Trouble Songs: A Musicological Poetics

Jeff T. Johnson

Published by Punctum Books

T. Johnson, Jeff.
Trouble Songs: A Musicological Poetics.

For additional information about this book
https://muse.jhu.edu/book/66804
Enter Trouble America

In “The Public Relation: Redefining Citizenship By Poetic Means,” Erín Moure explores the notion of citizenship as movement, which she describes as “the troubled and transgressive relation of this citizen to borders” (My Beloved Wager 167). So might a Trouble Song be a moving [through] place. In the same essay, she makes reference to “troubled text” (163). “It is as if site or country itself were performative or gestural, having more to do with languages than with soil” (168). Not, then, a song of country, nor even a country of song; not a country song, but perhaps a country-song (or country — song, or country : song). If the country (say, The United States of America, if not Moure’s native Canada) is troubled territory, or, if we will, a troubled text, we might enter that terrain through the Trouble Song, and know (or recognize) ourselves (even and especially as others) there. We might hope to transgress our own borders as we pass through the song that has passed through the moving country. We enter the blur of language that is The Trouble Song of America, and we sing (with) ourselves.

46 and/or a troubled song
47 Where the em-dash and colon operate as axes, around which the terms spin, tilling all terrain. As the song travels, or whirls, it also mulches the land, and the language. We hesitate, only briefly, to say/spread language. The em-dash also suggests a Deleuzian becoming, a line of flight between country and song, whose polarities may reverse or swivel.
48 an ever troubled term
49 history, but also a continuous present that is a line of flight to the future, whenever and wherever that is, which is to say here and here and here but also perhaps there &c.