The Politics of Blackness in Britain (with Mohan Ambikaipaker)

[opening music]

Dr. Juan Llamas-Rodriguez (JLR): Welcome to the Global Media Cultures Podcast. I am your host Juan Llamas-Rodriguez. Today, we are discussing music videos, political solidarity, and blackness in the United Kingdom. Our guest is Dr. Mohan Ambikaipaker. He's an associate professor in the department of communication at Tulane University specializing in critical race theory, anticolonial and post-colonial studies. He's the author of the ethnography *Political Blackness in Multi-Racial Britain*, published by University of Pennsylvania Press in 2018, an examination of the lived experiences of African Caribbean and South Asian communities confronting racial violence and policing violence in London.

He has also published extensively in journals such as *Communication, Culture and Critique, Postcolonial Studies, Ethnic and Racial Studies*, and the *Journal for Intercultural Studies*. Ambikaipaker's research and teaching comprises three strands, the UK, the US and Malaysia, and engages comparative research in theorizing connections between liberal democratic political systems and the reproduction of racial routines. Mohan, welcome to the Global Media Cultures podcast.

Dr. Mohan Ambikaipaker (MA): I'm happy to be here. Thank you for having me.

JLR: I'd like to start asking you about these research interests. Why are these topics interesting to you and why are they an important area for us to study?

MA: Well, I embarked on this work around racial formations, radical grassroots politics, cultural work in Britain in ways that were informed by my own personal political historical biography, I guess. So I'm originally from Malaysia, which was a former British colony, and my grandparents moved to Malaysia from Sri Lanka which was another British colony. And so my family's history has been deeply imprinted by the British empire and its history. The UK still is a place where many Malaysians go to for studies and to migrate and settle, so I've got family that's come through that way and settled in the UK as well. So it was really a way to try to understand, I guess, what Edwards Said said about the traces of history in how you've been shaped by the forces of history.

And so I wanted to understand how I have been shaped by the forces of the British Empire, it's raciology which has impacted my family in very profound ways. So when I was an undergraduate in the Philadelphia region where I was a part of the black cultural center at my university, and it was actually while I was the librarian in the Black Cultural Center at Swarthmore College that I came upon this book called *A Different Hunger* by A. Sivanandan that is a classic book and A. Sivanandan is a Sri Lankan Tamil like myself who is a big figure in the black movement and history of the UK. And so suddenly it all kind of came together and eventually this became my dissertation topic. I wanted to go to the UK to study how these political imaginaries were working out on the ground. I had read about them, but I wanted to be a part of it.

JLR: So the first book is an ethnography and now the article that we're discussing is specifically thinking about media and music, right, so it's interesting to see those connections in continuity as well. The article we're discussing is "Music Videos and the 'War on Terror' in Britain: Benjamin Zephaniah's Infrapolitical Blackness in *Rong Radio*," which was published in *Communication, Culture and Critique* in 2015.

And what I wanted to know is could you give us a brief history of this SAS as it came about in terms of how you began working on it, how did the ideas sort of change in the process of working through it and examining this video?

MA: So I initially didn't want to do something on media or culture, and I thought it was more productive to try to go and actually look at kind of everyday life to see how these formations were playing a role in that sense, and not just through artistic endeavors which were important. I was interested in that as well, but once I had done the ethnography, then during the course of being there and being a part of the scene, of course, I was also captivated by all the artistic production being produced. So this, in a sense, was then going back to some of the more media oriented, cultural text-oriented studies.

JLR: Right. Great. Yeah. So in some ways it seems it's coming at the question from different angles, but still somewhat interrelated, right? Even if you are studying the sort of everyday practices, cultural objects are still very much a part of that, or if we are studying the media cultural objects, we can't divorce those from the everyday practices that they emerged to?

MA: That's right. I think that's very accurate.

JLR: So as you point out, what your focus is on, is on blackness and formation of black identity in Britain which is distinct from how we might think about it in those of us based in the

United States. So could we start by thinking a little bit more about sort of the background, the social and political context of black identity formation in Britain, let's say, in this latter half of the century?

MA: So blackness, racial formations do not replicate themselves identically all across the world. I mean, even if you go to Brazil, you'll find blackness there has a complexity that is different from the complexity of US blackness. And in the case of the UK now, within the type of racial systems that the empire practiced, there were many different kinds of black people in the colonial imaginary depending on where the British empire was located. I mean, you've got to remember, they were in charge of more than a quarter of the planet's land mass at one point and that's an incredible amount of people, cultures, diversities that needed to be ordered, right, and managed as a part of the task of empire, right?

And so race was the tool that allowed the Western imagination, the Imperial imagination, to categorize, classify, organize, and manage these incredible diverse populations that they were now ruling over. And so the scene looks different in different places, but they have this one epistemological tool — race — to make sense of what they were encountering. And we were all sort of marshaled into this epistemological frame in given identities according to these frames that have been set up by the empire, right?

In many ways, the traditional narrative is after World War II, you get mass migrations of people of color from what's known as new Commonwealth countries, countries that are not white settler countries. Australia, New Zealand, Canada, or white settler countries, were called dominion colonies and they had a very different privilege status. It was called “kith and kin” when you can demonstrate biological relationships to white people in Britain, you were given a different kind of treatment access to Britain.

For masses of non-white folks from the same empire to be allowed to come to Britain was significant, right? But it was because they were coming, not as immigrants as the story today is sort of often told, but they were coming as empire subjects. They too were British and in fact, the migrations occurred because Britain had been devastated by World War II, it needed a quick and cheap source of labor and they were pulling this migration and labor source from the colonies, from the new Commonwealth colonies, Jamaica, Trinidad, Malaysia different places like nurses from Malaysia, transport workers from Trinidad, et cetera, et cetera.

So that was an invitation for British people to come to Britain to sort of participate in the resurrection of the motherland as it were, and this is why people went over there. They didn't necessarily see themselves as leaving the empire, they were just going to the heart of the

empire, which was what they had been a part of for many years. So when we have these mass migrations and the beginnings of a kind of mass settlement of nonwhite British subjects into Britain, now that process was an incredibly violent process.

So the state and the empire wanted to have cheap labor very quickly to rebuild Britain and sent out this invitation and said like, "Hey, we are looking for people to work on land and transport, or people to work in the national health service that was starting." That was the reward for ordinary Britain's for having gone through the war, there's going to be socialized medicines, but they didn't have the adequate nurses that didn't have adequate doctors.

So, I mean 30 over percent of the doctors of the national health service which was one of the big socialist achievements in the world was based on being able to draw upon labor both medical labor, nursing labor, and other kinds of labor from the colonies. But the social reception that they received when they came in and they started to become a part of everyday society was a violent process and it immediately became the materials out of which racist discourses started to organize themselves around and political discourses started organizing themselves around.

All of that narrative got changed to these are migrants swamping a white Britain. The narrative became a racialized narrative in a new way and so that's where you get the rise of anti-immigration politics, the rise of anti-immigration political leaders. Enoch Powell is a very important leader in this development. You get the mainstreaming of the idea that people from the British empire, from the nonwhite parts, the new Commonwealth parts of British empire do not belong in Britain. It's a new idea because for most of the British empire's history, they were trying to say, "No, it's a really good thing you are being ruled by us." And then all of a sudden, they say, "No, actually you're not a part of us."

So it is under these kinds of political conditions that the idea of political blackness emerges. So we can think about these conditions as giving that sort of maybe objective situational context by which people needed to confront common problems, whether you are from Jamaica, Malaysia, Trinidad, Nigeria, you were being seen by white Britons and by this new political anti-immigration imaginary coming up as sort of being an interloping presence in the motherland of the empire, where you shouldn't be inside here, right?

So that, of course, is a very difficult situation. So the early organizations banded together around some of these kinds of common issues. Now that's maybe the non-agentive part of it. The agentive part of the formation was also that in this movement, you are seeing a lot of radical organizers, political leaders also being a part of the circulations, transatlantic circulations

that are taking place, global circulations that are taking place. It used to be a joke when I was doing field work and some people said, "All black politics in the UK is Guyanese," because of that Indian-African dynamic, because everything that was kind of worked out in Guyana got sort of replicated in the production of political organizations, movements, things of that nature.

And they took a lot from the US as well where some of them like Claudia Jones and CLR James had already sort of been a part of the black movements here. So you see some of the organizations, they invited MLK, Malcolm X over to Britain and those visits that they organized with black power figures were influential in creating parallel organizations and movements in the UK, the British Black Panthers, for example, what were formed in replication of the Black Panthers in the US but with this different type of composition of who was black and in the UK.

So I would say that there's two things, the kind of this objective conditions, but there was also the agentive circulations and political activities of anti-colonial figures from the Caribbean and South Asia that were bringing their anti-colonial background into creating these new kinds of political formations.

JLR: It's interesting to trace all those different dynamics coming together and building on each other, right? It's the anti-colonial movements which get transposed into anti-racist movements, the sort of legacies of colonial classification and hierarchies through the notion of race allows them to be re-appropriated for a sort of transnational solidarity, right, in the sort of multi-racial blackness that allows for Afro-Asian co-identification as well.

So within this, one of the concepts that you talk about and that you find this helpful to think about Zephaniah's work is infrapolitical blackness. Could you talk a little bit about where this concept comes from and why you find it generative to think through these political dynamics, but then also Zephaniah's work?

MA: Sure. I came up with the term infrapolitical blackness myself. It was a conceptual term that I utilized and tried out in this article to think about people like Benjamin Zephaniah and also the political black movements and politics in the UK in our current contemporary time, right? Certainly somebody like Benjamin Zephaniah came from an earlier period where blackness was far more solidified as a solidarity practice among particular communities. But today, the work of trying to conceptualize solidarity politics among what, say, we will call people of color is so complicated. And so it lends itself to a question of how is it going to re-manifest itself?

And so this is why I think that political blackness today is less a overt phenomena and functions more as a sort of informing politics, kind of becoming politics that is there, but is far more involved in the work of trying to search for the solidarity rather than dealing with conditions where we already have very self-evident common problems to deal with. It's because of the increased complexities of population, communities, dynamics, histories, the search for common ground, the search for solidarity, the search for the basis of a political blackness I think is much more the question than in an earlier period.

So I turned it infrapolitical in a sense to build upon the political theorist James Scott, whose notion of infrapolitics in his ethnography is actually in Malaysia, as a matter of fact, among the peasantry in Malaysia talked about the kinds of politics where you're not able to sort of frontally announce an agenda, an ideology or practice because of asymmetries in power and peasant forms of resistance often misunderstood as being like a daisy or not proletarian enough and things of that nature have their own logics, have their own dynamics.

And for me, infrapolitical blackness today is no longer the sort of black power moment of organizations, military posturing, interventions, but far more peasant-like, if you want to use that analogy, or far more under the radar, under the open transcript as Scott would say, right?

JLR: Right, right. Yeah. It seems like an operative part of this is we could say emergence, right? It's less that the conditions have sort of set where the solidarity is always taken for granted and now the question is how to act on it, but rather as you point out there are those sort of civil society institutions, but there's also the question of given the change in context at the end of the 20th century beginning of the 21st century, the leading question is more how do we build that solidarity, right, or what are the points of connection?

And so that driving question leads to a different kind of impetus, but also kind of different practices that are more searching for searching rather than definitive in that sense, right?

MA: I think so. And some of the history too has been like, I mean, this is quite different in the UK than in the US but in certain limited contexts, political blackness also became institutionalized. I mean, for a period, it was institutionalized in state practices where black was adopted as the sort of social policy delivery mechanisms, servicing black communities.

And by that statement, all minority communities sort of in uniform ways was sort of it's policy-making language until it was dropped in the 1990s. And then that took a turn to being in this hyper-ethnicized model of service delivery that created a lot of the scholarship shows that

created an incredible fragmentary pressure on a lot of the solidarities built up because the state was encouraging them.

If you were Guyanese and if you applied to form a Guyanese organization as opposed to Trinidadian organization, then you could get money and funding. And so not only the South Asian Afro-Caribbean thing, but it fractured in so many different kinds of ways. And now, of course, also the dynamics of which communities have by the 20th century, some communities had kind of achieved social mobility, some communities had not. The Indian community by and large had sort of done pretty well for certain structural reasons. Other communities like Pakistani, Bangladeshi communities are some of the poorest communities.

Afro-Caribbean communities actually have done quite well in sort of educational terms especially Afro-Caribbean women are very high achieving educationally as compared to say Afro-Caribbean boys. So we are dealing with such a very different complexity and so what does it mean to create solidarity now and be attentive to these asymmetries within the communities?

JLR: Yeah, yeah, for sure. I mean, the sort of mainstream repeated point is that race is a social construct, but I think a lot of the changes that you're pointing out is also how race is an institutional construct in both the government instituting separate kind of funding and resources, depending on how you allow yourself ethnically or racially, and then institutions co-opting that too, right?

Becoming the "black candidate" but not really standing in for any issues in particular that are progressive or that are helping any of the groups in this sort of a multiracial coalition. So the role that institutions play in shaping and co-opting those identities is also crucial to think about here, right?

MA: Yeah.

JLR: So let's talk about the cultural media aspect of this, could you talk to us a little bit about who Benjamin Zephaniah is and his work and how does he fit into all of this?

MA: Sure. I mean Benjamin Zephaniah is sort of an iconic person today in Britain and in British cultural terms. I mean, he's often an ambassador for Britain in British council programs abroad and things of that nature. He is often on very prominent official cultural institutions, competitions, prizes, things of that nature, exhibitions.

So he's a very important prominent voice and also very radical. He rejected the honorifics by the queen to become a sir and I guess he's straddling a difficult terrain where today he's quite a prestigious icon compared to two decades ago, three decades ago yet at the same time he's continuing to kind of level critiques against empire, critiques against racism while occupying this very prominent cultural institutional position.

That's who he is, I would say today, but my experience with the kind of work that he does is that he has always kept his ear to the ground, he has always been dedicated to using art to talk about the issues involving oppressed communities in the UK. And also as with any marginalized person of color especially working class backgrounds who maybe one member makes it, but his family doesn't have that same kind of uniform social mobility.

So he, as I mentioned, had a family member who had been killed by the police and the Michael Powell campaign is a very famous campaign for social justice, racial justice in the UK and he was involved in that for a very long time and so he has a very firsthand experience how difficult it is to get justice for police violence, right, against the state. So he doesn't embrace his newfound prominence easily, and so he has continued to do work, I think, that is very critical of Britain and its social relationships, its racial relationships.

He is very well known as being a kind of founding figure in dub poetry. Dub poetry is kind of a Caribbean originated form, is a kind of spoken word poetry over regular rhythms would be one simple way to kind of characterize what it is. But yeah, children's author, dub poetry, pioneer figure, in his own way activist. I mean he used to get very annoyed at critiques against certain other... I won't mention some of the other radical music groups and musicians who sort of got too big headed, wouldn't go down to the local police station for a demo that weekend. In my conversation, they'd get annoyed. He would still turn up. When I was there, he turned up for all the local demos.

We had an anti-terrorism raid that mistakenly targeted a Bangladeshi family. He was there upfront being a part of the protest [against it]. This kind of '60s, '70s protest culture thing feels like you have to go down to the ground to make people's voices felt and then the artists should be a part of that in as much as kind of negotiating with executives and trying to kind of do that type of, oh, I'm, I'm a radical artist because I put out a radical song, but he really also in my observational experience is also somebody who actually is there in the police station demo. And how could he not be? It's his cousin. So that I think maybe it gives some kind of insight to who he is.

JLR: Yeah, yeah, for sure. And it marks an important distinction in that it's not just the text of the works or espousing the radical politics, but it's also the actions of the artists tied to what he's saying in the children's books or in the poetry as well, which makes an important distinction from other artists who don't do that, right?

MA: Mm-hmm(affirmative).

JLR: So the piece that you analyze specifically in this article is *Rong Radio* which started as a poem and became, I guess, a song and a music video. So can you tell us a little bit about what are the politics of *Rong Radio* and how is it making these connections in terms of political blackness?

MA: Yeah. So I think, as I said, when you watch the video, you don't immediately see a banner that's saying, "We are black," or, "Black and white unite and fight." It's not announcing its politics that way, right? You have to kind of search for the connections for yourselves to make those connections for yourselves and what he's saying and how he's visualizing the poem in the music video with the directors of the production as well. And so in that sense, that's what I call it infrapolitical, right?

So it's just this is something that you will have to do the work to actually understand the political messaging that's coming in in a more subtle way than say a direct spoken word form or something like that, right? Although when you hear him, his politics is pretty explicit. I mean, the songs about many different things, it's on the one hand a song about the ways in which the persona is sort of deeply colonized in the contemporary sense like it's a persona that's trying to reflect on the ways in which his political consciousness has become corrupted largely in the face of the opiates that we have as it were in consumer culture, in media, in tabloid culture.

In the UK, this is kind of a thing to have high culture, it's kind of a big point of social critique like the kinds of things that are seen in people magazine type of notion like gossip culture, celebrity culture, all of that kind of stuff which in some sense, I think in the poem is saying it's kind of colonized working class black consciousness, right? Political consciousness kind of dampened and dumbed it down, but also high culture, right? There's a line in there, I have to know what the stock market did today. I have to know that it went up 1%. This idea of what kind of subjects are we? What is it that's important in life?

The stock market is important, a mortgage is important. What is not important? A child in Palestine doesn't matter at all. When he juxtaposes things like that, that's what you kind of get a sense of, his project in that moment, I think it's a poem address, I mean, of course, universally,

but I think also address to black people writ large, right, to think about where we are at in terms of our political imagination and our political orientations and our political commitments. And at the same time, I think the backdrop, that story that you see as he is narrating all of this stuff is the story of what looks like a South Asian man being released from prison detention.

There's a lot of gray type images in black and white that form a part of his story, that character's story. So this person's been kind of... the hint is has been tortured, traumatized, being released just walking normally down the streets, taking a train, trying to come back home. So here you have these two, there's different levels. There's all of these kinds of social mobility, consumption, celebrity, stock market, neo-liberal, ethos going on that's captivating working class people and people of color, and then here the people who are being tortured in detention cells just down the road tortured, brutalized, and then released to come home lives broken.

JLR: Right. Great. Yeah. As you point out, it's part of the drawing attention and critiquing what is it that we value and what is it that we don't value, and so much of that has to be we value finance and debt culture and consumerism broadly, but we're not thinking about all of these lives that don't count, right, or that are made to not count. But also I think the way you phrase it is that he's also being very self-reflective about not being a sort of coherent black political subject, right?

So as you mentioned, addressing the black subject and the UK about what it is that we are valuing and what it is that we are not, and what is the things that we are drawn to whether it's tabloid culture, whether it's the buying the fancy or expensive car and what are the implications of that? What are we losing in that coalition politics as well? Right.

MA: Yeah.

JLR: So what's interesting about *Rong Radio* too, as you mentioned, it has the legacy of dub poetry which is now accepted, and Zephaniah's put in as a representative for British poetry, but then it's also bringing in music in the song version and then what you're analyzing is the music video. So what is it about the music video version of *Rong Radio* that is also interesting?

I think you started to mention the sort of parallel narratives, right, with the Muslim man and Zephaniah himself appearing on the video, but what are some of the potentials that you see in the media form of the music video to making these sort of political connections?

MA: That the genre music videos when you go into the global south, and then the global south incite the west as it were are doing different kinds of things. And I think that they are

constituting counter-hegemonic kinds of image making, counter-hegemonic kinds of subjectivity making, political subjectivity making at the same time. And in so doing, creating these kinds of counter-publics, right, of people who are United through the viewing of this video, the dissemination, striculation, discussion around the videos.

And so, I'm interested in how the music video and theorizing around music video doesn't just depart from a kind of Western-centric genealogy of that genre. It started out in this particular way, it does these particular things. Now, I mean, the death of the music video was announced so many times in western music and popular culture industries but if you just follow that story, you're going to miss out how music videos occupy or have different historical trajectories in different parts of the world.

And I can't say I have this one uber theory about everything going on in the Global South, but I would say that the capacity of music videos to be devices where political subjectivities have been constituted through these videos and through these songs is very, very powerful. So I'm very interested in the work that music videos do in the hands of what we used to call Third World practitioners, whether they are in the west or whether they are in the Global South, and what kind of imaginations and utilities do these practitioners put their music videos to do, right?

And I think that that's still an interesting question. I mean, I think more people should work on it because it's such a rich area to look at. Music videos around the Palestinian African-American connections, that's been a whole subtle output there of music videos that were doing that. And of course, you can't get that representation of African-American Arab, African-American Palestinian culture making in most other kinds of media genres or forums, television film is very difficult, but there are a lot of music videos around the solidarity between African-Americans and Palestinians.

So just two other examples, and I think Benjamin Zephaniah's work kind of circulates, we want to call it independent, Third World, Global South, it kind of circulates in these channels and circulations of political affiliations, commitments, interests. And so it's part of the cultural ethos of that kind of network in a global society if you want, right. So a video comes out, gets sent, people look at it, it launches a critique, it brings up an issue, it reinforces a certain momentum in a movement. It does a lot of different kinds of things of that nature.

JLR: Yeah. Yeah. And as you mentioned, the barriers to entry are helpful and the proliferation of say politically engaged music videos, right, because they might be cheaper to produce because they're short and because they circulate a lot more than would be some more of the

legacy media, right? Like a TV show requires a lot more investment and infrastructure and so does the film, so it makes sense that these artists who are pushing for more political agendas or ideas are drawn to the music video because of the sort of narrative and symbolic capacities, but also because lower barriers to entry.

MA: Yeah, definitely.

JLR: So one of the things you mentioned and in the article is talking to your students about *Rong Radio*. Could you talk a little bit more either in this case in particular about bringing in music videos to the classroom and talking about music leaders that you're writing about and teaching, and how does that influence or shape the analysis that you were thinking about too?

MA: Yeah, I think they're very effective. I mean, they're short, they're well produced, high production quality. So it is a very, I think, efficacious instrument to try to kind of generate a discussion. People are always wanting to talk about the music video that is showing for four or five minutes and then it's a good conversation starter. And oftentimes, I mean, I use another political music video artist, Lowkey, who was a Iraqi British rapper does a lot of very pointed critiques of Western imperialism, very famous for this controversial video called *Obamanation* that came out during the Obama presidency critiquing the Obama presidency as being a sort of just another phase of imperialism.

And I found that when I tried to teach and certainly during the period where it seemed strange to me, but at one point when I was teaching courses like critical race theory, I would often have a lot of students who were like, "Oh no, we are a post-racial world." You remember that was even in scholarship a lot, that we were a post-racial world. Nobody ever talks about all the articles written that announced the post-racial world anymore, but it was a thing.

But I remember using that music video to try to break through this notion that we were somehow still kind of on a racial progress trajectory that kind of would get better eventually with time in a natural order of things. And when the Lowkey *Obamanation* thing came out, they were like, "Oh my God, can you say that about the first black president?" It's so insulting and the rappers involved they were African-American rappers. Other people were not only going after Barack Obama, they were also going after Michelle Obama and so this was a kind of shocking video.

But the politics of the video is very sound. The documentation and citations of the video is absolutely ironclad. So whatever provocative questions that was being raised about what kind of a progressive term is this? What does that look like? What is really going on? Our first black

president bombed an African nation and famine, that was one of the lines in *Obamanation*, which he did bomb Sudan in the middle of a famine. So first black president, what does it mean? Raising a question that.

I remember in the context of the Obama years, the music video could cut through the veil as it were far more effectively than the critical articles I was assigning. To get students to think critically, the music video went straight to the jugular and they were like, "Oh, okay. I guess we get what you're talking about right now."

JLR: Great. So how have you built on this work since its publication?

MA: Well, my next project actually kind of stemming from this strand of my research interest is archival project. There's a Malaysian poet who was very prominent in the late '60s, '70s in the black British scene in the UK, his name is Cecil Rajendra, but it's become a bit of a forgotten figure now, but he wrote a lot of amazing poems in the kind of '70s Black Power moment in the UK while he was then in UK. He's back in Malaysia now and so I've collected a lot of these poems, I've interviewed him hoping to put his contribution out there as part of this archive for political blackness and the cultural archive, artistic archive of political blackness which is barely being mined, I would feel. I think people are beginning to do it, but there's so much that has been forgotten.

So I think the impact of political blackness also is global, and when we think about race, the impact of race in modernity, it cannot only be centered on the models that were developed in the horrific plantation economies and contexts of the US South which is one very important nodal point in modernities system of race, but there are all these nodal points around the world that also have histories interconnected but do not look exactly the same. So I think political blackness is a part of that history and it has this archive and I'm going to continue to try to resurrect that archive as one of the things that I do.

Also, the other thing I'm doing is researching anti-blackness and very specifically blackness that is signified by African presence and Africanity in Malaysia. I feel like in this moment, in a George Floyd moment, Black Lives Matter moment. I mean, it is part of my history with political blackness to say that, I mean, that's the kind of work that I can do. There are other people doing other kinds of work in the US and the ground, but I think everybody needs to ask themselves the questions about what is the work that you are well suited to be able to do if you are in solidarity.

JLR: Right, right. Yeah. For sure, I agree. Well, thank you so much for joining us.

MA: It was my pleasure, I was happy to be here.

[closing credits music]

JLR: This episode of the Global Media Cultures podcast was produced by me and edited by Alan Yu, and closing credits music by Cloud Mouth. This project is supported in part by the School of Arts, Technology, and Emerging Communication at the University of Texas at Dallas. Global Media Cultures podcast introduces media scholarship about the world, to the world. I'm Juan Llamas-Rodriguez. Thank you for listening.