

## **The Eternal-Fascist Protest of Zetazeroalfa**

The Italian group Zetazeroalfa engaged several rhetorical strategies in their work that could be understood to articulate characteristics peculiar to protest music—from their choices of musical genres, which included styles often associated with dissent such as rock, punk, and ska, to some of the themes explored in their lyrics, which expressed resistance to an imagined status quo, the desire to empower a community and mobilize a constituency, as well as bringing about social change.

On the other hand, such work disrupts the conventional association of protest music with progressive social ideals such as democracy, a social justice predicated on notions of equality and inclusion, and individual freedom. Rather, Zetazeroalfa's songs were permeated by a reactionary impulse and in particular by what Umberto Eco described as "Eternal Fascism": a constellation of features that when present gives rise to a "fascist nebula."

The archetypal fascist protest of Zetazeroalfa and the network of bands and venues in which they participated has already been identified as an important catalyst in the establishment of the political movement CasaPound, which was a key voice in the shaping of the discourses around Italian domestic and foreign policies in the late 2010s, however their music is yet to be researched and analysed substantially.

The questions igniting this research therefore are: what was the impetus for Zetazeroalfa's work? How did their music articulate an eternal-fascist protest? What was the specific "fascist game", as Eco would have it, that Zetazeroalfa played in their songs? How did the band understand and adapt fascist protest to their current political circumstances? What were the musical, lyrical, and visual strategies that the band adopted in formulating such a protest? To what extent it could be argued that the kind of reactionary protest advanced by Zetazeroalfa was "successful"? And finally, what does this case study tell us about protest music more broadly?

## **Biography**

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Dr Fiorenzo Palermo is Senior Lecturer in Popular Music at Middlesex University, London. His doctoral thesis focused on the work of the British composer, performer and instrument-inventor Hugh Davies and was supervised by Dr John Dack. His research interests include the critical study of musical instruments, queer theory analyses of popular music, and the understanding of ethno-nationalist music.