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Reprise Editor's Note

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# Reprise Editor's Note

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NINA MORGAN

In every issue of *JTAS's* Reprise, we offer a small selection of previously published works of interest to students and scholars of transnational American studies around the world. In this issue, the selections highlight places—Munich, Berlin, Tangier, Hong Kong—as temporary refuges or abodes of long-term influence and importance in the different transnational experiences discussed here.

In “Donna Summer’s Sound of Munich and David Bowie’s Berlin Trilogy,” Ulrich Adelt investigates the influential relationship between the music aesthetics of 1970s German “Krautrock” in its local, experimental manifestations and other music of that decade produced by popular US and European trendsetters. Adelt’s comparative study traces the influences of “Krautrock’s processes of reterritorialization and hybridization” on US and British artists whose time in Germany greatly impacted their cultural production as well as the musical environment they temporarily adopted. Describing the collaborations between African American singer Donna Summer and Italian German producer Hansjörg “Giorgio” Moroder as challenging the normative ideas of gender, race, and sexuality reproduced in Krautrock, Adelt’s work also reconceptualizes modes widely perceived as “quintessentially American,” such as disco. Interestingly, Adelt’s research not only provides readers with a more accurate portrayal of this and other transnational movements in music but his entire analysis underscores the validity of the transnational interpretive model even as part of a study presenting a nation-based approach to cultural production. Summer’s and Bowie’s significant experiences of living in Germany—in Munich and Berlin, respectively—impacted their private lives as well as their politics, just as experiences and events in the USA placed both artists inside and at the same time outside certain politicized zones and debates; thus Adelt does not hesitate to discuss Bowie’s bizarre attachment to German fascism as well as Summer’s movement from a hypersexualized commercial superstar to her eventual embrace of a “born again” identity at home. Adelt’s expertise and insight enable a complex understanding of how the liminality of some of the world’s most well-known popular musicians contributed to the invention of music that was effectively transnational as well as transgenre and marked the 1970s as an entry point to a new,

technological and hybridized experience of music that was transformative for musicians and audiences alike. *JTAS* appreciates the permission from the University of Michigan Press to republish this chapter of Ulrich Adelt's 2016 book, *Krautrock: German Music in the Seventies*.

Karim Bejjit's 1996 interview with American writer and composer Paul Bowles (1910–1999) in Tangier, Morocco, offers an illuminating snapshot of Bowles as coyly combative yet nevertheless resigned to the perspective age allows: Even after 50 years of living in Tangier, his outsider status, he acknowledges in the conversation, was from the start something that neither politics nor time influenced (“I wasn't French. I wasn't Moroccan, of course.”). Speaking to Bejjit from his Tangier apartment near the end of his life, the 86-year-old Bowles suggests that while his characters may not have noted or understood the local culture, he himself developed a sense of memory about it, which then found its way into his fiction. Readers of Bowles's writing may well note the prevalence of the desert, Fez, and Tangier in his work. While his ambivalence toward academic criticism or the words of friends is something that Bowles projects throughout the interview, he does make clear certain distinctions: For him, writing literature and composing music are exclusive acts; cultures cannot truly blend. Here, Bowles reveals a concern with the tendency of one culture to dominate (“destroy”) another, pointing to Europe, for example, as possibly changing what he sees as Morocco's “medieval” character. Bowles's personal sense of pessimism seems palpable at moments in this brief but intimate interview, yet that he accepts the interviewer's offer of consolation at the end hints at the extent to which Bowles acquiesced to a life of cultural coexistence in Morocco. This interview and the introduction accompanying it were together published in the *Moroccan Cultural Studies Journal* (Spring 1999). *JTAS* warmly thanks Dr. Bejjit for permission to republish it.

Tracing the perceptions and misperceptions surrounding popularly accepted narratives regarding the history of Chinese adoption in the US, Catherine Ceniza Choy, in this chapter from her book *Global Families: A History of Asian International Adoption in America* (New York University Press, 2013), focuses on the Hong Kong Project, a US-HK collaborative initiative begun in 1958 in response to a wave of refugee children from families that had already fled communist mainland China only to suffer austere or unfortunate circumstances under which they were forced to give up their children. Ceniza Choy asserts that this neglected story shares important similarities with other Asian adoption histories in terms of underscoring the causal relationships between war and the administration of transnational adoption. This study, however, intriguingly claims further that the transformation of the US (and its policies) into a nation of people who adopt internationally was primarily due to the perception among adoption agencies (in both Hong Kong and the US) dealing specifically with Chinese adoptive children that these children were in fact resilient enough to endure the challenges inherent in transnational adoption. Ceniza Choy attributes this assessment and evaluation of the adoptees' character and nature in

part to the thoughts and attitudes of individuals working inside the system, whose significant impact may have been dismissed due to a false impression that such adoptions were the mere result of “supply and demand.” This study asks readers to recognize the transnational links and the conscious efforts of individuals who developed policies and produced practices that were responsive and flexible—opening adoption applications to *all* ethnic groups, for example—and which (as they hoped) demonstrated to the world that “America’s heart” was “truly a big heart.” JTAS is grateful for the generous assistance of the staff at NYU Press and for permission to offer this reprint in Reprise.