene in West Germany was flourishing in the 1970s, it became increasingly harder to generalise about Krautrock. While many groups included classically trained musicians, diverted from the blues scales of American psychedelic rock groups like the Grateful Dead, released albums on small labels like Ohr, Pilz, and Brain, moved to the country to live in communes, and employed electronic instruments, none of these characteristics applied to all Krautrockers. Among the many different and

unconnected local scenes were Düsseldorf, with the slick electronics of Kraftwerk, Neu!, and Wolfgang Riechmann; Hamburg, with the experimental rock of Faust; Cologne, with the groove-heavy minimalism of Can; Munich, with the psychedelic progressive rock of Amon Düül II; and West Berlin, with the synthesiser drones of Klaus Schulze, Ash Ra Tempel, and Tangerine Dream. To some extent, the stratification of Krautrock is a West German phenomenon, where one of the examples of the denazification-motivated decentralisation after World War II led to making the provincial town of Bonn the capital. The stylistically pluralist and heterogenous nature of Krautrock can hence be related to the federalist nature of West Germany.

Also, Krautrock was an exclusively West German phenomenon. To explain the absence of the music in East Germany, it is useful to consider the differences of the counterculture between East and West. Students in East Germany had more fundamental needs, which were expressed by singer-songwriters, many of whom were harassed or banned by the Communist government. The sole political party, SED, or *Sozialistische Einheitspartei Deutschlands* (Socialist Unity Party of Germany), strenuously tried to prohibit Western rock music, which made it a sought-after commodity and difficult to consistently access. East German rock groups like the Puhdys walked a fine line between supporting the government and subtly critiquing it, and musically mostly imitated British and American bands while adding German lyrics.[16]

Since Marxism was part of the establishment in the East, many young people viewed the United States as a potential liberator, and there was not the same urge to reject Anglo-American influences as 'imperialist' as in Krautrock.[17] Jazz and rock were sought after as a 'window to the West'.[18] With the difficulty of obtaining and accessing music from Western countries, Krautrock was also simply not big enough to make it over to East Germany. Despite the absence of Krautrock in East Germany, understanding the divided nation is crucial for the politics of the music, in particular West Berlin groups like Tangerine Dream and Ton Steine Scherben, who were tied to West Germany ideologically but not geographically.

[16] Compare M Rauhut, *Rock in der DDR: 1964–1989* (Bonn: Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung, 2002).

[17] Compare R Ritter, '1968' und der Wandel der Protestkultur in der Musik im Ostblock: Ausgewählte Beispiele (CSSR, DDR, Polen, Ungarn), in Beate Kutschke (ed.), *Musikkulturen in der Revolte: Studien zu Rock, Avantgarde und Klassik im Umfeld von '1968'* (Stuttgart: Steiner, 2008), pp. 207–24 (p. 209).

[18] Ibid., p. 212.

Krautrock and Spatiality

There are a number of theoretical approaches one could apply to Krautrock. For instance, the historical context of West Germany's student revolution of 1968 has been thoroughly analysed by Alexander Simmeth, and gender would be an important lens to consider (with Krautrock groups defying the hypermasculinity of 'cock rock' yet overwhelmingly featuring male artists).[19] Here, I want to highlight spatiality as a concept that helps to understand the significance of the music and can even work to broaden the scope of what could be included (for instance, while many fans might disagree, I consider Donna Summer as part of Krautrock, challenging racialised and gendered notions of the music.)[20] Considering the spatiality of Krautrock can help re-thinking concepts of sound, belonging, and genre.

I hesitate to call Krautrock a 'genre' or 'movement' and would rather describe it as a 'discursive formation'. According to Foucault, 'the unity of a discourse is based not so much on the permanence and uniqueness of an object as on the space in which various objects emerge and are continuously transformed'.[21] Foucault applies this instability of seemingly fixed systems of classification to medical science, economics, and grammar, but it also informs the fragmented relationships between different musical expressions discussed under the contested term Krautrock. Connected merely by their destabilising of the seemingly coherent notion of national identity, Krautrock musicians rarely worked with each other (or even knew of each other) and did not form local scenes that expressed larger issues in regional ways. Indicative of a discursive formation, 'influences' on and by Krautrock artists did not operate in linear ways, a central figure did not emerge, and even the term Krautrock was only retroactively applied from outside of Germany. For Foucault, discursive formations are an attempt to apply some regularity to 'systems of dispersion' (like Krautrock), to describe 'series full of gaps, intertwined with one another, interplays of differences, distances, substitutions, transformations'.[22]

Rather than through a purely musicological or historical lens, I view Krautrock as being constructed through performance, articulated through various forms of expressive culture (among them, communal living,

[19] Simmeth, *Krautrock transnational*. For 'cock rock', compare S Waksman, *Instruments of Desire: The Electric Guitar and the Shaping of Musical Experience* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1999).

[20] Adelt, *Krautrock*.

[21] M Foucault, *The Archaeology of Knowledge* (New York: Pantheon, 1972), p. 32.

[22] Ibid., p. 37.

spirituality, visual elements but, most importantly, sound) by people not even directly interacting with each other but still structurally related. This explains how Krautrock succeeded through time and space and does not merely reflect historical events.

Barry Shank has addressed the complex and dynamic relationship between music and identity in which real politics can emerge: 'The act of musical listening enables us to confront complex and mobile structures of impermanent relationships – the sonic interweaving of tones and beats, upper harmonics, and contrasting timbres – that model the experience of belonging to a community not of unity but of difference.'[23] Shank goes on to state that, rather than reifying identity, musical forms help 'capturing an emergent sense of the world'.[24] While Shank's examples are mostly Anglo-American, Krautrock serves to illustrate the transnational dimension of the politics he so aptly describes.

By employing a derogatory term for Germans in its name, Krautrock is clearly linked with national identity, but, particularly in times of increased globalisation, the nation-state appears as the mediator between the local and the global.[25] The study of Krautrock allows for an anthropologically motivated study not just of what Deleuze and Guattari have called 'de-territorialisation', but also of 're-territorialisation', a re-localising of culture in new or changed contexts. Néstor García Canclini describes the process of de-territorialisation and re-territorialisation as 'the loss of the "natural" relation of culture to geographical and social territories and, at the same time, certain relative, partial territorial re-localisations of old and new symbolic productions'.[26] Canclini's context is 1990s Latin America, but with the disruption of World War II, Krautrock artists also expressed a fragmented, porous transnational identity that, in Canclini's words, lacked 'consistent paradigms' and experienced the loss of 'the script and the author'.[27] Krautrock's de-territorialisation, its negation of the nation-state as a stable identifying force, plays with national identity through expressing an international or cosmic non-German Germanness and through ironically invoking older, seemingly stable forms of Germanness. The latter re-territorialisation also involves non-German subjects

[23] B Shank, *The Political Force of Musical Beauty* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2014), p. 1.
[24] Ibid.
[25] Compare I Biddle and V Knights, National Popular Musics: Betwixt and Beyond the Local and the Global, in I Biddle and V Knights (eds.), *Music, National Identity and the Politics of Location: Between the Global and the Local* (Burlington: Ashgate, 2007), pp. 1–15.
[26] N Canclini, *Hybrid Cultures: Strategies for Entering and Leaving Modernity* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2005), p. 229.
[27] Ibid., p. 243.

identifying with a transformed and transmogrified Germanness as evidence of Krautrock's 'globalisation'.

In addition to de-territorialisation, hybridisation helps to understand the transnational dimension of Krautrock. Despite critiques of biologism and the obviation of issues like class and gender, cultural hybridity can be useful for describing the exchanges that take place between the centre and the periphery or between different peripheries.[28] Hybridity can function as a form of resistance but does not necessarily entail oppositional politics. Canclini warns of reducing the study of hybridised popular culture to either deductivist or inductivist notions (i.e. assuming either that cultural production is exclusively determined by hegemonic sectors or that subaltern forces are solely responsible for shaping popular culture). Krautrock's hybridity appears in a variety of ways, from Kraftwerk's blurring of 'man' and 'machine' to the linguistic slippages of Neu!'s appropriation of advertising slogans and the syncretic spirituality of Popol Vuh, who blended Eastern religions with a reformed Christianity.

It should not come as a surprise that the spatiality of popular music is one of the major factors that create its hybridity. As George Lipsitz has noted in describing a poetics of place:

> Recorded music travels from place to place, transcending physical and temporal barriers. It alters our understanding of the local and the immediate, making it possible for us to experience close contact with cultures from far away. Yet precisely because music travels, it also augments our appreciation of place. Commercial popular music demonstrates and dramatizes contrasts between places by calling attention to how people from different places create culture in different ways.[29]

Lipsitz's description of popular music as both transcending and reaffirming a sense of place applies to Krautrock's double discourse of the national and the transnational. In a different approach, Josh Kun has developed the notion of 'audiotopias', in which music itself appears as a spatial practice: 'Music is experienced not only as sound that goes into our ears and vibrates through our bones but as a space that we can enter into, encounter, move around in, inhabit, be safe in, learn from.'[30] One might add that as an alternative space, music is not always safe but disruptively appears in what

[28] See N Papastergiadis, Tracing Hybridity in Theory, in P Werbner and T Modood (eds.), *Debating Cultural Hybridity: Multi-Cultural Identities and the Politics of Anti-Racism* (London: Zed Books, 1997), pp. 257–81.

[29] G Lipsitz, *Dangerous Crossroads: Popular Music, Postmodernism and the Poetics of Place* (New York: Verso, 1994), pp. 3–4.

[30] J Kun, *Audiotopia: Music, Race, and America* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005), p. 2.

Lipsitz calls 'dangerous crossroads'. Josh Kun goes on to argue that political citizenship does not necessarily equate cultural conformity, and that 'music can be of a 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'.[31]

It follows from the ability of music to transgress and trespass invoked by Kun and Lipsitz that the relationship between national identity and music is always interpenetrative.[32] In their seminal book on popular music, identity, and place, geographers John Connell and Chris Gibson talk about the contested enterprise of linking music and nation-states when 'boundaries are porous, constantly being broken, necessitating new national anthems and new attempts to sustain imagined communities in the face of transnational flows'.[33] I disagree with Connell and Gibson's assessment that national sounds are by definition 'retrospective and nostalgic',[34] and posit that unlike national anthems, Krautrock allows for a more flexible expression of nationality that necessitates moving across borders, as well as questioning essentialist and fixed notions of what it means to be German.

Conclusion

I have exercised different modes of theorising Krautrock here: analysing the semantics of the term, tracing the reception of its sounds, and taking a stab at its musicological characteristics; one could add the underlying historical contextualisation of World War II and the student revolution of 1968. I have mentioned gender as yet another promising aspect to study in further research on the topic. In the last section, I have illustrated how national/transnational identity and spatiality can serve as concepts that connect Krautrock's history, identity formation, and overall politics.

Drawing on the history and music of Krautrock, I perceive its deterritorialisation and hybridisation in different ways. Groups like Can, Kraftwerk, and Neu! created a post-war German identity that engaged with and set itself apart from the Nazi past and the influx of Anglo-American music

[31] Ibid., p. 20.

[32] Compare J O'Flynn, National Identity and Music in Transition: Issues of Authenticity in a Global Setting, in I Biddle and V Knights (eds.), *Music, National Identity and the Politics of Location*, pp. 19–38 (p. 26).

[33] J Connell and C Gibson, *Sound Tracks: Popular Music, Identity and Place* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2003), p. 143.

[34] Ibid.

by blending man-made and machine-made music, negotiating internationalism, stereotypical 'Germanness', and anti-capitalism. Other Krautrock bands like Amon Düül I and II, Faust, and Ton Steine Scherben explored living in communes as alternative spaces and expressed notions of community and conflict in vastly different ways, while responding to similar modes of oppression. Performers of *kosmische Musik* like Ash Ra Tempel, Tangerine Dream, Klaus Schulze, and Popol Vuh developed post-national notions of New Age cosmic identity and spirituality, which involved the consumption of psychedelic drugs and the invention of new sounds, in particular through the employment of the synthesiser. Popol Vuh also exemplifies the parallels between Krautrock and the New German Cinema of the 1970s, as there are connections between the landscapes of Werner Herzog's films and the soundscapes provided by the band (the soundtracks by bands like Tangerine Dream and Can are also promising topics for future research). Finally, I would like to argue that it is necessary to stretch the definitions of Krautrock as transnational by including Italian-German producer Giorgio Moroder's collaborations with African American disco singer Donna Summer as well as the three years British pop star David Bowie spent in West Berlin in the 1970s.

As has become abundantly clear, when viewed as a discursive formation, Krautrock eludes any strict definition, easy theorising, or quick summation. Its boundaries remain contested and its understanding unfinished. This, however, is the intellectual work that Krautrock continues to challenge us to do, and I for one am happy that I am not done thinking about its ramifications.

Recommended Reading

U Adelt, *Krautrock: German Music in the Seventies* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2016).

N Kotsopoulos, *Krautrock: Cosmic Rock and Its Legacy* (London: Black Dog, 2010).

A Simmeth, *Krautrock transnational: Die Neuerfindung der Popmusik in der BRD, 1968–1978* (Bielefeld: Transcript, 2016).

D Stubbs, *Future Days: Krautrock and the Building of Modern Germany* (London: Faber & Faber, 2014).

C Wagner, *Der Klang der Revolte: Die magischen Jahre des westdeutschen Musik-Underground* (Mainz: Schott, 2013).