KEEP IT SIMPLE, MAKE IT FAST!

an APP— ROACH to UNDER GROUND MUSIC SCENES

Paula Guerra & Ana Oliveira

Keep it Simple, Make it Fast!
An Approach to Underground Music Scenes
Volume 6

Paula Guerra & Ana Oliveira (eds.)

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PARTY!

MOM, CAN I GO TO ROCK'N'ROLL?

PARENTAL ADVISORY, EXPLICIT KISMIF ---

W/ A BOY NAMED SUE
+ RICARDO SALAZAR

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Entrada Livre

sexta-feira

01.07
15.07
22.07
29.07

Pátio do Museu de História Natural da U.Porto (à Cordoaria)

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EXHIBITION

More than portraits, they are impressions, emerging from the desire
to express threads of a four-year narrative of a long-filled path.
Do not see this expression as pretentious or artistic, but rather
as something that we really want to share, to show how we saw it.

KISMIF CONFERENCE 2022
>>> PLENARY LECTURE

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NO ONE TEACHES YOU HOW TO LIVE

13 JULY 2022
10H45-11H05

KEY SPEAKER: *ANA DA SILVA* **CHAIR:** *JOÃO VIEIRA* AKA *DJ KITTEN*

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15H30 - 16 DE JULHO 2022

JAMZINE 1

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JAMZINE 1 – July 2022
Conteúdos /: . Pussy Riot
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UNIVERSIDADE DO PORTO - FACULDADE DE LETRAS

KISMIF SUMMER SCHOOL 2022
"REBEL WITH A CAUSE" 12 JULY 2022 16H00-17H00

PUNK PUNK
KEY SPEAKER: JORGE DE CARVALHO

CIBERMÚSICA CASA DA MÚSICA, PORTO, PORTUGAL + ONLINE

KISMIF CONFERENCE 2022
>>> PLENARY LECTURE

KISMIF
C 2022

MAGICAL METEORITE
SONGWRITTING DEVICE
KEY SPEAKER: EXENE CERVENKA CHAIR: ANGELS BRONSOMS

16 JULY 2022
16H30-17H00

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KISMIF C 2022

IMPACT OF SOCIAL MEDIA ON INDIA'S ARTISTIC ECOSYSTEMS

14 JULY 2022
15H15–16H00

KEY SPEAKER: MANISHA PATHAK-SHELAT **CHAIR:** MICHAEL MACDONALD

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KISMIF
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14 JULY 2022
14H30-15H15

INTO THE GRASSROOTS LIVE MUSIC ECOSYSTEM. LIVE HOUSES AND MUSIC WORKERS STRUGGLING FROM THE COVID-19 IMPACT

KEY SPEAKER: MIAOJU JIAN CHAIR: AIRI-ALINA ALLASTE

ROOM FOR ONE [ANFITEATRO NOBRE], FACULTY OF ARTS AND HUMANITIES OF *THE UNIVERSITY OF PORTO*, PORTO + ONLINE

KISMIF CONFERENCE 2022
>>> PLENARY LECTURE

KISMIF C 2022

UNSTOPPABLE: PUNK ACROSS TIME AND SPACE

KEY SPEAKER: ALICE BAG **CHAIR:** DAVID PONTES

14 JULY 2022
12H30–13H15

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13–16 JULY 2022
13–16 JUNE 2022
2022

AN APPROACH TO UNDERGROUND MUSIC SCENES

Paula Guerra & Ana Oliveira

✕ ~~*Abstract*~~

To address the issue of art, sustainability, and ecosystems, we use the contributions of theories that address the sensory experiences of individuals as a means of social, political, and cultural analysis. What we want to say is that the use of a sensory-theoretical approach can - in the context of analysing and reflecting on art, sustainability, and artistic ecosystems - enable a theoretical and empirical advance in the sensory experiences of social agents - artists, activists, or others - forming the basis of a comprehensive contemporary political-cultural project, because this sensory reflection is centred on difficulties, acts of resistance and the reversal of dominant-hegemonic 'orders of feeling' (and creating). Here, we also bring into the discussion the contemporary conceptualization around activism and artivism, as we consider it indispensable for addressing the conceptual and empirical richness that underlies the chapters that make up this book: the spaces and places of artistic ecosystems. In addition, it is essential not to mention the concept of resistance against monopolies of power within the scope of artistic production; at the same time, the themes of sustainability and pedagogy, serving and illustrating the purpose of sensitive DIY as a democratizing agency in contemporary times; it is very relevant to consider in this book sensitivity and its impact on social agents, mainly how they communicate and create anti-hegemonic strategies, with a vital gender component; the theoretical-empirical materialization, in different time-spaces, of the concept of low-tech and high-tech about 'wild design' or about sensitive DIY; all this analysis also involves collaborative creations and utopia: those new micro-ecosystems and emerging means of sustainability that we mentioned earlier.

Keywords: art, sustainability, ecosystems, sensorial approach, activism, artivism.

To address the issue of art, sustainability and ecosystems, we begin by expressing the support of Huberman (2023), in the sense that the author contemplates the sensory experiences of individuals as a means of social, political and cultural analysis (Guerra, 2023a, 2023b). What we intend to affirm is that the use of a theoretical-sensorial approach can - in the context of analysis and reflection about art, sustainability and artistic ecosystems - allow a breakthrough in theoretical and empirical sensory experiences of social agents - artists, activists or others - constituting the basis of a comprehensive contemporary political-cultural project, due to the fact that this sensory reflection focuses on the difficulties, the acts of resistance and the reversal of dominant-hegemonic 'orders of feeling' (and creating) (Doerksen, 2018).

Focusing on artistic ecosystems, other concepts seem necessary for this discussion, even if they can't be applied directly, such as *technoenthusiasm* (Huberman, 2013). This concept is generally associated with bodily modifications in the sense of robotic improvement, i.e., to make human beings faster and more intelligent, but - in our opinion - the same concept can be applied to artistic productions, specifically musical productions, especially when we think about the attainment of an ideal of perfection which, consequently, occurs with the expansion of Artificial Intelligence (AI) systems and the increasingly strong

preponderance of social networks and digital platforms in terms of artistic production, consumption, and dissemination. Let us read the excerpt below:

> *Artists are the ones who I think are mostly interested in experiencing or exploring different ways of seeing things. We see this as an art, the art of creating new senses, the art of creating new organs, and the art of designing your perception of reality. Art's aim is to change the way we see things or the way we think of things or perceive things. These senses literally do this, they literally change the way we sense things, and we perceive things, and it changes our reality. So, we see this as an art movement (Huberman, 2023: 3)

Another idea that seems attractive to us concerns the fact that there is a commitment on the part of the self to the technological sustainability of artistic-musical production, in the sense that artists - by using digital platforms and instruments - place their artistic production (Guerra, 2023c). This dichotomy emphasises the preponderance of Huberman's (2013) concept of *technoenthusiasm*, as it presupposes an incessant search for the best beat, the best platform and the best product, this is the "process of developing new senses" (Huberman, 2023: 3).

It is undeniable that - in this late modernity - sustainability in the field of the arts almost necessarily involves a presence and an alliance with the digital universe, something that is interconnected with our previous idea regarding the importance of sensory experiences as promoters of varied feelings of belonging. Consistently, the production of dynamics of belonging based on sensory/sensitive experiences is interconnected in contemporary times with the theme of sustainability, mainly because the biological senses are more refined and, in this way, they become decisive in conducting an artistic-musical creative process (Balsamo, 2011). Now, from the point of view of sustainability, we suggest an analysis/reading that goes beyond the strict sense of the concept - related to nature and the environment - and instead proposes a broader reflection that sees sustainability as a philosophy, a practice, and an ideology. A kind of body with senses - like a sensory experience - that dictates the creative process (Bourdieu, 1993), while, in the specific case of music, it ends up simultaneously allying with and contradicting the commercial/anticommercial spirit of consumer society.

Also, about these analytical axes, we have reappropriated the concept of 'wild design' by the artist Huang Heshan (Liu, 2023), which is characterized by a low-tech approach consisting of improvised solutions born of the ingenuity of people with low economic power but high cultural and symbolic power. The definition of this concept, within the scope of our analysis, remains the same. Still, it is only necessary to replace the concept of 'low-tech' with that of 'high-tech' due to the solid technological impact on contemporary artistic productions from music to literature, contemporary art, painting or sculpture, among many others. For Yaxi (2023), 'wild design' is not just a practice carried out by social agents with fewer economic resources. Still, it is a paradigm of temporal articulation and production of space that, in complementarity, can create a sensibility - in other words, a creative sensory typology - of space and time that includes alternative and unimagined strategies. Thus, we are dealing with a sensory do-it-yourself typology (Bennett & Guerra, 2023) that is defined according to a specific space-time and which is even more used by social agents located in urban systems and who are/were socio-economically marginalized or invisibilized:

> *Wild design agencies are ubiquitous but, at the same time, largely ignored because of the practitioners' low status and the undesirable qualities associated with them. (Liu, 2023: 419)

But alternative and improvised solutions such as DIY are nothing more than temporary solutions. Why is that? Because these solutions don't solve the basic problems related to the precariousness of artistic careers. But the DIY ethos-praxis can be interpreted as a theoretical-conceptual advance, since it goes beyond a mere artistic practice or mode of production; there is a focus on sensitivity, the artist's senses and the space-time relationship. At the same time, there are also other theoretical contributions (Lichtman, 2006; Turney, 2004) that argue that the use of a low-tech or high-tech DIY approach - as we saw earlier - allows the researcher to uncover specific aspects of the cultural identity of the artist and/or social agent, as well as offering us insights into their position in terms of social class, two crucial axes for

looking at the importance of sustainability in a broader and more comprehensive panorama of creative ecosystem typologies.

What's more, the act of sensory DIY production is primarily related to the creation of an aesthetic that, conversely, should not be judged solely on its quality, but rather as a discrete set of tactics that transform the material world into a creative sensory flow (Liu, 2023), thus blurring the boundaries between production and consumption. We can add that sensory DIY, within the scope of artistic ecosystems, can be seen as an autonomous practice (Jackson, 2015), but also as a democratising and liberating agency. Let's look at the different forms of participation by young people. We're not referring to action strategies, but to the way the political system deals with youth activism, which has been gaining more and more prominence lately. Hart (2008) raises some possibilities: the first, which he calls 'manipulation,' involves using young people to defend a cause when they are not adequately informed to make that decision. Characteristic of this measure is the use of young people wearing T-shirts or anti-vaccination flags during demonstrations; secondly, tokenism, which is more usual when social problems are related to ethnic or sexual minorities, in which some members of these communities are presented solely to prove that the movement is inclusive and open to diversity; the third possibility is already different from the previous two, as it implies an open and frank dialogue between young people and public authorities, in which young people are consulted and their opinions are taken into account. Here, we can give examples of social and community projects in which young people are essential social partners for their ultimate success. Finally, there are projects initiated and carried out by young people, such as the environmental school strike campaigns, where the project was implemented locally and internationally by young people and youth communities set up through social networks.

Turning now to action repertoires, a concept postulated by Tilly (1995) to describe the different ways that social groups and movements use to achieve their goals. Fischer and Nasrin (2020) postulate the different strategies used specifically in environmental a(r)tivism. Firstly, there is activism that seeks to have a direct effect on the environmental cause, which primarily involves lifestyle changes, such as reducing one's ecological footprint, which can be achieved by changing eating habits, making one's own clothes, creating artistic artefacts or opting for public transport. However, although it brings with it a feeling that change is still in the hands of each individual and that we are having an impact, it is not without its limitations, as it does not bring about the structural changes that are perceived as necessary. Despite these limitations, it is an individual change that underpins one of the main theories that has emerged recently, the theory of degrowth (Hickel, 2021). And undoubtedly, many of these practices are based on a DIY ethos. Aren't they going to solve all the dramas? No. But they use technology and digital to resist and make the world a better place.

A recession is categorically different to degrowth, however. A recession is a shrinkage of the existing economy (an economy that requires growth in order to remain stable), while degrowth calls for a shift to a different kind of economy altogether (an economy that does not require growth in the first place) (Hickel, 2021: 57)

There is also activism with indirect effects on the environment: a set of actions that, rather than being content with individual activities, seeks to influence and pressure social and political change. This includes political pressure strategies to change laws and cancel projects that are harmful to the environment, legal actions, such as taking state or business institutions to court for their actions or indifference to the environment, etc. Ultimately, the aim is to accelerate political movement in the environmental field. Fisher and Nasrin (2020) develop four sub-dimensions of this type of activism: litigious activism; activism aimed at companies, working with the political system, and operating outside the economic and political system. The first type of activism involves the application of climate lawsuits promoted by environmental activists and movements. One of the prominent examples was the case of four children and two young people filing a lawsuit at the European Court of Human Rights against 33 industrialized countries for not reducing the emissions that cause climate change, arguing that these emissions jeopardize their future. Activism aimed at companies involves pressurizing to get companies, especially on social media, but not only, with the aim of getting them to change activities that are seen as harmful to the environment, such as pressurizing and boycotting clothing companies like Zara or Levi's so that

they have more environmentally friendly processes (which, in turn, causes many companies to fall into what is known as greenwashing).

Activism, which works with the political system, refers to the relationship between the state and social movements, establishing pressurizing partnerships between state bodies and social activities, which Abers et al. (2014) call institutional activism. Finally, activism outside the political sphere is characterized forward suit by more contestatory and transgressive action towards the state through protests, the creation of parallel economies, etc. When we think of DIY, artistic ecosystems and sustainability, we can also think of all these concepts as an agency that inverts hegemony and monopolies of power, mainly because artists - in general - deal with a radical scarcity (Liu 2023) of opportunities and practical and technical resources. DIY, in this sense, assumes itself as an imaginary of freedom that - although conditioned - allows these social agents to renounce, to a certain extent, the dynamics that imprison them in the systemic monopolies of economic, political, and cultural power. In this regard, De Certeau (1984) mentioned that the ways in which consumers - and producers, we might add - operate is what allows for the creation of an anti-disciplinary network of action, through which the strategies of dominant artistic producers are contested, creating, as a result of this contestation, new micro-ecosystems and emerging means of sustainability (Guerra, 2022)

These questions and themes that we explain here serve as a motto for the presentation of this book, which is divided into six parts. In the first part, the concept of ecosystems is addressed in relation to physical spaces, namely cities, places and, in turn, there is a reference - in the chapters that make up this part - to the sensitivities of social agents in relation to physical spaces. The second part concerns resistance, especially in relation to the concept of resistance against monopolies of power within the scope of artistic production (Guerra & Oliveira, 2023). The third part, as a corollary, looks at the theme of sustainability and pedagogy, serving and illustrating the purpose of sensitive DIY as a democratising agency in contemporary times. The fourth part of the book therefore focuses more on the theme of sensitivity and its impact on social agents, especially the ways in which they communicate and create anti-hegemonic strategies, with a strong gender component in the chapters that make it up. Also important is the fifth part of the book, which - in overview - focuses on the theoretical-empirical materialisation, in different time-spaces, of the concept of low-tech and high-tech in relationship to 'wild design' or in reference to sensitive DIY. It is a part that presents creative alternatives and portrays the role of digital platforms in relation to sustainability in musical and artistic production. This thematic line is maintained in the sixth part of this book, with the addition of a focus on collaborative creations and utopia: those new myco-ecosystems and emerging means of sustainability that we mentioned earlier.

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Cities, Interventions, Spa — ces, and Places

1.1. IT'S UNDERGROUND! DO YOU KNOW WHAT I MEAN?

Richard Anderson[1]

✖ ~~Abstract~~

The society of the Finnish Kaale (Roma) is essentially patriarchal, but the position of men within it – and thus the construction and expression of masculinity – varied depending on age, marital status, family bloodline, name and reputation and set of values (e.g., religious, secularism). Thereby there are many meanings in Romani music and the construction of gender in music depend on the multiple contexts of Romani music (which comprises musical genres beyond mainstream culture). In this paper – based on my intensive fieldwork among the Roma more than 25 years - I will demonstrate how musical identities are regard as continuously changing and adapting phenomena. Thereby also for Roma, identity has always been constructed in relation to hegemonic powers such as nationalism, regionalism, patrons of the arts, socialist ideologies and European Union officials (Silverman, 2012, p. 55). Identities vary according to the opportunities of the situation and areas of culture concerned, and they are bound to the contexts within which they constructed. The earliest documentation of Finnish Romani music emerged in the 18th and 19th centuries in both scholarships and the arts. Anyway, through the Romani history, Finnish region has been a crossroad between the East (Russia) and the West (Europe). Different musical cultures and styles have flow together. Because the new ethnic landscape and migration from Eastern Europe (mainly from Romania and Bulgaria), the new trend is kind of hybrid style of Romani music mixing different styles together. Thereby the role of Romani music from different origin is important for the "global Romani identity" process. In this paper, I question some of the "taken-for-granted" conceptions and consider an alternative to the existence and practices of Romani music (Finnish, Russian, migrants from South-eastern Europe, like Romania and Bulgaria) in Finland. I ask, what kind of musical and music cultural communication the Roma from different countries have with the Finnish Roma (in historical, cultural and social contexts).

1. Introduction

The music of the Finnish Roma has always been marginalized and this oral tradition has lived only among the Romani people. Nowadays this music – mainly traditional songs – carry belief systems, norms and values that can be view as a political movement by the underground artists as their way to counter against to the hegemonic culture of popular music. In generic sense, hegemonic - also in a musical sense – is the way in which a ruling group establishes and try to maintain their rules as a part of larger

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project to dominate others.

The society of the Finnish Kaale (Roma or Gypsy) is essentially patriarchal, but the position of men within it – and thus the construction and expression of masculinity – varied depending on age, marital status, family bloodline, name and reputation and set of values (e.g., religious, secularism). Thereby there are many meanings in Romani music and the construction of gender in music depend on the multiple contexts of Romani music. Thereby in this paper – based on my intensive fieldwork among the Roma more than 25 years - I will demonstrate how musical identities are regard as continuously changing and adapting phenomena. Hence also for Roma, identity has always been constructed in relation to hegemonic powers such as nationalism, regionalism, patrons of the arts, socialist ideologies and European Union officials (Silverman 2012: 55). Identities vary according to the opportunities of the situation and areas of culture concerned, and they are bound to the contexts within which they constructed. The approach of my paper is ethnographic, which based on intensive field work during the long period 1994 – 2018 among the Roma. What comes to the gender identity, and especially masculinity, analyses also draw upon my own experiences as a male musician performing different genres of Roma music, like traditional songs, global Gypsy music, religious music, such as Pentecostalism and popular music performance by the Roma.

2. A brief history of the Finnish Kaale (Roma)

Finland has perhaps the most homogeneous Romani population in Europe, with the Kaale population comprising groups of the Roma who arrived through Sweden as early as the sixteenth century. In the nineteenth century, this group was strengthened by Russian Romani immigrants who have since merged with the Finnish *Kaale* (Pulma, 2006: 215; 2012; Åberg, 2015). The Finnish Roma, nowadays about 10,000—12,000 in all, lead a traditional way of life; there are also 3,000 Finnish Roma who live in Sweden, mainly in the Stockholm area (Markkanen, 2003: 262; Åberg, 2015). The process of estimating the numbers of Roma in Finland is a problematic one. These problems are rooted in the general difficulties associated with counting so-called "ethnic minority groups, and mobile communities" (Clark, 2006: 19). During the 1990s, Finland became more multicultural than ever before. The growing number of foreigners coming to the country raised discussion about human rights, tolerance and discrimination. However, there is still very little information about the old minorities, such as the Roma, in the teaching materials of the comprehensive school, in materials for different occupational groups, or even in teacher training (Markkanen, 2003: 264–265; Åberg, 2015).

3. Fieldwork and the Influence of masculinity on the material

Over the past few years, I have from time to time alternately distanced my subject of research and brought it closer to myself. In other words, I have taken new positions as a researcher in order to see the material in a new light. The notion of masculinity has been one of the positions that has guided interpretations. There are many reasons for this issue. Historically, ethnomusicological fieldwork often focused on the musical contributions of men, in line with the underlying assumption that male-dominated musical practices were reflective of musical systems of a society as a whole. Despite the historical trend of overlooking gender, modern ethnomusicologists believe that studying gender can provide a useful lens to understand the musical practices of a society. Considering the divisions of gender roles in society, ethnomusicologist Ellen Koskoff writes: "Many societies similarly divide musical activity into two spheres that are consistent with other symbolic dualisms" (Koskoff, 2014: 38-39), including such culture-specific, gender-based dualisms as private/public, feelings/actions, and sordid (provocative)/holy. In some cultures, music comes to reflect those divisions in such a way that women's music and instrumentation is viewed as "non-music" as opposed to men's "music". These and other dualities of musical behavior can help demonstrate societal views of gender, whether the musical behavior support or subvert gender roles.

During my academic studies, gender was discussed to only a small degree, if at all, in textbooks and courses on fieldwork. Most of our written guides to field research – Hood, Nettl, Merriam, Goldstein - did

not mention gender at all (Babiracki, 1997: 123). In some of my courses, the gender of the researcher was discussed in terms of access, rapport, and role expectations. Anyway, the identity I chose for myself in the field and the identities of others that I thought I had chosen were not always the same (or so I think now). I also want to underline that gender was only one of many factors that shaped my experiences. Age, status, "race", education, physical appearance, political ideology, concepts of the individual and the group, and many other factors contributed, all of them interconnected.

Interpretations of the culture of Finnish Roma have addressed masculinity mostly with focuses marked by feminism: men are regarded as ranking high in the hierarchy of the community, with women placed lower than the male, their head. Despite attempts to deconstruct the notions of gender in Romani culture through the concept of identity, interpretations have often led to the repetition of traits and features associated with gender at an earlier stage. Masculinity is defined as how things should and need to be, with considerations of how men meet the culturally specific norm of masculinity. Taken to its extremes, masculinity is defined as something that most men cannot fulfil.

Interestingly, though research has sought, in particular, the experience and voice of women through the writing subject (the researcher). In the light of present knowledge, especially when provided ethnographically this alterity of women can also be regarded as produced by the researchers themselves. Unlike femininity, masculinity presents itself, from the perspective of gender identity, as a stable, indivisible and given property that has lost its grip and "reins" in the increasingly faster pace of modernization. The fault of these perspectives and arguments is that the defining of gender has not been considered in relation to other systems of distinction and power, such as ethnicity (Butler, 1990).

Owing to the small amount of research concerning Finnish Romani music or musical culture, the domain of culture has only been given the focus of gender issues. The aim of research and interpretations of Romani music appears throughout to have been to show that gender does not reach beyond the range of influence of cultural identity. Present writings on Romani music have dispelled gender to be part of the marginality of the Romani community. On the other hand, elderly people have been the main interest of folkloristically oriented musicology. In the old situation of gender relations, for example, women were regarded as having maintained the culture of verbal expression. Elderly women, in particular, are markedly present in compilations of folklore material (Vakimo, 2001: 34), although the majority element in the basic activities of Finnish Romani musical culture often consisted of young people. Previously, the relics of an ancient and disappearing culture were sought among the so-called ageing population in the case of Finnish Romani songs. Present studies show that people adept and versed in heritage do not have to be sought among the elderly. The strong orientation of young people towards singing points to the presence of a living musical heritage.

Nonetheless, everyday beliefs concerning gender have an indistinguishable effect on our everyday actions and, by extension, on fieldwork. In my own fieldwork among Finnish Roma, roles attached to age and gender were at first sight relatively fixed and created through mutual definitions: the interviewer or recorder was a middle-aged male of the Finnish majority, or as the interviewees often noted among themselves a "kaaje" or "gaajo", Romani for a "white man" [e.g., of the majority population]. These definitions of the identity show how gender is always associated with other factors of identity, such as age, personal appearance or cultural background. Age and gender are thus grounds of classification that are associated with each inseparably but in a transforming way.

Maintaining my assigned male identity while documenting and participating in Romani communal song events proved more difficult. At times their expectations of me and my behaviour conflicted with my need to be a researcher. Singing occasions are highly gendered events. The roles of men and women are clearly defined in the singing situations. In a fieldwork situation where there are both men and women, singing is mainly a form of men's entertainment, although women and children can be present at the event. This remains the situation in storytelling in Hungary where Romani men's storytelling is a community event. In singing situations men take seats at the front and women either stand behind hem or sit down in separate groups. If there are many men in a singing situation, the singing is rarely a "solo performance". I was expected to join the men's gatherings. Even though it was a role I gladly accepted and thoroughly enjoyed, it also precluded documentation of the event and conversation with others – particularity women – in attendance. I decided to alternate male and female roles in these situations:

singing and playing the guitar with the men on some occasions and talking with the women at other times. It occurs to me now that my crossing of gender boundaries, mixing of gender roles, and creation of new roles (the ungendered researcher) may have contributed to my perceptions of the equality of men and women in the Romani communal singing situations.

Some of the trips I made alone, and some with my family, friends or colleagues. The differences between the journeys I made alone and those with my family are of interest methodologically. When I was alone, I was included in the young unmarried groups, and was expected to take part in their activities, especially their away-from-home activities. It was on those occasions that I learned a lot about Romani attitudes towards sex and honour. In general, I was expected to behave not unlike the Romani males of my generation. When my family was with me, we were considered to be more of the parent generation, which involved my being with other married Romani men, talking, and my wife being with the women, participating in the general household chores in which the females normally engage in households, whether they are of the family or are just visiting. Normally in the fieldwork situations, such as other social gatherings, e.g., funerals, birthdays etc. men and women will always split into their separate gender groups.

Roma overall do not expect non-Roma to know about their culture and their cultural norms and values, and as these are very complex and multitudinous it is inevitable that a non-Roma breaks the norms many times daily. Usually, Roma do not mind that at all, as they are very aware of and understanding about the enormity of the differences between their culture and the general Finnish culture, and do not expect that a non-Roma should follow their normative way of life. This is interesting, and in line with observations which have been made about other minorities, namely that they are more able to see the point of view of the majority than the majority can tolerate the view of the minority (Grönfors, 1977: 169). It is sometimes easier as an outsider to approach a particular topic because one is not assailed with divided loyalties, socially and culturally conditioned assumptions, or ingrained expectations. And because of my position not simply as an outsider, but as a foreigner, it was possible for me to ask the most basic and direct questions without causing offence or seeming to challenge elements of a belief system. This study, therefore, is also in many ways my study and inevitably with coloured interpretations (as many scholars in both the humanities and social sciences now recognize). I have, however, tried to balance this outsider's view with an insider's perceptions, particularly in relation to musical experience, most importantly through the inclusion, in the members' own words, of their interpretations of particular phenomena.

The significance of my own gender for the way in which the materials were compiled mainly depended on who were present at the interviews. On the other hand, the choice of locale was also pertinent to my research theme. In some situations, interviews and the playing of music were more called for in places suited to group interviews, while on other occasions a less disturbed and "more neutral" setting proved to be more suitable. The categories of age associated with my gender involved highly varying meanings depending on the situation. It was often the case in group interviews that the oldest men behaved as if they had all the power and as a male researcher, I found it hard to gain a grasp of the singing culture of young people, especially young women. A similar phenomenon has been observed to function in the opposite order: women researchers have found it hard to approach male interviewees. In traditional Romani research, grounds for this would most likely be sought from normative structures associated with respect and shame, with repeated reminders of how the lives of young people in Romani culture are regulated by a complex network of prohibitions, regulations and silence (Markkanen, 2003; Viljanen, 2012). On the other hand, as a male fieldworker I maintained the traditional gender division in the research situations, with males actively taking the initiative and women as passive recipients. In other works, I first went to talk with the males in the interviews. These eldest persons, however, often proved also to be the most active interlocutors. I thus applied gender-associated norms, just like other participants in the situation, in order to establish an everyday order of things.

A noteworthy aspect of fieldwork is associated with orientation and the world of experience at the individual level. A joint conversation always requires to some degree experience shared by the speaker and the listener, for the parties to understand each other in general. I naturally had more shared experience with the men than the women. It has been suggested that shared memories make people born around same time a social generation, bound not only by similar age but above all by shared experiences. Music

and different musical practices, such as playing instruments, singing and dancing were present in many ways in my ethnographic study. The various contexts of music and their ethnographic analysis show that masculinity is not a stable analytical category but instead becomes signified and provides significations in different ways in musical context, in different situations of time and place. Alternating in this way, masculinity readily avoids signification. By considering the male category in various musical contexts, we can see the major differences between different persons defined as males and how masculinity is merged with other categories of identity and alterities.

4. Early studies of the Roma and the impact of masculinity

First, I must ask why we non–Roma are so interested about the Roma - this is not only question about the Roma but any minorities as well. We know that majority cultures have in fact influences the development and expression in all cultural identity of minority in Finland as well as elsewhere, sometimes more than the minority themselves and members of the majority have wished to believe; either this has not been recognized or it has been ignored (Kopsa-Schön, 1996: 251). What comes to Finnish Romani music tradition the reason has partly also been research tradition. Roma, like other "alien cultures" and communities have been studies from the perspective of divergence. Definitions and categories are repeatedly created by which ethnic communities and minority cultures can be distinguished from one another. Not so often has been examined the influences by which various communities mold one another. For me one explanation is Roma exoticism or as I sometimes want to call it "orientalism inside the Europe".

The research tradition of the Finnish Romani music has always hidden the message of gender – or earlier sex – that Romani music communicates. General Finnish Folklore including music research was the property of old men: women were absolutely outsiders in this tradition. That is one reason why the earliest archive material of Romani songs, is totally male-dominated and the songs of the women were neglected. This comes very near to the ideology of musical creativity: It seems that the conceptualization of creativity as fundamentally masculine brings it reduction of women the role of muse. In 1970, Pauline Oliveros, a composer of experimental music, published a brief article in *New York Times* addressing the question, why there have been no great women composers: she replies that women historically have been taught to despise activity outside of the domestic real as unfeminine. It is understandably, because the conceptualization of creativity as a truly masculine phenomenon was widespread in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century; musicians as well as other artists, scholars, critics and scientists all sought to explain how a creator could only ever be a man. In addition, we must keep in mind that culture of the Finnish Roma is strongly masculinity.

5. Romani exotism

We know that the image of the Roma has gradually spread via literature to other genres, the visual arts and music in nineteenth century. In music, Romani stereotypes were applied to a major degree in both stage music and in entertainment for courts and the bourgeois middle classes. A connection with the world was actualized especially in Romani music and dance as all-encompassing freedom and as the authentic, natural, fiery and colourful characteristics of stereotypical "Gypsiness" as the Hungarian composer and piano virtuoso Franz Liszt (1811–1886) described the Romani music that he heard and its manner of performance as deeply emotional, with its free chains of modulation, large intervals, oriental ornamentations and rhythms that gain pace.

The virtuoso, artistic and colourful (emotional and fiery) character of Andalusian flamenco made the Romani entertainers of Southern Spain representatives of Spanish culture as a whole (Lindroos & Böök, 1999: 37). Romani entertainers quickly became popular all over Europe. It is interesting in these historical contexts of research of Romani music is that in that time, nationally focused Finnish musicologists faced a difficult question with regard to the Roma of whether or not their musical traditions belonged to Finnish folk music. Material in the folk poetry archive of the Finnish Literature Society suggests that the definition primarily concerned the language of the songs. Rhyming stanzaic folk songs known in Finnish

as "sleigh songs" (rekilaulu) and sung in Finnish by the Roma were included among Finnish folk music, while songs in the Romani language were not considered to be folk music (Blomster, 2012: 292).

In the 1960s the democratization of society was reflected in the first attempts to organize among Finnish Roma, although national unity in politics did not initially give Romani actors room in which to operate. In these political processes, representatives of minorities and the political system jointly formulated definitions of the ethnic and cultural nature of minorities (Pulma, 2012). In the study of Romani music, this was evident at the national and international levels as various projects for collecting traditional music (Jalkanen & Laaksonen, 1972). When the existence of the Romani language and Romani music was recognized at the political level and their significance began to be given more and more publicity, research began to focus national forms of "Gypsy music". Political and especially cultural "leftism" defined the study of minority and Romani music, the purpose being to study things previously unexplored, the disenfranchised.

6. The cultural contexts of the Romani music as a catalysator for 'otherness'

The music has heavily connect with the codes of moral of human being and the environment. Also, the Finnish Romani songs tells the story about morality, often asking or searching the meaning and purpose of human being life, seeking for authenticity, suggesting the social order, and seek to challenge the ways in which we interact with the problems of present through sharing the peoples experience in the past. Known as conservative, the Finnish Roma try to keep the special characteristic of their culture as pure as possible; the strict behavior rules – norms and values – seems to be more authentic and ideal among the Finnish Roma than elsewhere in Europe. We can look this ideal model of behavior in next table, or as I call it "Table: the rules of the game":

The "rules of the game" can be grouped under next 7 prohibitions and obligations (Table 1.1.1):

Prohibition	Obligation
1. Young versus old	respect for elders
2. Men versus woman	respect for men
3. Woman, mother and children	ritual cleanliness – women's body
4. Utensils, clean places, clothes	ritual cleanliness – woman's body
5. Control and movements of the body	ritual cleanliness – woman's body
6. Illness and death	ritual cleanliness – unclean
7. Roma and non-Roma	maintain ethnicity

▸ **Table 1.1.1.** The "rules of the game"
▸ **Source:** Author's own elaboration.

As mentioned before, all ritual cleanliness rules or we can talk also about taboo rules, are to be considered in relation to the traditional social structure and with the respective of religion. The belief in the uncleanliness of the female body is based on a patriarchal order of society (prohibitions 1 -5). The Finnish Kaale use much stricter *Mahrime* –rules than the Kalderas' do, a little bit same kind as the Sinti or Manouche Roma have. You have to respect always and everywhere older people, especially man. Ritual cleanliness means in musical contexts, that there is no dancing, because the body movement may refer to sexuality, no sexual lyrics – except using methafors – no sexual dressing or musical styles connecting sexuality, like rock or pop genres. That is one reason why the popular music performance by the Roma is very conventional, like old dance music, tango and walz. All rules are manifest in practise as avoidance, silence, respect and shame; rules are based the main symbolic classes in Roma society, respect for elders and ritual cleanliness. Also, the Romani language is good example of strength of ethnic identity.

7. Musical influences

Romani music researcher Bálint Sárosi (1980: 864 – 865) represents a modern approach to Romani music, although most of his work is based on Hungarian material. Sárosi recognized that even in Hungary there is no single Romani style and that a universal definition of Romani music is not relevant (Pettan, 2002). Sárosi claims that, in a limited sense, the concept of "Gypsy music" refers to Romani folk music but in a broader sense to all genres of music performed and produced by Romani artists (Pettan, 1996: 43). Despite some criticism (Radulescu, 2003: 79), I agree that Sárosi's latter definition is useful in the sense that it moves the focus of examination of the music from around the narrow theme of originality to processes of identification, making us ask what music the Romani consider their own and why. This definition also points in the right direction in the sense that researchers have observed that the Roma tend to co-opt the melodic language of the local majority wherever they live (in Finland e.g., Jalkanen, 1972; 1976; 1996; Blomster, 2012; Åberg & Blomster, 2006; Novak-Rosengren, 2012; Åberg, 2015).

The musical models for the widespread layers of *rekilaulu* ("sleigh song") and romantic songs in traditional Romani tunes in Finland come from Finland and surrounding areas. The melodic models for the *reki* songs favoured by the Roma have mainly been two and four-lined songs from the Finnish folk repertoire, so-called *reki metre* songs.

ESISÄEPARI	Esisäe ... Jälkisäe Ei nyt e-nää, ei nyt e-nää ke-sä-mar-jat au - ta
JÄLKISÄEPARI	Mi-nun kul-tain rak-ka-us on ruos-tu-nut kuin rau - ta

initial couplet	*Not any more | not any more | will summer berries | help*
final couplet	*My dearest's | love is | rusted like |iron*[2]

▶ **Figure 1.1.1.** *Reki* (Rhyming song) rhythm
▶ **Source:** Author's own elaboration.

Like Finnish *reki metre* folk songs, Romani *reki* songs also combine seven beats in the sung text with eight beats in the melody, creating the *reki* song form. The most important single criterion for identifying *reki metre* is the end of the second and fourth lines, which conclude with an accented poetic foot preceded by an unaccented beat. This also obtains in the *reki* style songs of the Romani as a rule. The following song provides an example of a *reki metre* verse:

....

2 The provided translations emphasize the literal meaning of the song lyrics.

RUUNA SE JUOSTA ROIKUTTELLEE

▸ **Figure 1.1.2.** "Ruuna se juosta roikuttellee" ("The Gelding Trots Along")
▸ **Source:** Author's own elaboration.

1. The gelding trots along
And the runners under the sleigh creak
Run, run, God's creature
Without any cares.

2. I will put the finest reins
On that skittish little gelding
So, he could pass for sale
Even to the gentlefolk.

Although no one knows the origin of *reki metre* singing with any certainty, foreign counterparts do exist, such as the erotic/satiric *schnaderhupfel* dance songs present in the German language area in the early Middle Ages, the Swedish *enstrofing*, and the Russian *chastúshka*, which were initially especially popular among young people. Essentially no differences exist in the phrase structure and basic tonality of the Roma and general Finnish *reki* songs. Almost without exception, *reki* songs in the Roma repertoire are in the so-called natural minor scale, progression cycles based on the repetition of couplets, which begin and end with the tonic of the scale. A pentatonic scale (Sarosi, 1971: 27) functions as the melodic deep structure of the tunes, which arises from the pentatonic movement of the motif thirds of the melodic frame due to the tension of the tonic and minor seventh interval (Blomster, 2006: 105 - 106).

8. Russian romances

The models for the romances favoured by the Finnish Roma are also to be found in Finnish folk music. While the models for *reki metre* Romani songs are old Finnish folk melodies, the influences on the romances come from the East, from Russia (Blomster, 2006: 114). The first professional Romani choir in Russia was founded by Count Alexei Grigoryevich Orlov in 1774, and the "Gypsy choir institution" came into being as an outgrowth of Romani exoticism of the Romantic Period in the mid-nineteenth century, later becoming a nationally significant phenomenon (Kutenkov, 2003: 72–75; Sarosi, 1971: 43). Political and cultural interests were operating in the background. Russian military operations in Crimea and the war with England and France that resulted created an atmosphere in which Slavophile nostalgia rose to its high point. Disdain for foreign nations, especially France, received additional impetus from traditional soirées in which Slavophilia was emphasized in both dress and art. This nationalistic shunning also

extended to music, with one counterweight being the domesticated, court-approved Gypsy choirs. The popularity of Gypsy choirs permeated all Russian society from the restaurants and cabarets to the court in St. Petersburg (Blomster, 2006: 114).

After the outbreak of the First World War, the repertoire of Russian restaurants, cabarets, and variety shows became even more Russian. All German, Hungarian, and Austrian performers were cut and replaced with Russian performers and groups. A central factor for the spread of romances was also the Bolshevik Revolution, as a result of which Russian romances momentarily became an international phenomenon (Hirn, 1997: 281-285). Although individual tunes spread from ear to ear through formal and informal contacts, sheet music publishing in the twentieth century also had a significant impact on the adoption of the romance repertoire as part of Finnish light music. The recording and sheet music publishing house Fazer began publishing a series of some one hundred romances translated into Finnish and Swedish in 1919, based on the St. Petersburg Davinghoff Gypsy romance series (Blomster, 2006: 115–116).

When one investigates the interfaces between Finnish Romani traditional songs and the melodies of the Russian romances, the use of a sixth interval is the most apparent feature (so-mi and do-la intervals). Thus, the models for the two main melody types of the Romani repertoire, the modal *reki* style and the tonal romance style are found in both the Finnish *reki metre* folk repertoire and a tradition of romance singing that is a fusion of disparate elements (Blomster, 2006: 116-118). It is interesting that the archaic special characteristics of Romani song, such as glissando-rubato (Belisova, 2002: 13), the use of a vibrato based on slow, broad intonation, and trilling embellishments have been preserved to this day. Mechanical rhythmicness based on metric accompaniment has diluted the ornamental features of traditional music but has not erased them.

Because the ethnic landscape and migration from Eastern Europe (mainly from Romania and Bulgaria), the new trend is kind of hybrid style of Romani music, like Romani hip hop, Balkan Beat, Sinti or Manuouche jazz or flamenco mixing different styles together. Anyway, the role of Romani music from different origin is important for the "global Romani identity" process.

9. Conclusion

The earliest documentation of Finnish Romani music emerged in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries in both scholarships and the arts. Anyway, through the Romani history, Finnish region has been a crossroad between the East (Russia) and the West (Europe). Different musical cultures and styles have flow together. The traditional Finnish Romani music consist of many elements from multiple space of different music styles, like Finnish folk music, Swedish folk music, Russian folk music and romances etc. Looking the historical context, the role of the music has always been important to the Roma for many reasons, but vice versa at the same time, also the Roma gave part of their tradition to the main population.

Even the Roma's music-culture seems to be a land of men's world, I reject, like Simon Frith and Angela McRobbie (1990) the commonplace idea that there is some sort of 'natural' sexuality which music expresses, arguing instead that the most important ideological work done by music is the construction of sexuality depending on the musical genre, and the context where music is performance. I also argue that analysis of lyrics is inadequate to show how music constructs sexuality, and that a full account must also discuss musical sound. Like Frith and McRobbie, I also argue that music participates in the social construction of gender, in part by creating vivid, gendered musical images of sexual experience. Thereby changes in musical style and form have generally been reflections of changes in society and also gender (Blacking, 1995: 49).

Singing the songs, playing the music, or discussing their contents is not just a reproduction of traditional way of life however, for the songs tend to acquire different meanings in the musical practices of very varied everyday contexts. They are a means of maintaining the sense of community, of underlining gender identity or of drawing a boundary with the dominant population. In this way, Roma songs have served as a forum for Roma to discuss the values and the norms, such like gender roles, of importance to them. Many descriptions concerning traditional music performance are usually described in masculine terms,

but these performances have a culturally respected place also for women. These songs carry all kinds of meanings, according to the context in which they are sung. Changes in gender identity are possible because the community boundaries are sufficiently elastic to take in cultural innovations that do not necessarily support the traditional cultural foundations of the community. Society is heterogeneous to permit changes brought about through the shift in gender identity. Thirdly, I argue that as in traditional Roma music, women singer escapes patriarchal definition. In the same time, they threaten in some ways to break out of definitions of femininity by challenging women's alienation from Roma's musical practises.

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1.2. LEFEBVRE'S RESIDUUM; MUSIC AND SPACE IN THE NEOLIBERAL CITY. CULTURAL CO-OPTION VS. AUTONOMY IN MANCHESTER AND SALFORD

Steven Taylor [3]

✖ ~~Abstract~~

Despite the hypergentrification that has swept through contemporary cities driving the erasure of spaces for independent culture, underground electronic music scenes continue to establish a concrete spatial presence with their own venues, record stores, club takeovers, bars, recording and rehearsal studios. I examine this apparent contradiction through the lens of French Marxist philosopher and urbanist Henri Lefebvre's concept of the *residuum*, a surplus of feeling and style that spills over from everyday life, emerging in places that challenge the spatial hegemony of property and its attendant culture. Two sites in Manchester, each claiming a role in cultural innovation - The White Hotel and Factory International - are investigated in terms of their relationship with the residuum. Is one a site for the vibrant, spontaneous expression of it? Is the other complicit in a counter-momentum that is expelling the residuum from the city's neoliberal core?

Keywords: autonomy, neoliberalism, space, underground, electronic.

1. Introduction: Already existing and socially produced space

> *Pressure from below must therefore also confront the state in its role as organizer of space, as the power that controls urbanization, the construction of buildings and spatial planning in general. The state defends class interests while simultaneously setting itself above society as a whole, and its ability to intervene in space can and must be turned back against it, by grass-roots opposition, in the form of counter-plans and counter-projects designed to thwart strategies, plans and programmes imposed from above. (Lefebvre, 1991: 383).*

In this chapter, an expanded version of a paper given in 2022's KISMIF conference in the Portuguese city of Porto, I explore some of the threads that entangle property development, the creative cities imaginary, spaces for culture, music scene nostalgia, and a flourishing underground electronic music culture in the postindustrial city of Manchester UK. I investigate these within a context of the financialisation, exploitation and extraction characteristic of the contemporary neoliberal city. Greater Manchester (GM) is the chosen location for these considerations, as it is a site of starkly uneven urban development (Smith,

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1984: 150-151), from a hyper-regenerated city core to areas of extreme poverty and social deprivation, whilst also being widely perceived as a site of musical innovation, albeit predominantly a retrospective one. (Gillespie, Rose & Silver, 2021) For the purposes of this paper, these polarities are explored through two music/culture/arts venues: Factory International, a permanent base and multi-scale performance venue for the Manchester International Festival (MIF) that is still under construction in an intensely regenerating part of the city centre; and The White Hotel, an independent underground venue located in a former garage in an unreconstructed postindustrial zone within the patchily-regenerated city of Salford, a component part of Greater Manchester adjacent to the neoliberal core.

The discussion of these two buildings is broadly informed by French Marxist philosopher and urbanist Henri Lefebvre's concept of the *production of space*. For Lefebvre, space - predominantly the urban variety - was capitalism's final frontier, the object of the metropole's inward turn once the spaces "outside" - the territories of imperial conquest and expropriation - had been exhausted; "Capitalism has found itself able to attenuate (if not resolve) its internal contradictions...*by occupying space, by producing a space*.". (Lefebvre, 1976: 21, emphasis in original). The production of space for Lefebvre meant far more than just the purchasing or seizing of land, the construction or occupation of buildings. He drew a clear distinction between the quotidian ontology of already existing spaces and the "organised space" that was the result of social relations *acting* on that raw material; "Space itself may be primordially given, but the organising, use and meaning of space is a product of social translation, transformation and experience." (Soja, 1980). Moreover, the relationship between "given" space and socially produced space, according to Edward Soja, takes the form of a "socio-spatial dialectic"; "Social and spatial relationships are dialectically inter-reactive, interdependent; [...] social relations of production are both space-forming and space-contingent." (Soja, 1980). Despite the totalising trajectory of capitalist spatial production, Lefebvre regarded the process as inherently and irrevocably incomplete; "For Lefebvre there is some residuum of human subjectivity and style that capital has been unable to subsume, invert, or control" (Charnock & Ribera-Fumaz, 2011). In Lefebvre's own words, "Everyday life emerges as the sociological point of feed-back; this crucial yet much disparaged point has a dual character; it is the residuum (of all possible specific and specialised activities outside of social experience) and the *product* of society in general." (Lefebvre, 2016, Chapter 2, Section 5, para. 14, emphasis added).

"All possible specific and specialised activities outside of social experience", refers to Lefebvre's belief that "class interests (structurally connected to production and property relations) cannot ensure the totality of a society's operative existence unaided." (Lefebvre, 2016, Chapter 2, Section 5, para. 10) "Specific and specialised activities" like music and art are an inherent part of living, and our life together as humans - life in society- does not function properly without them; "Production" and "property relations" are not enough. There is a fundamental role for culture, which he says, "is not useless, a mere exuberance, but a specific activity inherent in a mode of existence." (Lefebvre, 2016, Chapter 2, Section 5, para.10) Culture for Lefebvre is not a superstructural outgrowth, a recreational cherry-on-the-cake for the enlightened bourgeoisie; it is the product of *everyday life*. This distinction provides a useful perspective from which to view the two venues under consideration here: Factory International as a space that has been designed specifically for the production of big-ticket spectacles aimed at liberal-left middle-class audiences (Bayfield, 2015) contrasted with The White Hotel, an appropriated, semi-autonomous space that provides a site for practitioners of, and audiences for, radical music and arts (Rymajdo, 2017).

The terms that Lefebvre employs to position the residuum derive from geography, or to be more precise from political geography; it exists in space, at "the ill-defined, cutting edge where the accumulative and the non-accumulative intersect'', "at the boundary between the controlled sector (e.g., the sector controlled by knowledge) and the uncontrolled sector." It constitutes "ill-defined and dangerous border territory." (Lefebvre, 2008, Chapter 5 Section 7, para. 7). Lefebvre's repeated use of "boundary", "edge" or "border" all point to a liminal zone in which people perform activities that are inherent to human social existence, but which lie outside the compulsions of capitalist production and accumulation, among which - significantly for the purposes of this paper - "property relations" are a core component. Helpfully, he lists the "non-accumulative activities" that have the potential to erupt inside this "dangerous territory", including "sensory perception, sensibility, sensuality, spontaneity, *art in general*, morality" (Lefebvre, 2008, Chapter 5, Section 7, para. 7, emphasis added). The territory described by Lefebvre could stand as an useful description of the position of underground music scenes within the cultural political economy

of neoliberal capitalism. It can also describe an ideological space in which the priorities of capitalist production and social reproduction fail to hold absolute sway, and where creativity, joy and desire can pursue other trajectories. More straightforwardly, it helps to position the physical space or spaces where these things can happen.

2. Two Buildings

The White Hotel can be seen dialectically as both the product of, and productive of, Lefebvre's residuum; it sits, conceptually and spatially, on a divisive urban border (Lewis, 2020). The building constitutes a socially produced space that, in Guittaradeleuzian terminology, has been *deterritorialised* (Deleuze, 2012: 352-3) through the repurposing of a car repair garage into a dance club and underground arts venue, a place in which hedonic pleasure, intellectual curiosity, creativity, gender fluidity, social communing and other parts of the unrealised residuum of the everyday life of its attendees and artists can be collectively expressed and enjoyed.

In contradistinction, I argue that the space being produced as Factory International contributes to the inverse dynamic, helping to expel spatial expressions of the residuum from the urban core. "As Lefebvre notes, the plan does not rest innocently on paper - on the ground it is the bulldozer that realises these 'plans'. Space has long ceased to be a passive geographic or empty geometric milieu. It has become *instrumental*."(Elden, 2004) Despite Factory International's publicity material which describes it is a place "where we build tomorrow together", along with promises of training programmes for local people, cheap tickets for the masses and a 2023 opening production that involves mass participation (Factory International, 2022), the building's location, in the middle of an intensive burst of property investment and development on one edge of the city's neoliberal core, suggests that other agendas are at work, a supposition supported by the dense interconnections - spatial, political, financial, personal - between Factory International and the MIF organisation and real estate development, inward foreign investment, regeneration, cultural tourism and the promise of local economic growth (Hatherley, 2020). The erasure of Manchester's alternative music spaces by accelerating property development has a long history (Haslam, 2016; Owen, 2022) and has been exacerbated by the dominance of The Warehouse Project, a super-club based in a cavernous former rail depot whose contracts with DJs restrict them from playing at smaller clubs in the city, a practice that was confirmed by the lead booker for Soup, one of the few independent music venues remaining in the city centre (Warehouse Project Does No Good for the Electronic Music Scene/Culture in Manchester, 2021; Henderson, 2022, personal communication). The Warehouse Project is making Depot Mayfield its permanent home, on extremely valuable city-centre land where it is "part of a £1billion regeneration project." (Depot Mayfield, 2022) epitomising the entanglements between spaces for mainstream music and culture - superstar DJs and high-ticket prices in this case - and the calculated suppression of smaller independent venues that function as spaces for experimental electronic music. (Henderson, 2022, personal communication)

3. Factory Records casts a long shadow

Any consideration of music scenes and spaces in Manchester must contend with the legacy of Factory Records, the independent label launched in 1978 by actor and activist Alan Erasmus, designer Peter Saville and local television presenter Anthony (Tony) Wilson, who became its figurehead and spokesperson; Band manager Rob Gretton and producer Martin Hannett Wilson joined as directors shortly afterwards (Morley, 2016). Wilson courted and generated controversy to build Factory Record's profile as an insurgent force challenging a conservative corporatised music industry from a neglected regional urban base (Morley, 2016). He also involved the label in the production of a series of spaces; initially through the temporary takeover of existing music venues like the Russell Club (Wray, 2018), subsequently in a radical functional and aesthetic transformation of leased premises, and later in the purchase and conversion of a substantial city-centre building. (Middles, 2009) The label conspicuously failed to adopt the practice of many underground music scenes, that of autonomously appropriating, occupying and repurposing empty, unused city-centre buildings, despite the fact that Manchester in the late 1970s was full of

them (Blake, 2018). In fact, the label operated much like a conventional real estate business, leasing or buying existing buildings and converting them at great expense; Factory Records' relationship with Manchester's then-unloved industrial spaces was conventionally entrepreneurial. What was distinctive in the label's spatial business model were its serial failures, each 'investment' racking up huge losses that contributed to the label's eventual demise (Bourne, 2021; Hook 2009: 239-41; Wray, 2020). Despite his pretensions as a property investor manqué, in public, Wilson fostered an association with a late incarnation of Guy Debord's Situationists, including having Factory Records sponsor the group's 1989 conference at London's ICA. (Owst, 2011, 2012; Ingham, 2016).

The label's first building was the Haçienda, named after a gnomic pronouncement by the Situationist poet Ivan Chtcheglov (employing the pseudonym Gilles Ivain) that "You'll never see the Hacienda. It doesn't exist. The Hacienda must be built." (Ivain [Chtcheglov], 1953). Purchasing the lease and a hugely expensive conversion were funded from the royalties of Factory Records' most successful act, New Order, initially without their knowledge (Hook, 2009: 53). When asked if it had been envisaged as a nightclub or a venue. Wilson told author Jon Savage "neither, it was very much conceived as a space" (Savage 1992: 21, emphasis added). Its spatial legacy maintains a ghostly, ironic presence in the form of The Haçienda apartments, a block of luxury flats on Albion Street, Manchester built in 2003 on the site of the club (Lindores, 2022), On 21 May 2022 a 40th anniversary Haçienda 'rave' took place and was livestreamed from the apartments' underground car park (Moore, 2022), a bathetic outcome for a venue that was hailed at its inception as a transformative innovation in British clubbing (Brown et.al., 2000). Factory Records inexorable presence irrupts into any serious consideration of the two venues in question in this paper, initially in the shape of denial; some artists associated with The White Hotel being determined to dissociate themselves from Factory's history (Hayes, 2022, personal communication), while the chair of MIF, Tom Bloxham, has strategically distanced the space being produced by and for the Festival from any association with Factory Records; "we were imagining it more as a place of art production in the way Andy Warhol set up his Factory in New York". (RIBA, 2017).

4. Creative economies and the economisation of the creative

A more prosaic spatio-economic precedent for Factory International can be seen in the line of major urban arts buildings designed by international 'starchitect' firms with the goal of establishing cities as global attractors for cultural tourism, a myth for which Frank Gehry's Guggenheim Bilbao serves as the origin story (Michael, 2015). Factory International's architects, Rem Koolhaas's Office for Metropolitan Architecture (OMA), have form in this area, with a portfolio of recently completed and ongoing work featuring more than a dozen such projects, in cities from Buffalo to Berlin (OMA Projects, n.d.). The building's lead architect, OMA practice partner Ellen van Loon (Ellen Van Loon, n.d.) is also the designer of Porto's Casa Da Musica, built specifically as part of Porto's cultural infrastructure for its turn as European City of Culture 2001 (Balsas, 2004; Elengical, 2021). Despite evidence that the success of the Guggenheim Bilbao, far from being solely attributable to a statement building, was conjointly determined by multiple factors relating to the city and the surrounding Basque region (Franklin, 2016), and a well-documented history of failed attempts to repeat the trick in a series of other cities (Morris, 2017), metropolitan and regional governments continue to buy into the narrative that it is a failsafe formula for rebooting the depressed economies of post-industrial cities. Much of this uncritical cultural boosterism is predicated on Richard Florida's "creative cities" concept which asserted that not only is cultural tourism accelerated in cities where these expensive architectural 'statements' are built, but that they also serve to attract and agglomerate creative enterprises in their shadow, thus creating a double economic uplift (Florida, 2005: 116-117). Manchester gained Florida's personal imprimatur in 2003 by topping the UK Boho Index, a research project he conducted on behalf of the Demos think tank which measured the bohemian character of UK cities through a bizarre combination of their "gay-friendliness, ethnic diversity, and the number of patent applications per head of population" (Carter, 2003).

City and regional governments continue to find the siren lure of the "Bilbao effect" hard to resist, and Manchester city council is no exception having invested more than £50 million at the time of writing

(Timan, 2022) in the construction of Factory International, justifying the use of such substantial public funds in language that is an almost direct paraphrase of Florida's; "The Factory [the name of the building up until September 2022], will accelerate economic growth in the region by playing an integral part in helping Manchester and the North of England enhance and diversify its cultural infrastructure by attracting clusters of related creative industry activities and enhance [sic] the visitor economy." (Culley, 2021). Despite significant financial contributions to the project from the UK government and Arts Council England, the council found itself needing to raise a further £25.2 million in autumn 2022, by which time the building project was four years late and 90% over budget. (Herriman, 2022). In what could be construed as a belated acknowledgement of its embeddedness with capital, the council announced in October 2022 that it was looking to sell "naming rights" for the venue to a corporate brand (Herriman, 2022). Producing space on this scale is hugely expensive and the successive injections of cash to fuel the building's continually escalating costs had, this far, come from non-commercial sources, which were apparently now exhausted.

Returning to Soja's updating of Lefebvre's urban dialectic (Soja,1980), the logic of investment in spectacular mainstream yet 'edgy' spaces for culture has in turn transformed the art that is produced in them, recruiting it into the cultural corps of "capitalist realism" through a process the cultural critic Mark Fisher referred to as *precorporation* (Fisher, 2009: 9). As Josephine Berry observes, "pre-crisis neoliberalism's faith in the power of art to revive economically and socially depressed areas" has resulted in "a model of art and culture that is able to provide the capitalist state with the image of freedom, identity and participation" (Berry, 2015). It's the freedom to buy what you like in the gift shop - as long as you possess the means. Or in the case of Factory International, the opportunity to be a 'participant' in the Danny Boyle-directed show that will mark the opening of the venue to the public in October 2023. (Free Your Mind, n.d.) Boyle, orchestrator of the 2012 London Olympics opening ceremony - an eclectic pageant that The Guardian called "the last gasp of liberal Britain" (Rose, 2022) - will direct *Free Your Mind,* a hip-hop dance adaptation of The Matrix science fiction movie (Brown, 2022). The show epitomises MIF's signature brand of cultural production, which could be described as 'generously-funded artistic centrism as spectacle'. Critiquing the MIF model, David Wilkinson sees a direct line back to the other Factory; "Inflated claims of innovation have hung over Manchester in a self-congratulatory haze ever since the braggadocio of Factory Records' Tony Wilson." (Wilkinson, 2019), while the New York Times questions the Festival's fetishisation of spectacular, large-scale productions, concluding that "At the Manchester International Festival, Bigger Isn't Better" (Goldmann, 2019).

5. Inside and outside the regenerative arc

Manchester is atypical of many UK cities in having a dense mix of residential, commercial, retail and leisure developments in the city centre, which disincentivises commuting (Folkman et al., 2016), resulting in the creation of a remarkably homogeneous lifestyle-driven earn-and-spend monoculture (Allen, 2007) within the core. This urban formation that has been facilitated by the many substantial nineteenth century ex-industrial buildings in the centre that have been regenerated as apartments (Mengüşoğlu & Boyacioglu, 2013), alongside a proliferation of recently built apartment towers (Hebbert, 2020). Within this homogenised neoliberal core there are nodes of acutely concentrated development; The Factory International building is embedded in one, a planned arc that stretches along the city-centre side of the River Irwell and is intended to attract 250,000 new residents, in a zone which the former chair of Manchester council's planning committee David Ellison described in 2017 as almost "Chinese style" in scale (Williams, 2017), apparently unaware of the fate of that country's 'ghost cities' (Mingye, 2017). The arc includes the St. John's scheme, a mix of upmarket residences, spaces for entrepreneurs in Enterprise City, and Factory International (https://www.stjohnsmanchester.com/). St John's is consistent with the pattern of regeneration across the city's centre, where the pace of property development has accelerated after recovering from the 2008 financial crash, bolstered by high levels of inward foreign investment (Bower, 2017; Goulding, Lever & Silver, 2022) and developments include no homes for social or affordable renting. (Silver, 2018; Williams, 2018). Cheap, even free, housing is, along with spaces for writing, playing, rehearsing and performing, another key condition for the development of underground electronic music scenes, a conjuncture that had previously come together in the inner-city Manchester district of

Hulme around the end of the 1970s. (Hatherley, 2011: 126-127). Between 2020 and 2022, the riparian arc of development that includes Factory International has become mirrored across the Irwell in Salford, one of the cities incorporated into the Greater Manchester combined authority. (Deloitte, 2020, 2021, 2022); Residential developments cleave to the opposite bank of the river, facing the city centre (Deloitte, 2022).

The second cultural space considered here, The White Hotel, is situated outside of this development activity, a few metres into Salford across the border from Manchester itself. It is located in what can be identified from the real estate division of management consultancy Deloitte's annual roundups of property development activity in Manchester (Deloitte, 2020, 2021, 2022) as a consistent development black hole, bereft of a single new or in-progress property scheme. Development activity on Salford's Manchester-facing riverside, and in other pockets within the city have failed to counter the fact that in 2019 it was the 18th most deprived local authority area in England, with more than 10,000 of its citizens suffering from extreme deprivation (Salford City Council, 2019). It has been suggested that some recent developments in Central Salford are spatially arranged so as to face across the river into the prosperous central leisure and consumption area of Spinningfields, with their back entrances, refuse bins and so forth facing into Salford itself, causing critics to dub the area "Salchester", with the corollary that much of the city remains, in the terminology favoured by the UK government, "left behind" (Keeling, 2019).

The White Hotel is housed in a former car repair garage surrounded by almost filmic scenes of post-industrial dereliction. Even the building's ontology is provisional; Google maps labels it as simultaneously a "Vw [sic] & Audi Car dealer, temporarily closed" and "The White Hotel" (Google.com, n.d.), provoking echoes of China Miéville's 'weird fiction' story *The City and the City*, in which two different cities appear to coexist in the same space (Miéville, 2010). The ambiguity reinforces a sense that The White Hotel is "situated at the boundary between the controlled sector (i.e., the sector controlled by knowledge) and the uncontrolled sector" (Lefebvre, 2008, Chapter 5, Section 7, para. 10), less in the form of some crude contrast between Manchester city centre and Salford - the two are increasingly imbricated with one another (Keeling, 2019) - but more in terms of juxtaposed urban extremes and uneven development within Salford itself (Black, 2015; Hatherley, 2020). Approaching The White Hotel on foot from the west, after encountering almost continuous residential developments - some completed, others stalled - all the way from the regenerated docks at Media City (Wallace, 2014), the walker eventually moves through a distinct zone of post-industrial dereliction, partly repurposed as a commercial adjunct to the city economy through the erection of 'sheds' and the utilisation of empty lots for vehicle fleet parking, and partly left unreformed in a combination of abandoned structures and vegetal overgrowth (Schofield, 2018). The material fabric of The White Hotel, a single-story shed constructed from peeling white-painted brick, its roof protected by curlicues of barbed wire, and the interior with its unreconstructed bar space and basically-fabricated wooden platforms for sound and lighting operatives - none of which betrays the hand of a jet-setting 'starchitect' - feels consistent with the version of Salford outside (Schofield, 2018).

6. The epicentre of the underground - or not?

The venue has been lauded as an important space for an emerging Manchester underground scene by music writers who document the experimental edge of electronic dance music. *Mixmag* referred to it as "the city's experimental centre" (Rymajdo, 2017), while The Face called it "a crucial hub for club culture in the Northwest of England and one of the most exciting experimental scenes in the UK." (Kinney, 2021). Two of the most prominent musicians associated with the scene, Rainy (Jack) Miller and Blackhaine (Tom Hayes), have endorsed this view in media interviews; Miller told DJ and radio presenter Gilles Peterson that "places like The White Hotel...they're putting a lot into grassroots music at the core of the city." (Peterson, 2022), while Blackhaine has claimed that "Really, me and The White Hotel is the best relationship I've developed." (Kinney, 2021). In conversation, though, the musician is more ambivalent about the idea of a scene cohering around The White Hotel, inferring that it is the product of nostalgia for Manchester's past as the home of Factory Records, which he defines in spatial terms; "It is a geographical thing, people interviewing you want to say it's a return to the glory days. The reason I've got so much angst about [the notion of a current scene] is the comparisons. We're not like Factory." (Hayes, 2022, personal communication). Musicians' scepticism about the existence of a geographically bounded scene nevertheless coexists with their acknowledgment of The White Hotel as an important space for

nurturing experimentation. (Kinney, 2021; Rymajdo, 2017)

Although The White Hotel regularly puts on club-style all-nighters, the overall programming reflects a broader range of underground arts, particularly a distinct variety of experimental electronic music which is characterised by transcending its antecedents in grime, drill, noise and industrial musics without sacrificing their power, while frequently distorting the human voice to breaking point (Rymajdo, 2017). These musical stylings defined performances at the venue attended by this writer, including a solo electronic set by Moor Mother, the stage name of Camae Ayewa, a poet, musician and activist from Philadelphia, and Rainy Miller's live debut of his late 2022 album *DESQUAMATION (Fire, Burn. Nobody)*. That The White Hotel can attract artists of Ayewa's calibre and reputation evidences both the venue's international standing and Manchester's history of producing globally-recognised independent (if not always underground) music spaces since the postwar period (Milestone, 2008). The White Hotel's draw is a result of the dissemination of the spatial and urban *imaginary* of a music scene (Stahl, 2007) in which a lone venue stands as a metonym; a physical space - albeit very much a produced one - that has acquired an abstract, mainly virtual presence across increasingly wide geographical scales. The process is dialectical; musicians whose development has been nurtured by, and in, the space benefit from a Benjaminian 'aura' (Savage,1995), which has the material effect of encouraging bookings for their services from venues in Europe and beyond. This is evident in the internationally expanding tour schedules of musicians like Blackhaine, Rainy Miller and Space Afrika.

Again, the legacy of Wilson's label is hard to shake off; when the club staged a performance-art re-enactment of the funeral of Lady Diana Spencer though the streets of Salford in 2018, the Situationists were invoked to trace a direct line from the Haçienda to The White Hotel; "The Situationist International also come to mind, an organization of social revolutionaries whose advanced capitalism-critiquing Happenings were an inspiration for famed Manchester nightclub The Hacienda, from whom The White Hotel have picked up the baton as the city's most exciting event space." (Rymajdo, 2018). In November 2022 the venue staged its first opera, Tiresias 2.0, a declaration of the venue's creative ambition and reach: "a one-woman experimental chamber opera; mixing live electronics with soprano, strings, brass and Ney, a 3D printed replica of a 30,000-year-old ancient Arabic wind instrument originally made from a vulture bone." (The White Hotel, 2022) In a neat inversion of roles, Factory International/MIF seeks to translate onetime musical edginess into liberal 'infotainment' by, to take one example, pairing Massive Attack with polemical BBC filmmaker Adam Curtis (Gush, 2013), while it falls to a shabby venue in Salford, run on a shoestring by all accounts, to stage experimental chamber opera.

7. Under the ground, a palimpsest

The two venues have differing relationships to Manchester's industrial past and the spaces it bequeathed the present day. The official Architectural Statement included in the public relations materials handed out to journalists at the official launch (and announcement of name change) of Factory International on September 29th 2022 states that "Factory International embraces Manchester's industrial as well as its creative past", explaining how "The building's main event space, the warehouse, is conceived as one large industrial space, to be adapted by users as they see fit "(Factory International, 2022). Repeated use of terms that evoke historical spaces of material production - "factory", "warehouse", "industrial" - is a familiar trope of the cultural regeneration strategies that have been implemented, with widely varying degrees of success, in many post-industrial British cities particularly those located in the north including Liverpool (Cox & O'Brien, 2012), Hull (Umney & Symon, 2019), Leeds (Chatterton & Unsworth, 2004), Sheffield (Mallinder, 2007) and Newcastle (Miles, 2004). Factory International's material aesthetic consciously enacts this merging of past and present; "It's concrete and corrugated metal facades stand against the refurbished brick warehouses and new build flats, offices and television studios." (Factory International, 2022).

Less immediately visible is the way Factory International is the current instantiation of a chain of urban imaginaries, serially embedded in a palimpsestic formation (Kroessler, 2018; Cavalieri & Cogato Lanza, 2020; Viganò, 2020) 'under' the land on which the new venue is being constructed. As Lefebvre insisted, space is never produced *ex nihilo*; Factory International is being built on the site of the now-demolished

Granada Television Studios, originally the headquarters of Granada Television, the company that owned the commercial television franchise for the north-west of England from 1956 to 2013 and bought the site on Quay Street for £82,000 from Manchester City Council (Marcus, 2005). At the time he co-founded Factory Records, Tony Wilson was a local television reporter for Granada, for whom he presented a new music programme, So It Goes, which acted as a pre-guarantee of his guru-like status in the late 1970s North East English music scene. (Fryer, 1997) Granada Television's most successful programme was Coronation Street (Atkinson, 2017), a soap opera set in a street of terraced houses in a fictional Northern English town. To facilitate rapid production turnarounds - at one point the programme was airing six time a week - Granada built a simulacrum of a postwar working-class Salford Street within the studio complex, later adding another palimpsestic layer by launching a Granada Studios Tour so that the public could pay to explore the set, a distinctly Baudrillardian turn (Baudrillard & Glaser, 2022). Despite its evident fictiveness, the set functioned as a powerful socio-spatial imaginary, with visitors on the Tour reporting a deep connection to its "power of place" (Couldry, 1998). Five years after the set was abandoned and shortly before it was demolished, urban explorers broke into the Studios and filmed their exploration of the Coronation Street set before uploading it to YouTube, thus adding another layer to this palimpsest of 'real' and imagined spaces (The Urban Collective, 2018). To adopt Mark Fisher's term, this is a site that cannot escape being "haunted" by its past (Fisher, 2012), and not necessarily in the simplistic, myth-compliant way its current occupiers would prefer. Other lineages are buried here and are available for excavation.

There is a striking visual correspondence between video footage captured on the abandoned Coronation Street set and the patch of unregenerated Salford - "litter-strewn, anti-aesthetic, warehouse-crazy land" (Schofield, 2018) - that surrounds The White Hotel. Extending the Miévillean metaphor to the entirety of urban Manchester; the City of multi-million pound apartments and the City (Salford) of extreme deprivation don't exactly cohabit the same space, but they are juxtaposed so closely to each other that, beyond a justifiable revulsion at the blatant social injustice, the affect evoked by their intimate coexistence could be described as uncanny, a sense that "something that should have remained secret, but that nevertheless, through some chink in the shutters of progress, had returned."(Vidler,1994: 27). If what has "returned" is the poverty, squalor, deprivation and degradation that hypergentrification seeks to deny and displace, then the team running The White Hotel and artists closely associated with it such as Blackhaine, Rainy Miller and Space Afrika are transmuting that sense of the uncanny into sonic and visual representations such as the latter's 40-minute debut cassette/digital recording Above the Concrete/Below the Concrete, which is described on Space Afrika's Bandcamp page as "a concept based around the industrial architecture in the north west, specifically Manchester" (B2 by Space Afrika, 2014).

White Hotel team's second venture into the literal production of space, Peste, a bohemian bar, book and record emporium in the Manchester district of Ancoats, past the edge of the city's hip Northern Quarter, concretises this line of expression in its elegantly raw interior and its programming of outsider literature events and lo-fi music/sound performances (Lengden, 2022). Peste is the French word for plague, and the title of Camus' canonical novel of twentieth-century alienation. The bar opened in December 2022 and, having been planned during the pandemic, it has been assumed that the name is also a reference to that more recent epidemic (Lengden, 2022).

8. Conclusion

To what extent is it credible to understand places like The White Hotel and Peste as spatial expressions of Lefebvre's *residuum*? Does it make sense to see the construction of Factory International as part of a process that has excluded spatial expressions of the residuum from Manchester's neoliberal centre? Proponents of both buildings, in vividly contrasting language, endorse the principle that "for an urban space to be truly enabling, it must make *room for creative and productive capacities*, not only capacities of consumption and use." (Banville & Torres, 2016, emphasis added); The real questions are *whose* "creative and productive capacities" are being channelled through each space, and in the service of making *what* culture? With Factory International, Manchester city council and its developer partners clearly aim to consolidate the city's central zone as a "primary laboratory for the production of globally competitive space". (Charnock & Ribera-Fumaz, 2011). The new venue's entanglements with urban hypergentrification

run deep; Tom Bloxham, chair of the Manchester International Festival, is also the co-founder of property developers Urban Splash, whose owners have spent the past three decades establishing the company as a cool real estate brand while riding out a series of controversies and financial collapses. Urban Splash, according to the architectural critic Owen Hatherley, "excelled at selling neoliberalism as radicalism." (Hatherley, 2020). These interconnections are consistent with the well-documented ""economization" of the cultural in the context of mutating forms of neoliberalism." (Biebuyck & Meltzer, 2017), a phenomenon that is also fundamental to Andreas Reckwitz's account of how creativity has seeped into every aspect of post-Modernist culture and society (Reckwitz, 2021: 32). Iconic arts buildings like Factory International support and legitimate the ongoing, long-term processes of regeneration, financialisation and cultural homogenisation that erase the expression of residuum and its spatial outlets from urban centres (Bauer, 2016; Smith, 1996: 19-20).

Mapping the correspondences between The White Hotel's shaky ontology, cultural irreverence and its off-kilter, haunted urban setting demands a more supple theoretical framework, and Lefebvre's concept of the residuum provides exactly that. While his fundamentally Marxist approach means that material factors of land ownership, speculative finance and the generation of surplus value necessarily underpin his analysis, a "dangerous" surplus of feeling, expressiveness, sensuality and productive energy simultaneously arises - dialectically - from everyday life. This residuum is situated; it expresses itself in space, not least in the spaces of underground and autonomous culture. The question music technologist and theorist Matt Dryhurst posed to writer Chal Ravens - "what would happen if fans decided to invest in real estate rather than music; the amount of euros spent on vinyl in the city of Berlin — if that amount of capital had been invested in real estate, would the dance music community own all of Kreuzberg?" (Ravens, 2020) - is moot. Dryhurst provides his own answer with the polemical statement that "Resilient subcultures always own the building." For an organisation like The White Hotel, that is unlikely to become a possibility in the near future. But in the meantime, what it can do is own the space.

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1.3. '*I AM A HELIUM RAVEN AND THIS MOVIE IS MINE'. A HUMANISTIC- GEOGRAPHICAL CRITIQUE OF THE MID 1970S AMERICAN PROTO-PUNK IMAGINATION*

Shankhadeep Chattopadhyay[4]

✖ ~~Abstract~~

The assimilation of socio-physical and environmental practices constructs a unique cognitive representation of human reality where the organisation and production of social spaces become the primary locus of meaning. The 'proto-punk' imagination of the American '70s is marked by a 'shift' in such assimilative socio-physical, cultural as well as environmental behaviours of the young individuals who had started being heavily inflicted, both materially and symbolically, through the 'punk ideologies' and its sustainable 'do it yourself' (DIY) ethos. Such symbolic infliction leads to the social production of what Lefebvre suggests as, 'representational space' that can be identified with the individual or public urges of denial, resistance and escape from the rationalized state-dominated production of spaces inside the coherent matrix of homogeneous modernity. Lefebvre has called such spaces the 'counter space' which unleashes a libidinal impulse against the normative social order by making its inhabitants explode through the system of a contradictory spatialization. Based on this argument, this article will critique the 'lived' social space of the mid-1970s American 'proto-punk' imagination by focusing on one of the most significant punk-rock albums of all time – Horses (1975) by Patti Smith. This article will also explore how Patti Smith, through her individual 'lived' experience, has contributed to the production of a more activity-centred politicised ontology of 'space' and how the poetics of such alternative 'socio-spatial' imagination has developed the spatial-resistance as well as an ethos of sustainability in the countercultural biosphere of the American '70s.

Keywords: Patti Smith, proto-punk, spatial resistance, representational space, sustainability.

1. Introduction

The field of humanistic geography focuses on the geographical aspect of culture by representing and analysing the socio-cultural productions and consumptions of 'space' and 'place'. By re-designing the dichotomic patterns between the global and local as well as the social and individual, human geographers attach significant meaning and value to the construction of everyday situations which are geographically diverse and culturally productive. The term 'culture' bears a longstanding controversial reputation for its

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complex political construction that is specific to a particular space and time. Therefore, any geographical interpretation of culture is focused on the 'socio-spatial' construction of the culture itself and tries to explore how such constructions are born out of everyday situations. The spatial components of social life open up possibilities of spatial feelings and emotions that severely contributes to the totality of human experience. Hence, unlike exploring any conditional features and aspects of a specific geographical location, humanistic geographers emphasize the explicit territorial perception of space and place by the societal individual. The socio-spatial construction of any subcultural production essentially engages in a relentless struggle against the hegemonized neo-liberal and state-dominated production of spaces. Such forms of socio-spatial conflicts, according to Pickerill & Chatterton (2006: 1), lead to the creation of "autonomous geographies", that is the formation of "those spaces where people desire to constitute non-capitalist, egalitarian and solidaristic forms of political, social, and economic organization through a combination of resistance and creation". The geographical potentialities of popular music lie with the crystallization of a 'symbolic environment' which is simultaneously ever unfurling in its expansion as well as possesses the capacity to relativize the everyday experience of a societal individual. Infusing popular music with such humanistic geographical concerns might allow us to experience rich socio-political and cultural aesthetics of the musical language.

With a motif of transcending beyond specious 'spatial' abstractions of modern urban capitalism, which carries a motif of alienating the social individual based on an arbitrary value system, Henri Lefebvre has severely emphasised the dialectical construction of the everyday life inside the 'lived' social space. He has argued that the everyday 'socio-spatial' realm is utterly a commodified zone shrouded under the mystification of an expressive urban imagination that leads to some significant social resistance. Therefore, a motif of de-mystifying such imagination occurs at the very heart of the 'lived' social space, or what Lefebvre calls the "representational space", by its "users and inhabitants" which develops around both the 'real' and 'imaginary' construction of their everyday lives. According to Lefebvre, an unrestrained effervescence of the 'spatial body', which embodies the 'lived experience', gets generated from creative social intercourse and attentiveness. He has also suggested that the wide range of such creative discourses, starting from sexuality, music, and visual arts to the images, symbols and spoken words, collectively construct the complex corporeality of culture. Adhering towards a humanistic and naturalistic outlook, Lefebvre has opined that; "'space' does not consist in the projection of an intellectual representation, does not arise from the visible and credible realm, but it is, first of all, 'heard' (listened to) and 'enacted' (through physical gestures and movements)" (Lefebvre, 1991: 200). Being severely associated with the global capitalistic subjection and infused with political and ideological contradictions, the 'representational space' is both 'real' and 'imagined' at the same time; "they are the chosen spaces for struggle, liberation and emancipation" (Soja, 1996, p. 68). Considering the above argument, this article seeks to explore the humanistic geographical concerns of the mid-1970s American urban imagination while focusing on one of the most celebrated punk-rock albums of all time – *Horses* (1975) by Patti Smith. The article also attempts at drawing the ecosophical dynamics of the American proto-punk imagination.

2. More than Proletarian Angst: Patti Smith, proto-punk, and the limits of intellectual ambition

Patti Smith, with her aggressively raw and emotional capacity for writing and performing poetry, had introduced herself in the early New York proto-punk scene of the 1970s. Smith's countercultural avant-garde practices can be identified in her creative cross-pollination between the 'high' genre of poetry and the 'low' genre of popular music. She has treated the stereotypical generic demarcation between poetry and music very porously and that too with a motif of establishing rock music as an ideal model for performance poetry. A blatant exposition of the bourgeois American reality and inauthenticity of the contemporary popular culture, that has been reflected in Patti Smith's words and music, "represents", as described by C.J Noland, "the transgression of ontological orders" because her artistic impulse has always been drawn to the "very orthography of the passage to the distinction between 'word' and 'song'; 'text' and 'matter', 'art' and 'shit'" (Noland, 1995: 597). Smith's provocative artistic language has displayed a crude, formidable, salacious and symbolic resonance of the unprecedented everyday situations and was vehemently influenced by a series of rebellious and 'outlaw' poets and musicians like William Blake, Allen

Ginsberg, William. S. Burroughs, Delmore Schwartz, Gregory Corso, Bob Dylan, Jim Morrison and most evidently, the French symbolist poet Arthur Rimbaud. Much like the Beat writing tradition, Smith's written words as well as her shamanic recitations and performances had instigated a shift in the contemporary urban imagination and helped in the creation of a "space for people to express anti-corporate feelings" (Bockris, 1998: 89). Smith's intellectual ambition of revolutionising and re-constructing the long-lost innocence of rock n' roll has ultimately culminated in what we know these days as punk rock and "if Iggy Pop is the godfather of punk" as Allan Cross suggests, "then Patti Smith may be its godmother" (Cross, 2012: 4). Unlike the economic exploitation and celebration of rock music's mass market values in the late 60s, Patti Smith "wanted to invest poetry", as opined by Daniel Kane, "with the bigger than life theatrics of the rock n' roll" which "suggests a real intervention into and critique of the avant-garde poetics and attendant ethics of the period" (Kane, 2012: 115). With a flagrant rejection towards capital-intensive music production and with an antipathetic attitude towards the conventions of 'textuality' in high cultural lyric tradition, Smith had invented a unique artistic formula to negotiate with the cultural disillusionment of the American 70s. In her 1973 review article for *Creem* magazine entitled "Edgar Winter After Dark", she emphatically depicted the changing scenario of American rock music:

> *Rock n' roll is dream soup. what's your brand? mine has turned over. mine is almost at the bottom of the bowl. early arthur lee, smokey robinson. blonde on blonde. it's gone. the formula is changed. there's new recipes. new ear drums. rock n roll is being reinvented. just like truth. it's not for me but it's there. its fresh fruit. (Smith, 1973)*

Smith's artistic ambition has called for a radical ideological transformation within a dilapidated and de-politicised artistic environment. While thriving for a departure from the standardisation of thought, her works have created a shared feeling of transcendence from all sorts of structural binaries like, 'high and low', 'sacred and profane', 'good and evil', 'bourgeois and proletariat', 'queer and straight', 'self and other', and several other bipartite segments of the modern urban capitalism.

3. On Horses: The symbolic construction of spatial resistance

Patti Smith's lyrical representations of socio-cultural imaginaries have created an intersubjective spatial resistance by acknowledging and being generated from the socially produced and reproduced 'representational spaces'. Such distinct spaces contain the potential to create a 'sense of place' by essentially stretching across images and symbols and these spaces are inhabited by the "artists, writers and philosophers" (Lefebvre, 1991: 39). *Horses*– now considered one of the most iconic and philosophical debut albums in the history of rock music – was released in 1975. With her electric debut in the mid-70s American rock scene, Patti Smith had "fulfilled her desire" as Victor Bockris has described "to wake people up to a new form of rock and give the fans an album that would make them feel the way she had when purchasing a Dylan or Stones album in the sixties". *Horses*, as Bockris further describes "was a kind of manifesto and [with that] Patti Smith suddenly thrust into the spotlight as a rock politician" (Bockris, 1998: 103). The unique, bold and transgressive approach of this album has carved out a distinct position of its own by challenging several hierarchical divisions of the late capitalistic values and beliefs. Being replete with Rimbaldian symbolism, the album has displayed an unconventional lyricism infused with a euphoric delivery technique of spoken words. The ontological construction of Smith's narratorial voice in the album (her poetic self) has always remained exceedingly anchored to the material urban environment where 'conflicts' sprout ceaselessly from the dominated 'lived' spaces and where its 'inhabitants' engage in an act of symbolic resistance against the schizophrenic cleavage of global capitalistic forces. Therefore, "to listen to *Horses*" as Philip Shaw has described "is to hold oneself in suspense, it is to reconsider all that one knows to be rational and real" (Shaw, 2008: 76).

The first song in the album, "Gloria (In Excelsis Deo)", with its ritualistic fervour and visceral disruptions integrated with a steady acrid progression in chords, has deliberately put forward a transgressive critique on human desire and its relational complexity with an organized religious belief system. While improvising on Van Morrison's 1965 track, the very title of the song makes an explicit doxological reference

to the Catholic convention only to place it in contrast with the unstimulating and regressive values that 'religion', as a belief system', injects into the everyday life of a human individual.

> *Jesus died for somebody's sins but not mine*
> *Meltin' in a pot of thieves*
> *Wild card up my sleeve*
> *Thick heart of stone*
> *My sins my own*
> *They belong to me, me*
> *People say "beware!"*
> *But I don't care*
> *The words are just*
> *Rules and regulations to me, me*

The very opening line has its root in Smith's 1970 poem "Oath" where she has blatantly expressed her desire of becoming a true artist by transcending the capitalistic conjectures of race, gender, sexuality, religion and politics. While reinforcing her 'self-liberation' from the arbitrariness of religious judgements, Smith's narratorial voice has affirmed to take full responsibility for her rebellious and 'sinful' attitude towards it. The last two lines have certainly reflected the narrator's unshaken confidence in breaking down all the stipulated social conventions and judgements. As the song moves forward, the charismatic narrator expresses a 'sense of mobility' by entering inside an imaginary room which is full of utopic possibilities;

> *I walk in a room, you know I look so proud*
> *I'm movin' in this here atmosphere, well, anything's allowed*

By suddenly shifting into such an alternative and imaginary space of the 'room', the narrator embraces a "spatialised selfhood"; that is a spatial construction of the 'self' which is not only "imaginary with respect to origin and separation, but also concrete and practical with respect to co-existence and differentiation" (Lefebvre, 1991: 186). While treating the 'social space' as a space of 'affirmation', Smith's narrator attempts to appropriate the Lefebvrian 'representational space' by illustrating the room's 'atmosphere' where 'anything's allowed' and therefore endless possibilities are awaiting to fulfil her crazy desire for the 'sweet young thing' – Gloria. With a sensational lyrical and musical build-up and with repeated use of verbs like 'walking', 'coming', 'crawling' and 'waltzing', Smith has dramatized the appearance of Gloria through a series of different places by developing a covert sexual tension.

> *And I look up into the big tower clock*
> *And say, "oh my God here's midnight!"*
> *And my baby is walkin' through the door*
> *Leanin' on my couch she whispers to me and I take the big plunge...*

The symbolic illustration of the 'big tower clock' and 'midnight' has uphold the significance of the temporal geography of resistance as the limited temporality of 'night' brings the narrator in close association with an exploding celebration of her eros where repression holds no sway. This very act of temporalizing the celebration of such libidinal impulses has indisputably outflanked the trivial empirical structures of the narrator's everyday life by de-routinizing and de-objectifying her momentous erotic force which is extremely temporal in its expansion as well as very insightful in its revelatory potential. However, after the shamanic hymn for her artistic doppelganger 'Gloria' and by distinctly pronouncing each letter of her name – 'G-L-O-R-I-A' – Smith relocates the narrator inside a 'stadium' where a huge crowd has been seen calling their names out to her. The depiction of place-based images in this song not only provides an individual spatio-temporality of 'being' but rather manifests a concretised 'lived experience' of the narrator which is based on the very endemically ambiguous and symbolic construction

of those particular places. For example, the sense of a vast communitarian place like the 'stadium' has constructed a 'symbolic value' inside the narrator's repressed 'lived experience'. Therefore, at the end of the song, the narrator becomes extremely impulsive towards her desires and feels it in her breath by overlooking the crowd with a straightforward motif of uniting with 'Gloria' while the anarchistic sound in the church bells chiming – 'Jesus died for somebody's sins but not mine'.

Another song "Birdland" is one of the most highly experimental tracks in the album *Horses*. Being directly influenced by Peter Reich's 1973 memoir *A Book of Dreams*, Patti Smith, with an unparallel visionary symbolism, has improvised on one of the sections from the book where Peter Reich as a young boy had the vision of his dead father. The narratorial voice in this song frequently oscillates between the third and first person's point of view while associating the protagonist – 'the boy' – with a vast series of real as well as imaginary places and dissociative objects like 'New England', 'funeral car', 'shiny red tractor', 'blue fields', 'belly of a ship', 'white opals' etc. In a sophisticated Rimbaud-like prose-poetry format, Smith has taken up the subject matter of a father-son relationship infused with the theme of 'death' and the limitation of human existence.

His father died and left him a little farm in New England
All the long black funeral cars left the scene
And the boy was just standing there alone
Looking at the shiny red tractor
...
'Cause he was not human, he was not human.

From a third person's gaze, the narrator attempts to situate the boy out of the bereaved and mournful environment of the New England Farm where his father died, to the symbolic 'shiny red tractor', the object associated with the memory of his father. By making the young boy navigate through such personal recollections and empowering him with a force of territorial detachment, Smith has described the imaginary voyage of the boy to meet his dead father where 'he was not human'. The aspect of 'death' has remained a significant theme in Patti Smith's lyrical oeuvre, as Dave Thompson (2011: 9) claimed that "only in death, she believed, could true love be revealed". As the song moves forward, the narratorial voice shifts to the first person while describing the desirous intent of the boy who wants continuously to go upwards by transcending his terrestrial limitation and by entering into an alternative zone of existence where he would cease to be a 'human'.

I won't give up, won't give up, don't let me give up
...
And the ship slides open and I go inside of it, where I am not human.

Smith's clarion call for cultural regeneration by stimulating the contemporary urban imagination with ethics of non-conformism has become much more vivid in the next stanza where we see the third person narrator crying out over the alienated condition of the boy inside a drab and disenfranchised generation.

I am helium raven and this movie is mine,
So he cried out as he stretched the sky,
Pushing it all out like latex cartoon, am I all alone in this generation?
I'm helium raven waitin' for you, please take me up,
Don't leave me here!

The symbolic resemblance of the narrator's continuous urge of being taken up above has certainly reflected Patti Smith's aspiration of elevating onto a more authentic artistic plane by breaking off from an unstimulating and quotidian cultural landscape. Consequently, we see the baffled narrator screaming with utter abhorrence – 'am I all alone in this generation?'. On the other hand, the narrator is driven by strong zeal and therefore invokes some ambiguous creative personalities who have seen approaching

like a saviour in 'silver and platinum lights' and are 'moving in like black ships'. The mentioning of the symbolic 'helium raven' draws the portrait of a young individual who is unfitting to the regulatory cultural tradition and desires to float across with individual creative imagination. By symbolising the young boy's desire of meeting his dead father, who used to be the container of all inspiration to him, Smith has indicated the lost glory of 'rock n' roll' and her immanent desire of retrieving its valour. The song ends in a shamanistic fervour with the third-person narrator describing the flight of the young boy towards the imaginary as well as metaphorical 'Birdland' on the back of a raven.

"Land: Horses / Land of a Thousand Dances / La Mer" is the second last and the longest track in the album *Horses*. Carrying a somewhat moderate influence from Chris Kenner's 1962 classic "Land of a Thousand Dances", the song describes the story of a young boy named Johnny and situates him amidst bizarre and absurd circumstances. Much like Bruce Springsteen's mid-70s songs, by maintaining a symbiotic progression between the music and the delivery of the spoken word narration, Patti Smith's lyrical imagination has created a symbolic construction of some kind of a 'promised land'. From the very beginning of the song, Smith throws an open invitation to her readers and listeners to partake in the beliefs, dreams and struggles of her narrator's voyage towards the land of 'possibility'. The hypnotic repetition of the word 'hallway' in the first stanza has catered to the description of the mysterious appearance of another boy from the other side of the hallway who seemed to merge with his reflection.

> *The boy was in the hallway drinking a glass of tea*
> *From the other end of the hallway a rhythm was generating*
> *Another boy was sliding up the hallway*
> *He merged perfectly with the hallway*
> *He merged perfectly, the mirror in the hallway*

As the song moves forward, we see this mysterious other boy gets disappeared after a violent tussle with Johnny by leaving him lying on the ground and making him deliberately crash his head against a locker. The story becomes more complex as Johnny wakes up from his hysteria only to discover himself surrounded by the euphoric glimpse of white shiny horses.

> *When suddenly Johnny gets the feeling he's being surrounded by*
> *Horses, horses, horses, horses*
> *Coming in in all directions*
> *White shining, silver studs with their nose in flames,*
> *He saw horses, horses, horses, horses, horses, horses, horses, horses.*

The gradually accelerating pulse in Smith's utterance of the word 'horses' evokes a splendid symbolistic representation of a self-destructive narcotic culture of the contemporary time and can be identified here with the uses of phrases like 'nose in flames'. Such instances can also be found in the latter half of the song where Johnny has been seen crying out his agony by immersing himself in a drug-infused state.

> *Then he cries, then he screams, saying*
> *Life is full of pain, I'm cruisin' through my brain*
> *And I fill my nose with snow and go Rimbaud*

Smith's artistic adherence towards the complex symbolism of 'horses' has not only emphasised the severe perplexity of a 'drug generation' but also summoned the harbingers of creativity and life force in it. By directly alluding to Rimbaud, the narrator suggests to Johnny an alternate strategy of transforming all the despotic forces into creativity and artistic resistance much like the French poet. Simultaneously the narrator assures Johnny about the plausibility of a distinct 'place called space' where one can exercise such alternate artistic visions and creative resistances.

There's a little place, a place called space
It's a pretty little place, it's across the tracks,
Across the tracks and the name of the place is you like it like that

In her book *Collected Lyrics 1970-2015*, Patti Smith claimed that her artistic mind has always been concerned about the formation of counterhegemonic spaces where free will can be exercised by resisting the bourgeois deformation in society. Smith describes, "these things were on my mind: the course of the artist, the course of freedom redefined, the re-creation of space, the emergence of new voice" (Smith , 2016: 12). The song further goes on to depict a secret route towards the imaginary land of possibilities while forming a sexual tension between the narrator and Johnny.

There is no land but the land (Up there is just a sea of possibilities)
There is no sea but the sea (Up there is a wall of possibilities)

Here, Smith attempts to delve into the deeper recesses of an alienated urban psyche by creating an alternative 'sense of place' where the collective repression of the social individual can relentlessly be released through vibrant physical actions and territorial fantasies. The depiction of epiphanic moments of redemption across vast series of such alternative places thus severely contributed to the symbolic construction of a 'spatial resistance' in the collective urban imagination of the American 70s.

4. Patti Smith, punk and ethos of sustainability: An ecosophical analogy

"Like all expressive cultures", as Titon (1984: 9) has opined,

*music is a particular human adaptation to planet earth. Each music culture is particular adaptation to particular circumstances ... each world of music can be regarded as ecological system with the forces that combine to make up the music culture.

Following professor Titon's lead, this can be affirmed that punk's musical habitat includes both its physical and cultural factors like recording technique, sound, fashion, DIY ethics, performances, ideas, lyrics, community members, etc., that altogether constitute an interacting musical ecosystem. But certain levels of polarisation in the urban environment can never be properly grasped without exploring the deep-rooted socio-political, ethical, ecological and aesthetic practices inside any artistic ecosystem. Felix Guattari describes that "the ecological crisis can be traced to a more general crisis of the social, political and existential" that essentially involves "changes in production, ways of living and axes of value" (Guattari, 1995: 134). The radical ecological perspective called 'ecosophy', that Guattari has come out with, advances an ethico-political paradigm of an empirical and speculative model of reference that provides a more efficient reading of human beings, society and its connection with the environment. The Guattarian notion of 'ecosophy' presents the relation between an individual and the environment in a pluriversal outlook where both the individual 'self' and its surrounding environment continuously engage in the process of defining and redefining each other. Being often misunderstood, the concept of 'ecosophy' does not simply describe a radical philosophical approach towards defining 'ecology', but "to think ecosophically", as argued by Tinnell (2012: 361), is "to rethink philosophy in our contemporary moment defined by the convergence of nature and culture, ecological crises, globalisation and the internet.". For Deleuze and Guattari, being environmentally aware is not to create preventive measures against the deployment of the natural or built environment, but to participate in the construction of a "nascent subjectivity" inside the "existential territories" of everyday life which will lead towards an emancipatory process by inventing new forms of valorisation against the homogenous abstraction of capitalistic values (Deleuze & Guattari, 1996: 199). Therefore, along with the 'environmental' aspect, Guattari has severely emphasised the aspects of 'mental' and 'social' domains of his ecological model by claiming for the radical transformations of mentalities and collective social habits, as because, without

such transformations, the material environment only appears as illusory. The malleable sites of 'existential territories' can be formed inside such areas as, architecture, arts, sports, media, etc; "they are movements that either standardize or produce change, loosening fixed relations that exist with a body or a collective, while exposing them to new organizations" (Deleuze & Guattari, 2005). The ecological and processual aspect of the 'existential territories' makes it a territory of action by including the "body proper, the self, the maternal body, lived space, refrains of the mother tongue, familiar faces, family lore and ethnicity (Guattari, 1995: 95).

Adhering to Guattari's ecosophical' analogy of the 'three ecologies' — the human mind, society and nature — this can be argued that the emergence of an urban subcultural phenomenon like punk rock in the American 70s has certainly contributed to the radical construction of 'nascent subjectivities' inside the 'existential territories' of the contemporary everyday urban imagination. The transgressive ethics of punk rock has developed several alternative strategies for survival and evolution both as a music genre and as an attitude towards life. Starting from experimenting with vocal techniques, fast-paced rhythm and inclusion of the 'high' genre of poetry to the DIY ethics of producing zines, music and manifestos; the development of the punk movement has not only sought a more sustainable motif of dealing with the traditional capitalistic economy but has also concocted numerous alternative conditions in the microsocial realm of everyday life. Patti Smith's pioneering artistic vision and the practice of a 'punk' sensibility in her lyrical oeuvre have delineated a strong critique of urban decadence and the dominant and unsustainable social structures. Her expressive and alternative creative practices have shared a distinct ecological responsibility by fostering certain forms of valorisation in the existing artistic environment and by producing a systemic shift in the value orientation of the contemporary urban imagination. In Smith's lyrical construction, the formation of illicit human desires and a gender-bending attitude of her poetic 'self' has contributed to the production of 'nascent subjectivities' by warding off the repressive mechanisms of the dominant society. It is the very heart of the 'lived' social space of the American urban imagination where such new transformative artistic agendas have been inscribed by Smith's radical artistic ideologies and which made the contemporary societal individuals drop out of their prefixed social organization and contexts in search for experiencing new 'existential territories'. Therefore, the inception of punk rock can be considered as the birth of "new social and aesthetic practices, new practices of the self in relation to the other" which is "the foreign, the strange" (Guattari, 2008: 45) and an essential component in the radical reconstruction of humanity. An act of artistic ambivalence which governs Smith's poetic subjects has always emphasised the proliferation of personal vision by overthrowing stale conventions and the neo-liberal conception of artistic integrity. The neo-liberal capitalism or what Guattari calls an "integrated world capitalism" exercises immense control over the everyday production of such radical artistic practices by "decentring its sites of power, moving away from structures producing goods and services towards structures producing sign, syntax and in particular … subjectivity" (Guattari, 2008: 47). The ecological devastation in the social and mental domain of the 1970s American urban imagination can thus be identified with a mark of intrusion by the neo-liberal politics of conformism where the very pursuit of creativity lies at stake underneath the shroud of fetishization and commodification. While the cultural climate of the late 1960s had started being facilitated and channelised towards rampant capital accumulation, Patti Smith's artistic ingenuity initiated a motif of difference by sharing the vision of new 'existential territories'; the formation of which goes against the existing pattern of social dogmas and doctrines by stimulating new possibilities for continuous production of radical aesthetic and artistic practices. Smith's formal artistic experimentation with a music album like *Horses* thus not only contributed to the production of a significant cultural text but also delivers a firm ecological critique of her contemporary time that is marked with an extreme sense of duality and an impending sense of alienation.

However, though the meaning and practice of punk rock have changed over the years, its artistic ideology has always been driven by constant ethics of sustainability, that is to recreate, recycle and rebuild the individual identificatory processes in different ways from the comforting cliches of popular culture. Whether it is by engaging in the search for the lost glory of 'rock n' roll' or by creating a dystopic urban panorama, Patti Smith's *Horses* has displayed an unflinching attempt to restore and sustain the artistic values of an alternative cultural form by constituting a symbiotic organization between the spoken words and eclectic rock rhythm. Such experimental and creative cultural endeavour directs the ongoing cultural

path towards an emancipatory process by attaching new values and meaning to the existing artistic ecosystem. Mark Pedelty in his book *Ecomusicology: Rock, Folk, and the Environment* has discussed at length the ethics of sustainability along with a dystopian environmental critique that is reflected in the punk poetics, and which stood against the escapist nature of 1960's hippie pastoralism. Pedelty (2011: 70) argues by describing that;

> *On the whole, Punk has not presented a terribly sophisticated critique of capital excess. Punk fashion, song and lifestyle, reveal in urban decay, turning consumer societies' castoffs into art. In that sense punk were early adapters of recycling ... punk is perhaps the most honest and artful form of musical commentary.*

Pedelty further goes on to associate the development of punk rock with an Oedipal rite of passage by describing how its distinct transgressive attitude has affected a wider cultural spectrum and the collective social psychodynamics with positive traces. Thus, an ecosophical analogy of any such radical socio-cultural phenomenon is not limited to the discussion of natural environmental sustainability, rather it attempts to analyse the repressive ecological debris inside the periphery of the human mind and society and thereby creating an ethos of sustainability in a pluralistic way by engaging in a process of (re)defining the natural and physical environment itself.

5. Conclusion

The development of punk rock is characterised by the continuous production of social dissents and several other transgressive cultural practices which reflect an effective counter-projection of contemporary popular culture. While positioning itself in opposition to the neo-liberal capitalistic values, punk rock has promoted dynamic and counter-hegemonic identificatory processes. Along with all other physical and cultural factors associated with the growth and development of punk rock, the lyrics have remained inherently discursive and one of the most active and significant factors in popularising the punk ethos. The component of lyrics are the "epistemological 'DNA' of punk", as described by Gerfried Ambrosch, and "an ideal means by which to trace the developments and explain the conflict and schisms that have shaped and continued to shape punk scenes" (Ambrosch, 2018: 15). Along with the musical dimension of punk, its literary dimension and linguistic polysemy have also been experimented with by a vast series of singer-songwriters since the emergence of Patti Smith's *Horses* in 1975. While the traditional academic scholarship on punk has mostly subordinated its literary dimension by majorly emphasising the musical dimension, Lee Konstantinou›s book *Cool Characters: Irony and American Fiction* has stood as an exception. Konstantinou (2016) claimed that punk rock has experimented with its literary dimension only to reach an area of autonomy outside of language and it is "as much a literary as a musical or subcultural phenomenon" (Konstantinou, 2016: 23). Patti Smith's contribution to the proliferation of punk ethos is based on more of a literary dimension than musical and deliberately reflects her participatory motif in the construction of a decentralised and anti-hegemonic configuration of 'language'. Greil Marcus, in his visionary exploration of the early American punk scene, has rightly depicted that punk rock "was not a music genre; it was a moment in time that took shape as a language anticipating its own destruction" (Marcus, 1990: 182). The inception of punk rock in the American 70s has sustained its aesthetic responsibility as an avant-garde art form by uniquely appropriating the spatial construction of everyday life through its lyrical and musical estimation. *Horses,* being a pioneering punk album, has significantly catered to the production of symbolic resistance in mid-70s American urban imagination and vehemently influenced the later punk bands for recreating and rebuilding their counter-institutive attitude towards producing new ideas, images, lyrics, record labels, and all other things associated with music production which eventually led to the further creation of autonomous cultural spaces.

This article has attempted to decern Patti Smith's lyrical compositions as cultural productions by focusing on the inception of a punk ethos in the American urban imagination of the 1970s. I have tried to establish that attaching a humanistic geographical concern with an ecosophical outlook towards investigating the development and growth of punk rock can be immensely productive in determining the aspects of resonance, robustness and resistance associated with the punk ethos. By analysing select songs from

the album *Horses* and identifying those songs in a humanistic geographical framework, I have explained how the poetic construction of Smith's song stories has served as a hefty critique of denial and resistance by engaging the very urban imagination with an eternal act of spatial struggle which helps generate new cultural meanings. I have also examined how an ecological perspective can be drawn from the emergence of an experimental, aesthetic and artistic practice like the mid-1970s American punk rock, which had formulated a 'lived spatialization' inside the hegemonic 'logico-epistemological space' of modern urban capitalism. By exclusively focusing on Patti Smith's empirical dispositions of lyrics, images and symbols, I have tried to analyse, how the creation of an alternative sense of place and space in her lyrical oeuvre has produced the visions of new 'existential territories' which helps revive the mental, social and environmental ecologies of an existing artistic ecosystem.

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1.4. BLURRED RHYTHMS: EDITING TOWARDS AN ACOUSTEPATHIC APPROACH TO SOUND IN EDMONTON, CANADA

Craig Farkash[5]

✖ ~~Abstract~~

No matter where we find ourselves sound exerts an enormous influence on our lives, both consciously and unconsciously. Sound is boundless. To quote Halpern and Savary, while "we can easily close our mouths and our eyes to what we don't want to take in, we can't really close our ears. Nature did not give us earlids" (1985: 3-4). But our experiences of sound are also extremely subjective. So how might we further understand these distinctions? Acouste(m)pathy may be one place to start. Building on Feld's "acoustemology" – a knowing with and through sound (Rice & Feld, 2021), acouste(m)pathy combines 'acoustic' and empathy, referring to the inseparability of sound and feelings of place. Not only can we begin to better understand how urban sound environments make people feel, but how we can create better feeling sound environments.

Keywords: sound studies, anthropology of sound, acouste(m)pathy, sonic ethnography, Edmonton.

1. Introduction: Acouste(m)pathy: what is it?

An engine roars past. Then another. And another still. Motorbikes and sports cars alike, all in various states of tuning, travel up and down Edmonton's Groat Road, competing with one another for the loudest vehicle. Unlike previous summers, this was now an easily measurable phenomenon. As part of a pilot project introduced by the city of Edmonton, decibel sensors displaying the loudness of each passing vehicle had been installed at various points around the city, partly meant to encourage residents to 'tone' it down. Yet, citing safety concerns regarding the 'quietness' of modern car interiors and generalized lack of spatial awareness from other motorists, motorcyclists argued that altering their mufflers was a defense mechanism signalling their presence to others on the road. At the same time, noise complaints from the neighbourhoods lining the Groat Road ravine rose and, after a few weeks the signboard on that road was shut off. This is a relatively simple sonic montage but this simple example also highlights certain questions of power – regarding who has the greatest ability to curate the urban sonic environment, whose voices are left out or invisibilized in these discussions. The same sound, unsurprisingly, can be experienced very differently depending on a variety of factors. So how might we begin to reconcile these differences?

Acouste(m)pathy may be one place to start. It is a concept that I have been developing and redeveloping for some time now, both directly and indirectly. In its most base form, it combines the terms 'acoustic' and 'empathy,' drawing from the intellectual heritage of Steven Feld's "acoustemology" – a knowing with and through sound (Rice & Feld, 2021). It teases out the inseparability of sound and our feelings and understandings of place, asking us to better account for how others might experience shared sonic environments and how our approaches to sound in our cities may work better for all. It is an imaginative practice grounded in a plethora of sonic realities. One person's trash is another's treasure and so it is with

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noise and sound, two extremely subjective terms. I hope – as this project transitions from a speculative to an ethnographic one – that the acouste(m)pathic approach to sound might help us, first in Edmonton and then elsewhere, think more empathetically about sound, not just when our own ears experience disruptions, but how what constitutes everyday sound for one of us, may be a sonic rupture for others.

To date, the acouste(m)pathic project might be divided into three acts, each one distinct but filtering into the next. First, it is rooted in my own past and experiences. Second, it is influenced by explorations into the relationship between sound and health, and, more particularly, what might be missing from those investigations. Lastly, it draws from a deep dive into rhythm as a sense, which I'll briefly account for later.

2. ACT I: It's personal

*How can I begin anything new with all of yesterday in me? (Leonard Cohen, 2009 [1966]: 289)

I grew up in the country, on a small acreage in rural Alberta, Canada. Out there we only had a couple of TV channels and often enough we might not even have those. The internet was nothing but a distant fantasy. And so, my brother and I had to find other means of filling our time. I come from a family of musicians, on both sides, so naturally sound was a foundational source of exploration. We'd spend summers stomping through the slough at the bottom of the hill chasing symphonies of croaking frogs, or listening for the sound of an approaching dirtbike that might jump our driveway, much to my father's chagrin. In the winter especially, we might hear the blaring of a train horn from the nearby tracks as the leafless branches did little to dampen the sound by the time it reached us. As a kid, the world was explored through my ears.

A lot of my early memories of family gatherings involved music, whether I was jamming with my grandpa Charlie or showing my great-grandma Rena a new song that I'd learned on the piano. But more than that, most of my family members were tradespeople or farmers, and understanding environmental sound was critical to everything they did – it meant the difference between diagnosing mechanical problems early and fixing them or compounding those issues. So it was that sound was how I learned to communicate with the world, how I learned to understand the world, when words were insufficient.

Many years on from those days, in the summer of 2015, I found myself in Belgrade, Serbia, a student at the University of Alberta's Fieldschool for Ethnographic Sensibility. As most of us that arrived in Belgrade didn't speak Serbian, the school was designed so that most of our ethnographic explorations were performed through sensory modalities, combining embodied, artistic practices with ethnography. I largely focused on sound. I listened to the city's sonic patterns in my comings and goings from the classroom and often followed my ears where they led me, even if they might lead me astray. I recorded the sounds that struck me as particularly poignant, and tried to think through, on a crude basis, how we might *hear* cultural patterns.

At the end of our time in Belgrade each summer, we held a gallery exhibition featuring artistic interpretations of the limited sensory ethnographies we were doing. And each summer I focused on trying to synthesize some aspect of the Belgrade that I was hearing around me in a sound composition. Something that I hoped would not only be interesting to listen to but provoke conversations around what I was hearing of the city and how that butted up against others' perceptions. What struck most were the conversations that the sound pieces I created opened – things that I noticed that didn't register for locals, things I may have overemphasized, and all that was in between. Sonic thresholds are extremely variable and perhaps the biggest lesson was that while you can teach some aspects of ethnography, it is ultimately something that also has to be felt.

Back home in Edmonton, I continued to follow those feelings. For my master's research I explored the mythmaking practices of the Edmonton Blues scene, and to supplement that, I started doing a lot of the same things I was doing in Belgrade, albeit on a smaller scale. I'd set parameters for myself – recording in certain areas, or while travelling along specific routes – and create fictionalized sonic accounts of my movements through those places/spaces. One such piece, titled WhyteNoize, mimicked my movements along Whyte Avenue – the street pictured – in a given night, imagining the venues I'd visit and the

people and sounds I'd encounter along the way. Sound registers changes in our environments, but how we hear those sounds also might tell us what is taken for granted or overlooked, the differential impacts of sound and listening, and can help us imagine others experiences of place.

3. Act II: Sound and health

No matter where we find ourselves, sound exerts an enormous influence on our lives, both consciously and unconsciously. Sound is boundless. It vibrates through walls and windows, resonates through open spaces, and can be felt in the body. In the words of Halpern and Savary, while "we can easily close our mouths and our eyes to what we don't want to take in, we can't really close our ears. Nature did not give us earlids" (1985: 3-4). Sound is something we're always susceptible to.

Reflecting this sonic susceptibility, substantial research in the natural sciences has examined the impact our built sonic environments have on our health. Studies have highlighted the connection between elevated traffic noise exposure and increased risk of certain health conditions such as hypertension, stroke, and elevated blood pressure (Halonen et al., 2015; Lu et al., 2018), with ranges over an average of 60 db in some cases being linked to a significantly increased risk of hypertension (Banerjee et al., 2014). And with the volume of sound that exists in the modern city, this obviously has larger implications for those living in urban environments.

At the same time, there has been a growing discourse on the impact of hospital noise on patients (Iyendo, 2017) and sound's role in recovery (Sacks, 2007; Schulman, 2016). All these studies are interesting in the ways they demonstrate the unconscious impact that sounds can have on our wellbeing. We're attuned to our ambient environments. And yet all these examples (apart from the latter) account less for socio-cultural and economic differences, as well as the ways sonic thresholds vary between individuals -- how and what we hear (and by extension the impact of sounds on us) is as much wrapped up in how we learned to hear and where we learned to hear as it is the actual sonic environments we're surrounded by.

4. Act III: A sense of rhythm[6]

Imagine yourself standing on a street corner. It doesn't matter where – Edmonton, Montreal, Porto, any place would work. In fact, it may be best that you imagine a place you're familiar with. What do you see? Smell? Touch? Taste? Any number of things might spring to mind, subject to the whims of the corner you've imagined yourself standing on, the time of day, or the season.

Now, what comes to mind when you think of rhythm? Open any dictionary and you'll find numerous definitions. The entry under 'rhythm' in the Merriam Webster dictionary alone has six unique definitions with multiple sub-definitions related to music, poetry, speech, biology, and more. Other dictionaries offer similarly broad and multi-directional statements, not to mention the varied academic uses of the term. As Lefebvre asks in *Rhythmanalysis*: "Is there a general concept of rhythm? Answers: yes, and everyone possesses it; but nearly all those who use the word believe themselves to master and possess its content, its meaning" (2004: 15). Ask a thousand people what rhythm means and you'll likely get a thousand different answers, all equally valid, in some form or another.

The same could easily be extended to sound or noise. They're concepts that are equal parts vague, and abstract, with blurry definitions. In the winter of 2022, drawing on Boudreault-Fournier's chapter on 'Editing' in *A Different Kind of Ethnography* (2017), I attempted to create a sonic map of the sounds that I was hearing in my apartment in Montreal. Any sounds I might hear in a given day were potential sources – the sounds of a guitar or piano, the sounds of household chores, or of the creaky floorboards.

The only problem was that not all the sounds I was hearing *in* my apartment were actually being made in my apartment. Snowblowers and ploughs and snow sirens traveled up and down the street in front of our place, my neighbours stomped across their apartment, trucks and trains leaving the nearby shipyard

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6 This section is adapted from an earlier blog post on the topic, "A Sense of Rhythm" by the author and posted on sensorystudies. org: http://www.sensorystudies.org/a-sense-of-rhythm/

clunked and revved into the distance. I could close a window here and there, or move to a different room, or go for a walk along the canal to escape, but these competing rhythms followed me. And for those who are unhoused or sleeping rough, the impacts of those competing rhythms become harder to escape from. That exercise got me thinking more deeply about rhythm as a sense. Rhythm as the one sense to rule them all, encompassing all five senses of the Western sensorial hierarchy, as not just something musical or biological, but a total body experience.

You can hear rhythm on the streets around you or in in the songs we sing and listen to. You can see rhythm on a dancefloor or in the movements of the outside world. You can smell rhythm in the pleasant aromas wafting out of kitchens throughout the day or emanating from a public restroom. You can touch and feel rhythm – as a musician's hands move around a guitar's fretboard or tap a beat on a drum kit, but also in the vibrations of a passing train or street construction or the beatings of our hearts. And you can taste rhythm, in the foods you eat at a certain time of day. Our cultural rhythms, whether beholden to the five senses or subject to other ways of sensing the world, allow us to anticipate what is to come, and adapt bio-culturally when our sense of rhythm is off. Rhythm is enacted with the entire self.

5. Acouste(m)pathy[7]

In developing the idea of acouste(m)pathy, and in applying it in the Edmonton context I plan to bring together the three acts I've described above – my personal background, connections between sound and health, and the blurred rhythms of everyday life.

To do this, I hope to – in part – work with local musicians and sound artists to develop soundscape compositions reflecting a range of Edmonton neighbourhoods, from the downtown core to the suburbs to parks and industrial areas, creating a substantial sound bank of unedited field recordings that I will collect. This will then be turned over to a range of musicians and sound artists in Edmonton to create a sonic piece from, with the final pieces being part of a sonic gallery exhibition. These recordings and compositions will be used as an entry point to provoke early discussions of sound, a form of 'research-from-creation' (Chapman & Sawchuk, 2012) and will hopefully direct me to other sonic insights into the range of ways people in Edmonton hear.

My fieldwork will include "participant sensation" (Howes, 2022) (as both a performer and community member), collaborative soundscape and audiovisual recordings, sound maps (Aiello et al., 2016), and experimental research-creation. These approaches will ensure that my findings will be properly situated within significant historical and contemporary contextualization of Edmonton. Many people are finding creative ways to reconcile the loudness of our cities with their appreciations for them. It is hoped that by gaining insight into how people in Edmonton adjust to their sonic environments (both musicians and non-musicians) I can begin to understand how we might begin to incorporate *acoustepathy* into our urban sonic environments.

Because this is still a rather speculative project, it's hard to place exactly what impacts I hope it might have. I do hope that by providing people with an assortment of tangible sound artifacts – something that reflects the neighbourhoods they hear around them, that they can reference and critique – we might provoke better discussions of sound and create more accessible language for those discussions. Can we create better sonic ecosystems in Edmonton, from local music scenes to city streets, by better understanding the range of ways Edmontonians hear the world around them? Not necessarily to clean up the sonic chaos, but to learn how to better translate between different rhythms and understand different ways of feeling and hearing and knowing the world through sound. Can we create a more sonically just city? I think approaching sound more empathetically – more *acouste(m)pathically* – might just be a place to start.

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7 This section is adapted from an earlier blog post on the topic, "A Sense of Rhythm" by the author and posted on sensorystudies. org: http://www.sensorystudies.org/a-sense-of-rhythm/

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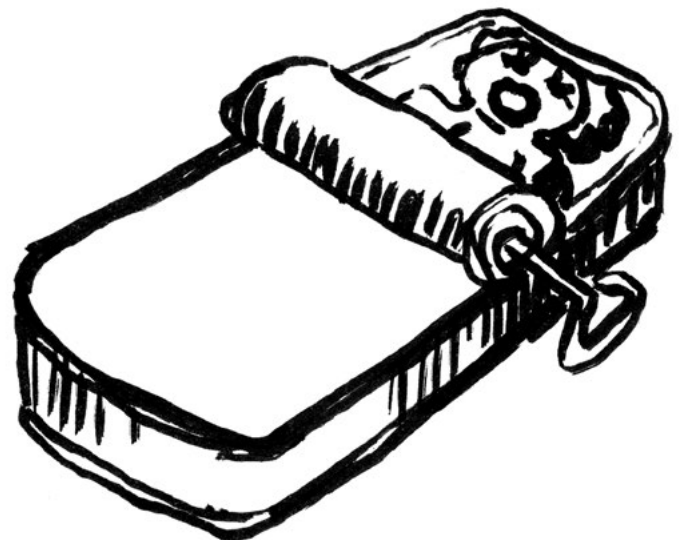
1.5. *LAND POETRY. OCCUPY, SPEAK, PUBLISH, AND REGROUP*

Francisco Gelman Constantin[8]

✖ *~~Abstract~~*

July 2020, as the global pandemic deepened social precariousness in the peripheries of Buenos Aires, around 2000 families decided to squat 250 acres of vacant land in the neighbourhood of Guernica (Argentina), in order to develop a housing project planned with agroecological farming, health services et cetera. Several counter-cultural projects took it upon themselves to multiply the reach of the voices of the community and help in the concrete political marking of the territory. Poet Dán Zeta and the coop Tinta Revuelta organized two collective writing experiments mobilizing poetry and narrative into strengthening the social-political process: Tierra para vivir. Una lucha hasta vencer and Tierra para vivir, feminismos para habitar #1. While State violence brought a violent ending to the Guernica social experiment in October of the same year, both self-published books remain a part of an organized community experience and material and symbolic networks in reserve for future endeavours.

Keywords: collective poetry, land, occupation, situated writing.

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July 2020, as the global pandemic deepened economic and social precarity, around 2000 families and folk in the neighbourhood of Guernica (Argentina) decided to take matters into their own hands and proceeded to squat 250 acres of vacant land –from both private and State property claims–, in the hope of developing a sizeable housing project planned with agro-ecological farming, community centres, health services, trans-feminist networks and cultural initiatives. No longer able to afford rent since the retraction of informal labour that came along the early months of isolation measures, these people came to the conclusion they could no longer wait for the campaign promises of housing solutions made by the Government. They identified a vacant patch of land; they marked their contours and proceeded to give each in-coming person their share.

As the settlement grew, organization blossomed. New neighbours came from different backgrounds and experiences, some part of different grass-root networks and social movements, some well versed in daily practices of vicinity. All of these were to be critical assets for collective decision making and the development of commons for material reproduction.

Decisions at the Guernica land occupation were the product of horizontal assembling in periodical block-meetings, block-delegate gatherings and a multitude of committees and workgroups. They guaranteed the distribution of resources, communal pots, self-defence provisions against Government retaliation and/or patriarchal violence, the co-ordination of basic infrastructural work, such as some prevention of land-flood, and so forth.

Collaborative urban planning combined individual household and farming space with different types of communal grounds, including meeting zones, medical units, et cetera –both in the actual presence in the territory, and in the urbanization project developed during the occupation process and presented to the State.

Yet from the very beginning the marking of the land consisted not only of the sticks and wire that divided parcels, pike lines and design plans, but of a dense net of spatial practices from the red crosses signalling health stations to various flags or the piling of old tires that revealed the continuity of key piquetero-

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movement methods.

And amongst these practices were also several artistic interventions. Musicians like rapper Sara Hebe brought their sounds to Guernica; collectives such as the Escuelita de Arte Callejero y Propaganda developed collaborative mural painting with squatters and social activists (they would also later on paint the banner for the marches to the city). There was theatre, puppetry, circus acrobatics, children painted on paper and dressed the parcel marks with colours...

Artistic languages and techniques, vast and diverse, both strengthened the inhabitation of the land and connected the experience in Guernica with countless supporters, far and near.

There was also poetry. *Tierra para vivir, feminismos para habitar #1* [A Land to Live On, Feminisms to Inhabit, vol. 1], and *Tierra para vivir. Una lucha hasta vencer* [A Land to Live On. Fighting to the Victory], were two digital and independent publishing projects titled after a key motto of the land occupation.

Feminismos para habitar was an initiative of the collective Yo no fui and the Reunión project, consisting of one single polyphonic poem built by the verse segmentation of the voices of the participants in a trans/feminist assembly of Guernica on September the 19th 2020, recorded in writing on site, with a single-page foreword by the editors. The book was uploaded and shared digitally a few days later.

Una lucha hasta vencer was an anthology collected by poet Dán Zeta of twenty-two poems by himself and ten other authors, in the company of four illustrators and photographers, published in December of the same year. Both books are not only a poetry from and of the land, but also an attempt to land poetry firmly in the territories disposing of any transcendent flight of autonomous literature, in order to bring all resources of the poetic, visual and editorial craft into a very immediate political use.

Feminismos para habitar is an odd creation. Admittedly nothing more than the breaking into verses of the recorded voices of some of the women, lesbians, trans and queer folk gathered at the assembly, it nonetheless makes evident to what extent both land occupation and trans/feminist devices like that one meeting are highly creative instances in which subjects access singular speaking possibilities way beyond the restrictions of everyday speech rituals. As far as invention goes, poetry came second to both in dismantling normative discourse conditions to carve an opening for the gendered and class voices.

However, it did take a singular poetic sensibility to operate upon that materiality and offer it a new life as a DIY poetry book, in which their words could earn new meanings, travel further distances and build new connections with each other. While over-flying police helicopters developed their panoramic look from above, designed to create objectifying knowledge over the life of the inhabitants and their vulnerabilities, the speech-writing continuous in *Tierra para vivir, feminismos para habitar*, in sowing together the experiences of those heard/red in the book, sketched a constellation from de ground up, from the land up, tracing the steps through the near-by territories that led those women and queer folk to where they stood at the moment of the assembly.

> vengo de una familia muy humilde
> tengo muchos hermanitos
> a los trece salí de mi casa a trabajar
> y la vida me llevó a muchas cosas [...]
> Yo viví en plazas
> en parques
> en puentes
> ¡un frío!
> viví con tíos que me maltrataron
> con amigas que me bancaron,
> ¿sabés lo que es dormir con tus hijos en una plaza
> y que en un momento te digan, "mama
> hace mucho frío, hace mucho frío"

y lo mejor que les podés ofrecer
es ir a dormir al baño de un hospital? (Reunión, 2020: 3-5)[9]

The book also marks their steps through the patch, as they come together to borrow a bag of sugar from each other, or to offer one another shelter. It also draws contending futures for the land:

vamos a hacer permacultura
casas de adobe
huertas comunitarias [...]
y se lo quieren dar a China para criar chanchos
o a un empresario para hacer canchas de rugby... (Reunión, 2020: 9-12)[10]

But in sketching the land, they also struggle over the language needed to come together, what Julieta Yelín has termed the "sensory apparition of speech" (2022: 12):

hablemos en una lengua que podamos entender todas
la comunicación no es solo visibilidad hacia afuera
la comunicación es también cómo nos hablamos entre nosotras [...]
y nosotras estamos acá
para reafirmar que lo que venimos haciendo
sintiendo
diciendo
tiene sentido
tiene sentido,
y entre nosotras nos la pasamos hablando
todo el día hablando y tomando decisiones: (Reunión, 2020: 17)[11]

If poetry is supposed to relate to the transcendent, to a scratching of reference, to undecidability, is this poetry? It is perhaps what poetry should sometimes be, situated speech, the language for decision-making, a practical tool, doing the work.

If *Feminismos para habitar*, the first book, traces the steps to Guernica and sends the gendered and class voices in every direction, the second book, *Una lucha hasta la victoria*, constitutes in and by itself the travel to the land. Since at that time of the pandemic movement through the cities and the peripheries was highly restricted, Dán Zeta's invitation to write for the land occupation allowed people from far away to bring their support even if they could not physically be there. Digital tagging through social media and digital platforms literally took the writing to Guernica, or at least to that part of Guernica that is its internet signature.

Some of the poets in the book did however manage to come to the land. For instance, a group of

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9 "I come from a very modest family/ I have many little brothers and sisters/ at thirteen I left home to work, and life led me to many things/.../ I lived in squares/ in park/ on bridges/ the cold!/ I lived with uncles that battered me/ with friends that stood by me/ Do you know what it's like living with your children in a square/ and have them say 'Mama/ it's too cold, it's too cold/ and the best you can offer them/ is a night in the hospital bathroom?"

10 "we're doing permaculture/ adobe houses/ community orchards/ and they want to give it to China for raising pigs/ or to some bussinessman to make rugby fields"

11 "Let us speak a language that we can all understand/ communication is not only visbility to the outside/ communication is also we speak among us/... and we are here/ to reinstate that what we've been doing/ feeling/ saying/ makes sense/ it makes sense,/ and we're constantly talking to one another, constantly talking and making decisions"

them spurred a communitarian documental poem, both written and filmed, that consisted of an heterogeneous assemblage of styles and rhythms, some attributed to someone in particular, some floating by anonymously. It sometimes reads like rap lyrics, sometimes like witnessing, sometimes like rallying; the potence comes from that very oscillation in tone and wording. The fact that there is no proper genre, that it is itself a coming together and becoming combined of pieces would perhaps make it to classic critical lenses more novel-like than poetic, yet it also is somewhat reminiscent of William Carlos Williams' *Patterson*. Like in *Patterson*, the place is everything, the placing is crucial. Poetry is a way of stepping into the land, of marking a manner of walking more lightly through the ground, more gently, more generously, more justly.

*La necesidad es sobre todo
*una profunda obligación de luchar.
*De andar descalces la tierra del futuro,
*cansades de que, en zapatos
*lustrados, pisoteen nuestro pasado. (Zeta, 2020: 28)[12]

▸ **Figure 1.5.1.** The Guernica Land Occupation
▸ **Source:** Author's archive

At the dawn of 30 October 2020 from that patch of trees at the back emerged 4000 policemen, firing guns and setting tents and shacks on fire. Despite several weeks of meetings between the families and folk of Guernica and the local and national administrations that appeared to be progressing towards an agreement that would warrant their legal access to some of this and other patches of land for safe and solid housing, suddenly the Government had decided one-sidedly to terminate the negotiations brutally.

The savage eviction ended with several detentions and a sizeable amount of injured, among those who defended their share of land. I wasn't there that night; by that point I had needed a good night sleep back in my apartment and by the time the news of the police operation travelled through the cell phones I was in no shape the travel back.

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12 "Necessity is above all/ a deep obligation to fight./ To walk barefoot through the land of the future,/ too tired of our past/ being stepped on all over/ by polished shoes"

None of the families and folk in Guernica have yet received from the State any other form of stable and decent housing, two years after they were muscled out of this land. Yet the Guernica Assembly persists and their cry for a land to live on has not been silenced. It is a time for regrouping, for finding a fleeting place to mend the cuts and plan ahead.

The murals are still there, close to the entrance of what once was the Guernica Land occupation. Digital books on the other hand travel light, they are landing again.

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1.6. *BRICK BY BRICOLAGE: ADOBE PUNK, DIY THEATRICALITY, AND DECOLONIZING LOS ANGELES*

Jessica Schwartz[13]

✕ ~~*Abstract*~~

This essay offers a case study on the Los Angeles, CA focused theaterwork, Adobe Punk (About… Productions, 2022). It is framed by the idea that conversations around sustainability—as a concept that stresses "intergenerational equity" in terms of economic, societal, and environmental community endurance—demand that 1) we reflect on ongoing historical injustices to remedy (e.g., settler colonial) exploitation and environmental abuses and 2) we align punk DIY (do it yourself) with other communities' DIY practices rooted in radical anti-capitalist, anti-colonial sustenance models. Reading punk futurities through bricolage aesthetics, I share how the theaterwork counters violence in canonic representations of 1980s LA punk.

Keywords: DIY, decoloniality, place, generational injustice, repair.

No squares, no lines on a map
to desecrate the open space
just a drawing by hand
not to scale
…

No compass, no tool
to direct the future
to say this is mine (exactly)
just a drawing by hand
not to scale
…

► "Not to Scale" by Bell System (Adobe Punk, 2022)

These lyrics, excerpted from the Bell System song "Not to Scale," in the theaterwork *Adobe Punk*, speak to the hopeful freedom imagined in punk's break with the past—a rejection of the boundaries and borders set by authority figures, from governmental officials to parents, who create the maps with already paved roads leading to predictable destinations and other metaphorical and literal boxes that direct the course of our lives. And yet, as I will show, the meaning and inspiration behind this song is more complicated, since it is steeped in layered (de)colonial processes that our punk protagonists become immersed in as they discover the history of the building in which they are squatting and their connections—and possibly responsibilities—to it. In this way, the theaterwork locates the tension in punk between individualistic freedom or autonomy and (familial, intergenerational) connections and/as responsibility. Might a reflection on this tension help us consider punk and sustainability or punk as sustainable practice, given it is now multigenerational?

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Punk subculture has often been written about in terms of breaking with previous generations and traditions through desecration and defamation of values symbolized by aesthetic, lyrical, and musical choices. Most iconic, perhaps, is the Sex Pistols' defacement of the queen and their rewriting of the British anthem, "God Save the Queen," in which they liken the queen to a "potential H-bomb" and deem her to have been made a "moron." The lyrics are telling and, along with other punk productions (e.g., the Dead Boy's "Sonic Reducer"), send a message that might be worded along the lines of the following: "Previous generations and their leaders got us into the messes that we are currently in, and therefore, if we want a future, we need to cut ties and rebuild by sifting through the refuse. We need to collect the scraps, patch and stitch them together to forge a pathway that's our own while we make sense of the lies, we've been told so we can avoid their traps, including the trap to become complacent in oppressive structures by being oppressed or becoming the oppressors ourselves." What do we make of punk today, then, as a multigenerational phenomenon that, itself, has a canonic history and historicity? What do we make of punk's enduring commitments, across generations, to, for example, DIY or do it yourself practices and certain ways of life, such as squatting, and particular aesthetic musical stylings? How can we creatively and critically reflect on punk histories, futurities, and solidarities while keeping generational exchange in mind within and beyond the punk community while also challenging traditional hierarchies and power structures?

This essay discusses the theaterwork, *Adobe Punk* (About…Productions), which premiered in March 2022 at Plaza de La Raza, known for providing accessible and affordable arts education, in East Los Angeles, California (US), which is now a primarily Latinx community. It is framed by the idea that punk-centered conversations around sustainability—as a concept that stresses "intergenerational equity" in terms of economic, societal, and environmental means of community endurance—demand that 1) we reflect on ongoing historical injustices in order to remedy exploitation of, for example settler colonialism, and environmental abuses and 2) we align punk DIY with other communities' DIY practices rooted in radical anti-capitalist, anti-colonial sustenance models. And, to complicate matters, we need to contend with punk's differential colonial liminality—that is both resistance to and participation in settler-colonial structural benefits. Historical representations of settler colonialism and punk have suffered from Anglocentric narratives, binaries, and biases. Moreover, while mainstreamed punk has prioritized denouncing the capitalist system and environmental injustices, there are less pointed attacks on the settler colonial basis of capitalism and its enduring structures of Indigenous deracination through interrelated processes of conquest, displacement, and environmental racism.[14] However, we punks need to understand that settler colonialism, as "a structure and not an event," is fundamental to the power structures and privileges that many punks rally against and feel entitled to assume, such as squatting on "unoccupied" or "unclaimed" land or buildings. Adobe Punk situates itself in a transitional time and compels us to reconsider these narratives and practices through our own situatedness, modes of belonging, and roots/routes.
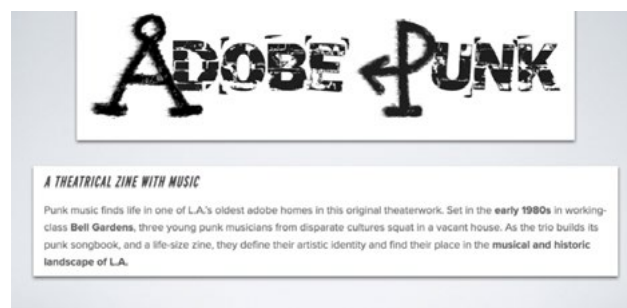
▶ **Figure 1.6.1.** *Adobe Punk*: "A theatrical zine with music"[15]
▶ **Source:** About productions. (n.d). Adobe Punk [Webpage]. Retrieved from https://www.aboutpd.org/adobe-punk

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14 There are punk bands, such as the Indigenous punk band Blackfire, that grapple with settler colonialism. See Martinez, K. L. A. (2019). Not All Killed by John Wayne: The Long History of Indigenous Rock, Metal, and Punk 1940s to the Present (Doctoral dissertation) UCLA, Los Angeles, CA.

15 "Punk music finds life in one of L.A.'s oldest adobe homes in this original theaterwork. Set in the early 1980s in working-class Bell Gardens, three young punk musicians from disparate cultures squat in a vacant house. As the trio builds its punk songbook, and a life-size zine, they define their artistic identity and find their place in the musical and historic landscape of L.A."

Coined a "theatrical zine," Adobe Punk was born from an intergenerational collaboration between a mother, Theresa Chavez, and her son, Gabriel Garza. Chavez also directed the play and, along with Nina Diaz (of the band, Girl in a Coma), composed the songs. Chavez was part of the formative Los Angeles punk scene in the 1970s. As such, the play is pointedly inspired by her experiential knowledge and DIY punk culture, which Kevin Dunn argues in Global Punk, "provides individuals and local communities with resources for self-empowerment and political resistance" (Dunn, 2016: 9). DIY punk culture is increasingly becoming reconsidered in terms of DIT or do it together, which underscores the communal efforts in DIY practices, such as starting a band, releasing an album, or putting on a show. DIY-as-DIT also exceeds these oft-discussed "punk productions," to use Stacy Thompson's term (Thompson 2004). DIY punk culture has seen the growth of rock 'n' roll camps for girls (and non-cis-male gendered participants), on the one hand, and resources for the unhoused, persons suffering from mental health issues, and those with addiction or substance misuse and abuse disorders, on the other. Many punks with whom I have spoken have felt suspicious of or rejected by the system and the laws (and law enforcement) aimed to "protect and serve" them as well as society's status quo that continues to be dominated by elite members with particular (moralized) values and notions of respectability. "DIY punk provides the means by which alternative ways of being are imagined and realized at the individual and local levels, with profound implications for the lives of its participants (see Sofianos, Ryde, and Waterhouse 2014)" (Dunn, 2016: 19).

Punk did not create DIY, and many marginalized communities have had to engage in DIY practices to survive. "The DIY ethos," as Dunn explains, "became the defining feature of punk rock scenes as they emerged in the late 1970s" (Dunn, 2016: 13). This ethos is often explained by the consolidation of the media in the 1970s with the "Big 5" corporate record labels and performers who were increasingly disconnected from their fans. In the US, the 1970s also brought a critical lens to the taken-for-granted Anglo-American, male hegemony that dominated the economic, political, cultural, and social sectors and norms. Political movements such as the Civil Rights Movement, Women's Liberation, LGBT Rights, the Chicano Moratorium, Environmental Rights, and Native American Rights made strides in making visible and beginning to remedy historical injustices. While there were (and are) many reasons for getting into punk, some people didn't fit neatly into one political or social group, and punk became a place to belong to create new familial relations and support systems by DIY--doing it yourself, together. As Alice Bag and others from the early LA scene explain, punk was a place where labels were taboo; they were misfits and outsiders creating a new identity: punk. And, with this new identity came the wholesale questioning and, at times, refutations of cultural traditions of their parents, such as challenging normative gender roles, for example, or ideas surrounding sexuality, relationships, and religious mores. This is where the storyline of Adobe Punk, finds us—with three young people from different backgrounds who identify as punks living together and relating across any perceived differences (societally).

1. Background

The storyline of Adobe Punk is set in the working-class neighborhood of Bell Gardens, which is in Southeast Los Angeles, California in the early 1980s during a time of great socio-demographic change after white flight occurred and Latinx, Black, and immigrant communities, such as Lebanese refugees, made Bell Gardens their home.[16] Crucially, the theaterwork takes DIY as its central theme through which the history of Bell Gardens, and the Los Angeles basin more broadly, is shared, connecting the Indigenous and colonial roots of California to the formative pivot in the early 1980s when punk shifted from its nascency to hardcore, which has shaped how punk has been viewed in Anglophonic terms. As Garza explains, the entire play takes place in a set of an historical adobe building built by the Lugo family in 1844 that did, in reality, burn down in 1983, which prompted him to think of what was happening in punk at that time. Of his inspiration, he noted:

> *I have loved this music for a long time, and upon learning more information about this home and the timeframe of its last days, correlated with the demise and at the same time height of the punk scene becoming the hardcore punk scene in LA. And just that immediate idea of a house burning

....

16 In the United States, "white flight" refers to the phenomenon of racially coded "white" communities leaving cities and moving to suburbs en masse.

The opening scene is set with the building itself and a haunting Californio soundscape, which seems to emanate from the "soul" of the house but are actually coming from amps on stage, which we find out are our punk protagonists' amps. Californios were early Hispanic Californians, typically descended from Spanish and Mexican settlers, and their contemporary descendants. Sage Lewis, the resident composer and sound designer for the production, culled Californio and Indigenous sound recordings from the Gene Autry Museum Archives and threaded them throughout the theater work. As the lights come up, our three punk protagonists, all of whom are between the ages of 19 and 22, enter in a joyful manner. Manny, the drummer, is Mexican-American, and we later find out that he is pro-labor, a fan of the Minutemen, and, with his roots in Bell Gardens, the most knowledgeable about the town's history. Kat, the bass player, is a Lebanese immigrant whose family is Muslim. She and her family emigrated from Lebanon during the start of the Civil War in 1975 when she was a young teenager, and she was introduced to American culture and cultural values through media (radio and television). We learn that her favorite bands are Blondie and the Bags. Noreen, who is Anglo-American (white), and, before joining Kat and Manny in the squat, she lived in a mobile home park with her mom and sister. She loves photography, drawing, and the band, X, especially the avant-garde stylings of Exene, and she is the lead singer and guitarist. Both Noreen and Manny are from Bell Gardens. All are learning to play their instruments, which, throughout the theaterwork, shows the DIY approach, which as Rebekah Cordova has outlined is a valuable form and process of education, endangering different types of sustainable knowledges (2017). Each character represents a means of sustainable knowledge that emerges through their unique sensitivities that they bring to bear on the history of the house through their intergenerational positionalities: Manny (labor, history, the grounding rhythms of life), Kat (diasporic movement, media/sound, religion/spirituality), Noreen (visual sensibilities, narration, artistry).

We find their joyful entrance due to them returning from an X show, singing the X song, "In This House That I call Home." The walls of the squat are covered in lists, flyers, photos and other cut-and-pasted ephemera in the DIY bricolage aesthetic. From the outset, these punks are both connected to and disconnected from their given families. Manny declares that they are officially squatting, which concerns Kat, because she doesn't want to get her immigrant parents in trouble, to which Manny explains that some of his relatives aren't even documented. Inspired by the X show, they start to practice their own songs. One aspect of this theaterwork that shows the DIY process is, as Chavez explained, how "the songwriting process is part of the show, and we see them developing these punk songs that they perform for us as well" (Chavez, 2022). During the theaterwork, the trio names their band "Bell System" after their municipal tele-communications company that has its company title imprinted on the manhole coverings around the city. Manny comes up with the name, and he excitedly persuades Kat and Noreen, "Just think. The place where we're from, Bell Gardens, that we disregard and cherish, is in the name too... We grew up in this system, we're gonna get out of it, and why not pronounce that with our name?... And we're stripping our community away from the company..." The enthusiasm grows as they discuss doing away with the manhole coverings that say "Bell System" on them so that holes appear that "lead to [their] underground." Their collective chants of "my underground" turn into the inspiration for another song, "Bell Underground Gardens." After Noreen tacks a large piece of paper on the wall, contributing to the bricolage texture, they each contribute a line in slow earnestness, compose the music, and contemplate going "public."

The band name can be read as metaphor for engaging punk creativity, such as music-making, photography, cinema, and poetry to invigorate trans-historical communication. As Manny shared, it encompasses their formative spatial and temporal realities of place (Bell Gardens) and structural process (the system). Uncovering the layers of Bell Gardens (literally by removing manhole coverings and later discovering the history of the adobe house) becomes a way, it seems, to disregard the immediate present while still cherishing it. One line from the song, "Bell Underground Gardens, "My underground/ where thoughts begin, but never start," seems to suggest the continuity of collective consciousness where they take shape in being (beginning) but not as a radical start. What follows from the scene suggests the important work of revealing the layers of our material surrounds and our emotional connections to them that manifest as we do this work. Kat discovers an old piano, hidden beneath a sheet. Manny doesn't want her to disturb the covering, and Noreen exclaims, "It feels like you're uncovering a dead person..." As the lights lower and Manny and Noreen fall asleep, Kat begins to play the instrument, "I love the sound

of an old piano. I haven't had one since we left Lebanon. Sometimes I wonder if that piano is still alive." We don't often think of punk musicians playing or "loving the sound" of pianos (new or old). In fact, DIY punk musicianship might balk at the arrangement of piano keys and their immediate inflexibility, the instrument's connection to classical Western music and music theory, and the instrument's overall immobility. Yet, here we are, with what can be considered a haunting among many—the sounds of the old piano ("a dead piano" as Noreen qualified it) that bring feelings to life and change the soundscape of the squat.

2. Portraits & drawings

Then, the lights go dark. As Kat sits down and "plays Middle Eastern tonalities" on stage left, on stage right, a film screen emerges with Noreen sitting in front of it, her back to the audience. Manny's image in black and white pops up on the screen, and he begins talking, in interview format, reminiscent of the interviews in Penelope Spheeris' Decline of Western Civilization from 1981, coterminous with the era. Yet, while Spheeris documents the violent punk scene, Noreen's "portraits" as she calls them, document aspects of their lives, and she reveals, what she feels is a "secret corner of her neighborhood." The interviews are woven throughout the play. Manny is the first subject. He talks about the lists he makes, lists that he gives to city hall so they can fix all the municipal breaks. "It's their job not mine..." He talks about how his cousins and neighbors are some of the people who do the manual labor to fix the crumbling city and that maybe it is a good thing the city is in disrepair because it gives them jobs but he also doesn't want little kids to trip. He talks about why he doesn't want to settle into his father's footsteps, and the video recording is doubled by Manny's voice in person. As he explains why he doesn't want to follow in this father's footsteps, he punches a hole in the wall and reveals the adobe. In doing so, he uncovers that they are actually squatting in what was an adobe building, made in the mid-1800s by early Californios.

▶ **Figure 1.6.2.** Kat sits at piano (stage left), Manny stands (center stage), and Noreen sits in front of a "portrait" (film) of Manny (stage right). Still from Adobe Punk film of theaterwork (not released)
▶ **Source:** Author's own archive.

A Californio soundscape plays, emanating the vibrational history of the house. "It feels like something is touching me back, like a pressure around my whole arm, like its surrounded by something," he exclaims with passion. "Old bricks, the kind my grandfather used to make in our backyard... Mud, straw, sunlight forced together to create a brick...Am I feeling him?" Manny has a transformative experience. He faints and is caught in a dolly by Kat and Noreen. "Adobe," he says. He begins to feel as though he is floating above the house. "I can see its bones. And feel its organs. Its blood pulses through me like a transfusion

from the past." Kat and Noreen lower Manny back to the ground, and he shares that he is returning with new information about the house and its "birth." Kat and Noreen ask, in unison, "How did this house come to be an adobe?" sonically manifesting the records that Manny has retrieved. The script shares his actions (Figure 1.6.3), which connect the adobe brick structure to the punk bricolage that adorns the walls of the squat, comprising their interconnected "by-hand' texture. He explains that it was built in the mid-19th century by Vicente Lugo before the area was incorporated into the United States.

MANNY then pulls out/unscrolls a large scale diseño/map of the Lugo rancho that becomes part of the collage. (It's already attached to the wall but was unseen till now.) He puts his finger on the map.

▸ **Figure 1.6.3.** Adobe Punk script directions
▸ **Source:** Chavez, T. & Garza, G. (2022). Adobe Punk [script]. (pp. 15). Pasadena: About...Productions.

They examine the land deed, part of the early colonial system, and Manny continues, "It was part of a larger rancho that his father had...This is where they placed themselves in this landscape. And they drew this picture so they could say..." Kat interrupts, "They exist." Noreen follows, "Here. In this house." The conversation surrounding the *diseño* of the Lugo rancho continues, as the protagonists go back and forth: "It's like a map...sort of...but it's not straight. No squares. No lines." Noreen muses that it is between the "rock hard" reality of a map and a drawing. "That's how a lot of rancheros lost their land to the Americanos," Manny expounds upon the layers of colonial entitlement related to how the first Californios were the descendants of the Spanish military expeditions that established the California presidios and mission system, converting the Native populations to Catholicism. Militarization and missionization are both elements of broader colonial ventures, and the Californios' culture became centered on the Vaquero tradition (cowboy) practiced by those who received large land grants on which they established ranches (part of the Rancho system). The Lugo house was part of the early European colonial system, but they became displaced, in part, when the Anglo-Americans colonized the land. The *diseños* were in Spanish, Manny notes, while the court proceedings were in English, which meant that land titles were often not recognized, or boundaries considered. He explains that the land was further and further subdivided in the creation of contemporary neighborhoods and states that "even squatters were involved." However, the squatters about which he speaks were the U.S. Americans (Americanos).
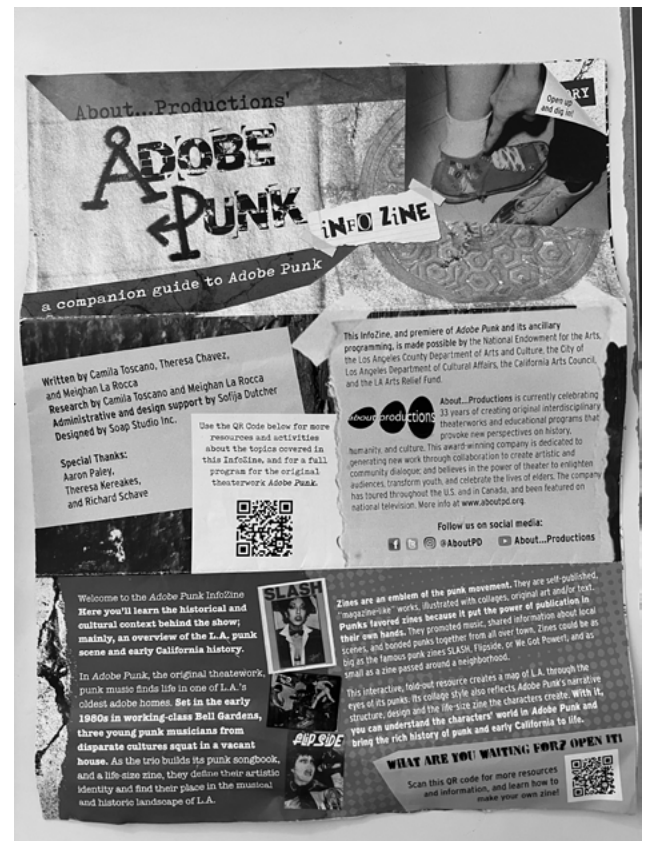
▸ **Figure 1.6.4.** Info. Zine (Adobe Punk)
▸ **Source:** Toscano, C., Chavez, T. & La Rocca, M. (2022). Adobe Punk – a theatrical zine with music. Los Angeles: About... Productions. https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5d0001705827d60001a89d40/t/631a6ff312d6741ca6828093/1662677002487/About+Productions+Adobe+Punk+InfoZine+FULL-compressed.pdf

Adobe Punk's accompanying "info zine" focuses on a different facet of Californios life stating, "Californios were a DIY culture much like the punks. Separated by hundreds of miles from what is now Northern Mexico, they developed their own distinct food, music, dress, and created their culture from the ground up." And, the program also notes that Theresa Chavez and Gabriel Garza are 7th and 8th generation Californios. The Californios, then, were intermediaries of sorts in settler colonial history, exploring their roots might offer a way to reconnect with a more complicated history than the play is able to delve into. Thus, while Manny stated that the Americanos "carved away at the edges," Kat's response, "Why can't we carve away at the edges too? Really, stake a claim on this empty house. Create a map of our own to say – we exist here. Our music exists here" belies that difficulty in divesting from staked claims, even when challenging "the system" as it were. For, when people are pushed from their home, as was Kat, or born into a place that is the only home they have known, how do they work to decolonize

and provide intergenerational equity when they also must survive? As Noreen shares with us, she was forced to work for her mom and sister—who don't seem to care about her only her money—after her dad died and they had to live in a trailer park. That the creators locate themselves and the characters in the midst of colonial theft and generational trauma—as persons with generational inheritance of being both oppressed and the oppressor—provides a crucial corollary for punks to think through their/our responsibilities as societal "outsiders" while many of us, to varying degrees, also benefit from legacies of generational privilege. How can we "carve away at the edges" of the injustices that come from land theft and toxification? Do the Californio soundscapes offer vibratory clues?

After the trio discuss who knows they are squatting (it turns out it is only Manny's mom knows), they launch into the process of another song, "Not to scale" (the lyrics are excerpted at the beginning), which references the *diseño* and also the punk protagonists' desire to affirm that they and their music exist in the house and in some way have made an impact. After song finishes, they ask in unison, "is this the center of my universe?" Noreen's portrait of Kat follows. She talks about leaving Lebanon: "Sometimes I can hear those pieces of myself wandering between Lebanon and here, especially when I am playing. The vibration of my bass sends out a signal and my soul hears it." Her parents tried to move away from the life before but now her mom covers her head with a hijab even though she didn't in Lebanon because someone from the mosque here told her to– she is becoming more conversative – and Kat is moving in the other direction. "And what about you?" Noreen asks. "I could cover my head with a brown paper bag like the Bags did when they first started their band," a reference to the seminal Los Angeles band fronted by Alice Bag who appeared in *Decline of Western Civilization*. She continues, "And to me, they were saying, we're not anonymous and we won't be silenced. And we are going to punch our way out of this paper bag." Like Manny before, her voice is doubled live and they launch into another song with Kat singing, "no waiting for permission, I'll stop playing the submissive."

▶ **Figure 1.6.5.** Kat (pictured with bag over head) in her "portrait" Still from Adobe Punk film of theaterwork (not released)
▶ **Source:** Author's own source.

3. Becoming history through sound

Noreen, the photographer, finds a portrait of Maria Antonio Lugo (1877), and feels like she is connected to the house. They then hang up Lugo's portrait on the wall and the amps start playing an eerie music, to which Kat responds, "sufi mystics believe that sound comes from the soul, and why wouldn't this house have one?" The hole that Manny punched now becomes a journey back to and through the sounds of the Gabrieliño/Tongva peoples (the Indigenous communities of the 'Los Angeles' basin) and beyond to Earth. Kat proclaims "it's saying go back further...before this house there were hundreds of tribes here for thousands of years and they're still here and we should listen." Bell System start jamming with these sounds, becoming a different type of trans-generational communication system. We hear what sounds like old ranchero (Californio) songs and native chanting. Suddenly, they fall asleep and when they wake up, they have had a dream, although different, they are interconnected, tying them to each other and to the soul of the house, compelling them to share their messages with the world and leave their mark. Each person dreams about red lights, perhaps suggesting the fire that caused the ultimate destruction to the building in 1983.

▸ **Figure 1.6.6.** Noreen's self-portrait, with camera. Still from Adobe Punk film of theaterwork (not released)
▸ **Source:** Author's own source.

Finally, Noreen shares her self-portrait (Figure 1.6.6). "This camera belonged to my father," she announces, "I felt like it had a hold over me. I felt like it was an extension of not just my arm but my entire body." The theaterwork highlights how deeply connected the punk youths are to their families on an embodied, spiritual level, and how these connections manifest both in their punk productions (the breaks with their immediate families that sees them living in the squat) and in their connection to the adobe house, which they have all come to claim as rightfully theirs and to "keep" for however long they can, and thus each other. As such, the play ends with their song, "Diddly Squat," which they have been working on since the beginning, with the chorus: "We don't have diddly squat, but we got the right to keep what we got." The song is an upbeat, playful sounding punk anthem. And yet, it speaks to the issues of entitlement, of "rights" as privileges that I brought up in the initial framing of this essay.

4. Conclusion

I want to conclude this essay with ruminations on sound (sonic vibrations) and DIY music as material-spiritual connection that, in the context of *Adobe Punk*, has the potential to invigorate conversations about how punks are connected through their roots to different processes of privilege and oppression. Such contemplations, I hope, can compel more reflections on the responsibility of punk productions to pave decolonizing routes. Nina Diaz, for example, claimed that the play was like rediscovering her roots.

Being Latinx, as we evolve and we change things that generations before didn't have the opportunity to change, we could still remember our roots, we could still remember that past all these layers we have that connection to our ancestors. So, I feel that this play also reminds you that whether or not you're Latino---wherever you belong to that don't forget your roots because it's like the music today – don't forget where it came from, it came from somewhere. (Diaz, 2022).

She said, "As you create, you touch into something spiritual, and if your ancestors are there or spirit guides – I feel like, it's amazing—and that's definitely a part of the play too, connecting with ancestors and your inner core" (Diaz, 2022). When we think about "the ancestors" or the presence of the ancestors, often we think about human ancestors. The play, however, shows how all things creative – music, sound vibrations, buildings, maps, cameras, lists, decaying infrastructure, and, importantly, adobe—the mud and straw that human hands molded such that the work of the sun would fuse them together to bake them into a brick, as a building block…. –are extensions of ancestors, intergenerational energies that carry vitality and support in their own ways, relational knowledges and guidance that disrupt the mediated modern categories or disciplines that punk, in its nascency, was messing with. What does decolonizing work consist of? With the theft of land through settlement and restructuring of society, there is the violent erasure of entire systems and lifeways. Reconnecting, intergenerationally, with the spirits of the ancestors and with others and their ancestral worlds can awaken us to the shared need for sustainability and equity—not in development terms coopted by the system as such—but in terms of DIY, what we need to thrive and to divest from continued violent modes of theft, policing, and surveillance—those that are part of mainstream politics and those that have overtaken punk's boundaries and borders, as we realize with the challenge to Decline and the violent history it presents. The challenge to Decline is poignant because, in some respects, the hardcore scene that moved in, as Garza discussed of his inspiration, colonized the spaces and places of formative LA punk, which was more diverse. And yet, there remained an irreverent attitude, again as Garza suggested, of these punks in this scene such that it seemed to fit the story that they would burn down the house, which coincidentally was part of the storyline in Penelope Spheeris' *Decline of Western Civilization III* that focused on the crust punk/squatter scene.
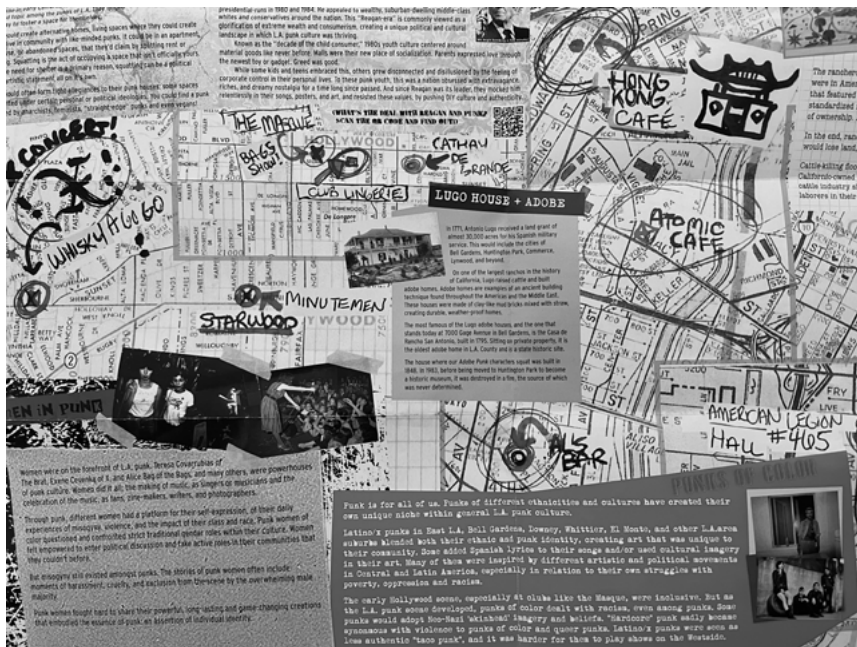
▶ **Figure 1.6.7.** Punk Map and info about punk and Lugo house, from "Info. Zine" (Adobe Punk)
▶ **Source:** Toscano, C., Chavez, T. & La Rocca, M. (2022). Adobe Punk – a theatrical zine with music. Los Angeles: About… Productions. https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5d0001705827d60001a89d40/t/631a6ff312d6741ca6828093/1662677002487/About+Productions+Adobe+Punk+InfoZine+FULL-compressed.pdf

In sum, *Adobe Punk* brings up more questions and complications than answers and neat resolutions. We are left with impressions of aesthetics and theatrical artistry share the lessons we learn from land theft as part of the increasingly toxic industrializing of Los Angeles (a city infamous for its smog, for example) as

well as the importance of intercultural, trans-generational knowledges of perseverance through which sustainability can be effectuated. But we aren't directed in any way from these impressions. Perhaps that is the lesson – to create and be open to spiritual, intergenerational connections—to DIY decolonial divestments and reimagining the hard reality of a map through drawings that direct us to alternative places comprised of people with different backgrounds, like the one that is offered to us in Adobe Punk's "infozine" (Figure 1.6.7). Here, the Atomic Café and Hong Kong Café, for example, remind us of the Asian (East and Southeast) communities that are part of LA punk's formative story. As Fiona I.B. Ngô writes in "Punk and the Shadow of War," punk needs to be situated amidst U.S. imperial logics through discussion of where punks choose to live (often with an among immigrants, poor people, people of color, as detailed with the Canterbury residence). Ngô offers:

> *punk reformulated topics and modes of resistance, the impact of the wars in Southeast Asia, as well as continuing histories of imperialist aggression elsewhere, served as a way for this racially and sexually diverse punk scene to imagine itself as resistant through (sometimes simultaneous) affiliation with and disassociation from the state, military, and acts of capitalist violence (2012: 205).

This disassociation is problematic, and it needs to be confronted, as the above article details through situating punk amidst the living and business spaces of Southeast Asian immigrants displaced by the war, which officially ended in 1975 (the year the Lebanese Civil War began as we recall from Kat's narrative). The sustainability of punk has thus depended on these communities displaced by war and punk's sustainability requires we locate the colonial, imperial processes as constitutive in punk's formation. We are always contending with our personal, political, and entwined legacies of being displaced and disenfranchised and searching for a home, a place where we can belong and feel secure in a community. Capitalism has promoted the idea of scarcity and the zero-sum game. Rules are written such that our belonging or success seems to necessitate the displacement or failure of another. Just as punks resist capitalism, we need to remember how to think more capaciously, which might start with hearing more capaciously, and, through frank conversations with each other about our lineages, reposition ourselves in punk futurities that take into consideration intergenerational equity and strive towards who and where we want to be beyond ourselves.

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part 2

Cinema, Sound Cultures &

RESIS TANCE

2.1. DIY IN EDGAR PÊRA: THE CONSTRUCTION OF A VISUAL IDENTITY

Teresa Lima[17]

✖ Abstract

Porto Alegre is the capital city of the Rio Grande do Sul state, located in the most southern region in Brazil. Its colonisation had an important role played by immigrants from Azores (Portugal), together with people from other European and African countries. This paper has the objective of producing initial notes for a historical perspective of the music scene in this city, and the research question is which facts compose a possible historical perspective of music in Porto Alegre, and how they are related to each other, as well as changes in the city across time. The investigation, considering from the 18th century until the end of the 1990s, was conducted based on bibliographic review. As a conclusion, it was possible to identify places, artists, music groups and genres, as well as how the social processes and historical facts had been relevant on the events in this music scene.

Keywords: history of music, music scene, historical perspective, Porto Alegre, Brazil.

1. Introduction

The topic of this paper is a historical perspective of music in Porto Alegre, the capital city of the Rio Grande do Sul State, in Brazil. This is the most southern state in the country and has borders with Argentina and Uruguay. Porto Alegre is a very interesting place to observe. Immigrants from the Azores (Portugal) had an important role in the colonisation, together with other populations that already lived in the region, such as other people with Portuguese background, from São Paulo, and black people, from Africa, which were slaves. With the passing of time, this city developed a quite interesting music scene, with the arrival of other immigrants and cultural influences. Also, being near to other countries which had been colonised by Spanish immigrants was a relevant fact.

The research observes from the arrival of the Azorean immigrants, in the 18th century, until the end of the 1990s. This investigation has the objective of producing notes which make possible to build, like a timeline, a historical perspective of music in Porto Alegre. The research question is which facts compose a possible historical perspective of music in Porto Alegre, and how they are related to each other, as well as changes in the city across time. Concerning the methodology, the investigation was conducted based on bibliographic review. The references are related to the history of music in Porto Alegre, with Arthur de Faria (2017), Luiz Antonio Gloger Maroneze (2007), Marcello Campos (2014), Fabiane Behling Luckow (2011), Luiz Artur Ferraretto (2007; 2013), Adriana Amaral and João Pedro Wizniewsky Amaral (2011), Adriana Amaral, Ivan Bomfim, Marcelo Bergamin Conter, Gustavo Daudt Fischer, Michael N. Goddard and Fabricio Silveira (2017), Mauro Borba (1996), Hardy Vedana (1987; 2006), Alisson Avila, Cristiano Bastos and Eduardo Müller (2001), and Ivan Paolo de Paris Fontanari (2003).

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2. The 18th and 19th centuries

For the purpose of this paper the historical perspective of music in Porto Alegre starts with the arrival of immigrants from the Azôres in the 18th century. There was a series of musical activities related to the azorian folklore, such as the dances called chimarrita and pezinho, and also carnival (Faria, 2017d). In this period the first theatre, Casa da Commédia, opens, which was formerly known as Casa da Ópera. Although the population preferred open air performances, which took place on a stage that was set up on Sundays and holidays. Porto Alegre had, with the passing of time, immigrants of other European countries besides Portugal, such as Germany, Italy, France, England, Spain and Ireland (Vedana, 1987). There are records of musical activities with African rhythms in the 19th century, which happened near where we can now find the Lima e Silva Street, in the Cidade Baixa neighbourhood (Faria, 2017d). There was a place called Candombe da Mãe Rita, where robbed slaves played *candombe* with percussion instruments. In this place there were also rehearsals of Christmas acts called *cocumbis*, related to religious syncretism.

Six bands were playing in Porto Alegre near 1870 (Vedana, 1987). União Brasileira, Firmeza and Esperança played at the Menino Deus chapel, and there were also others, such as Euterpe, Sete de Setembro and Corporação Musical do João Ferreira Lima. Lídia Knorr, a female composer, publishes in 1881 her sheet music for genres such as polka (Faria, 2017d). There is a lack of more profound information about her. Os Cubanos, a kind of music group called 'rancho', used to play popular music in the streets of Porto Alegre around 1880, between Christmas and Three King's Day (Vedana, 1987). From 1885 on, there were also other "rancho" groups: O Moçambique, Os Benguelas and Os Baianos.

São Pedro theatre was inaugurated during the 19th century. At this time, with other people coming from a previous association, José Araújo Vianna created the "Sociedade Philarmônica Porto-Alegrense", which lasted for 20 years (Faria, 2017d). Music soirees were also organised by the "Sociedade Partenon Literário", created by the city's first generation of writers. The concentration of the black population in the region near the current Rio Branco and Bom Fim neighbourhoods was the reason it started to be called the African Colony. At this time, the batuques took place there, including open air performances (Faria, 2017d).

3. Records, radio and balls

Different popular music genres originated from a synthesis of sonorities produced by African and European immigrants to the Americas in the end of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th centuries (Faria, 2017d). From this process, genres such as *jazz*, *tango*, *samba*, *choro*, *marchinhas*, Cuban rhythms and blues came into being, and later made possible the emergence of rock, bossa nova and soul, among others. The first record company in Porto Alegre, Discos Gaúcho, started at the beginning of the 20th century, and was the second one in Brazil. It belonged to Savério Leonetti, who also owned the Casa A Eléctrica, which sold gramophones and needles (Vedana, 2006). Discos Gaúcho recorded genres such as waltz, *dobrado*, *choro*, *polca*, *maxixe*, *habanera* and schottischs, amongst others (Faria, 2017c). The record company also made it possible to record the music of artists like Octavio Dutra, music composer and instrumentalist, responsible for a generation of musicians and the leader of the Terror dos Facões music group.

During the period between the 1920s and 1930s a modernisation process based on European and American influences took place in Porto Alegre (Maroneze, 2007). It had consequences in terms of different urban and cultural aspects. Public meetings begin to happen with streets, bars and coffee shops as protagonists and places. At this time, there is a change in the development of sociality, with the practice of what was called "footing", when people walked in the city centre to meet others and be seen. This behaviour expanded to the night life with music, representing a city which started to have a kind of metropolitan way. The manifestations of a music scene related to the elite began to take place in the city centre.

Cidade Baixa and *Ilhota* neighbourhoods had the other musical performances in Porto Alegre, and the area was called the "zona boêmia", where the "seresteiros" played (Faria, 2017b). These places were similar

to the African Colony and considered to be a peripheral region. They were inhabited by the population removed from the city centre, mainly formed by black people, who were descendent of slaves. There were no phonographic registers of the music produced by them. At the beginning of the 20th century, in 1924, the first radio station in Porto Alegre went on air, Rádio Sociedade Rio-Grandense, but it soon closed because of financial problems (Faria, 2017a). The second one was Radio Sociedade Gaúcha, which started in 1927.

In this period another important place for the music scene opened in Porto Alegre: the cinema theatre *Recreio Ideal* was the first one in the city that had an exclusive building (Faria, 2017e). The musicians played live during the exhibitions, as the films were still silent. It was considered an important entertainment, and the best musicians performed at these occasions, such as the piano player Radamés Gnatalli. Tango was a strong music genre in Porto Alegre at that time, because of the nearness of Argentina and Uruguay and because of the El Mundo and Belgrano radio stations, from Buenos Aires, whose content could be listened to in Rio Grande do Sul (Faria, 2017e). It made it possible for many *tango* music groups to perform in Porto Alegre.

During the first decades of the 20th century, live music could also be found at the *cabarets*, like Clube dos Caçadores, Brazil Club and Club Marly (Luckow, 2011). They were a place for male sociality where the *chanteuses* - female singers - performed, such as Jane Marny and Marcelle D'Orlys. The main music genres were Italian, Brazilian and French songs, and also tango, waltz and habaneras, besides operettas, accompanied by small orchestras. Around the middle 1930s "jazz" or "jazz-bands" music groups were present at the parties, balls and music recordings. They played, except for jazz, music genres such as *maxixes*, *polcas*, schottischs and *habaneras*. There were plenty of these music groups in Porto Alegre during that period (Faria, 2017f). Besides the other music genres already mentioned, "jazz" had in its repertoire tango, waltz and milonga as well (Faria, 2017a). The music for carnival in Porto Alegre was *marchinhas* and *sambas*.

These were the main music groups in the city until the 1940s, when the orchestras known as "big bands" came into being (Faria, 2017f). They were inspired by music and films from the United States, which relate to the idea of modernity from this country that increased during Second World War (Maroneze, 2007). In this period, Porto Alegre had two more radio stations: Difusora started in 1934 (Ferraretto, 2013) and Farroupilha in 1935 (Faria, 2017a). There were plenty of music programmes, with hired artists that performed live. Difusora had the main audience during the 1940s, and in the 1950s Farroupilha becomes more important than the former (Vedana, 1987). Between the end of the 1950s and the beginning of the 1960s the repertoire on the radio stations in the city was mainly international (Faria, 2017a). They played Caribbean music, *bolero*, *salsa*, Paraguayan *guarânia* and American pop, as well as tango and some hits of what was considered as Brazilian music, which was the one produced in Rio de Janeiro.

There was no place on the radios for the music from Porto Alegre that already had, at that time, its own identity (Faria, 2017a). It happened because of the national unification policy by Getúlio Vargas, who governed the country from 1930 to 1945 and from 1951 to 1954. He had forbidden the state's anthems to be played and commanded its flags to be burnt. There was a strong usage of radio as a centralising communication media. During this period, samba was the music genre established as a national symbol, broadcast by the state radio Nacional, from Rio de Janeiro. What started to be considered as the regional music was the one produced in the inland part of the state of São Paulo and in the Northeast of the country.

There were no record companies in Porto Alegre since the closure of Discos Gaúcho in 1923 (Faria, 2017a). Consequently, the artists that have not left Rio Grande do Sul did not record albums at that time. After Vargas left the government some actions that had the objective of valuing the cultural manifestations in the region took place (Faria, 2017a). The *Departamento de Tradições Gaúchas* (traditions department), in the Júlio de Castilhos school's student union, started in 1947. The next year, the traditions centre CTG 35, created by Barbosa Lessa and Paixão Côrtes, began its activities. During the same period, *O Tempo e o Vento* (The Time and the Wind) a book trilogy, by Erico Verissimo, started to be published, and "Contos Gauchescos" (Short stories from Rio Grande do Sul), by Simões Lopes Neto, is republished.

A generation based in a night life behaviour came into being in Porto Alegre between the end of the 1930s and the beginning of the 1960s (Faria, 2017a). Lupicínio Rodrigues, a black singer and composer,

who was born in Ilhota neighbourhood, became famous for his *sambas* (Campos, 2014). During the same period, Túlio Piva started to compose *samba* as well (Faria, 2017g). New musicians, especially the ones who had just arrived from the inland part of Rio Grande do Sul, used to perform at the Public Market, where they were evaluated by the more experienced ones (Faria, 2017a). They usually got donations after playing. These presentations made it easier for the musicians to get a chance to work at the radio stations in Porto Alegre, which had live programmes as theatres, soap operas and music performances.

During their golden years, the radio stations held an expressive cast of singers (Faria, 2017a). Considering different generations, it is possible to mention artists such as Fernando Collares, Guilherme e Gilberto Braga, Roberto Giannoni, Edy Polo, Sérgio Dias, Vaine Dutra, Renê Martins, Zé Bode, Francisco Lopes, Valdir do Carmo, Alvaiade, El Chamaco, Heitor Barros, Armando de Alencar, Alcides Gonçalves, Johnson, Sady Nolasco, Carusinho; and the female singers Horacina Corrêa, Teresinha Monteiro, Gessy Dávila, Neusa Teresinha, Lucy Natália and Maria Helena Andrade. The latter was one of the few of her generation to record an album, accompanied by the music group *Primo e seu Conjunto Melódico*, in 1957.

The Porto Alegre Symphony Orchestra was created in 1950 by the Hungarian conductor Pablo Komlós (Faria, 2017a). Its members were mainly part of the cast of Rádio Farroupilha. In the 1950s, when the evening programmes were broadcast, 92% of radio were on in Porto Alegre (Faria, 2017a). At this time, the music group *Conjunto Farroupilha* and the female singers Elis Regina and Lourdes Rodrigues started to perform. Bars, balls and cabarets were the places for live music (Faria, 2017a). Balls were the major opportunity for musicians and artists who performed on the radio, and consequently were well-known. Orchestras played at the balls and, during the break, the *conjuntos melódicos* (melodic music groups) performed. These melodic music groups were instrumental. Its repertoire was *bolero*, *mambo*, *samba-canção* and Italian, French and American songs (Faria, 2017b). Music was played softly, so people at the balls could talk and dance at the same time. These music groups recorded albums and performed at balls such as the *Baile da Reitoria*, which took place at the Federal University of Rio Grande do Sul Weekly. The most famous among these music groups were *Conjunto Melódico Norberto Baldauf,* Flamboyant and Flamingo (Faria, 2017h). The first had a contract with Rádio Gaúcha, and the second, with Rádio Farroupilha. Both played on the first television broadcast in Rio Grande do Sul, by TV Piratini, in 1959. Flamboyant, which played *samba-jazz*, was very important for the development of Elis Regina as a singer and performed with her at the inauguration of *TV Gaúcha*, in 1962. *Renato & Seu Sexteto* was also an important music group during this period. These groups' repertoire was partly authorial.

4. Rock and TV

The first groups that played rock in Porto Alegre, *Poposky e Seus Melódicos and Stardust*, came into being in the end of the 1950s (Faria, 2017h). They had the formation of *conjunto melódico* and played instrumental music. During this period, the balls started to also have the rock groups, as well as the orchestras and the melodic music groups. According to Glênio Reis's account (Ávila, Bastos & Müller, 2012), at the beginning of the 1960s, there were around eight presentations of rock groups each night at the balls. The clubs hired them by the hour. The bands were *Os Incendiários*, *Bulls*, *Os Monges*, *Thunderballs*, *Os Morcegos*, *Os Jetsons*, *Os Brasas*, *The Bachfools*, among others, according to *Mutuca and Cláudio Levitan*'s Report (Ávila, Bastos & Müller, 2012).

In the 1960s, the rock band Liverpool was formed. They recorded the album *Por Favor Sucesso* (Please Success) in 1969, released by Equipe Record Company in Rio de Janeiro, according to Fughetti Luz's account (Ávila, Bastos & Müller, 2012). Liverpool lasted until 1973 and some of its members formed the band *Bixo da Seda*. When TV broadcast companies started in Rio Grande do Sul, all programmes were live (Faria, 2017a). This brought a change for the radios, and by the end of 1966 there were no longer radio programmes with an audience at the studio. Videotape started to be on TV in 1963, and the local TV stations received the tapes with the recorded programmes from the other TV companies they were associated with. These companies were in Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo. Consequently, it was no longer needed to hold a huge cast of artists, and many musicians lost their jobs (Vedana, 1987).

Musical TV programmes such as *O Fino da Bossa*, *Jovem Guarda* and music festivals with competitions, from the TV channel Record (São Paulo), which were widely important during the 1960s, are an example

of the broadcast use of videotape (Faria, 2017a). Local programmes, produced in Porto Alegre, were not able to compete with them. TV Gaúcha, for example, was purchased by TV Excelsior, which produced programmes in Rio de Janeiro and in São Paulo, and whose owners also owned the air company Panair (Faria, 2017a). This made the videotapes transportation, which was by airplane, much easier. After *TV Excelsior*'s closure, in 1968, *TV Gaúcha* associated with *TV Globo*, from Rio de Janeiro.

This period is the end of what was called *anos dourados*, the golden years, and modernisation actions then took place in Porto Alegre. Because of interventions in the urban space in the 1960s, another urban imaginary begins (Maroneze, 2007). There is a conflict between the promised benefits of these actions and the negative effects that derived from it, that were not considered previously. Expectations of a future, which were positive, then transformed into nostalgia in a context of tension between tradition and modernity. Modernisation of urban space between the end of the Second World War, in 1945, and the beginning of the military dictatorship in Brazil, in 1964, had later developed in social tension (Maroneze, 2007). It is possible to point out that decadence of sociality in the urban environment was brought about by the military coup. This decay can also be explained with public works commanded by authoritarian governments, centred on viaducts, tunnels and the extension of avenues, to improve the rapid circulation of vehicles. An example of consequences for this transformation in sociality relates to security problems, as it happened to the city centre in Porto Alegre (Maroneze, 2007). At the same time, television starts to be central for entertainment and for themes for social conversation.

5. The 1970s

Many projects began to take place in Porto Alegre in the 1970s, with the objective of creating spaces for the local bands and artists to show their work. The *1.ª Mostra de Música de Porto Alegre* (first exhibition of music) happened in 1972 according to Kledir's account (Ávila, Bastos & Müller, 2012). The event was not competitive and wished to recall Woodstock Festival and be against the military dictatorship with a solidary process and the creation of a new world of peace and love. Another project was the *Rodas de Som* (Circles of Sound) at *Teatro de Arena* (a theatre that recalls an arena, with the audience seated around the stage) in 1974. The event, according to Kledir, was always crowded, and took place on Fridays at midinight. Three or four artists and bands performed in each gig. Some of them were *Bixo da Seda*, *Os Almôndegas* and *Hermes Aquino*.

During this period, *Rádio Continental* was the radio station which gave visibility for this music scene. Júlio Fürst, according to his own account (Ávila, Bastos & Müller, 2012) presented a programme where soul and funk records were played. From 1975, sponsored by the denim brand Lee, he started to present a programme called Mr. Lee in Concert, initially with country music. After attending the music festival Musipuc, that took place at the Pontifical Catholic University of Rio Grande do Sul, where he could see artists such as Nelson Coelho de Castro and bands like Inconsciente Coletivo, he noticed the strenght of the local music scene. So, he proposed to sponsor to play more music by the bands and artists from Porto Alegre, which is what actually happened, and the idea succeeded. Some artists brought him their own recorded tapes, and other ones, like *Os Almôndegas*, recorded at the radio station. *Rádio Continental*, according to Nelson Coelho de Castro's account (Ávila, Bastos & Müller, 2012), also broadcast the audio recorded at the music festivals.

From this moment, a series of concerts, sponsored by Lee, started to happen, called *Vivendo a Vida de Lee* (Living the Life of Lee), according to Júlio Fürst's report (Ávila, Bastos & Müller, 2012). These events took place at Teatro Presidente, a theatre, with bands like *Bobo da Corte*, *Byzzarro*, *Palpos de Aranha*, *Cálculo* and *Inconsciente Coletivo*, and also the artist Hermes Aquino. Three thousand people attended the first occasion of this event, and the police had to close the traffic in the street in front of the theatre, Benjamin Constant Avenue, because the place had the capacity for one thousand and five hundred people. In three years, twelve editions of this event happened.

Between the end of the 1970s and the beginning of the 1980s, Porto Alegre had many artists and bands that played Brazilian popular music (*Música Popular Brasileira*) and rock (Borba, 1996). During this time the city started to have a record company again: ISAEC. It made it possible to record the album *Paralelo 30*, produced by Juarez Fonseca in 1978. This record contained the first register in vinyl of MPB artists such

as Bebeto Alves, Carlinhos Hartlieb, Raul Ellwanger, Nelson Coelho de Castro, Nando D'Avila e Cláudio Vera Cruz, and became an important milestone for music in Porto Alegre. In 1981 there were seven radio stations in Porto Alegre (Borba, 1996). The same year, Radio Bandeirantes went into air, wanting to be an alternative station which aimed to make the local music scene more visible. This radio station received cassette tapes recorded independently by musicians and bands. It keept going on when Bandeirantes replaced on the dial Difusora station and, from 1983, had its name changed to Ipanema, which played primarily rock, but also local MPB. Besides that, Ipanema radio also broadcast live concerts by landline phone, according to Kátia Suman's report (Ávila, Bastos & Müller, 2012). Consequently, a culture of valuing local musicians and bars with live music came into being at that time, according to Ricardo Barão's account (Ávila, Bastos & Müller, 2012).

The first independent album recorded in Porto Alegre, *Juntos* (Together), by the artists Nelson Coelho de Castro, Bebeto Alves, Totonho Villeroy and Gelson Oliveira, was produced in 1981 (Borba, 1996). It was financed by selling coupons, so the record was purchased by supporters before it was made. The artist Nei Lisboa also used bonus to produce its first album, *Pra viajar no cosmos não precisa gasolina*. They were all MPB artists, who formed a music scene with others such as Kleiton e Kledir and Vitor Ramil. During this time, they were considered as popular music from Rio Grande do Sul, under the acronym MPG (*Música Popular Gaúcha*), according to Arthur de Faria's account (Ávila, Bastos & Müller, 2012). With the passing of time, the rock scene had increased, and MPG artists started to lose their visibility in the city.

6. The end of the 20th century

In the 1980s, many bands had started and finished in Porto Alegre (Borba, 1996). *Replicantes* was a punk rock band; *Taranatiriça*, *Urubu Rei*, *Garotos da Rua*, *TNT*, *De Falla*, *Atahualpa y uns Pânques*, *Prisão de Ventre*, *Fluxo*, *Bandaliera*, *Júlio Reny e Km Zero*, *Engenheiros do Hawaii*, *Nenhum de Nós* and *654* played rock; Astaroth and Leviaethan were heavy metal bands. They performed in places like Ocidente, a bar, and Auditório Araújo Vianna, an auditorium - which still exists in the same place, in Bom Fim neigbourhood – and Terreira da Tribo – that was located in Cidade Baixa neighbourhood at this time; B 52's, Danceteria 433, Crocodilos and Taj Mahal were other venues, also in Bom Fim, but these ones no longer exist. Because of this music scene's growth, another record company in the city, ACIT, launches a compilation album with rock bands, Rock Garagem, in 1984, and Rock Garagem II, in 1985.

The "1° Festival de Rock Unificado", a rock festival, took place in 1985 and was organised by Unificado, a school which offered preparation for undergraduate courses admission exams (Borba, 1996). Ten thousand people attended the concerts of ten bands at Gigantinho sports arena. Four bands signed contracts with RCA record company, from Rio de Janeiro: Replicantes, Engenheiros do Hawaii, Garotos da Rua and TNT. De Falla, another band, did not perform at the festival, but it was also hired by the same company. The other bands at the festival were *Taranatiriça*, *Júlio Reny e Km Zero*, *Astaroth*, *Banda de Banda*, *Os Eles* and *Prize*.

RCA then launched the compilation album *Rock Grande do Sul* in 1985, with the bands hired, which later their individual albums had recorded in the company. One of the producers had the idea of creating a record label for rock, called *Plug*, when he came to Porto Alegre to attend this festival, according to Claudinho Pereira's account (Ávila, Bastos & Müller, 2012). In 1986 Vórtex was created, a record and video production company, which launched Replicantes's second album (Borba, 1996). This company also made videos for the bands in Porto Alegre, as well as producing the cassette tapes that were used to show their music, in compilation and individual albums, according to Carlos Eduardo Miranda's account (Ávila, Bastos & Müller, 2012). It was a period, nevertheless, in which that rock scene started to decay.

Rock in Porto Alegre features three specific characteristics: a strong inspiration from the United Kingdom; an aesthetic that shows a carelessness regarding excellence when playing and singing music, called *estética da chinelagem*; and a hermetic humour, based on inside jokes and nonesense (Silveira, 2014). What is called *chinelagem* could be also defined as a sense of improvisation in music and concert production (Amaral & Amaral, 2011). These could be considered as fundamental elements for the constitution of an identity of rock produced in Porto Alegre. During the 1980s, this music scene had

some visibility on TV because of the TV show *Pra começo de conversa*, presented by Cunha Júnior and later by Eduardo Bueno (Borba, 1996). The TV programme had interviews and was broadcast by *TVE – TV Educativa*, the public channel of the State of Rio Grande do Sul.

The electronic music scene began in Porto Alegre in the 1980s and developed also in the 1990s, in venues such as Ocidente, *Taj Mahal*, *Elo Perdido* and *Fim de Século*, which was later called NEO (Amaral et al., 2017). *Cidade Baixa* and *Bom Fim* neighbourhoods were considered as the underground of this music scene, and Moinhos de Vento neighbourhood was seen as a place for mainstream electronic music. DJ Nando Barth, DJ Fabrício Peçanha and DJ Double S were some of the DJs that played in electronic music parties, starting with dance music and later with other eletronic music genres such as house, techno and trance. In the end of the 1990s projects such as *Fulltronic*, a rave, and *Mix Bazaar*, a clothing and accessories fair that had a party as well, were part of this scene (Fontanari, 2003).

In the 1990s, in *TVE – TV Educativa*, there was a show called *Radar*, where rock bands and artists performed live, had their videoclips shown and were interviewed (Borba, 1996). Another programme was *Tele Ritmo*, presented by Clóvis Dias Costa, where videoclips were exhibited, in *TV Guaíba*. Regarding radio stations, besides Ipanema, that keept on supporting the local music scene, there was also Felusp, which went on air in 1988 and belonged to the Lutheran University of Brazil – ULBRA. This radio station was later called Pop Rock (Ferraretto, 2007). Between the end of the 1980s and the beginning of the 1990s, there were still bands such as *DeFalla*, *Engenheiros do Hawaii*, *Bandaliera* and *Nenhum de Nós*, according to many accounts (Ávila, Bastos & Müller, 2012). During this time, other bands came into being, such as *Graforréia Xilarmônica*, *Cidadão Quem*, *Acústicos e Valvulados*, *Barata Oriental*, *Space Rave*, *Maria do Relento, Walverdes*, *Rosa Tattoada*, *Tequila Baby*, *Papas da Língua*, *Os Cascavelletes* and *Ultramen*. Some of these band's members had belonged to other ones that stopped playing. MPB artists like *Bebeto Alves*, *Nei Lisboa* and *Vitor Ramil* were also still recording albums and performing concerts.

In the 1990s, the main venues where the bands played were *Porto de Elis*, *Ocidente*, *Rocket88*, *Megazine*, *Garagem Hermética* and *Fun House*, according to many accounts (Ávila, Bastos & Müller, 2012). In *Porto de Elis*, many concerts under the name *Segunda Sen Ley* (Monday without law) took place weekly and generated a compilation album in 1995. In this period, the rock music scene starts to be located in Independência neighbourhood, and the local record company ACIT launches a specific label for rock, called Antídoto. From the middle to the end of the 1990s, rock bands such as *Cowboys Espirituais*, *Tarcísio Meira's Band*, *Os The Darma Lóvers*, *Tom Bloch*, *Comunidade Nin-Jitsu*, *Bidê ou Balde*, *Cachorro Grande*, *Video Hits*, *Identidade* and *Fresno* – this one representing what was called emocore – came into being. *Nei Van Sória* and *Flávio Basso* (also known as *Júpiter Maçã*), both former members of *TNT and Cascavelletes*, and *Wander Wildner*, former vocalist of *Replicantes*, started solo careers, according to many accounts (Ávila, Bastos & Müller, 2012). During this time, heavy metal bands Hibria and Hangar also started. In the transition between the end of the 20th and the beginning of the 21st centuries, the popularisation of the internet, which had its usage open to the population in Brazil in 1994, brings many changes to the music scene, according to Mini and Gaby Benedict's account (Ávila, Bastos & Müller, 2012). From this time, producing, promoting and distributing music becomes easier than before.

7. Close

This research reveals that Porto Alegre had an interesting development of its music scene, related to many different music genres. As a matter of conclusion, this paper made possible to identify places, artists, music groups and genres, as well as to understand how the social processes and historical facts across time had been relevant for the events and changes in this music scene. An important influence of immigrants of Europe and Africa could be noticed on the cultural manifestations in the city. The effect caused by the nearness of Uruguay and Argentina could be perceived mainly in the first half of the 20th century. After the Second World War, the impact of the cultural habits of the United States has increased in Porto Alegre, bringing a modification in social behaviour and in the music genres that became more important in the city.

This research also made possible to perceive changes in the city's urban space which affected the music scene with the passing of time. These changes were related to politics and policies from different

governments. It was also possible to notice how the different authoritarian governments of Brazil brought a negative impact to the music scene, as well as to other aspects of the cultural and urban environment. A lack of more detailed register of the music produced by the black population and by women in Porto Alegre is an issue that was evident during the process of this bibliographic review. As a suggestion for future research, these aspects could be investigated, in order to enable more visibility for these people's role in the music scene. This paper had the intention of producing initial notes for a historical perspective of the music scene in Porto Alegre. It is possible to say that this objective has been reached. This research has the purpose of being useful for other studies and to inspire deeper sights of the music in Porto Alegre, including, for example, more information regarding cultural manifestations such as carnival.

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2.2. TOWARDS A "SEMANTICS OF POWER": A CASE OF RESISTANCE AND RECOGNITION IN CONTEMPORARY BRAZILIAN FILM

Eliska Altmann[18]

✕ ~~Abstract~~

Drawing on Lula's Angels (*As Panteras do Lula*), a fake trailer which premiered on the Zel Junior YouTube channel and went viral in March/April 2022, this paper discusses the construction of a "semantics of power" within the context of an "impotent fascist aesthetic" in contemporary Brazil. Through the pop influence and a critical and humorous expression, the present work explores how Zel Junior, an artist and content creator, elaborates a language which takes for itself and diametrically inverts Bolsonarist signs in a desire for self-representation and recognition.

Keywords: semantics of power, fascist aesthetic, Bolsonarism, contemporary Brazil, sociology of culture and communication.

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1. Introduction: the interlocutor and his artistic creation

A stylish trio dash into the middle of a dark city street when they come across a muscular guy with an electronic eye wearing Brazil's football shirt. With a strong punch, he breaks the ground below his feet and presents himself with a cyborg's voice: "I am Bolsonaro's robot". The film's beginning pulls the viewer toward the adventure he/she will experience in the next two minutes. The director, actor, screenwriter, producer, editor, and costume designer Zel Junior unveils with his creation the current Brazilian political scenario through an anti-bolsonarist film semantics as a key element for the understanding of the country's contemporary context.

▸ **Figure 2.2.1.** Film poster available on Zel Junior YouTube channel
▸ **Source:** Zel Junior Youtube channel. Last accessed on 29 July 2022.

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As Panteras de Lula (translated here as Lula's Angels) premiered on YouTube in late March/early April 2022 (nearly six decades after the civil-military coup of 1964) and lasted ten months to be fully completed. That was the time Zel needed to raise the film budget coming from his five different freelance jobs in order to be able to independently afford the seven shooting days. During his interview for the research, Zel notes that, in contrast with the film industry in which countless people work together on a production, he takes care of everything by himself without sponsorships or any other sources of funding. "I really do things like in the guerrillas, you know? I take my mobile phone, and my cameras, and I start recording with my friends. I have never made a script for my videos." The "peripheral and northeastern" young guy, as he likes to define himself, migrated from an inland region of Bahia to São Paulo still as a child. He votes for the Workers' Party since he was 16 and nowadays, at the age of 25, he is based in the East Zone with three brothers and his mother.

When inquired about what drives him, the artist confidently states:

> *Anger. I am driven by indignation and anger. That can be seen in all my videos. It is through them that I show what hurts me and what I want to express. As I can't face it on the spot, I create it to relieve my feelings. When I feel hate, I know good things are coming (Zel Junior).*

Zel was afraid of *Lula's Angels* "not going well", being "ignored" or having "little recognition", as he supposes his previous videos have been. His fear also rested on the fact that Lula's Angels was a fake trailer – a teaser for a film that will not premiere, which "out there is common, but not in Brazil". In addition to using social media channels, he printed film posters and went to the streets to distribute them with the intention of disseminating the work. "Somehow, I believed [in the film]", he admits.

The video's millions of views bothered Brazilian right-wing and far-right viewers. Zel received death threats through his social media channels, as well as protests from political parties and movements, such as the Movimento Brasil Livre (MBL). "I massively received photographs of Marielle [Franco] in the comments of my videos, you know?[19] On Facebook, it was mostly comments saying that I would only stop when being shot in the head. Nowadays, all I can do is be very careful. Where we are in this country... I'm scared but I learned by force to ignore everything, otherwise, I would have stopped already", he says.

The other side of the story, however, is that representatives from progressive political parties and the film sector have declared admiration for the video. For instance, the director of The Edge of Democracy (2019), Petra Costa, publicised Zel's work as "the new promise for national action cinema."[20]

This visibility resulted in Zel receiving offers of contracts of exclusivity from different entertainment companies. "The proposal was to silence everything I do", that is, he would have to suspend his YouTube channel and paralyse his own productions. He did not accept. "What is the point? How am I supposed to stop doing what I do? I still don't see many transgender people making action films as protagonists. So, if I'm doing this, I think it's only fair to continue". In August 2022, Zel released Lula's Angels 2, a film as elaborate, political, and reflective as the first.

2. Conceptual readings. For a 'semantics of power'

The notion of a 'semantics of power' was conceived based on Zel Junior's work on the construction of signs and meanings antagonistic to the "aesthetics of impotence"[21] of the Bolsonarist grammar (or even culture). It is worth noting that by the latter we understand a set of rules or linguistic structure which seeks to establish ultra-rightist standards – or a 'reactionary populism' (Lynch, 2022) – in a kind of

19 "Black woman, from the favelas, Human Rights advocate and sociologist" (https://www.instagram.com/marielle_franco/), Marielle Franco was murdered on 14 March 2018, in the middle of her administration as a city councilwoman in Rio de Janeiro, seven months before the retired military officer Jair Messias Bolsonaro was elected President of Brazil.

20 https://twitter.com/zeljuniorm

21 The concept of "impotence" discussed below draws inspiration from Baruch Espinosa. Likewise, here we are inspired by Walter Benjamin's notion of the "aestheticisation of politics". In 1935/1936, the author writes that fascism leads to the aestheticisation of political life. "All efforts to aestheticise politics culminate in one point. That one point is war [...] Such is the aestheticising of politics, as practiced by fascism. Communism replies by politicising art" (Benjamin, 1994: 195-196; my translation).

"moral community", as suggested by Angela Alonso (2019). On the other hand, the notion of semantics presented here relates to the grammar, but in its objection instead. An antonymic aesthetic. The second name to compose the notion is inspired by the 'living seeing'[22] thinker, Baruch Spinoza. Let us go to it quickly.

In Definition 8 of Book IV of Ethics, the seventeenth-century philosopher outlines his understanding of "virtue and potency", which would be the same thing: "virtue, while referred to man, is his own essence or nature, as he has the power to accomplish things that can be understood exclusively through the laws of his nature" (Spinoza, 2021: 159).

Regarding our artist and content creator, Zel Junior, it is worth mentioning Proposition 46, still in the Fourth Part of Ethics: "Whoever lives under the condition of reason strives, as much as one can, to **reciprocate with love or generosity, the hate, anger, contempt, etc. of another towards him**". In his scholium, he says: "**Whoever wants to avenge offences by mutual hatred, lives, in fact, unhappy. Those who, on the contrary, seek to overcome hatred for love, certainly fight with joy and security; they defend themselves easily both from one and from many men**" (Spinoza, 2021: 187-188).

Within the context of a state that not only marginalises but worships signs and favour practices for exterminating women, gays, LGBTs, and other "minorities", as well as the progressive groups, Zel accounts for the forms of oppression, hostility and disrespect he has himself struggled with in his daily life coming from various sectors of society. For instance:

> *There was one day when I was aggressively stopped by a Christian couple because I was wearing high heels, and this happens very often, it's not an isolated case. While we were shooting Lula's Angels, some people violently stopped me in front of my team, you know? And several of my LGBTQIA+ friends share with me these stories of evangelicals who have tried to exorcise them and other types of approaches. This is very common, okay? (Zel Junior)

Given this scenario, it is worth noting the following questions: the artist does not incorporate an exclusive politics of suffering,[23] nor does he seek to fight back the hatred received. When he declares that he could respond with the same feeling, "but is unable to", that is, he transforms it into creative power, there is a finding about his semantics: in contrast to the "fascist aesthetics of impotence," Zel exercises a critical and propositional role contesting those who "do not know how to fortify the spirits of men, but rather depress them – these are unbearable for themselves" (Deleuze, 2002: 31).

In the case of *Lula's Angels* and some of his other videos,[24] it becomes clear that his "revenge" is translated into a political, pop and ironic action language. In his films, one can observe his knowledge of the signs and codes of the extreme right – such as the fundamentalist aesthetic, the images of "cleaning" and "sanitisation", and the gun ideology, to name a few – represented in reverse, in a double that is antagonised, in a kind of metamorphosis of the sad passions into joyful feelings. As an example, in Lula's Angels, there are no images of Jair Messias, but satirised bolsonarist symbols – like a bomb with the number 17 alluding to Bolsonaro's election number which explodes in a trap, and "bolsominion robots" ironised in an allegory of utopia as the female superheroes are ready to end their project for the destruction of Brazil.

The semantics that rips that grammar apart can then be interpreted through the idea of "a minor literature", developed by G. Deleuze and F. Guattari:

> *[It] does not belong to a minor language, but rather to the language that a minority builds in a larger language […] The three categories of the minor literature are the deterritorialisation of language, the connection of the individual with the political immediate, and the collective agency of enunciation (Deleuze & Guattari, 2003: 38-42).

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22 As named by Gilles Deleuze, 2002.

23 Notion discussed in expanded research (to be published) based on ideas of political scientist Wendy Brown.

24 Such as Gay X Evangelical; Gay X Evangelical 2; I Dated a Bolsominion; among others: https://www.youtube.com/c/zeljunior. Last accessed on 10 August 2022.

How to verify such categories in Zel Junior's productions and, more specifically, in *Lula's Angels*? Considering that deterritorialisation[25] represents a movement of displacement or departure from the territory (as well as the disconnection of a sign from its context of signification) towards a reterritorialisation, this desire is in Zel's own semantics. In other words, his language seeks ways out of the fascist aesthetics leading to new paths, notably, of production and recognition of assembled subjectivities. Such unsubjected subjectivities lead us to see the two categories mentioned in the above excerpt, after all, in *Lula's Panthers*, the individual-collective-political are mixed with each other and represented in multiple discontinued expressions.

As for the idea of "minor", the authors suggest that it is a condition of certain literature, here seen through "a minor cinema", which promotes other versions towards transforming assemblages, other actions and actings, bodies and spatialities, aesthetics and poetics, in fearless acts of disruption with the establishment. Thus, that noun – "minor" – "no longer qualifies certain kinds of literature, but the revolutionary conditions of any literature within that which is called great (or established)" (Deleuze & Guattari, 2003: 38-42).

Evading a "bigger" narrative can be added to Zel's accounts of injustices, death threats and violence suffered by him and his friends, who represent themselves in the film, representing, in turn, a community (LGBTQIA+). In his transgressive cinema, while disrupting the "great" (institutional or established), we see that anger is poured into other lines, powers and aesthetics, where collective agency plays the leading role. In one of his lines in Lula's Angels, for instance, the director says to his friends that "the best part of all this is not hitting Bolsominion, it's you" (in the video entitled *I Dated a Bolsominion*, likewise, it is friendship, love and group identity that prevail).

3. Open remarks or 'Which art form should my anger take?'

The desire to continue producing, deterritorialising and creating "escape routes"[26] has as its driving force the recognition, which, in turn, flows into Judith Butler's notion about the productive character of power relations.[27] Such a character would generate a type of subject to pave battles for the destabilisation of established norms and "frameworks" (2015).

In our case, that could be exemplified by the interview Zel and Jade Mascarenhas (her friend and actress) gave to a YouTube channel[28] when the artist recalled the promises he received from progressive entrepreneurs who would support him if he no longer discussed religion and some other topics in his videos.

But I am a gay guy, who's been tortured by the church his entire childhood... So, it's just impossible not to criticise that in my videos, you know. It's not that I'm romanticising, I rather work hard to produce my short film, and own it, doing it my way, than sell myself out to do something I don't believe in. Our creations are precisely meant to criticise what's oppressing us.

During the special episode with Judith Butler of *TransMissão*,[29] the television show hosted by Linn da Quebrada and Jup do Bairro, Linn posed the philosopher a question about "the force of non-violence" (2021): "How can we consider the non-violence [position] in a place like Brazil, where violence is everywhere, and it is even institutionalised and backed towards bodies like ours? A violence that is sophisticated, cruel and part of our everyday lives? It is possible not to have violence as an answer?".

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25 To learn more about Deleuze and Guattari's concept, see Mil Platôs (1995).

26 Concept developed by the same authors and equally discussed in the full version of the research.

27 See Rosenfield e Saavedra (2013) for an example of the wide reception of the concept developed by Axel Honneth in Brazilian Social Sciences.

28 Available at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HzWRaMW4Mt8. Last accessed on 13 July 2022.

29 Produced and broadcasted by the TV channel Canal Brasil, directed by Claudia Priscilla and Kiko Goifman. Available at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DMge3Uc9sUs. Last accessed on 15 August 2022.

To which Butler replied: "Let me say first that you must react. There must be a reaction, there has to be a widespread reaction, local, regional and global, and the anti-violence movement has to be very large, and very strong, and very loud. So, for me, non-violence is not the same as passivity, has nothing to do with passivity. The only question then is, you must react, how do you react? (…) Now how can I be forceful without being violent? That is the question: how do I be powerful without being violent? (…) What art form should my anger take? How can we make a collective art form of our anger?".

Zel Junior's way of reacting, his motivation and film form – these elements altogether build up his semantics of power by creating meaning through his loud, angry, collaborative, and loving film language. May his wishes not be undermined by mainstream grammar and may the artist and his friends continue to explore new territories, through escape routes that guide them (and us) to follow confidently.

In addition to Zel, other artists, art groups and collectives, and cultural movements have been working on powerful semantics despite the power of the established visual systems out there. We will have a long road of investigations to walk through in the near future.

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2.3. THREE FILMS BY PIER PAOLO PASOLINI: ACCATTONE, MAMMA ROMA AND SALÒ OR THE 120 DAYS OF SODOM, AS A MEANS O ANALYSIS OF THE ITALIAN SOCIETY OF THE 1960S AND 1970S

Emanuele Stochino[30]

✖ ## Abstract

This article analyses three films by Pier Paolo Pasolini: Accattone, Mamma Roma and Salò, or the 120 Days of Sodom. This analysis aims to highlight the Pasolinian reading of the social change which took place in Italy between the beginning of the 1960's and the early 1970's. At the end of the Second World War, Italy witnessed the construction of its extensive infrastructure network (Diefendorf, 1989). This was the initiative which allowed for the creation of large industrial centres and impressive residential complexes within the country. Pasolini framed this first phase of this social transformation in his films Accattone and Mamma Roma. Accattone is a metaphorical icon of the urban working class unaffected by the civilization of consumption which arrived in the disadvantaged suburbs of Rome during the postwar period (Grisolia, 2007).

Keywords: Accattone, cinema of poetry, Mamma Roma, Pier Paolo Pasolini, Salò, or the 120 Days of Sodom.

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1. Introduction

Mamma Roma tells the story of a former prostitute who wishes her son to receive a good education in a bid to gain social redemption for them both (Bondanella, 1985). However, since her son is more attracted to hedonism and crime than to educational betterment, her dream will not come true. In a 1972 radio interview, Pasolini said that his first films were made: "*[...] under the sign of Gramsci [...] that is, to make popular national works in the Gramscian sense of the word and therefore [...] I thought of addressing people as a social class well differentiated from the bourgeoisie*". (Pasolini, 1972). In the late 1960's, by accepting the values of the bourgeoisie and rejecting its own cultural origins, the common population underwent a period of rapid transformation and Italian society was turned into a neo-capitalist society. (Polanyi, 2015).

The birth of this new neo-capitalist or mass consumer society, led Pasolini to produce films for an elite public, an audience which he defined as follows: "*[...] elite not to label a privileged class exercising cultural power, but rather to describe a democratic elite present also among the intellectual minorities of the working class.*" (Pasolini, 1970: w/p).

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One can detect this refusal of both consumer society and of Power in his later films, for example in *Salò, or the 120 Days of Sodom*. This film is set in a country house in the Republic of Salò during the last days of Benito Mussolini's regime. A group of four of the most eminent representatives of politics, religion, legislature and economics, all men of *Power*, round up eight young men and eight young women, all of whom are non-fascists, with the help of the SS. Their aim is to subject these youngsters to torture, sexual abuse, and then to murder them merely to satisfy their own depravity and perversion.

The film is divided into four parts each of which bears a title reminiscent of Dante's geographical vision of Hell as laid out in *The Divine Comedy: Anteinferno*, the *Circle of Manias*, the *Circle of Shit* and the *Circle of Blood* (Bachmann, 1976). Pasolini interpreted De Sade's 120 Days of Sodom as "the relationship of power with those who are subordinate to power". In this reading of De Sade, Pasolini also took onboard Foucault's thoughts concerning docile bodies, that is, of manipulable bodies (Foucault, 2001); a body is docile when it can be subdued, transformed, and perfected for purposes proposed by those who wield power.

2. Cinema of poetry

All the forms of artistic expression which Pier Paolo Pasolini used, such as cinema, poetry, and narrative, are characterised by aesthetic coherence. In his films, Pasolini maintained the same formal and stylistic processes which he employed in both his prose and poetry. To create this formal stylistic unity in his films, Pasolini took personal responsibility for the creation of both subjects and screenplays. In addition, he also casted his films and chose most of the music used in them himself. Defining his cinema as *Cinema of Poetry*, in his book entitled *Empirismo Eretico*, Pasolini wrote:

> *Is a language of poetry possible in cinema? [Or A / N] Is the technique of free indirect speech possible in cinema?" [...] [Free indirect speech] is simply the author's immersion in the soul of his character, and therefore the author's adoption, not only of the psychology of his character, but also of his language [...]. In Cinema, it is certain that indirect free speech is possible [...]. When a writer "relives the speech" of one of his characters, he immerses himself in his psychology, but also in his language: free indirect speech is [...] always different from the language of the author. Reproducing, by reliving them, the different languages of the different types of social condition, is made possible by the writer since they exist. Every linguistic reality is a set of differentiated and socially differentiating languages, and the writer who uses the "free indirect" must above all be aware of this, and this is a form of class consciousness. (Pasolini, 1999: 1475-76)*

It is precisely because one can make poetry in cinema that Pasolini decided to become a filmmaker as well as poet and writer. In 1964, he stated: "If I have decided to make films it is because I wanted to make them exactly as I write poems, as I write novels. I had to be the author of my films, I couldn't be a co-author, or a director in the professional sense" (Pasolini, 1964: 16). According to Pasolini, the harmony present in *Cinema of Poetry* is emphasized by the presence of mainly non-professional actors. Generally, the actors who he selected belonged to the urban underclasses and he had them perform roles which recalled their everyday lives. Pasolini required that his actors gave him their complete collaboration, and so he directed his films with both gentleness and authority. This allowed Pasolini to turn his actors into the characters he had idealized when writing his screenplays.

> *The search for the actor is the thing I find most involving. This is because, when doing this, I can verify whether my hypotheses are arbitrary: that is, whether the character as I imagine him corresponds to a physiognomy which I have imagined. When I need young actors who are shrewd, smart and a little funny [...] I go to look for them directly in the borgate. (Pasolini, 1975: 238)*

Pasolini's typical actor used a limited verbal register which was then complemented by mood, facial expression, and music. The most well-known non-professional actors he used were Franco Citti and Ninetto Davoli, both of whom hailed from the poorest inner-city areas of Rome, the so-called borgate. However, for the most demanding roles which required more complex forms of expression and dialogue,

Pasolini casted professional actors, such as Anna Magnani in *Mamma Roma*, Orson Welles in The Ricotta, Totò in The Hawks and the Sparrows, *La Terra Vista dalla Luna and Che Cosa Sono le Nuvole?*, Silvana Mangano in Teorema and Salò, or the *120 Days of Sodom*, Maria Callas in *Medea* and Laura Betti in *The Gospel According to Matthew* and in various theatrical works. Regarding his use of professional actors, Pasolini said: "*When I need someone to play a more demanding part, then I turn to a professional actor, but I always reduce this choice to the bare minimum*". (Pasolini, 1975: 238)

Embarking upon his film-making career in the 1960's, Pasolini's first film, *Accattone*, was released in 1961, closely followed by his second film, *Mamma Roma*, in 1962. These two films were clearly inspired by two of his novels: *A Violent Life and The Ragazzi*. As Pasolini stated: "*The Ragazzi and A Violent Life represented reality as the brutal degraded reality of the underclasses living in Roman towns.*" The reality represented by Pasolini is multiform and covers social, anthropological, political dimensions and his physical description of settings is also rich and detailed. However, it is above all the language with its poetry and its expressionistic violence which allows one to penetrate the human reality of Pasolini's characters and to understand their significance.

When shooting Accattone, Pasolini still had a limited knowledge of cinematographic techniques: "I began working in cinema without any professional knowledge … When I started making Accattone I didn't know the meaning of the word "panoramic" […]. When I directed Accattone … I had a total lack of technical preparation. This, however, was compensated for by my way of seeing things (Pasolini, 1964: 15).

Pasolini's scarce knowledge of cinematic technique had been gleaned from films he had seen, from what he knew about the history of literature and art and from both the popular and classical music he listened to. What is more, he only learnt how to use a film camera while shooting the film. This is how Pasolini described his initial experiences as a filmmaker:

I've always thought about making films. Before the war, I thought I would go to Rome to attend the Experimental Center […]. This idea of making cinema then ran aground and was lost. Finally, I had the opportunity to make a film and I took it. If you take, for example, certain pages of The Ragazzi, you realize that they are already visual. That is, there is a certain dose of cinematic elements in my literature. Therefore, approaching cinema was tantamount to approaching a new technique that I had already worked out for some time (D'Avack, 1964: 111).

Pasolini had to make up for this initial lack of cinematic know-how by coming up with his very own technique. The technique he invented, one which incorporated the use of Roman folk songs to emphasize lighter scenes and the music of Bach and Vivaldi to complement dramatic episodes, was rather elementary but nonetheless, effective.

Indeed, the function of music in my films is twofold: one is of an aesthetic nature, sometimes arbitrary, merely "aestheticizing", the other is didactic and "functional". For example, Bach's Passion according to Matthew, in the brawl scene in Accattone […] assumes this aesthetic function. A sort of contamination is produced between the ugliness, the violence of the situation, and the musical sublime. It is the amalgam (magma) of the sublime and the comic of which Auerbach speaks (Pasolini, 1999: 1511).

Rather than using Bach's music in *Mamma Roma*, Pasolini preferred to include music by Vivaldi, which he used to present allegorically the sacralization of the urban underclass. The music of Vivaldi alternates with *Una Furtiva Lacrima* from *L'Elisir d'Amore* by Doninzetti and with popular songs such as the *Gypsy Violin* and traditional Romanesque songs known as *stornelli*. Another element which rendered Pasolini's images vivid were the references he made to thirteenth and fifteenth-century Italian painters such as Masaccio, Giotto, Masaccio and artists of the Romanesque School. (Pasolini,1999: 1519)

In *Accattone* Pasolini expresses: "*A technical sacredness […]. There is no more technically sacred than a slow overview. especially when it is discovered by an amateur and used for the first time […]. Sacredness: face on.*" (Santato, 201: 342). The opening scene of *Mamma Roma*, the wedding, recalls *The Last Supper* by Leonardo da Vinci. In the final scene of the film, reminiscent of Mantegna's *The Dead Christ*, Pasolini

portrays the corpse of Ettore, the male protagonist, lying on a restraint table in a dimly lit prison room.

*When making Accattone [...] I had to invent a technique while shooting the film [...]. The first operation I had to carry out was an operation of extreme simplification [...]. The whole film is shot with extreme simplicity, with extreme frontality [...] The style of Accattone is Masaccesque, Romanesque, frontal and direct [...]. I brought this simplicity to a moment of almost hieratic, of religious solemnity [...] Actually, Accattone is a religious film but not because of its content [...]. Accattone was religious... in his style or rather in his technique. There was a technical sacredness in Accattone (Pasolini,1999: 793- 794).

In an exemplary fashion, for instance by the inclusion of a slow panoramic sequence of Bethlehem after the birth of Jesus in his film the *Gospel according to Matthew*, Pasolini expresses sacredness through his cinematic technique. It was Pasolini's belief that the cinematographic technique, as a medium of realistic representation of the world, was a means which represented its sacredness. "When I shoot a film, I immerse myself in a state of fascination in front of an object, a thing, a face, a facial expression, a landscape, as if it were a device in which the sacred was about to explode." (Pasolini,1999: 1494).

3. Pasolini's inner crisis due to anthropological change in Italy

In the 1950's, thanks to funds from the European Recovery Program, Italy initiated a policy focused on: the construction of motorways, railways and ports, a large quantity of council housing, the distribution of subsidies to encourage industry, and the implementation of social reform in areas such as education and health (Radici, 2019).

The ensuing economic boom meant that all those consumer goods which were previously only the prerogative of the upper-middle class, for example cars and decent housing, also became available to the subordinate social classes. To make goods more affordable to the wider public, many companies introduced a policy to allow consumers to pay for goods in installments. This newly found well-being meant that in only a few years, all those goods hitherto dreamed of by generations of proletarians became a concrete reality for them too. This suggests that the original thought of a Marxist and Gramscian class struggle was of less and less interest to the proletariat.

*The middle classes have radically - I would say anthropologically - changed: positive values are no longer clerical Sanfedist values [...] but are the values of the hedonistic ideology of consumption and the consequent modernist tolerance of the American type [...]. The matrix that generates all Italians is now the same [...] in everyday, mimic, somatic behavior there is nothing that distinguishes [A.N. or the homologation] (Pasolini 2008: 40- 41)

According to Pasolini, when propagating hedonism television was the medium par excellence: "Television's ideological bombardment is not explicit: it is all in things, all indirect. But never has "a model of life" ever been promoted so effectively than through television." (Pasolini, 2008: 59). Due to this rapid social transformation, Pasolini admitted that the audience he had idealized in the 1960's no longer existed. Consequently, Pasolini surpassed Gramsci's *National-Popular* vision; Gramsci's outlook was no longer in line with 1960's society. From the 1960's onwards, Pasolini set out to produce works for an *elite* as opposed to the *masses*. Pasolini defined the *masses* as an "*undemocratic, alienated and alienating*" group. (La Porta, 2012)

Accattone and *Mamma Roma* present an Italy which is still split into social classes, that is, the urban proletariat with their traditions and language and the *bourgeoisie* with their own language and a lifestyle so different from those of proletarians.

During an interview in 1964, Pasolini stated that since the urban proletariat described in *Accattone* and *Mamma Roma* had fallen victim to cultural leveling and no longer existed, had he attempted to shoot these two films five or six years later than he did, they would never have been made. "I am a disenchanted man. On the other hand, I have always been at loggerheads with the society of my time. I have fought it,

it has haunted me, but it has also brought me success. But now I don't like it anymore. I don't like its way of being its quality of life" (Pasolini, 1992: 146).

4. Salò, or the 120 Days of Sodom

Pasolini sets his film in a stately villa in which, after having been abducted, eight young men boys and eight young women are locked up for 120 days by four gentlemen. The villa which Pasolini chose as the setting to have these four gentlemen satisfy their perverse cravings mirrors the castle of Silling mentioned by De Sade in *The 120 days of Sodom*. In the *Circle of Anteinferno*, the four gentlemen draw up a Code which lays out in detail what it is lawful to subject the young victims to and everything which the captive youngsters must comply to with blind obedience. Within the Code, it is described how and where each act of perversion can be performed. To seal the drafted Code, each of the gentlemen marries the daughter of one of the four and they sign a blood pact. In the *Circle of Anteinferno*, four former brothel owners, Signora Vaccari, Signora Maggi, Signora Castelli and one woman who remains nameless and is only there to play the piano, join forces with the four gentlemen. In the Circle of Manias Signora Vaccari, recounts fetishist stories to excite the four gentlemen and lead them to torture their captives. In the *Circle of Shit*, Signora Maggi describes a series of anal perversions to the four gentlemen. In this Circle, the youngsters are to be subjected to acts of sodomy and forced to eat their own faeces. In the *Circle of Blood*, Signora Castelli creates a climate of perverse denunciation among the young captives to discover who has contravened the Code and thus, must be punished with torture and amputation in the final scene.

During the shooting of the film in 1975, Pasolini was interviewed by Bachmann. When questioned about this interview, Pasolini said:

> *In other films I have asked professional actors to be non-professional and non-professional actors to be professional [...], an actor must be highly attentive to detail [...]. To do this, I need a structure which maintains a precise rhythm [...] and certainly less realistic since this is more befitting. The confirmation then comes from the Dantean characteristics which I have included in the structure of the film. In my opinion, the division of groups according to the theological verticalism in Dante's Inferno was already part of De Sade's intention (Siti & Zabagli, 2001: 2335).*

When writing the screenplay for the film, Pasolini drew upon the thinking of Bataille, Blanchot and Klossowky. Due to the influence these three intellectuals had on him, Pasolini decided to set De Sade's novel in the Italian Social Republic. Pasolini did this: "To combine, in its function of legal control over individuals, the reason of Enlightenment with totalitarian degeneration and the suppression of all human rights: transporting De Sade into the last remnants of fascism to demonstrate how horror arises from the desire for normality" (Murri, 2001: 23). Speaking about Pasolini's choice of setting, Brodesco observed: "More than on the link between fascism and sadism, it goes towards the perversion of republican fascism, towards the isolation of an ideology from the world (fascism in Salò, sadism in the castle in 120 Days) and its drift into a surface deprived of thought" (Brodesco, 2014: 126). In the film, Pasolini brings together de Sade's vision of the law as absolute tyranny and how the anarchy of power is an integral part of deviated Power. In a 1975 article Pasolini stated:

> *Salò was the result of a state of mind [...] of what I was harbouring in my thoughts and which I personally suffer. This is perhaps what I want to express in Salò, or the 120 Days of Sodom. Sexual intercourse is a language The language or system of signs of sex has changed radically in Italy over the last few years. I cannot remain outside the evolution of any linguistic convention of my society. From this, derives a type of sexual behaviour which is radically different from what I have been used to. For me, therefore, the trauma was (and still is) (Pasolini, 1975: 15).*

Thus, it can be said that Foucault's vision of the body and *Power* dovetails perfectly with Pasolini's:

> *In the body all the control strategies used for any measure of maintenance of order are ascribed, the*

conception of individuals-bodies as objects to be manipulated is established in it. For this reason, later, we go back to the first point of bio-power, that is the human species, since it is the whole species-population that is under the eye of control, through its body. By virtue of this highlighting of the body as the pole on which the control strategy is established, we can arrive at a famous point of Foucauldian research, namely the concept of disciplinary power which then generates the so-called docile body, developed - the two concepts - in Supervise and Punish (1975). Foucault speaks of an even deeper and more subtle conception of power which, like a machination, carries out its role from within the individual, generating - without embankment given the almost unconscious normalization - individuals already subjected and constituents of power itself. The docility to which our author refers, through disciplinary power, lies in the fact that not only - as docile - was easily subjected, but at the same time it must also be a productive body, that is, one that responds to laws and rules ascribed to the control space in which he acts and moves: whether they are barracks, hospitals, prisons, urban space and so on. All this to understand how bio-power is the basis of the technology of the discipline (Maurilio Ginex, 2017: w/p).

5. Conclusion

Pasolini witnessed various important moments in Italian history first-hand: the Second World War, the birth of the Republic, the economic boom, and the years of the student protests and all these events are enucleated in his literary and cinematographic works. Even though he declared himself to be a heterodox Marxist, Pasolini always had the clarity to understand social change and to evolve his own thinking. He did not have an ideological vision; he believed that reality should not adapt to the ideas of ideology but should always be ready to question its own ideas in the face of cultural change. In *Accattone* and *Mamma Roma*, Pasolini expressed his extreme faith in the fact that social change could be attained through class struggle. Indeed, Pasolini made his first films under the banner of Gramsci's *National-Popular*. The Rome described in these films is that of the post-war years, a city with a human and urban geography which was soon to disappear. The advent of the economic boom allowed the working classes to appropriate themselves of what they had been wanting for generations: cars, decent housing, and a steady job. When given this opportunity to lead a more comfortable life, to adapt to hedonistic bourgeois thinking, the less militant classes renounced the ideals of class struggle they had hitherto held. Given that the class struggle was one of the central elements in his Marxist creed, Pasolini was thrown into crisis. Once he had come to terms with the disaffection of the masses with class struggle, he began to produce works which berated hedonism, the Italian people's diminishing humanity and their loss of values.

When Pasolini wrote and filmed *Salò, or the 120 Days of Sodom*, he was fully aware that he was creating a work which, due to its crudeness and violence, was unwatchable in a certain sense. Nonetheless, the film does show reality as Pasolini conceived it. Pasolini himself used the metaphor of republican fascism as the dehumanization of the body by Power. In *Salò, or the 120 Days of Sodom*, the abuse of power over bodies is allowed by the victims themselves as they lack the moral and ideological values on which to base any form of rebellion. The only scene in which a victim is seen to rebel, is the one in which, just before being murdered, one of the young male captives raises his fist in the communist salute. In the 1970's, all the basic values of society, such as family, religious institution and the State were contested violently and without distinction. However, it should be borne in mind that those who contested were not only youngsters but also those intellectuals who, from inside the *halls of the mighty*, despised the society in which they were living but were unprepared to abandon power and the economic advantages which that society had bestowed upon them. The violence in *Salò, or the 120 Days of Sodom* perfectly mirrors Italian society of the times, a society which, in order to acquire much desired ephemeral objects, was willing to sell off everything and everyone for sake of personal gain. However, even though the society which Pasolini represented in *Salò, or the 120 Days of Sodom* is the society of fifty years ago, on closer inspection hedonism is still one of the main values within society today. As Pope John Paul II observed in his 1998 encyclical *Fides et Ratio*, man has forgotten to direct his investigation on *being*, focusing his research on human knowledge rather than relying on his ability to know the truth.

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2.4. DIY IN ROMANIAN REGGAE AND SOUNDSYSTEM CULTURE

Ioana Pînzariu[31]

✖ ~~**Abstract**~~

In the last fifty years, Jamaica has had a remarkable amount of cultural export, and this can be easily observed without any statistical data. Were we only to take a glance at music trends and tops, we would find at least a couple of songs that were influenced by reggae, dancehall and dub. Jamaican music influences and culture have existed in Romania long enough to forge small communities of followers. Testament to this are several party series of reggae/dub/dancehall, sound system sessions and concerts featuring Jamaican artists paid out of the public purse. This paper tries to answer several questions revolving around the phenomenon of Jamaican music in Romania. How does rastafari spread among white people? Was bass culture imported along with Jamaican spiritual ideas or was the sonic body the only element Romanian culture bought into? Is this community a homogenous one or perhaps it has layers and hierarchies? Are the participants at the session drawn towards the event just by the music or they share other ideological ideas with the music? Furthermore, we are interested in the reason why the artists the Romanian music scene have chosen this particular type of music, especially considering that in Romania it is difficult to build a financially stable career in any kind of music. Most of the musicians know that music imbued with social critique and protest have even a more difficult road towards radio or television and that is one of the few ways one could have concerts and be able to support oneself through music. The other category of reggae/dub/dancehall musicians are the ones who already have ordinary jobs in other fields, and they do this for passion, usually investing what they earn from their daily jobs. To my knowledge, there is no research on Romanian reggae or other types of music influenced by Jamaican inheritance. My paper is mostly based on ten years of attending reggae, dub and dancehall events, being in the studio with the artists, and the interviews I conducted with them.

Keywords: reggae, Romanian, Jamaican, sound system.

1. Protest music in post-communist Romania

In the first decade after the fall of the communist regime, the music industry was rapidly swallowed by the newly self-made" producers" and the owners of television and radio stations. There was a monopoly at first, the only music television being Atomic TV, which promoted mostly overly simplified music which seemed to have only one purpose: to be easily sold. This meant that lyrics had hardly any substance, they were using standard formulas and some hooks so as to build earworms, trying to target as much of the

population as possible. Since most people did not have options other than traditional folk music, a major part of the Romanian people had their music taste defined by what Atomic TV delivered.

In the 90`s music, social commentaries were scarcely present in the creations of Romanian musicians. Among the exceptions were: The Romanian hip hop band Paraziții with their album *Poezii pentru pereți* (*Poems for the walls*) in which they criticized the Romanian society and the political leaders of the time.

However, there were some folk artists compensating for the lack of critical attitude exhibited by the vast majority of artists. One such case was Vali Sterian, whose album, *S-a votat codul penal* (*The criminal code was voted*), recorded in 1992, is an outcry against the new post-communist government, largely made of ex-communists. Until cancer put an end to his career at the turn of the century, he continued to make sure that the horrors of the communist regime would not be forgotten. Along with him, there were other musicians: Alexandru Andrieș and Cristian Pațurcă. One interesting thing about them is that, while on YouTube they have barely gathered a couple of million views, their songs are ubiquitous during Romanian protests. The most encompassing demonstration, the one in 2015 triggered by the fire that broke out in the music club Colectiv during a metal concert and had a death toll of 64, resulted in the resignation of the social-democrat prime minister Victor Ponta. Music was used during those days by the protesters, through big speakers, even sound systems as they wanted to show their vexation at Romanian corruption. Noteworthy is that the two most played songs belonged to Vali Sterian and Cristian Pațurcă.

On the rock music scene, the band Timpuri noi, who had been censored and prohibited during the communist era, were back on track. During the the first decade after the fall of the regime, they launched the albums *De regiune superior* (1995) and *Basca abundenței*. We could not find any other examples of protest music, although I am certain that had there been archives of early underground music in Romania, we would have the possibility of going more in depth about the phenomenon.

1.1. The first reggae sound in Romania

Although there were some songs that embraced some musical characteristics particular to reggae music, such as skank guitars, bubble organs and *one drop* or *rockers* drum groove, we could not go as far as classify that music as reggae. That is because they were missing some key elements like the direction of the lyrics, their subversive nature, the passion around bass culture and many other non-musical, yet essential aspects. On this rather barren land there were two music projects I found to have laid the groundwork for Jamaican inspired music: the singer Pacha Man and the band El Negro.

1.1.1. Pacha Man – Rasta Gangsta

The first musician that brought along with his music several elements from the Jamaican culture was Pacha Man, freshly arrived in Romania after three-year jail time served in Canada and another three years of bachelor's degree in law in the United States of America. He recorded his first album, *Globul de Cristal* (*The Crystal Globe*) in 1998, with the help of Hobby Music studio from Timișoara. His attitude was rather inspired by gangsta rap and dancehall, but the content of his albums was controversial and challenging for the analytical listener, as he embraced this antithetical musical duality. Musicians involved in the Romanian reggae scene and simple listeners alike are still disputing his affiliation to reggae and Rastafari, but this does not little to challenge his unofficial title of Romanian reggae pioneer. The contrast between the styles he approaches is obvious even without listening to his music. When I tried to look up his artist's name on Google, I found two Wikipedia versions, one in Romanian and the other one in English: the first one said he is a hip hop musician, while the second one claimed he is a reggae musician. In the end, both perspectives are right since his music is a hybrid between the two stylistic directions.

He is a musician with a colorful history and an interesting past. He was in prison for various crimes, and he declared in an interview (https://www.youtube.com/c/hiphoplive, 2013) that he did everything, apart from rape and murder. The first album he released contains the first Romanian songs in the style of reggae/dancehall, but most of the pieces are likelier to be pegged as hip hop. The piece „Oral meu" (My city) is also the first song in the country to use a traditional Jamaican riddim as an instrumental for the songwriting. While toasting, his phrasing reminds us of the style of Shabba Ranks, but the vocal timbre is more similar to the one of the Jamaican singer's Shaggy. On the same album, the song Imaginația

(Imagination) exudes Rastafari ideology, but again blended with the ragamuffin style, using words from Jamaican patois like buyaka (usually associated with the sound of the gun or the persecution of marijuana users). The word itself, given its cultural context, contrasts strongly with the I and I concept otherwise present in the rest of the lyrics.

The second album he released sharpens this image of a cross-culture artist, now visible in the visuals as well: he has dreadlocks, but is shaved on the sides, a long-braided beard and a necklace in the colors of Rastafari, red, gold and green. The album is called *Drumul către Rastafari* (2003), however, the acknowledgements go to famous Romanian hip hop groups: BUG Mafia, La familia, Paraziții and others. He starts his album with a song that has a lot of the musical characteristics of roots reggae, while also adding new sound textures that remind us of a more industrialized, machine-like soundscape. In the intro, a voice describes him: 'he's a rapper, he's rebellious, he has the looks... and he says what the average audience wants to hear'. This album also contains his first viral song, *Același sânge*, where he reverses the process of the *riddim*: instead of taking an instrumental and build a new melody on it, he translated One Blood from the Jamaican singer Junior Reid and recorded it on an instrumental version that was more in tune with the contemporary soundscape. Although many voices have accused him of stealing the song, when I discovered the physical album cover, I noticed that on the second cover he mentioned the author and that all royalties were paid to him.

After listening to the first three songs, one can notice that this second album has a very different sonic world from the other reggae releases in Romania. The members of the band are already more versatile in their way of playing reggae grooves, all of them being experienced instrumentalists. He perpetuates the discrepancy between reggae grooves and violent lyrics as a way of shock his audience. For instance, in the piece *Avertisment* (*Warning*) he uses verbal imprecations dedicated to other local rappers he claimed 'were prostituting with the mic' and would rather lip sync than sing live.

The intermezzo of the album is a version of *Rastaman chant*, a song from 1973 by Bob Marley and The Wailers in a version that draws closer to *nyabhinghi music* (Rastafari traditional music). In the following songs, the flow of invectives gets even denser, and only takes a small break on the electro-reggae song called *Rastafari*, dedicated to king Selassie I (the king of Ethiopia and one of the key figures in their belief). This mixture is confusing to the point that it is difficult for the listener to fathom whether he has an acumen for the reggae beliefs or he just meant to ridicule one of these two antithetic sides. The other songs on the album vary from active social commentary to pleading for the legalization of cannabis.

It is certain that Pacha Man was the pioneer of reggae and dancehall in Romania, although he would not stick solely to this style as he combines reggae and hip hop). In fact, he overtly acknowledges both being the pioneer of Jamaican influenced Romanian music and belonging to the Romanian hip hop group, as it is showcased by the title Rasta Gangsta, released in 2021.

1.1.2. El Negro

The band El Negro made their first public appearance at the end of the 90s. Initially, it was a group featuring two lead singers: Bogdan Negroiu and Stevie Bass. This was a famous recipe in Romania back then: a duo with a singer and a rapper. With the help of other musicians, they released, in 2000, the album *Reggaesonic*. When I asked them why they chose reggae, as there were almost no Jamaican influences in Romania back then, they replied that, at first, the groove and the vibe were the ones to get them interested in this music. I cannot say *Reggaesonic* was a reggae album, it was an album with various influences, including latin, rock and others, but it is true that most of the pieces had their grooves built around the most legendary element of reggae: the skank formula. The orchestration included brass instruments, but they were rather recorded in a latin style and the timbres used were limited by the technology available in Romanian studios. The lyrics of the song weren't related to reggae topics, they were mostly love ballads and also included some cover songs.

The turn of the century meant, for most Romanian musicians, a struggle to get to the musical mainstream, the underground music was barely developing and most Romanians, with the exception of rock and hip-hop fans, did not have the time nor the patience to search for and listen to other music than the one radio and television offered them. For those who wanted to get their music to people, being part of the

mainstream was the only option, so musicians were forced to sign contracts with labels. El Negro signed with Cat Music and the label helped them reach an audience. As Bogdan, the lead singer, told me in an interview, the stylistic direction was imposed by what would sell, musically speaking, during those times.

One year later, in 2001, El Negro releases their second album, Reggae Bum Bum, where their reggae influences start to become clearer. The album was recorded only with a band, without any electronic elements and it currently only exists in the form of a tape cassette. The last album released in this formula was *Fuga-n Jamaica* (*Escape to Jamaica*), yet another album filled with love songs, not very different to what the local boy bands were producing, except for the reggae groove.

The turning point of their career came with the release of the song *Ploaia*, which would soon become an anthem at the parties held by young people. Released in 2006, it was written with a strong hook and melody, but this was not the only reason it became a hit song. The lyrics were somewhat rebellious. As I have already mentioned, there was protest music in Romania, but most of it came from the underground scene that was unknown to the masses. Music broadcast on radio and television didn't have the slightest tinge of subversive attitude. Given that the new regime in Romania didn't please the people, especially the youth, they were looking for alternative ways of thinking and felt like protesting against the new post-communist society as it was shaping up. El Negro reached a middle point, they were not underground, they used to be mainstream, but they started tackling intriguing topics in their songs.

As for their hit song, *Ploaia*, it was paradoxically released after many failed attempts to penetrate the radio scene and to apply different patterns to satisfy the requirements of the market. In the end, they gave up and decided to be true to themselves and write what they like instead of trying to sell. This seems to have panned out, because the song made it to the charts, and it stayed there for a while.

Although the lyrics were sprinkled with banalities, the song managed to introduce a form a consciousness in Romanian music and El Negro became reggae not only through vibe and groove, but also through ideas. They released Antipanica, a more mature album where the change of perspective regarding the music they should be doing becomes obvious. The songs explore a wider range of topics, including legalizing cannabis and satires of the Romanian mentality.

1.2. What came after the avant-garde – Romanian Reggae scene

After Pacha Man and El Negro started paved this road, a community started taking shape in Romania. There were several reggae lovers passionate about international projects and bass culture, concert organizers started bringing reggae and dancehall artists, so it was easier for people to discover Jamaican music. It also helped that reggae was one of the tolerated genres among rock listeners. The end of the first decade of this century already saw more reggae projects developing in Romania.

1.2.1. East Roots

The band East Roots, founded by Mihai Pară (drums) and Laur Iftene (bass and guitar), started its activity in 2009. They began playing reggae, dancehall and ska with elements of electronic music such as drum and bass and dubstep. Their vocalist, Mistah Boogie, had previously worked as a photographer for the Swiss website www.reggae.ch, position that helped him gain a better understanding of the Jamaican culture. He also founded a sound system in Switzerland, called Ranking Sound (http://czb.ro/articol/1238/, 2011).

Their sound was eclectic, with multiple extra-European music influences, but well defined. During their activity, they released two materials: *East Roots EP* and the album *From the East to the West*. Unfortunately, the band ceased to play after the death of the singer, Mistah Boogie. Although they had a short career, their contribution to Romanian reggae scene was of paramount importance.

1.2.2. Basska

Basska is one of the most active bands in the Romanian underground and although you can't find the word 'reggae' in their description, most of their releases fall in this spectrum. They have a strong reggae

component, especially through one of their lead singers, Yardie Flo (Florian Avramescu), who is also one of the selectors and MCs active in the reggae scene. Basska fuses Jamaican inspired music with traditional folk music and instruments, with hip hop, ska and drum and bass. They are now part of a larger crew along with the Romanian bands Subcarpați, Fantome, Frații Grime and Cred că sunt extraterestru, labelled as *Culese din cartier*. This initiative is one of the best examples of budding entrepreneurship in the underground music that managed to build a well-defined community, since they refuse to go on mainstream television. Despite this fact they have managed to sell NFTs (Non-fungible tokens) worth two million euro in just 40 minutes and create huge communities around the projects they have undertaken. Their older songs are more in the spectrum of grime and hip hop, given their association with the crew mentioned above.

One of their latest songs, 2 *focuri*, is a blend between reggae and folk music-sounding themes played by Andrei Maxim on kaval (a common instrument owned by mountain shepherds in the Balkans). It also features the singer Ioana Milculescu, a fresh new addition to the crew. The song soon made it to the charts, reaching three million views, becoming the second most listened to reggae song in Romania, behind only El Negro's *Ploaia*.

2. Sound system culture in Romania and music festivals

In Romania, the interest toward reggae music was rising in the 2000's, but dub music was seldom explored and there was no proper technological means to enjoy it full scale. The sound system culture was not yet present, mostly because nobody dared to build a configuration similar to the ones used in Jamaica.

2.1. Kaya Foundation and Kogaion Sound System

Although there were sporadic reggae and dub sessions across the country, it was only in 2009 that the first such sound system was built in Romania. Named Kogaion Soundsystem, it belongs to the Kaya Foundation crew and it encouraged people to build other similar sound systems in other Romanian cities. They are finely tuned to deliver music in keeping with the original vibes of the genre, both sonically and culturally. Besides their sound system pioneering title, they were also the first ones to organize a reggae and dub festival, called *One Love Gathering*. It was a DiY event with thousands of people, they refused to accept big brands as sponsors, fearing that such a compromise would destroy the very feeling that pushed them towards reggae music: freedom. The festival was organized only with help of volunteers in the community, and it has reinforced the position of Jamaican-inspired music in the underground scene.

They never intended for the festival to be a big one and this was one of the main reasons they preferred to invest their own money in it or take moderate amounts of money from local entrepreneurs. Often, they found themselves in debt after an edition. Although this usually spells failure, at least in financial terms, it was not the case, since the purpose of the festival had never been a commercial one, nor was it to reach large numbers of people. Actually, the underpinnings of their enterprise were to introduce the audience to roots reggae philosophy and the sound system practice. They wanted to promote the original values of dub music, as it had been when first exported to Europe.

2.2. Kaze sound system

The second sound system was built in 2011, this time in the Moldavian city of Iași. Its name, KAZE, is an acronym of Keep Alive Zion Empire and also the nickname of the owner. He grew up listening to reggae and wanted to do more for the movement. Together with his father, he opened a reggae themed bar named Kaze Pub, a bar which became soon a cornerstone for Jamaican music practices, since it was the first bar in the region hosting sound system sessions. Later, the visual artist Ioana Faya joined the crew and together they collaborated with Kaya Foundation crew when it came to organizing events and sessions. Kaze specifies on his Facebook page that Bobi and Damian, founders of Kogaion sound system, were a true inspiration and a real help in his development.

His skills as a carpenter helped Kaze build his own sound system by himself and also helped design other sound systems across the country. He is one of the selectors who refuses to accept the digital trend and only uses vinyl. Kaze sound system was present at Afterhills, Electric Castle and organized sessions in Iași with Alpha Steppa, Indica Dub and Dub Engine.

He is also part of the wider concept AMALGAm, an umbrella used for a crew organizing parties in the sphere of reggae, dub, roots, breakbeat and house. These events are not only meant as entertainment, but also used as an opportunity for people to know more about the phenomenon. They usually stream documentaries on dub or electronic music before the beginning of the session itself.

2.3. Jah Order Sound System

Jah Order sound system was built in 2017 with the help of Kaze and is operated by the sound engineer Tibi Tănase, which has been one of the youngest selectors in the reggae/dub scene. He also produces reggae music and collaborates with musicians around the world. He started a series of off-grid dub sessions called Dub Farm somewhere near the city of Ploiești, on an actual farm. The space itself is closer to the *Rastafari ital* values than the urban venues hosting other sound system sessions. On the other hand, it seems like the ideal way of fully exploring one sound system without the limits imposed by the sound policies within urban areas.

3. Dancehall influences in Romania - manele music

In Romania there is not such a thing as full-fledged dancehall culture, only isolated songs with dancehall grooves, but with no intention of further exploring the Jamaican culture. That being said, there are two different sectors where you can see the influence of dancehall in Romania: street dance and one of the urban genres of music developed in Romania, called manele.

3.1. Street dance, night life and rude boy elements

Night life in Romania, especially in the capital city, is known for being effervescent. Among the hundreds of weekly club parties, there are some events where dancehall music cannot be skipped: afro and reggae parties. One of them is the series of sessions by Blazing Vibez, launched in 2010. Although they mix both reggae and dancehall, it was one of the main venues where people could experience this type of sonic atmosphere during a party. There, the music is mostly based on Jamaican contemporary dancehall and there are usually professional dancers passionate about the culture and the choreography around it. It is true that they do not have the visceral sexuality promoted by today's dancehall videos, but rather an old school, middle school approach with a hint of the more sexual dancehall queen style. This, however, is one side of the dancehall influence in Romania and it usually attracts students or people already connected with the reggae community.

There is another type of music where you find strong dancehall influences, although I am certain that most people doing and listening to this music are clueless to Jamaican culture and it is a mystery how it managed to contour itself in a way not dissimilar to that of dancehall. The genre is called manele and here you can find an array of eroticism ranging from the sexual to the pornographic, unlike in the street dance community. At first, the manele genre was characterized by some musical characteristics inspired from Turkish and Balkan music, it was an urban party music mainly sung by members of the Roma community. With time, it became associated with crime, lack of education and people developed a feeling of repulsion towards the music and the values it promoted. Its status has been constantly changing together with the dynamics in the Romanian society.

With time, the original traits, musically speaking, dissolved and blended with sonorities of dancehall or reggaeton. The visuals, also, are very similar with the ones in Jamaican slackness videos. One of the possible explanations of this rather surprising association of two cultural groups that are a far cry from one another is that manele musicians found in Jamaican dancehall archetypes similar to them: people on the fringes of society, who are pushed by the lack of opportunities into a life of crime and would not

have seen the light at the end of the tunnel but for the music they do. One of the producers in this genre, Costi Ioniță, just released several pieces with famous Jamaican dancehall artists like Shaggy, Sean Paul and Spice.

This article does not aim at exhausting the topic of Jamaican influences in local music, but rather to educate people on the phenomena emerging in Romanian underground music. There is much more to be said about the people doing this music and about the other actors in the community. Although I initially planned my paper from a more musicological perspective, it has eventually turned, into a radiography of the ways Jamaican culture managed to penetrate several aspects of urban arts in my country.

Discography

» East Roots. (2012). From the East to the West. Independent label.

» El Negro. (2000). Reggaesonic. Cat Music.

» El Negro. (2001). Reggae Bum Bum. Cat Music.

» El Negro. (2003). Fuga-n Jamaica. RBA.

» El Negro. (2008). Antipanica. A&A Records.

» Pacha Man. (1998). Globul de cristal. Hobby Music.

» Pacha Man. (2003). Drumul către Rastafari. Nova Music Entertainment, Rebel Music.

» Paraziții. (1995). Poezii pentru pereți. Amma.

» Valeriu Sterian și Compania de Sunet (1992). S-a votat Codul Penal. Eurostar.

» Timpuri noi (1995). De regiune superior. Vivo.

» Timpuri noi (1998). Basca abundenței. MediaPro Music.

2.5.
A MEADOW FULL OF ANTS. A SUBCULTURAL FIELD APPROACH TO THE ITALIAN BLACK METAL SCENE

Valeria Marina Borodi[32] & Roberto Carradore[33]

✕ Abstract

Black metal is an extreme metal subgenre that has existed in Italy since the late 1980s. Since then, several attempts to construct a scene were made, without success. Therefore, because of its fragility and ephemerality, it represents a unicum in the wider metal scene. In this contribution, we aim to look at the Italian scene, combining Straw's theoretical perspective and conceptual tools of Bourdieu's field analysis, thus conceiving it as a subcultural field where musical practices are interpenetrated with aesthetic and social practices. Combining documentary analysis of bands, labels, and bottom-up support activities, with in-depth interviews to privileged witnesses, our purpose is to understand if the Italian Black Metal scene has the criteria spotted in the sociological literature of music scenes and, if so, how this concept fits the characterization of this national and musical specificity.

Keywords: music scene, black metal, field analysis, subcultural field approach, DIY.

1. Introduction

Black metal is an extreme subgenre of heavy metal music that came of age, as it is conceived today, in the early 1990s in Scandinavia. Due to a series of crimes committed by musicians, the genre became famous in many countries, where specific identities between tradition and innovation were produced, generating different music scenes. In Italy, black metal reached its peak - both on the side of production and consumption - during the 1990s and a first attempt of constructing a scene was made, without success. A second attempt was made between 2005 and 2008 with the Black Metal Invitta Armata association. Since then, at least apparently, there have been no more attempts to construct a scene. Therefore, our study aims to analyse the peculiarity of the Italian context and to understand what are the elements that allow a scene to be considered as such and what are the self-representations within the Italian Black Metal (IBM) scene. We adopted the concept of "music scene" in the perspective of Bourdieu's field analysis and looked at the IBM as a "subcultural field", namely a symbolic space of exchange which possesses a certain degree of autonomy, coherence and organisation over time, and where musical practices are interpenetrated with aesthetic and social practices. Since in the Italian sociological literature this perspective of analysis has never been adopted to study black metal, we wanted to start filling this gap.

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2. A brief history of black metal

2.1. First wave of black metal

It is common opinion to trace the origins of black metal at the beginning of the 1970s, with Black Sabbath's self-titled debut album, recorded in 1969 and released on 13th of February 1970, which constitutes the year zero for the birth of heavy metal and arguably of black metal itself. Thanks to its dark atmospheres, satanic and anti-Christian imagery, and lyrics, it had a primary influence on black metal, as much as Motorhead's aggressive rhythm and volume and KISS and Misfits' punk outfits. Although the first seeds of black metal were sown during the 1970s, it is only during the early 1980s that the so-called "First Wave of Black Metal"[34] began to take shape. Bands such as Venom (UK), Bathory (Sweden), Mercyful Fate (Denmark), Hellhammer and Celtic Frost (Switzerland) established some features of the black metal canon. The first two Venom's albums "Welcome to Hell" (1981) and "Black Metal" (1982) – which also gave the name to the genre –, played the key role in defining the sound of black metal but also extreme metal in general: the music was chaotic both on the production and playing sides, and lyrics were explicitly imbued with anti-Christianity and occultism topics like never before. Furthermore, Venom's members also adopted pseudonyms, a practice that became common among black metal musicians. Although these bands had established a prototype for the genre, they are musically distinct from what is currently referred to as black metal, since they played music that was in the vein of thrash, speed, or death metal style with only slight changes (e.g., lo-fi productions and satanic imagery). Summing up, in the words of Dayal Patterson (2013: 5):

> *The first wave was a very small collection of bands who pushed metal toward harsher territories in both sound and imagery [...]. Nonetheless, while it's a mistake to consider these bands exclusively part of the black metal genre, the work of these pioneers undoubtedly laid the foundations for the cult.*

Involving several bands in countries around the world, the "first wave" can be considered as a transition out of the common ground of heavy metal toward constructing a new and more identifiable genre, with stronger national embeddedness.

2.2. True Norwegian black metal

In the early 1990s, a slew of Norwegian bands pushed their extreme metal into more distinct musical territory, refusing the commercial logic of mainstream death metal bands and labels. Indeed, the reaction against the worldwide success of bands such as Slayer, Sepultura, and Cannibal Corpse, was musical, aesthetic, and ideological. The main features of the crystallisation of black metal as an independent genre were the presence of violent riffs played in tremolo picking, blast beats and screaming voices. In the intentions of the founders, black metal had to be the most extreme music and aesthetics. As Eugene Thacker argues, indeed, "black metal is black because it is [...] the most extreme form of metal, both in its attitude and in its musical form" (Thacker, 2011: 179).

In the attempt of constructing a black metal scene, it was crucial the role of the Helvete ("Hell" in Norwegian), an independent record store in Oslo owned by Euronymus, leader of the band Mayhem. The store and the record label, Deathlike Silence, which operated in its basement, served as a hub and focal point of inspiration for bands such as Emperor and Burzum. Together, they operated a stylistic turning point in the genre and in its imagery which rapidly became known as a "scene": the so-called "True Norwegian Black Metal". Some of the participants in the black metal movement were involved in crimes, such as "a series of church burnings, murders, and suicides [which] focused world attention toward Norway" (Wallin et al., 2017: 2).

The most emblematic event was the killing of Euronymus by Varg Vikernes (behind the one-man band Burzum). The murder was also linked to the burning of several churches in Norway and to another

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34 The distinction between "first" and "second wave" of black metal is retrospective and aims to emphasise continuity and discontinuity in the foundation of black metal in the early 1990s.

murder of a homosexual person by Bard "Faust" Eithun (a member of Emperor). As Kahn-Harris states, these events "brought a certain notoriety to black metal and led to features in the non-metal media throughout the world" (2004: 97). What characterised this scene was

> *a spectacular, serious and uncompromisingly satanic vision of metal that attempted to merge music and practice as an expression of an 'essential' identity. Under the slogan 'No fun, no mosh, no trends, no core', a tightknit scene developed in Norway that attempted to be 'genuinely' satanic and evil. The scene developed a mythology in which Satanism was constructed as part of a pagan history of resistance to the conquest of Christianity (Kahn-Harris, 2004: 99).

More precisely, Norwegian Black Metal scene generated a real ideology that has extended beyond the music genre (Zebub, 2007), which pillar was - besides antagonism toward organised religion and affinity toward Satanism, already mentioned - attempts to remove "mundanity"[35] from the scene through transgression and "transcendent violence" (Phillipov, 2011).

Public attention and international resonance to what the black metallers were doing, sped up the international diffusion of this musical innovation, maintaining at the same time a strong local and specific identity. A real "meadow full of ants", as one of our interviewees affirmed, has begun to take shape, stretched between innovation and tradition - a balance that can be considered a characteristic of national music scenes.

3. Theoretical and methodological framework

The concept of "scene" finds its genealogy in neo-Weberian microsociology and, in particular, with John Irwin (1977; 1997 [1970]), who in the early 1970s was the first sociologist to choose to focus on this concept, elaborating it explicitly as a system of action where "persons in interaction are involved in comparing, sharing, negotiating and imparting cultural patterns", by means of which they carry "the cultural component into consistent relationship and maintain boundaries around the system" (Irwin, 1997[1970]: 68). Irwin's merit was to definitively introduce this concept within the sociology of leisure in relation to cultural creativity and social stability within a flexible urban society. A scene is a semi-structured community that implies norms, rules, and places which can be understood as general instructions allowing a certain degree of freedom and creativity. Therefore, the concept of scene can be applied both to particular social events that can take place in each context and moment - in this case the scene "has a definite location and is transitory" (Irwin, 1997[1970]: 67) - and to a more permanent lifestyle.

Besides the importance of this first contribution, the concept of scene is used today in the field of popular music studies, offering "the possibility of examining musical life in its myriad forms, both production- and consumption-orientated, and the various, often locally specific ways in which these cross-cut each other" (Bennett, 2004: 226). In particular, Will Straw (1991) defines music scenes as supra-local cultural spaces encompassing a wide range of different musical practices. In this sense, as Straw affirms, a scene "destroys stable traditional continuities and at the same time cosmopolitises and relativises them" (as cited in Kozorog and Stanojević, 2013: 361). The author also adopts the concept of "field" conceptualised by Pierre Bourdieu (1979) to describe spaces of symbolic circulation in which musical practices interpenetrate with other artistic, economic, political and social practices recognized within and from the outside as endowed with a certain degree of coherence and organisation. The set of these internal practices takes place in a broader external context that can influence the process of differentiation according to trajectories of change and embedded cross-fertilization. The concept of field also suggests "those procedures through which principles of validation and means of accommodating change operate within particular cultural spaces so as to perpetuate their boundaries" (Straw, 1991: 374). According to the author,

> *it may be argued that the complex and contradictory quality of cultural texts [...] has prevented neither their circulation within societies nor their alignment with particular population groups and cultural

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35 Kahn-Harris describes scenes as often being oriented toward the "logic of mundanity" (2007: 59), where scenic practices involve members mostly attempting to "experience 'everydayness' in all its regularity and unexceptionality within the scene itself" (Kahn-Harris, 2007: 59).

spaces from following regularized and relatively stable patterns. If this predictability is the result of semantic or ideological contradictions within these texts usually being resolved in favour of one set of meanings over others, then an analysis of these more general patterns, rather than of the conflicts which unfailingly produce them, may have a provisional usefulness at least (Straw, 1991: 374).

Thus, Straw shows a "bourdieusian" concern for the processes of legitimization and competition for cultural prestige. In particular, he conceives the scene as a subcultural field within which there are forms of power and domination, institutions, hierarchies, tacit and explicit rules, which determine its organisation, boundaries, and habitus - that is, that set of perceptual and cognitive schemes that are shaped by experience and that, internalised, orient the action.

In the present research we follow this theoretical approach of music scene, framing the Italian Black Metal scene as a subcultural field, focusing on the features and conditions that allow to observe the existence of a scene.

In particular, the research questions that have oriented our study are:

✖ Does the Italian Black Metal scene have the criteria spotted in the sociological literature to identify music scenes? If so, how does the concept of scene fit the characterization of Italian black metal in its national specificity?

✖ What are the theoretical consequences of the Italian Black Metal scene on the concept of scene in the subcultural field approach?

In order to answer these questions, we combined in-depth interviews, conducted between May and July 2021, with desk research, performed from February 2021 to March 2022. As for the first ones, we interviewed four privileged witnesses, including three men and one woman, all of them under 40. The interviews lasted two and a half hours on average. For them, we relied on a Telegram community born in 2016, which counts just over 100 members and a strong Italian character. The interviewees are privileged witnesses as each of them embodies one or more of the four key-roles that we have identified to describe the activities that are carried out within the subcultural field. One of the interviewees has a YouTube channel called "The Italian Black Metal Museum"[36], within which he deals with collecting and making available Italian black metal music productions, often underground and DIY. He is what we call a "curator", since he is responsible for handing down the memory of these bands and music and putting the Italian peculiarity at the centre of attention. A second one has a Facebook page ("The Black Chalice"[37]) on which he conducts live streamings and interviews with important exponents of Italian and international black metal. He recently decided to create a black and white fanzine, in full DIY spirit, dedicated to underground black metal from all over the world. For these reasons we call him a "supporter". The other two key-roles that we have identified are the listener and the musician. What is peculiar to underline is that all respondents embody not just one, but multiple roles, suggesting that there are several belonging levels to a scene, and, for this reason, it is necessary to dissect the self-representations of it in its myriad forms of participation. Indeed, the classification of key-roles must be used as an analytical tool.

Finally, for a more accurate analysis, we integrated the interviews with desk research starting from the suggestions provided by the interviewees on labels, bands, and bottom-up support activities (e.g., fanzines), and, additionally, with other references on black metal - e.g., black metal theory symposia "Hideous Gnosis" (Masciandaro, 2010) and "Mors Mystica" (Daniel, Connole & Masciandaro, 2015). All the data gathered has been analysed from a qualitative perspective, emphasising the common views and values on the Italian scene, and identifying the most relevant latent dimensions and inner controversies which characterised the current underground situation and the structural challenges in the establishment of a solid and acknowledged Italian scene. The research presented here is in its pilot phase and all the results shared in this contribution must be considered as preliminary for a next and larger phase of data collection and analysis.

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36 https://www.youtube.com/c/MuseoDelBlackMetalItaliano (last visit on 30 October 2022).

37 https://www.facebook.com/ilcalicenero (last visit on 30 October 2022).

4. Italian black metal scene: preliminary results

4.1. Genesis and development of black metal in Italy

In Italy, black metal has existed since the late 1980s. In a very common ex-post interpretation, "Neurodeliri" (1988) by Bulldozer is considered the very first Italian black metal album. However, IBM was initially strongly linked to the Scandinavian scene, reminiscent of both its musical style and iconography. Mortuary Drape and Necromass, two of the Italian prime movers, are example of the reinterpretation of the Scandinavian message, "using both its grammar and symbolic/colloquial apparatus" (Frangioni et al., 2018: 72). Only the one-man project Hesperia (also member of the black metal band Sulphuria), together with Funeral Oration, Inchiuvatu and Aborym, among others, in the 1990s pushed the genre in a partially innovative direction. These bands embraced a "back to the roots" centred on Italian culture and history and, for this reason, embodied in references to Roman and pre-Roman mythology, to the use of Italian and Latin lyrics, but also around the claim of a so-called "Italic spirit"[38]. These aspects are congruent with some values they wanted to promote nationalism, misanthropy, fascism, elitism, and anti-modernism are some of them. As Frangioni and colleagues argue, in fact, "this serves as a good example of an auto-reflexive choice to claim the adherence to a cultural background" (2018: 74). Moreover, the presence of shared values gave IBM of the 1990s the opportunity to feel and self-represent itself as a scene. However, precisely in the years of its boom - between 1993 and 1994, when it had become a genre of the masses - IBM entered decline. "The black flamed weakened, like a fire suffocated by too much wood", because of "jealousy, battles among have-nots, small circles in the bigger cities, [which] started forcing the public about the clubs to go, what to wear, what to read, how to act […] in perpetual competition rather than cooperation"[39].

An attempt to rebuild a scene was made by Black Metal Invitta Armata, an association active between 2005 and 2008 which brought several bands and musicians together around a common musical style and precise ideological coordinates, this time explicitly centred on fascism and its imagery, which "has been expressed in a wide range of shades and with different degrees of belief" (Frangioni et al., 2018). The band Spite Extreme Wing dedicated the album "Non Dvcor, Dvco!" (2004) to the Endeavour of Fiume (*Impresa di Fiume*), led by Gabriele D'Annunzio between 1919 and 1920. Another example is Frangar's album "Totalitarian War" (2007) which exalted World War I and glorified the elite assault troop Arditi. What went wrong this time, using the words of Frangioni and colleagues, was

that they lack explicit geographic (and political) references and consequently [they] lack of a relationship with the present. As if in their argumentation the past was seen from the distant perspective of the historian rather than reinterpreted through the lens of the activist who tries to provide interpretative keys for the present by forming links to a mythical past (Franioni et al., 2018: 81)

Thus, IBM represents a unicum in the wider metal scene since its fragility and ephemerality (both during the 1990s and the 2000s). But what we think is of particular interest is that after 2008, apparently, there were no other attempts to rebuild a black metal scene. In particular, we wanted to investigate the reasons behind this absence through a "scene perspective", which means adopting the concept of scene as a referent with the aim of studying the elements that allow a scene to exist and be considered as such.

4.2. Field analysis of IBM as a subcultural field

4.2.1. Key-roles and activities

In the research, we have adopted some conceptual tools of Bourdieu's field theory in order to orient the

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38 It is important to highlight the difference between the terms "Italian" and "Italic". In fact, while the first is a geographical and political referent, the second is a cultural concept, which refers to pre-Roman Italy.

39 Museo del Black Metal Italiano, "Le origini del black metal in Italia, parte II" https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=C3P2gTToZ-g (last visit on 30 October 2022).

investigation on the key-roles and the activities carried out by the people engaged in the subcultural field's life. Their activities and self-representations are socially performed and exchanged and depend on a set of resources (capitals) related to a specific habitus. The concept of habitus is a generating and unifying principle that retranslates the intrinsic and relational characteristics of a position in a unitary lifestyle, that is, into a unitary set of choices - of people, of goods, of practices (Bourdieu, 1994).

We have identified four main key-roles: listener, musician, supporter and curator. The listener is the one who benefits from cultural products linked to the music genre and therefore possesses *cultural capital* in the objectified form (e.g., collections of LPs, CDs, books, fanzines, and other merchandising) but also social capital in terms of a community of listeners, and attendees to concerts and thematic festivals. The specific feature of the musician consists of the *practical knowledge* of the genre, such as the ability and skills in playing instruments or singing style. The supporter not only is involved in buying records and going to concerts but is deeply aware of its role in the circulation of music knowledge and invests his/her own personal *economic capital* for giving support to emerging bands, organising concerts, distributing and producing demos/albums and merchandising. In all these activities he/she does networking to enlarge and enforce the music scene as a social field. Finally, the curator (Hogan, 2010) is a special figure who takes care of the cultural productions in terms of innovation and tradition, identity and heritage of the bands and the scene itself: essentially, he/she deals with the construction of the representation of the *subcultural capital* within and outside the subcultural field.

Especially in the case of original and underground music genres, such as black metal, all these capitals must be analysed at the subcultural level, detecting the interests, symbolic and material, and the points of view that unfold in the field and on which the organisation of the field itself depends. For this reason, it is crucial to implement our model with the concept of *subcultural capital* as a form of symbolic capital, objectified and incorporated through social knowledge and practices and based on prestige and recognition. At a macro-level it operates as a general mechanism of inclusion and exclusion, defining boundaries, and establishing identities and differences inside and outside the field. Therefore, defining a black metal subcultural capital as the core of a black metal scene is the first step towards the characterization of the IBM scene. Exploring and extrapolating norms and values in the literature and deepening them in the interviews, we will now discuss the possibility of applying the concept of scene to IBM focusing on the following dimensions: audience, aesthetics, infrastructures, and networks.

4.2.2. Audience and aesthetics

The audience is an important element since without it there could be no scene. But the interesting result of our interviews is that the audience of black metal is always described in relation to the values shared within it. In this regard, a respondent said that being a *blackster* (black metal listener) implies

> *a kind of unwritten social code of behaviour: [...] the real 'true' doesn't have to show too many emotions at a concert; [...] you're not true if you don't listen only to black metal; [...] as for the Italian scene, to be 'true' you must have political ideas of a certain kind, so maybe more sympathisers with the right, whether they are fascists rather than national socialists (Giulia, listener).*

The use of the phrase "unwritten social code", in fact, implies that there are rules and norms, together with values and beliefs, which have become implicit and that allow a blackster to self-represent him/herself and be considered as belonging to the black metal scene. Another important term is "true", which is related to the first one and which also is defined in opposition to the term "poser"[40]. In fact, there are boundaries not only between the scene and the outside but also between the members of the scene. This is a very common sociological phenomenon of *schismogenesis*, typical of a close social system (Bateson, 1935; see Abbott, 2001, for the concept of "fractal distinction" in the scientific field). In the common knowledge, a blackster to be "true" must have and perform political ideas sympathising with fascim and national socialism. The blackster must show few emotions, and those emotions must be negative: "Black metal is linked with barbed wire to very negative sensations, both on an emotional level and on an esoteric level and on a cultural level" (Roberto, curator). This negativity is also pushed to

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40 A poser is someone who pretends to be a part of a culture or of a genre just to fit in and to impress other people.

the limit, somehow it becomes radical: "Black metal, for me, is a lifestyle, [...] is something out of control" (Il Cattivo Maestro, supporter). This idea often comes back with the concept of "extreme", declined not only in philosophical terms (decadence, cosmic pessimism, etc.) but also understood as physical evil: "They [Leftovers band] are truly the total extreme, even in cutting oneself, self-mutilating on your body. [...] That is total extreme, really, to exhaustion" (Il Cattivo Maestro). The same sympathy for fascism and national socialism could be read not in ideological terms, but as a pure need to manifest hate and evil, and as a search for extremism. Thus, in IBM there is not only a political or a social dimension, but also a more personal and intimate dimension, both emotional and physical.

Linked to this, there is a discourse about the aesthetic dimension of black metal. Several bands (see, for example, Immortal, Mayhem, Gorgoroth and Dimmu Borgir) over the years defined a canon with the result that the black metaller is usually represented, among other features, as dressed in black, leather and studs, with long tousled hair and corpse paint. But there is also an aspect linked to the imagery of black metal: "There is no longer any line of light, there is no sun, there is no moon. There is nothing. The dark. Silence" (Il Cattivo Maestro). And also:

> *I was very passionate about the first three Cradle of Filth albums, because [...] we are talking about a more symphonic, melodic black metal - let's say - because of all that dark, fantasy imagery, which can also be traced back to Gothic literature. [...] In addition, I was very fond of Immortal, a bit for their alternative and winter world with all its mythology and stories (Fabio, musician).

These aspects mentioned by the two interviewees bring us back to the intimate dimension of black metal, which therefore is expressed also in personal interests and affiliations, and which also informs us on the cultural goods (i.e., *cultural capital*) that are shared within the scene.

4.2.3. Networks and infrastructures

In the previous sections, we have focused on the content of the black metal subculture, highlighting some elements which characterise the Italian specificity. Negativity and being extreme are considered the core of the audience experience. These values are declined into specific topics taken from national history, mythology, occultism, and religion. This set of experimental and aesthetical references acts in the symbolic exchanges at the subcultural level, enabling and disabling the constitution of a national music scene. In order to address this level, it is necessary to pay attention to the structural level of the subcultural field, looking at how its "backbone" takes shape in terms of networks and infrastructures. Networks in this context refer to bridging and bonding (Wilks, 2011) relations and mutual help between those involved in the subcultural field, thus not only between producers and consumers of the music genre, but also other insiders (such as owners of premises, and events organisers). Infrastructures refer to the record producing and distributing system, as well as to the concert promoting and venue systems (Weinstein, 2000). From the interviews emerged that these are two critical points, on which IBM is disconnected from the definitions of scene in the sociological literature. In relation to these points, it emerges also what interviewees define as scene - which is everything IBM is not. In fact:

> *When it comes to the scene... it means more a network of contacts, so group X knows group Y, which knows in turn group Z and therefore makes a support network [...] to create dates, concerts, then situations, aggregation points in general for fans of a certain music genre (Giulia).
> *Bands, in my opinion, to create a scene, to create a strong coalition, sharing, must help each other (Il Cattivo Maestro).

Thus, according to our interviewees, a scene is a support network of contacts based on coalitions and sharing. An IBM scene doesn't exist since "there is no cohesion or collaboration between people that share a passion for the same music genre" (Giulia). Two other reasons behind the absence of a scene are that "there is no global vision" (Fabio) and, secondly, that "the Italians have continued to cheerfully wage war for thirty years now" (Roberto), because of economic interests, different political ideas, games of power, and competition.

The lack of support networks has a negative effect on the infrastructures of the scene, that is, the complex of elements that constitute the support ground for the activities carried out within the subcultural field. In fact, their building relies on networks between insiders. At the same time, how is it possible to create bonds and relationships in the absence of infrastructures? Therefore, a double negative effect emerges both on the possibilities of networking and on the construction of infrastructures. For example, a deficiency that is underlined by the interviewees concerns the spaces of encounter and aggregation, such as concert venues and thematic festivals.

> *In Italy there are no great points of aggregation. There is no place as aggregation point, at least currently. […] There are no venues which can possibly bring together a scene at the national level. There are small local realities, but they struggle to hold on (Fabio).

Also, distribution houses, record labels, magazines, and so on, are services around which several activities and resources unfold. Services without infrastructures and infrastructures without services are unlikely to exist.

> *Scene means not only having many bands, but also having distro, labels, magazines, which come from the same place. You create a scene not only with the bands, but also with the insiders. Bands without insiders and insiders without bands don't go anywhere (Il Cattivo Maestro).

Thus, regarding the Italian case, all the respondents affirm there is a lack of these infrastructures, which is sometimes attributed to a mental closure and a lack of culture on the part of those who work in the cultural and artistic sector. There is also a lack of economic resources, or, instead, there is an improper use of money - aimed more at the mainstream, than at supporting small underground realities. More thoroughly, the reasons for this absence should be sought in the cultural, social and economic fabric of Italy.

5. Conclusions

The goal of this research is not to verify whether or not an IBM scene exists, but if IBM reflects the key elements identified in the literature to describe a music scene. The history of the development and spread of the genre in the Italian context presents some attempts for the construction of a real national scene, thematically homogeneous and geographically organised. In the current situation, we detected several activities performed by what we called the key-roles and exchanges of resources typical of the subcultural field, but in a context with a lack of organisation at the infrastructure and support network levels. This fact makes it hard to consider the IBM scene within the theoretical conceptualization found in the sociological literature. Nevertheless, the word "scene" is strongly persistent and recurrent in the discourses both in the interviews and in the material examined. From the inner perspective, "IBM scene" is used as a *negative reference* that acts in the self-representations of the field. If there is no IBM scene, there is a need to build it, and all the effort spent by the key-roles is oriented toward this purpose. The reasoning about the historical and contingent forces that hinder the realisation of an IBM scene entails both internal (e.g., competition attitude fostered by the value of being true and evil) and external factors (e.g., lack of venues for emerging underground extreme metal bands). Beyond all these criticalities, the concept of scene acts both in the local identification of the black metal community (positioning individuals, bands and projects inside the field), and in its moral anchoring (establishing boundaries and conflicts, identities and differences). Compared to the sociological concept of music scene, the IBM scene expresses more the very *content* rather than its solid *form*. In other words, the creative energy and unique enthusiasm in the building phase, even if it does not assume a solidity in the long run, catalyses the attention of the few who invest economic and social capital in it. Ultimately, this unstable and precarious situation of the IBM scene can be considered as a guarantee of authenticity, according to the extreme and anti-commercial values of the black metal music movement in its early foundation back in the 1990s.

6. Perspectives

The preliminary results collected so far allow us to highlight the specificity of an IBM scene and to discuss its implications for the concept of music scene in general. Due to the small number of interviews conducted it is not possible to draw all the main features of the IBM scene. Nevertheless, our privileged witnesses have helped us to approach this unexplored field of research and to open new paths and issues for the next phase of the research. In particular, in the interviews emerged the role of a regional and sub-regional organisation of the black metal scene (e.g., Sardinian Black Metal scene). Also, the role of the Internet in the transformation of musical fruition is huge and affects the theoretical meaning of music scene. Compared to the nascent phase of an IBM scene in the past, the present situation and future perspective are strongly influenced by the positive role of the digital networking, which may help in the building of a moral community, bypassing the "offline" obstacles. In conclusion, the present research invites to review the concept of scene *in the light* of digital innovation, but also *in the shade* of subcultural realities where an invisible multitude of small actors cultivates and animates an unfinished extreme metal scene, like in a *meadow of ants*.

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CRITICAL PEDAGOGY, RESISTANCE, ALTERNATIVE CULTURES, AND SUSTAINABILITY

3.1. POP PEDAGOGY AND ADOLESCENCE

Massimiliano Stramaglia[41]

✖ Abstract

Pop pedagogy is an approach used for analysing media content and devising new reading keys to develop a critical spirit and to provide tools, which help defusing the manipulation operated by current forms of communication. Pop pedagogy draws on art, sociology, psychoanalysis, linguistics, and semiotics. It is a transdisciplinary pedagogy. Madonna owes a great part of her success to her name: in America, researchers tried to explain how "the game of the name" was the way Madonna has always attracted public attention, calling herself Madonna (after her mother, Madonna, who died when Madonna was five), but posing as a "whore". The contrast is pleasant, it creates discussion, it makes what is uncanny plausible.

Keywords: pop pedagogy, pop culture, education, adolescence, Madonna.

1. A new kind of education... starting with Marilyn Monroe

Hearing from Luisa Santelli Beccegato, who claimed a "more aggressive pedagogy, towards the past, in psychological and psychoanalytic terms" (Beccegato, 1994: 306), in 2011, I published my first work about Pop pedagogy: *Love is music. Adolescents and the world of spectacle*, which combined the new frontiers of Italian Catholic Personalism with the psychoanalysis by Donald W. Winnicott (1960) and Gustavo Charmet (1995). Psychiatry and psychoanalysis also opened to issues concerning popular culture, such as Marilyn Monroe's case.

> **Perfectionism comes at a high price in terms of anxiety and depression; it paradoxically causes more anxiety in gifted people than in the less gifted ones, conditioning a wrong relationship with goal achievements and, ultimately, success. […] Many of Marilyn's pictures are perfect, she was herself in some films and some appearances, as many people testified. We wonder if she was ever aware of it since she has strenuously pursued her ideal of perfection right up to the end. It is also very likely that she fell into the trap of identifying herself with the perfection of her own image, which could not fail to disqualify everything else in her real life (Dell'Osso & Dalle Luche, 2016: 204-205)*

The psychotherapist Nicola Ghezzani also wrote about Marilyn Monroe and the:

> **moral masochism [...], a singular attitude, which punishes and characterises people with low self-esteem and obsessive, depressive self-doubt. […] On this regard, I would like to just recall a few of the great minds who committed suicide from depression: […] Marilyn Monroe, […] Guy Debord […] and a thousand of other people. Not to mention all those who died from indirect suicides (drug abuse, alcohol, marginal acquaintances, risky behaviour, etc.) and serious illness, which occurred because of antisocial behaviour and self-destructive tendencies. A real genocide of the best ones! (Ghezzani, 2021: 94-95)*

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At the beginning of his career, Edgar Morin also wrote a book about Hollywood Stars with a specific section devoted to Marilyn Monroe. According to the Sociologist, the actress represented:

> *the vanity of all the success; beneath the shell of the superstar, the unarmed innocence of the dressmaker; the tragedy of childhood and adolescence, which success, friendship and love could not overcome; behind glory, loneliness; the character of an ill-loved though much-loved woman; fun which has become the enemy of happiness; emptiness beneath intensity; the discomfort of false existence; unrealised aspirations; behind the most extraordinary smile, death (Morin, 1995: 189)

Regarding the crystallised image of the actress and the symbolic death, which accompanies every form of hypostatisation, Pierluigi Malavasi described Andy Warhol's poetics also referring to the famous work portraying Marilyn Monroe: beauty and death merge to the point that one becomes the guarantee of the other.

> *Pedagogical reflection can be prompted to some extent by the cultural mediation elaborated by Warhol, who makes use of imagination and technological actuality to carry out a trenchant critique about what is banal in the dynamics of social life. The adoption of the silkscreen technique allows the artist to replicate the images, which he elects as myths of his time's society within the same painting several times […]. The famous portraits with Marilyn Monroe fully fit into this matter. The actress' image, which is replicated within the canvas, loses all its communicative referentiality, changing it into an abstract and purely decorative module. The detail of the lips, which are frozen in a sensual smile revealing the crown of her teeth, changes Monroe's loveliness into a macabre fetish (Malavasi, 2005: 25-26)

This is very interesting from an educational point of view. In this first paragraph, Marilyn Monroe's character has been discussed from psychiatric, psychological, psychotherapeutic, sociological, and pedagogical points of view. This means that Pop culture can be interpreted as a bridge among different disciplines: this is what Pop pedagogy deals with. Starting from what is common and popular, every single person can find his/her own parts of personal and collective memories, the society in which he/she lives and the indirect education, which passes through media messages, and he/she can find a *unitary sense* – which is different from the *common sense* – for himself/herself and for the other from himself/herself using all these components. Generational memories represent direct evidence of this phenomenon: memories belonging to a generation are created and contribute to the identity definition of an individual subject and the construction of the social group memory, becoming a *Sign of Belonging*. Who needs to belong to one group outside family at least, more than teenagers? The transition from common sense to unitary sense makes it possible along the course of growth, to arrive at a *Unitary Feeling*: what politics lacks today to cultivate and to preserve the precious good, which democracy represents and can represent for all the people. This is also pop pedagogy.

2. Psychosocial and educational aspects of adolescence

Adolescence represents a very delicate phase in the growth process. Teenagers inhabit a "middle ground" between childhood and adulthood: they are no longer children, but they are not adults either. Children seek the protection of adults as a reference. They need adult figures to be able to identify with them, to develop a sense of belonging, to understand the meaning of their existence. After childhood, pre-adolescence (from 11 to 13-14 years old) is an important stage, which properly prepares for adolescence (physiologically, between 13-14 and 18 years old).

In pre-adolescence, boys and girls must prepare themselves to abandon their childhood beliefs: for example, they understand that parents are not always right, they understand that they have organs, which have not only the functions of urination and evacuation, but also sexual and reproductive functions; they understand that there are friends, in addition to family, and one can do things with friends that one cannot do with family. Psychosexual development is very difficult: for example, discovering that one's penis ejaculates can produce feelings of guilt and shame, because it is the same organ, which releases urine: a 'dirty' liquid. It is the same for menarche and breast development in girls: in the former case, the

same organ, which produces urine and blood, can also produce sexual pleasure (even if one hopes she has not had sex at that age yet); in the latter case, breasts 'merely grow' but, at the same time, they cause pleasure at the very moment one involuntarily touches the nipples.

It is important to know that our Western civilisation has done whatever it takes to hide the 'dirtiness', which is supposedly inherent in the sexual sphere, through the transmutation of the (autoerotic or erotic) sexual act into a procreative act. Considering that one enters the adolescent phase at the end of pre-adolescence, it is precisely at that point that one discovers the pleasure of masturbation as a way of understanding whether one's body "works" or not. But from adolescence onwards, both female and male people also discover that it is a source of pleasure to masturbate several times, and it is pleasurable to have sex several times with no intention of becoming parents.

Biologically, human beings are led to have multiple sexual activities even with different people for the simple purpose of reproducing the species. Our culture connected sexual activity to procreative activity for two specific reasons: continence prevents the proliferation of sexually transmitted diseases; furthermore, investing all the adult resources within family preserves blood and, above all, the transmission of material goods, which pass from father to child or mother to child.

One comes out of the adolescent phase when one discovers how one's body works and makes it available to "others" (a male or female partner, depending on one's preference).

In the field of pedagogy, we share a very strong focus on *moral values* (Beccegato, 1991) and, therefore, on sexual ethics, even if it is not necessarily based on Christian inspiration.

This means that the intervention of culture on nature must not be restrictive or prescriptive, but relational and respectful for the value of each person and other people. In other words, everyone can choose his/her own sexuality while respecting the values he/she believes in and the values of other people: exploitation, manipulation, circumvention and instrumentalization are actions, which are always considered reprehensible. *Sex must be a form of expression and sharing*, not just a hedonistic action oriented towards giving free rein to one's impulsiveness. Sexual choices call into question the responsibility of the one who chooses.

But only the adult can make a choice: in the adolescent phase, everyone is searching and discovering himself/herself. It is all to be experienced: there are no real certainties. Certainties will never come, not even in adulthood. Anyway, unlike teenagers, adults have psychological and educational tools to manage the plans of risk and uncertainty.

3. The Age of Stardom: everybody is James Dean

During adolescence, discoveries lead to the emergence of socially acceptable forms of *exhibitionism*. Just as one discovers new forms of expression at a bodily level, in the same way one seeks no longer confirmation of these ways of expression from family, within whom one still feels like a child, but above all outside with teachers and friends, because one is also *seeking a place* in society. This search for confirmation and approval leads teenagers to expose or to overexpose themselves to receive compliments about their adequacy and, above all, their importance. While one tries to feel adequate and to receive love from one's parents (by also throwing a tantrum) as children, during adolescence one tries to make one's place in society and to receive love from people one considers important to make it less painful to give up one's role as a child. At that point, it is no longer enough to have parents, who remain fundamental and whose task is to accompany their child lovingly in the course, which will lead him/her to an adult identity, but it is necessary to become *The Protagonist of the Scene*. The peer group fulfils this task in the first instance: it is in the peer group that the teenager discovers who he/she is and how he/she could be in relation to other people, either by carving out a role for himself/herself or by suffering or accepting what other people hang around his/her neck. It is in the peer group that they make their first alliances, they confront each other, they fall in love, they share their experiences, and they reap their first socially marked sufferings and disappointments. Every teenager is divided between the desire to *Become Big* (or *Become a Big*) and important and the fear of growing up. Precisely for these reasons, adolescence is a risky age: many teenagers lose their way (Farina, 2022), they make existential experiments through dangerous behaviour

or by taking psychotropic substances, and they have disproportionate sexual behaviour because they have not learned to manage their bodies yet. To be successful, all the celebrities of the Star System have always had an adolescent behaviour, that is oppositional, transgressive, provocative, manipulative, sometimes violent.

This mainly arises from "recycling" the characteristics of the first real showman, who was specifically created to reflect a youthful style: James Dean. James Dean is the Hollywood matrix of all the male and female actors and pop stars, who have succeeded him (Stramaglia, 2021: 99-107). While Marilyn Monroe was created to please men and Marlon Brando to please women, James Dean was born to be a *Rebel Without a Cause* (1955) like all the teenagers. Adolescence itself was born as a social category in post-war America: before the economic *boom*, people went straight from childhood to youth. From James Dean onwards, the very young people had a voice of their own: the market for records, fashion and junk food grew; teenagers became a social category and acquired the right to a psychosocial moratorium: a period of truce while waiting for growing up. Today's teenagers are the offspring of James Dean and all his clones: not by chance, Gustavo Pietropolli Charmet defined them as fragile and swaggering (2009). Paraphrasing Luigi Pirandello (1921), in this paper we define them as *Artists in Search for Stardom*: *bloggers*, *influencers*, *gamers*, *DJs*, *sporty boys and girls*, who are absorbed in their world, such as Audrey Hepburn, or open to new challenges and adventures, such as Tom Cruise.

4. The Theory of affective myths

The Theory of Affective Myths was introduced in the field of psychoanalysis to effectively explain adolescent developmental dynamics. The theoretical matrix of reference goes back to Franco Fornari's thought, but the systematisation referred to in this paper is derived from two works by Gustavo Charmet and Elena Rosci (1995: 126-169) and Diego Miscioscia (1999: 85). This theory is very fascinating because it makes it possible to correlate: 1) adolescent development with the adolescent need to feel as protagonists; 2) prominence of Media Stars as a reflection of the adolescent growth (the specific target of many Stars). Affective Myths are unconscious or semi-conscious stratagems through which teenagers rework their previous (childhood) identity and "design" their own image as adults. What teenagers are faced with is a real showdown: in fact, adolescence calls into question the affective wounds of childhood (Galimberti, 2009: 12) and tries to heal them in some way. However, parents are no longer enough for teenagers: in fact, most of the childhood wounds come from the parents themselves, who cannot be both wounders and healers. The image of parents takes second place (to avoid further disappointments and because parents symbolise childhood) and teenagers tend to idealise themselves through other reference models: for example, by identifying themselves with the peer group, which seeks a "centre" (a symbolic place of recognition) through common hobbies (*football*, *dance*, *music*, *TV series*).

Showbiz personalities are available for more evolved identifications: that is why 1) teenagers imitate the Bigs and 2) the Bigs take on adolescent attitudes. The former finds what they would like to become in their idols; the latter find a very profitable market share in teenagers.

There are eight *Affective Myths*.

The Maternal Myth concerns nostalgia for their mother's tenderness, the protection which their mother's warmth gave their children, the idea of an "ethical world", which their mother's teachings had helped to create in her children's minds (e.g., Katy Perry's childish look). The Child Messiah Myth concerns children, to whom the healing task or mission was given by their parents; this elaboration robbed children of their childhood time and teenagers of their light-heartedness typical of that age (e.g., Marvel Superheroes). The Child Messiah negative version is the Myth of the Revengeful Angel: this is a child, who felt abandoned, betrayed by his own family, and tries hard to make up for what was or what he perceives was taken away from him (e.g., *trap* musicians, *bad boys* and *bad girls*). The Myth of the Omnipotent Masculinity concerns boys, who go into crisis because they want to prove to everyone that they are "already big" for reasons of insecurity. Therefore, they have a competitive, arrogant, bullying behaviour, especially towards their peers, but also towards teachers and adult figures (e.g., Wrestling Heroes). On the other side, the Myth of the Omnipotent Femininity concerns girls, who want to appear older than their age: they tell their friends that they had sexual experiences, which never took place, and they may go so far as to bully

shyer classmates or to take on sexually provocative attitudes (e.g., Britney Spears). The Myth of the Child Idol is experienced by children, who were excessively spoiled by their parents during childhood (the "golden children") and, as teenagers, they always want to be the centre of attention and to excel, entering a deep narcissistic crisis when this does not happen. They are very fragile teenagers because they had parents, who did not accept and love them for whom they were, but they projected their narcissistic ideals onto them. Therefore, as soon as these teenagers disappoint the expectations of their parents, teachers, or peer group, they feel inadequate and develop depressive attitudes (e.g., the character Neil from the film *Dead Poets Society*, 1989). The Myth of the Combined Parent concerns teenagers, who grew up with unstable parents, or with impromptu fits of rage, or they had an authoritarian mother and a submissive father. These are teenagers, who have a bisexual behaviour or a fluid sexuality, in which the boundary between male and female appears very indefinite, or non-existent (e.g., David Bowie). The Father's Myth has to do with the theme of control: these are very disciplined teenagers, who tend to control their emotions and instincts a lot: they do not generally masturbate and have an excessively rigid and sometimes caricatured sexual morality. These were children, who learned early to put their toys back into the box, children who had never been allowed to be messy and were forbidden to make mistakes. These children become teenagers, who have a compulsive need to tidy up their room: they are not given the permission to laugh, they deny superficial friendship relationships and tend towards exemplary but neurotic respect for the rules.

5. A new kind of education… ending with Madonna

Madonna's popularity conceals many aspects. Following Edgar Morin's footsteps regarding Marilyn Monroe[42] (see the first paragraph of this paper), it is possible to state that we can find in Madonna Ciccone:

> *the vanity of all the success; beneath the shell of the superstar, the aspiring singer; the tragedy of a childhood, which success could not overcome; behind the glory, the loneliness of a perfectionist; the character of a much-loved woman but an orphan girl; the fun which became the enemy of normality; frailty beneath intensity; the discomfort of a multi-existence; the unrealised aspiration to be an important actress (as she deserved); behind coldness, the pain of losing her mother (also see Morin, 1995: 189)*

Georges-Claude Guilbert described one of the main elements of Madonna's character very well: her *indefiniteness* (which commensurate with the market intention to create an "average consumer": neither male nor female, neither adult nor child, neither white nor black, neither rich nor poor, neither educated nor ignorant).

> *In some interviews, she practically seems brainless, she utters verbless sentences, she swears like a fishmonger, she lacks vocabulary and gives the impression that she has never read a book in her life. On such occasions, even her voice and accent are nasal and vulgar. On other ones, she expresses in a refined manner, she is distinguished, mature and posed. Her voice is changed, she speaks about psychoanalysis, art films, painters, intellectual writers in a very convincing way. At this point as in many other situations, I suppose we'll never know the truth – supposing there might be such a thing as a "true" Madonna. [...] In a post-modern context, it is part of the order of things (Guilbert, 2002: 3-4)*

In one of her most beautiful songs, Madonna details the family drama, which robbed her of her mother's love:

> *My mother died when I was five/And all I did was sit and cry/I cried and cried and cried all day/Until the neighbours went away/They couldn't take my loneliness/I couldn't take their phoniness/My father had to go to work/I used to think he was a jerk/I didn't know his heart was broken/And not another word was spoken/He became a shadow of/The father I was dreaming of/I made a vow/That I would never need another person ever/Turned my heart into a cage/A victim of a kind of rage (Madonna, Mother and Father, 2003:w/p).*

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42 "Though, Madonna had been fantasizing about fame and fortune for years and was more than happy to give the public the provocative double-meaning female image, which had been absent from the spotlight since Marilyn Monroe's days" (Randy Taraborrelli, 2001: 90).

The *phenomenology* outlined by all the biographies about Madonna is as follows: Madonna Louise Veronica Ciccone is orphaned at the age of 5; Madonna grows up without a real model of femininity and becomes a sort of "tomboy" in search for her own identity; this search leads her to distance from the Sanctity of Madonna and to behave like a prostitute; a sort of "Satanic Madonna" was finally born, embodying the contrast and the ambivalence, which characterise all her existence; the early "Cinderella Madonna" manages to discover her real identity and marries Fame.

Each of the eight affective myths corresponds to an "embodiment" (or apparition) for Madonna: the Maternal Myth (Madonna chose her own first name as an explosive artistic *nome de plume*, which does not evoke only the Mother of Christ, but also her mother's name, Madonna); the Child Messiah Myth (Madonna said that she wanted to become more famous than God; she was portrayed with a crown of thorns; she performed hanging on a cross); the Myth of the Revengeful Angel (time after time, Madonna destroys the previous musical "embodiments" as in the case of the video clip *Music*); the Myth of the Omnipotent Virility (Madonna often shows herself as a muscled man); the Myth of the Omnipotent Femininity (Madonna is often wearing the clothes of a *femme fatale*); the Myth of the Child Idol (Madonna usually plays with childish objects, such as Mickey Mouse ears – *Dear Jessie* –, the big white teddy bear from Erotica era, the candies from *Hard Candy* era); the Myth of the Combined Parent (Madonna has a bisexual behaviour); the Father's Myth (Madonna covers herself with muscles and discipline).

Above all, Madonna evokes the Good Mother, who sacrifices herself for her son, who loves mankind unconditionally. Madonna is partly Italian: her father is from Abruzzo. Her Italian-ness ("Italians do It Better", as reported on the T-shirt in Papa Don't Preach video) is ever more evident in her recent choices to spend her summer holidays in Italy: in Apulia, for years, and Sicily (2022).

While she is invited on The Tonight Show to introduce her latest hit collection (*Finally Enough Love*, released on August 19th, 2022), Madonna and the anchor-man Jimmy Fallon play with the letters of the alphabet (psychoanalytically, as Madonna says). Both must associate the first word, which comes to his or her mind, to each letter. Here comes M, and Jimmy Fallon says: "Madonna". Laughing, he pushes: "What am I supposed to do? Mum? Do I think another one? Mom? Mommy? Mommy?! Do you want me to fail and to talk about my childhood? I promised myself I wouldn't do it. Not here".

Madonna, a.k.a. "Mamma", a.k.a. the "Italian Mamma". A perfect combination of her deep Italian roots (her father Silvio Ciccone) and the unconditional love for her mother (Madonna Louise Fortin).

An *exemplary daughter*, despite (false) appearance.

6. Conclusion

As Michele Corsi writes: "Popular pedagogy can fulfill this task. Supported by academic pedagogy (I do not consciously use the term: 'scientific', because both pedagogies, the popular and the academic ones, have the right and the duty to define themselves scientific); the popular one must instrumentally allow society to finally *manage*" (2003: 10). Indeed, the intent of this paper has been to demonstrate how Pop culture and Academic Knowledge could come together to pursue the same goals. Even mainstream characters conceal educational potential: for example, Marilyn Monroe can be the pretext to work on the themes of fatherlessness and secondary needs educationally, while James Dean can be "used" to understand the sense of rebellion, which is typical of youth, and Madonna is used to deal with the orphanhood of a mother and primary needs. The most important aspect emerging from this paper is that *public figures are symbols of the common unconscious or the popular soul*: for example, excluding Netflix Series from the contemporary youth imaginary means missing a significant opportunity to act educationally, forgetting adolescent symbols and signs of belonging and identification. Only through a good mix of pedagogical, psychological, sociological, and psychiatric research, it will be possible to reunite the plan of reality with the one of *imagination*: for example, Madonna is not just an Icon, but a Collective Dream (Turner, 1993). After all, what we dream with our brain is what we believe is possible in our hearts.

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3.2. STREET ART AS A FORM OF SOCIO-EDUCATIONAL INTERVENTION

Tommaso Farina[43]

✕ Abstract

This paper aims to highlight the role of street art as a peculiar type of cultural heritage, through which social exclusion can be reduced. The examined case study is Artisti in Piazza – International Festival of Performing Arts, hosted since 1997 by the Italian town of Pennabilli. This project leverages the promotion and development of the territory through cultural and artistic production and represents a unique event that integrates playful and cultural aspects, oriented towards authentic educational actions. These actions are carried out to foster equal and widespread opportunities for access, participation, and representation, without creating cultural boundaries that generate or legitimize inequalities, within communities and between individuals.

Keywords: cultural heritage, education, street art, buskers, territory.

1. Cultural heritage as a kind of link between street art and education

The methodological premise from which we wanted to start is that while, in general, street art refers to the static visual art form of graffiti, graffiti scenes or the guerrilla art movement, here, however, we use street art as an "umbrella term" to also include street performance, street theater and busking as art forms and cultural heritage. According to the *Italian Cultural Heritage and Landscape Code* (Italian Government, 2004), cultural heritage consists of both tangible assets-physical places and natural environments-and intangible assets, such as languages, music, religions, folklore, and manual skills. It is something that can be offered to all as a resource, as an area of study, as a temporal and spatial reference point for understanding human collectivities and their cultural and environmental contexts. For this reason, we consider it a significant and essential element to be included in educational processes: to add human and social meaning to knowledge, coherence to research and study methods, and effectiveness to design and implementation strategies. Nevertheless: how can we see heritage as a kind of link between street art and education? Educational experiences based on the enhancement of cultural and environmental heritage, cultural and artistic animation, tourism development, as well as participatory practices to stimulate the educating community all have different purposes and different goals that can be taken as development factors, as summarized in the figure below. In particular, we talk about personal factors, when related to physical involvement, psychological, ethical, and aesthetic enrichment; community factors, when related to knowledge, understanding and appreciation of educational and cultural tools; individual and collective factors, when related to cultural production, empowerment, and social participation; factors involving territories, when related to socio-economic promotion and development of an area.

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**Enhancement of the cultural
and environmental heritage**

Developmental factors

Physical involvement, psychological, ethical and aesthetic enrichment	**Knowledge, understanding, enhancement of educational/cultural tools**	**Cultural production, emancipation, social participation**	**Promotion and socio-economic development of areas and contexts**
Personal	Community	Individual/Collective	Areas/Territories

▸ **Figure 3.2.1.** Developmental factors for the enhancement of cultural and environmental heritage
▸ **Source:** Farina, 2022

Many of the challenges faced by educators or professionals who design education within unstructured contexts, such as the street and the natural environment, play on understanding and using different languages. In this regard, Mario Gennari states that the interpretation of the "spatial patterns forming the environment affect the relational structures of the inhabitants and thus become maps of social orientation" (Gennari, 1997: 49). According to the Italian pedagogue, the relationship between unstructured spaces and education can be described as "cultural units". In fact, as Gennari says:

*Space, in the configurations made in educational occasions, can be identified and conceived as a text and, therefore, is defined as a result of its own autonomy, based on its coherence as a system, as well as conformity with what it distinctly represents, itself, as a cultural unit (Gennari, 1997: 28).

Space as a "cultural unit" is meant to be a facilitator of growth processes and a catalyst of opportunities. But it is also a territory opened to educating communities, allowing them to express the values and peculiarities of which each one is the bearer. A space that is at the same time a:

*laboratory for planning development criteria and verification of their implementation, as well as a training place dictating the overcoming of individual cultural limitations in the dissemination of new languages and codes (Gennari, 1997: 133).

2. Integrating playful and cultural aspects with educational actions

The following pages will present an example of how, using cultural heritage as a link between street art and education, it is possible to reduce social exclusion, referring not only to the cultural sphere, but more generally to the entire political, economic, and social system. This is the case of an Italian project for the promotion and development of the territory through cultural and artistic production, focusing on street art with the meaning of intangible heritage assets. The name of the project is: *Artisti in Piazza – International Festival of Performing Arts*. Hosted since 1997 by the Italian town of Pennabilli, it represents a unique event that integrates playful and cultural aspects, pushing towards authentic educational actions, carried out to foster equal and widespread opportunities for access, participation, and representation, without creating cultural boundaries that generate or legitimize inequalities, within communities and between individuals. The city hosting the festival is located on the borders of three northern-central Italian regions: Emilia-Romagna, Tuscany, and Marche. Since 2009, the number of

municipalities in this area, including the town of Pennabilli itself, has changed several times due to administrative transitions of communities from one region to another. The territory is characterized by the presence of small and very small towns that in the last 20/25 years have seen a progressive depopulation and a slow migration of their inhabitants from hilly areas to larger urban areas with a greater offer of social and cultural services. In this case, we are talking about the coastal city of Rimini, which is one of the most populated by tourists, in Italy, during summer. This is a very iconic territory: according to recent research, Pennabilli's bucolic landscapes seem to appear in the background of famous artworks, such as Leonardo da Vinci's "Mona Lisa" or Piero della Francesca's "Double Portrait of the Duke and Duchess of Urbino" (Borchia & Nesci, 2011; 2013). Pennabilli is associated also with the figure of such a well-rounded artist as the Italian poet Tonino Guerra, who lived and worked here[44] from the late 1980s until his death in 2012; or again, with the two visits, in 1994 and 2005, to the Pennabilli community of the fifteenth Dalai Lama of Tibet, Tenzin Gyatso, during which the Nobel Prize for Peace paid tribute to the local Capuchin friar and Tibetologist Francesco Orazio della Penna.

The guiding idea of the festival is to connect the public, territories, and local communities through the involvement of live performance on natural backdrops such as local vistas, forests, the countryside, or the historic city center. Streets and squares, suspended in a natural, cultural, and playful dimension, become the scene of multiple and multifaceted artistic performances, returning to the community and visitors a stimulating urban *milieu* capable of facilitating the internal and external knowledge of its bearers (Dematteis & Lanza, 2011). All activities related to the festival, on the one hand, are aimed at visitors to the event; on the other hand, they are dedicated to young people from local primary and secondary schools, to bring them closer to art, in general, and specifically to the performing arts. The environment and landscape play a primary role, one as a "system of signs that change over time and space, telling the story of natural and cultural events, and [the other as] an aspect of nature in the relationship of interaction with human beings" (Vinella, 2004: 134-135). The aspect of "interaction" has become increasingly central over the years, due to the approach taken by the organizers toward education about the various art forms available during the event. This approach has not only allowed to involve more visitors but also contributed to the creation of professional opportunities and the opening of new channels, parallel to the event, to promote the area and develop the local economy. For example: the involvement of the public in the choice of artistic programs, with the possibility of voting/choosing the shows they wanted to see during the event, chosen between the thousands of applications received each year. Or the design of interactive experiences and performances, designed to upend the normal experience and make the audience more aware, participatory, and active. Originally, Artisti in Piazza was conceived, developed, and organized by an Italian cultural organization called "Ultimo Punto", thanks to the contribution and support, partnership and cooperation of regional public bodies, local associations, and private enterprises. "Ultimo Punto" was established in Pennabilli in 1998 with the following main goals:

✖ Promoting, developing, and protecting musical and artistic culture, firstly in the Montefeltro rural area, then in Italy and abroad.

✖ Creating and producing live performances: music, theatre, film events, exhibitions, conferences, courses, and seminars.

✖ Conceiving, planning, and managing festivals, reviews, and events of all kinds.

Today, after more than 20 years of activity, the four-day festival averages 40,000 visitors per year, engaging an increasingly diverse audience each edition and incorporating new forms of art and performance. The local event has gradually evolved into a multidisciplinary, international festival that hosts all types of performance art staged on the street.

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44 A museum featuring part of Tonino Guerra's artistic production has been set up in the underground rooms of the Oratory of Santa Maria della Misericordia, in Pennabilli. The museum has been included by the European Film Academy among the Treasures of European Film Culture (https://www.europeanfilmacademy.org/Treasures-of-Film-Culture.490.0.html) (10/2022).

3. Supporting youth creativity, educational co-design, and social participation

As we said, the event has a strong focus on the promotion of youth creativity and co-design of specific activities, in collaboration with local associations involved in education and training. These, on the one hand, are aimed at the festival audience present during the event (seminars and workshops in music, dance, juggling, busking, and circus performances); on the other hand, they are dedicated to young people from primary and secondary schools present in the area, to bring them closer to art, in general, and specifically to the performing arts. During the last three-year planning period, 2019-2021, the artistic director and organizer of *Artisti in Piazza*, Enrico Partisani, submitted to the Emilia-Romagna Region the following interventions:

✖ Creating information opportunities for audience development and audience engagement; planning surveys and research to learn about audiences and the impact of the event on them and the local area.

✖ Audience involvement in the choice of artistic programs, with the opportunity to vote/choose the shows you want to see during the event.

✖ Design of interactive experiences/shows, to overturn the normal experience and make the audience more aware, participatory, and active, such as improvisation workshops in public spaces.

✖ Design of intensive workshops on group energy, movement quality, and breathing, open to the local community and aimed at exchanging experiences among artists, participants, and audiences.

4. The social value of street entertainment

The topic of entertainment education allows us to open a brief parenthesis on the social value of street entertainment: a *sui generis* artistic and cultural expression that in Italy, from a legal point of view, is regulated by the following provisions:

✖ Ministerial Decree of February 28, 2005, which includes the street show in the list of entertainment activities and attractions of the traveling shows.

✖ Ministerial Decree of November 12, 2007, which grants a public subsidy up to a maximum of 30 percent of the expenses incurred by entities that promote street theatre or organize events and festivals exclusively using street artists as an opportunity for social gathering, integration with the architectural and monumental heritage, and development of cultural tourism.

✖ Law 175/2017, which establishes for the first time that the Italian Republic recognizes the contribution of street artists in the promotion of urban and suburban contexts.

Focusing on the main similarities and differences between street art and theatrical performance, we can say that, both in street art and in theatre, the performance itself fulfils its "life cycle" in the individual performance, each time maintaining an original "physiognomy" that is unpredictable and cannot be reproduced identically. Both art forms are oriented toward the entertainment of large social groups, but, if the artistic-cultural product, in the case of theatre, is offered to an audience of medium-high age and a medium-high social and cultural level or disposable income, street art, by its very nature and setting, is aimed at a broader audience diversified in age, background and culture. The great Italian performer Dario Fo, responding to a journalist in a 2015 interview as part of an investigation entitled: *Who is afraid of street artists*, said:

On the street there is almost always spontaneous and direct participation. It also happens inside theatres, but it depends on the theatre culture of the audience. Sometimes you create a wall and when the audience becomes hostile, you are finished unless you have an extraordinary driving force and the ability to break that wall. Luca Ronconi[45] [...] had that ability and he was very good at that level. I remember when he staged 'L'Orlando Furioso' in Piazza del Duomo in Milan. There were hundreds of people going there, passing by, having other problems. And he, engaging them, was able to turn the audience of passers-by into a listening audience, waiting and in awe (Di Cori, 2015: w/p).

On the profound importance of street theatre and the street as a stage, Dario Fo added:

It is the invention of what you do at the very moment you do it. Where, how, with what rhythm. You don't direct the performance; the audience directs you. And at the same time the audience speaks, moves, approaches and, without realizing it, becomes part of the performance. It is the improvisation that goes around, this relationship with the audience and the possibility of playing together. This is the street performance (Di Cori, 2015: w/p).

The comparison between theatre and street art prompts further reflection on public space and, at this time, where the spread of SARS-CoV-2 has inevitably weakened the social and relational dimension. The result of this weakening, which mainly affects children and adolescents, who have experienced the inability to deal with recreational play (Wulf, 2014; Farina, 2020) during the lockdowns, is also inevitably reflected on the territory. The latter, in fact, due to the forced stop to productive activities, including cultural entertainment and live performances, was deprived not only of "spaces and facilities to fill, but of content with which to enliven them, of generous people and educators" (Deluigi, 2010: 108). In this regard, in an article published by the Italian FNAS, the National Federation of Street Arts, is stressed how:

At this (historical) moment, street artists and entertainers bring experience and skills that the indoor sector has not honed to the same degree. To those who express the urgency to get outside, generating possible proposals to give new impetus to culture, we ask not to forget that professionals who are experts in the outside and its dynamics are there and have always been there, and who can help find solutions to get us where we need to be. There is knowledge that has often not been considered high compared to traditional places, but it is extremely high in this regard. It is perhaps important now to turn to these artists, these workers, these professionals, for a discussion of practices. It is time to be pragmatic. We need to talk to people, to bring them [...] back together, to find each other. These artists do not speak to critics or elites. They talk to families, workers, shopkeepers, the homeless; they talk to priests, drug addicts, the elderly, politicians, immigrants, local tourist boards, associations, volunteers, passers-by. This is their audience. They are their customers. Because these artists do a simple thing: they talk to people (FNAS, 2020: w/p).

Hence, a plea to policymakers not to underestimate the importance of arts and culture, and not to fall into the trap of relegating them to a "suspended time" (Corsi, 2020) where "the indignity of our socialization: conditioned, penalized, rewritten [...], as a refuge of affective and cognitive areas and their original context, is the meta-demand that represents the suspension of all possible suspensions" (Corsi, Susca & Farina, 2020: 28). On the contrary, following a dialectical approach between theory and practice, which is the fundamental regulatory criterion of pedagogical epistemology and educational work "in the field" (Baldacci & Colicchi, 2016), it is deemed indispensable to identify norms and procedures that ensure the safe and peaceful conduct of the aforementioned relational occasions, since "[...] reducing communities to a mere container of places, without cultivating a relational and emotional dimension means de-centring the role of people and reinforcing their real need for interaction" (Paroni, 2004: 109).

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45 A renown Italian theatre actor.

5. Conclusion: a pedagogical perspective on street education and citizenship

If we think about the first two decades of the 21st century, we realize how they have been characterized by profound social transformations. From September 11 to the impact of new technologies on our ways of life; from the globalization of markets to the management of major migration flows; from climate change to the emergence of sovereigntist movements in many of the oldest Western democracies; up to the recent pandemic-related events that have affected us all. These are just some of the events that marked the two decades just ended, but they are also perhaps among the main reasons why today's younger generations – in particular, those born within the first decade of the 21st century – face difficult challenges. Challenges concerning both knowledge and the transmission of knowledge, thus primarily involving schools and the main educational agencies as they participate in an increasingly complex and multicultural society.

Jerome Bruner (2000: 8) has argued that, for a young person in formation, participating in a culture means dealing, from a psychological perspective, with "issues concerning the creation and negotiation of meanings, the construction of identity, and the meaning of personal action". In such a multifaceted framework, which pedagogical perspective can contribute to place the ideals of citizenship, community, common good and social participation at the center of youth horizons? Italy is facing this challenge starting from school environments: the recent Law n. 92 (Italian Government, 2019), introduced the obligation to teach Civic Education in all school orders and grades. This represents an opportunity to develop educational practices aimed at defining a new idea of active and aware citizenship. The ministerial guidelines present three macro areas on which the teaching of Civic Education will focus:

- ✖ The first concerns the study of the Constitution, for a more conscious participation in civic, cultural, and social life.

- ✖ The second concerns sustainable development, for the knowledge and protection of cultural and environmental heritage, but also of health and common goods.

- ✖ The third concerns digital citizenship, for a conscious and responsible use of the new means of communication.

On this theme, Michele Corsi, in 2011, also heralded that:

> *Schools become aware of the resources for change they have at their disposal, to the extent that society is called upon to choose a citizenship project that reflects its cultural and political identity. But it is only through the synergistic effort of school, family, and society that truly transformative educational action can be achieved. It is therefore necessary to move from the school to the territory, to meet young people where they are, without forgetting, indeed, to take advantage of the opportunities and levels of communication offered by the new digital media and the world wide web (Corsi, 2011: 11).

Moving from the classrooms to the city streets and identifying youth animation as one of the most effective tools to raise awareness of social participation, democratic life, and the value of differences, we can consider, again, the "umbrella term" (and the idea of) street art as a contemporary form of socio-educational intervention. From this point of view, it is interesting to note that the guidelines contained in the "European Youth Strategy 2019-2027" (EU Commission, 2018) also bring educational interventions back to the territory, with the primary objective of helping new generations to make a full use of their potential, promoting personal development, autonomy, sense of initiative and social participation. Society and territories, therefore, once again become a background within which participatory and transformative processes can be activated and integrated. This is crucial for the new generations of citizens, from whom institutions and educational agencies ask to think big (globally) but to know how to act small (locally), for the common and collective good.

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3.3. PLASTIC BARBIES AND BODIES MADE OF PLASTIC

Federica Manfredi[46]

✖ ~~*Abstract*~~

Plastic is a controversial material, often connected with thoughts concerning the climate emergency. However, plastic doesn't only concern the planet: it is also involved in many cosmetic practices, from injective technologies to facial rollers or other rejuvenating tools. Plastic bodies are not only those with silicone prothesis: the plasticity of humans is linked to the potentiality of transformation, but that can also involve polymeric materials. This paper is going to consider the role of plastic in body projects and their plasticity, understood as ability of self-modification in pursuit of social goals of empowerment. The reflection is based on results of the project Excel – The Pursuit of Excellence, comparing data collected during the workshop series The Hacked Barbie about the pressure to actively produce "perfect" bodies, and biohacking practices explored in the doctoral project Learning to Fly.

Keywords: plastic, body modification, Barbie, practice-based methodology, excellence.

1. Introducing plastic and bodies

Plastic is a controversial material featuring the contemporary reflection about how humanity is irremediably shaping a new geological phase of the planet: the Anthropocene debate is raising acknowledgement on the role of plastic polymers and climate changes in connection with the industrialization process (Zalasiewicz et al., 2010; Bougleux, 2017; Dall'O, 2019), coining the expression *plastic age* (Couzens & Yarsley, 1956). Scientific evidence about the toxic permanence of the synthetic material on the Earth are raising concerns that are not limited to the environment; rather they concerns human life, highlighting the long term consequences for human being survival in a polluted ecosystem: "Yet the plastic that insinuates itself pervasively into all of our surroundings will never disappear: it will be all that will remain in a future fossil layer" (Longobardi, 2014: 186).

Plastic is not only embedded in the planet or a protagonist of the industrial production of the last decades. The material has been progressively inserted in biotechnologies and embodied by human beings: plastic is involved in the medical industry to fix bodies perceived as defective (Jarrin & Pussetti, 2021), as well as in many cosmetic practices, such as rejuvenating tools and injectable technologies. These examples of body modification have been analyzed in the project *Excel – The Pursuit of Excellence*, developed at the Institute of Social Sciences at the University of Lisbon, with Chiara Pussetti as Principal Investigator and founded by the *Foundação para a Ciência e a Tecnologia*.

Presenting the workshop series "The Hacked Barbie", that constituted one of the investigative methods developed in Excel, this paper is going to present data related to pressure of excellence in Europe, mainly referring to data collected in Portugal and Italy between 2021 and 2022. The workshop invited over 70

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participants to manipulate a doll for creative projects aiming to facilitate a reflective process about the use of body practices in the everyday life of attendees. The plastic flesh of anthropomorphic toys supported this experimental method of practice-based ethnography, confirming that contemporary bodies are continuously under construction.

Human bodies are plastic devices because they can adapt, be modified, and transformed to follow personal projects that (re)produce hegemonic models of beauty, but not exclusively: after a more in-depth presentation about the project Excel, the initial part of the paper will examine data of biohacking practices, collected during my doctoral project *Learning to Fly. A trans-spatial ethnography on body suspensions in Europe* (Manfredi, 2022b). Biohacking interventions challenge the understanding of hegemonic models of perfect bodies, highlighting the research of originality and uniqueness along with beautification goals. Some of these body modifications involve silicone implants, while others use temporary hooks inserted in the skin or a scalpel to bifurcate tongues.

The aesthetic is only one of the components of the *perfection*: body interventions indicate the expectation of positive recognition as well as uniqueness. This is a cultural labor of equilibrium in between the respect of shared models of perfection and the pursuit of customized versions of excellence, and the result can be controversial, as some conclusive examples of The Hacked Barbie workshop will show.

2. The Excel project and painful processes to be excellent

The project *Excel - The Pursuit of Excellence* was born in 2017 at the Institute of Social Sciences at the University of Lisbon and it concluded in late 2022 with the artistic exhibition *Be F** king Perfect – The Pursuit of Excellence*, curated by Chiara Pussetti and supported by the engagement of Terra Esplendida and the artistic assistance of Antonio Faria. The exposition was hosted at the Óriq Gallery in the district of Campo de Ourique in Lisbon, from 15 September to 16 October 2022, and it constituted the final dissemination activity of the project *Excel*.

In an entrepreneurial approach of the self (Foucault, 2005), the project analyzed contemporary and non-therapeutic body modifications as biotechnologies, understood as body interventions aiming to enhance the social performance of individuals. The research team, that I had the pleasure to join as a member, explored bio-investments addressed to body shapes, wrinkles, skin colors and cognitive abilities, that are modified through plastic surgery, anti-aging techniques, skin bleaching practices, and cognitive enhancements (Pussetti & Pires, 2020; Pussetti, 2021a; Pussetti 2021b; Barbosa, 2021), among others[47].

Body interventions require considerable amount of energy, pain exposure and economic resources, and they are perceived as the pursuit of personal desires and ambitions because we internalize the social value of being excellent. Interviewees reported the life-long need to always be the best version of themselves, as confirmed by many slogans and commercials of the Western societies that (re)produce the ambition of being "with no limits", "anything you want", because "you're worth it". I argue that the excellence is a social construction multiply composed: the ethnographical data collected during Excel showed that the excellence can take the form of a body that is young, fit, tall and thin, with spotless and bright skin, long and straight hair, where disability, aging signs, or a non-white skin do not match with the hegemonic and heteronormative models of reference. The actions on the body enhance the social capital, for instance, improving the possibility of success in a job interview, in the search for a love-partner, or a flat to rent in a neighborhood with low crime rates. Beauty opens doors and facilitates connections in multiple life domains, and people are aware that investments in the body correspond to the empowerment of their social capital.

According to the post-modern perspective, individuals are responsible for their bodies (Giddens, 1991) and the body is the mirror of the self (Shilling, 1993), meaning that the appearance of the skin, hairs, nails, abdomen, or any other body's part is perceived as revealing the commitment of the individuals to themselves. A not-perfect body is evidence of negligence, or a lack in the moral conduct of the person; and people – especially women – are disposed to undergo through elaborate, expensive, and painful processes to avoid the guiltiness of a lazy or lousy body performance. These considerations powerfully

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47 More details on the project Excel-The Pursuit of Excellence are available at www.excelproject.eu (consulted 21.12.2022).

emerge in the graphic works of two artists who cooperated with the Excel team and who exposed a collection of their works on the occasion of the artistic exhibition *Be Fu**king Perfect-The Pursuit of Excellence*: Evija Laivinia, from Latvia, authorized a reproduction of her *Beauty Warriors* series (also presented in Pussetti et al. 2022), *Everything is Going to Be Awesome*, and *Fat Series*, while Jessica Ledwich, from Australia, shared a selection of her photographic work *Monstrous Feminine*. Their visual works ironically unfold the social pressures experienced by contemporary women to be always perfect, denouncing the physical pain and the emotional suffering required by the life-long process of self-engagement through the body. Evija Laivinia and Jessica Ledwich supported the translation of scientific results in an accessible visual language, and a picture of each series was selected for the two playbills of the exhibition (Figure 3.3.1, Figure 3.3.2).

▸ **Figure 3.3.1.** Playbill of the exhibition base on the graphic work of Jessica Ledwich
▸ **Source:** Excel-The Pursuit of Excellence

▶ **Figure 3.3.2.** Playbill of the exhibition based on the graphic work of Evija Laivinia
▶ **Source:** Excel-The Pursuit of Excellence

Jessica Ledwich's work uses blades, blood and morbid combinations to communicate the aggressivity of cosmetic practices and the resistance of people in front of physical sacrifices to achieve a wished body shape. On the other hand, to produce the series *Beauty Warriors*, Evija Laivinia decided to invite friends and family members to wear a collection of plastic objects she bought on a well-known e-commerce platform, promoting them as quick and simple solutions to acquire beautiful necks and forefront, such as the cheek slimmer or the nose massage, or to contrast age deterioration. Beauty nowadays is on sale and such tools remind us that all pockets can contribute to the achievement of a forever young body. There is a wide range of prices and cosmetic products promising skin whitening effects, from hundreds of euros in perfumeries of the Lisbon city centers to a 5-10€ as medium price for those sold in "ethnic shops", without a translated list of ingredients or the label of the European Community authorizing legal commerce (Pussetti & Pires, 2021). The beauty industry takes advantage of the cultural pressure to be perfect and people are exposed to the need for achieving excellent bodies, reproducing inequalities connected to economic power, social class, skin colour, age, gender identity and sexual orientation.

Simone de Beauvoir (1970) and Susan Sontag (1972) denounced in the 1970s the social invisibility of women not matching beauty standards, and Excel's data indicate that a body that ages 'badly' is perceived as demonstrating a lack of ability and commitment to the self and to appropriate standards of body performance. Rather than being invisible, wrinkles and flaccid flesh have a negative visibility, connected to moral disapproval. In other words, ugly people are not only un-matching beauty standards; rather, they are guilty of the lack of body domination and self-control. Plastic is not only present in the cosmetic devices for the low-income segment of costumers, such as the tools used by Evija Laivinia.

Plastic surgery involves the social meaning of a legitimate use of the polymer under the skin to shape breast, abdominals, noses and lips, as the ethnographical work of Meredith Jones illustrates when exploring narratives of patients who experienced plastic surgeries (Jones, 2008). If in the 1990s the pain was almost made invisible, focusing especially on surgery's results, today the recovery process has gained importance: the pain has become a proof of commitment. The acceptance of pain during a surgery is seen as evidence of morality to deconstruct claims of superficiality usually associated with cosmetic invasive procedures. Pain dignifies and "it becomes an act of courage, bravery and self-determination" (Jones, 2008: 53-54), an index of the engagement and responsibility in the self-making life-long project of construction.

3. Biohacking and the understanding of perfection as uniqueness

The project Excel showed that beauty is much more than aesthetic, and it relates to moral values and desires to be accepted, respected, and valued by our peers. Additionally, a perfect body is not only beautiful or spotless; rather, it needs to interpret the "perfection" in a unique and personal declination, as reminded by Antony Giddens in the construction of individuality as self-responsibility (Giddens, 1991).

During the doctoral project *Learning to Fly. A trans-spatial ethnography on body suspensions in Europe* (Manfredi, 2022b), developed from 2016 to 2022 at the Institute of Social Sciences at the University of Lisbon, I explored meanings associated with body suspension in a multi-sited perspective in Norway, Portugal, Italy, and on selected Facebook groups. A body suspension is a practice consisting in the elevation of a protagonist through metal hooks temporarily inserted in the skin; hooks are linked to ropes and to an above scaffolding called *rig* and, pulling the main rope, the protagonist is elevated from the floor as long as she/he desires. They are practiced during dedicated festivals and private events, where elected social figures facilitate the hook insertion, the rig connection and the after care. The surrounding community provides an emotional assistance that cooperates in the significance of the suspension as cultural labour, enhancing social ties and providing individual empowerment.

The research analysed body suspensions in conjunction with other body modification, such as tattoos, piercing, scarification, split tongue, and insertion of silicone implants, showing the connection of the hook-practice with a net of acts of care dedicated to the body, such as diet regimes, meditative and yoga routines, or abstinence from alcohol. In a phenomenological perspective, the ethnography indicated that suspensions' goal is the regeneration of the individual, a deep moral and physical empowerment pursuit thanks to the alteration of the perceptive abilities during the fly: the exposure to the pain provokes a so-called "hormonal kick" of adrenaline and endorphins that are interpreted as responsible for the activation of an altered state of consciousness.

The doctoral research showed that there is a rising interest in avant-garde operations with un-mainstream styles of body manipulation, also known as biohacking practices. If body modification is a general term referring to any intervention concerning flesh and skin, a biohacking operation is the act of altering the processes of one's body in an attempt to improve what is perceived as constituting the humanity. Some bio-hackers identify in the social movement "Do-it-yourself biology", aiming for the self-enhancement beyond human abilities: they embody technologies to empower senses and the body functionality, often inspired by animal skills, such as the cat's view in the darkness, or by interactions with machines in post-human horizons (Luceford, 2012). Similarly, the split-tongue inspired by reptiles is a practice enhancing the perception of tastes and the uses of the tongue muscle. It requires a dedicated period of recovery and of re-education of the tongue after the cutting.

Understanding biohacking as the self-design of bodies to achieve an enhanced version of the person, ethnographical data confirm the contemporary need for original and unique combinations of physical appearances alongside with an authentic and fulfilled sense of the self. As stated by Carolina "My bmods [body modifications] tell the story who I am, they are me and I am made by them" (Fieldnotes, December 2019).

The skin and the body materialize our relationship with others (Trosman, 2013) and how the navigation

in and through the world has shaped us as a unique combination of experiences, relationships and progressive knowledge acquisition. Body modifications are visual narratives and the site of discourses that systematically shape the objects narrated (Foucault, 1985), producers of the experience, and constructers of reality. In this sense, biohacking practices work to construct a unique identity acting on and with the body, attributing value and meaning to specific episodes or people instead of others, perceived by the protagonists as pillars of the self (Manfredi, 2022a). Body interventions correspond to the need and desire of self-design, electing those events of the past that the protagonist wishes to embody and to be defined by. Hacking the biology, the individual shapes and empowers their self-perception: the person actively engages in the planification of what is understood as a body that corresponds to an ideal sense of beauty, realized in a unique combination of body signs and key aspects of life that promote the full person in an original artisanal outcome. In this sense, the body reveals all its plasticity, making available an almost unlimited possibility of hacking and empowerment in a life-long perspective.

Biohacking procedures, especially those less conventional, such as the split-tongue or the incision of design on the skin through scalpels (Manfredi, in press), provoke ambivalent reactions, often seen as disobedient for the refusal of shared conventional rules concerning what a beautiful body should be, or what individuals are free to do with their body. Sometimes the explorative and avant-gardists tone is misinterpreted as evidence of deviancy, biologically or socially based, arousing suspicious of misconduct for the noncompliance (or rejection) of mainstream beauty standards. In reaction, biohackers often renounce the opportunity to explain their vision of the body and of the personality, adopting the strategy of invisibility online, during family meetings or in the workplace. In these cases, the authenticity of the self, pursuit through body intervention, is in antithesis with social inclusion and with the positive recognition of the efforts faced by the protagonist.

Despite superficial perception of biohacking practices, their meanings reveal the praise of perfection, the desire to be every day a better version of themselves, working to create more and more correspondence between the self and body; and no matter what it costs, even if the recognition of the process can be misunderstood.

4. A reflexive exercise through a metaphorical plastic flesh: the Hacked Barbie workshop

The plasticity of human bodies, meaning the ability to modify and to adapt our flesh and skin according to goals, wishes, and ambitions, has been investigated and discussed with a sample of 70 attendees in the workshop series *The Hacked Barbie*, an outreach and research activity of the Excel project developed by Chiara Pussetti and the present author. With a participative approach, participants aged between nineteen and seventy-one years old from Brazil, Portugal, Italy, Germany, Denmark, and England, have been invited to re-create their bodies on the metaphorical plastic flesh of a doll. They attended online and in-person workshops, organized in nine editions between February 2021 and March 2022.

The Barbie is the symbol of an idealistic perfect body (Ringrose & Coffey, 2016; Fusaschi, 2013), promoting Euro-American standards because the doll is white, blond, slim and tall. Additionally, she is eternally young and without a menstrual cycle: she is anatomically incomplete, by the absence of genitals. (Pussetti, 2021a: 12). Generations of children have been raised looking at the Barbie not only as a toy to play with, but also as a model of being to strive for, corresponding to the beauty standards also displayed on cat walks, in TV, and in the cinematographic industry.

The workshop's goal was to stimulate a different gaze on the body, disclosing everyday and exceptional practices participants direct to themselves to fit with society's beauty standards. With the objective to stimulate self-awareness and to deconstruct embodied models of excellence, we invited participants to reproduce their bodies by hacking a doll of their choice. Even the selection of the toy stimulated reflections concerning the limited options of bodies available on the market. In the workshop, obtaining a nice result was not the purpose; rather, the experience aimed to formulate new questions enjoying the hacking process and discovering new meanings and feelings. Pictures and notes of the hacking steps were collected and then displayed by each participant during the meeting, online or in person, followed by a common discussion led by the organizers.

The workshop made visible how participants construct themselves, acting on their body hair, breasts, nails or dressing styles. Some body parts were signified as more crucial than others: the group work around handcrafts during the final roundtable of each session showed how vulnerabilities and insecurities are connected to textures, colours, presence or absence of fat, wrinkles, hair, and other elements perceived in connection with age, gender and social respectability.

Laura, a university girl affected by the polycystic ovary syndrome, recreated a body-hair on the neck of the doll (Figure 3.3.3a) to represent her hormonal disfunction that provokes an excessive growth of body hair in the body's parts "where girls are not supposed to have hairs", in her words.

▶ **Figure 3.3.3a.** Laura's creative project during the Hacked Barbie workshop
▶ **Figure 3.3.3b.** The load of the hormonal treatment
▶ **Source:** Pictures provided by the participant during the workshop.

The undesired presence of body hair was elaborated during the workshop as a self-esteem trouble that affected Laura for years, undermining her ability to relate with other people and to experience love relationships. The perceived incapacity to appropriately perform a feminine gender identity was a factor generating discomfort and sense of inadequacy for social performance through the body. In the creative handcraft, dark eye bags represent the insomnia and general fatigue related to the syndrome, along with acne scars on the Barbie's cheeks: all these elements contribute to creating a body that has less attractiveness compared to the doll's ones before the hacking process. The doll is naked to symbolise a health condition that is impossible to hide, according to Laura, and whose body is almost squashed under the load of the pills that aim to regulate her hormonal production (Figure 3.3.3b): "I can't forget to take my pills, they are my mask because they don't cure or solve the syndrome, rather they hide it" (fieldwork notes, April 2021). Perceived not even as a solid solution or positive health device, the therapy calls into question the sense of authenticity.

Manipulating the plastic flesh of the dolls, participants developed reflections about social pressures, expectations, but also fragilities and strengths often silenced or hidden in the lifelong commitment to produce the self through the body. The hacked Barbies reveal the disparities, the stress, and the negotiations that such bodies, and their subjects, have to deal with.

Another workshop participant used the occasion to reflect about the refusal of beauty models and the emotional consequences connected with un-mainstream choices: Lidia, in her twenties, presents a doll where body hairs have been designed with a black felt-tip pen on legs, groin, and underarms (Figure 3.3.4).

▶ **Figure 3.3.4.** Lidia's creative project during the Hacked Barbie workshop
▶ **Source:** Picture provided by the participant.

The hacking process on the doll represents the refusal of the participant to use depilation: "I would not say that letting my body hair remain on my body is a real modification. On the contrary, I do not intervene on them, and I am more natural than people who are used to waxing or shaving their body" (Fieldwork notes, April 2021). A *natural body* is interpreted as more authentic, closer to an ideal of coincidence with the Nature, or connected to a positive value that is held by a person uncorrupted. Corrupting factors are indicated as the concerns of looking appropriate, and being appreciated by peers, but moralized as superficial because not in line with a *naturality* that should instead inspire the actions on the body and the efforts of individuals.

Lidia presents her body hair as result of a personal labor, a reappropriation of her body and femininity. Despite that, she has to constantly face the negative judgments for her rebellion against a beauty standard that imposes her to be hairless. The others challenge her political positioning against a mainstream idea of feminine beauty especially during the summertime, but also in the privacy of her room, Lidia suffers the emotional consequences of being too distant from the mainstream model. In Figure 3.3.5 she represented her doll in front of a mirror, but the Barbie can't look at herself: body hair produces a body result that is not "good to be looked at", creating suffering for the social stigmatization.

Ma come posso guardarmi?

▶ **Figure 3.3.5.** Lidia's doll in front of a mirror and wondering "How can I look at myself?"
▶ **Source:** Picture provided by the participant.

The Hacked Barbie series, as a practice-based method of investigation (Brown, 2019), expanded the sensorial engaging and the communicative possibilities between participants and ethnographers: the manipulation of materials supported a communication and a mutual understanding beyond logo-centric logics (Eco, 1975). The creative work stimulated symbolic and multi-sensory channels of expression, in co-participative processes of meanings creation that redistributed the ethnographical power and empowered the reflexivity, as also evidenced in other art-based research (Foster, 1995; Schneider, 2008; Pussetti, 2018; Noronha, 2019; Manfredi, 2019).

5. Conclusions

Attractive bodies are produced and disciplined on the basis of models influenced by the Eurocentric and post-colonial culture of Western societies. We are condemned to always confront these models, even when we decide to subvert them by being rebellious: as Lidia's choice shows, the refusal of beauty standards end up emphasizing the "right way to behave", rather than a new possibility of being. The lack of opportune body performances, even if it's the result of an active or political positioning, forces us to dialogue and negotiate with mainstream models of perfection, in a life-long emotional and physical work. And if being original is a mandatory aspect of excellence, this value needs to be "properly" interpreted; otherwise the outcome will negatively shape the body performance. Some declinations of perfection are appropriated, while others push too far the interpretation of originality: there is a balance to achieve and it isn't made of unlimited possibilities.

The work of identity through the Barbie shows that people are not only subjects under the influence of models of beauty, or excellence. We are also able to react, negotiate and reproduce such values. We

are involved in constant processes of construction of our corporeality, dealing with hegemonic patterns that create hirarchies of bodies more or less adequate. We are the first judges of our efforts, the first (re) producers of pressures of excellence.

The plastic flesh of the dolls during the workshop facilitated reflective experiences about projects of self-design and the feelings associated with them, confirming the plasticity of participants' bodies: they are able to transform and adapt according to individual perspectives and plans regarding how perfection should be interpreted.

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3.4. NEW SUSTAINABLE CULTURES: (RE)HUMANIZATION, POLITICAL ACT AND NOSTALGIA

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✖ ~~Abstract~~

Based on a Cultural Studies perspective, we address a critical-theoretical reflection supported by empirical data resulting from our research on the subject of new bricolage sustainable cultures as they reorganize traditional production processes aiming at social change. Our focus is on the analysis of the uses and discourses of Brazilians on collaborative consumption application devices that are not impaired by monetary benefits (the apps Tem Açúcar? (Got Suggar?) and Beliive). Within the conceptual framework brought by Botsman (2013) and as we are looking at the notion of consumption, we apply the expression "collaborative consumption for non-monetary benefits" to refer to such specific practices. In that sense, our main research question is: what are the possibilities introduced by the dynamic of collaborative consumption for non-monetary benefits? So, we retrace our analytical considerations crossing three narrative axis: the (re)humanization of relationships; the political nature of consumption and the feeling of nostalgia.

Keywords: sustainable cultures, collaborative consumption, urban microeconomics.

1. Introduction: object of study and methodological approach

We currently place our research interests on the studies of culture, performing an in-depth investigation over a conceptual object in particular, which are the material discursiveness enounced on the practices mobilized by digital applications of social interaction aimed towards collaborative consumption and not directed to monetary benefits. The larger research project[49] had to be sampled here in order to bring a core problematic around narratives and meanings built over new consumption practices as they are related to a contemporary project of collaborative economy for non-monetary exchange, and it grasps a new type of citizenship emerging from that. In a broader perspective, we investigate the possibilities introduced by the dynamic of collaborative consumption for non-monetary benefits.

For now, we present two initial conceptual clarifications. The first of them refers to the adoption of the notion of device application, that we incorporate alluding to the mechanisms implied in process of subjectivation, as developed by Agamben (2005). The second one of them regards the use of the expression "collaborative consumption for non-monetary benefits" in reference to the specific context of our object of research. Such choices are justified because we are focused on consumption and also

because we are in line with the terms that define the collaborative movement today, as addressed by Botsman (2013) – collaborative economy, collaborative consumption, shared economy and peer economy.

Starting from the already established problematic, we set as the more general objective of our article to understand new consumption practices emerging today, its meanings and its connection to a project of collaborative consumption for non-monetary benefits. Additionally, we also describe the concepts of communication, consumption, and collaborative consumption in order to give context to the discourses of the subjects heard by the research. Regarding the necessary sampling of the research, we have selected the locus of two application devices with matching characteristics to our research outline, meaning they do not imply the introduction of money to close the exchanges of goods and experiences: the applications *Beliive and Tem Açúcar? (Got Sugar?)*.

The research includes three methodological procedures besides the necessary bibliographic recovery: observation of the interaction among users in the selected application devices *Beliive and Tem Açúcar? (Got Sugar?)*; use of structured questionnaire for demographic and cultural consumption data recollection; and operationalization of in-depth interviews to the effective comprehension of the consumption practices for non-monetary benefits and its meanings.

The initial phase of the research included the observation of the interaction among users in the application devices, it helped recruit interviewees for the following phases of the research. Such selection of interviews was done randomly[50], resulting in a sample group of 10 participants[51]; a number that is enough to observe a recurrence of discourses and which is in consonance with the qualitative character of our research. In order to settle such group sample, the criteria were to be the user of one of the application devices in the study and live in the city area of São Paulo (geographic criteria founded on the presupposition that the capital of the state of São Paulo is the country center for behavioral tendencies). All the 10 selected subjects answered a structured questionnaire with focused questions on demographic and cultural consumption data before the in-depth interview in order to establish the understanding on their sociocultural contexts.

In the present article, first we perform a demographic and sociocultural presentation of the subjects of our research, believing that the understanding of the context of their lives will help clarify their speeches as social actors. In the same line of work and aiming at recovering their speech, we go on establishing the understanding of the same group of people on what is communication, consumption and collaborative consumption. We raise these notions because we believe that they are on the core of the consumption practices for non-monetary benefits, which are our main focus. At last, we try to give evidence of the meanings emerging from such practices; amongst which we highlight the (re)humanization of the relationships, the political nature of consumption and the feeling of nostalgia.

2. Empirical approaches: demographic and sociocultural contextualization

Based on the epistemological broad spectrum of the Cultural Studies, we have done field work with direct empirical approach to the subjects that are actors and agents on the application devices. From this point of the article on we will describe the main results of our research in the attempt to respond to its launching matter. We point to the main references found in our corpus and to the significative strands of such discourses.

It is worth noticing that we have started from the demographic and sociocultural contextualization (including an investigation on the consumption) of the subjects. That epistemological approach is due to a basic central principle of discourse analysis of French influence which says that all enounced discourse should be understood as being built the way it is because it is invested of context shaping its formation.

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50 The non-probability sample based on convenience: "[...] refers to a sample selected with a few systematized criteria, and it helps complement the sample in the easiest most simple way" (Yasuda & Oliveira, 2012: 128).

51 We have established the size of the sample (5 users of each application device) based on a statistical principal proposed in the 1990s by Jacob Nielsn, a specialist in website user research. As he developed research on the interaction of users in digital interfaces, he concludes that 5 is a necessary minimum size sample to identify the most relevant behavioral patterns (Knapp, 2017: 234).

We establish, then, that the social placement and the consumption habits regarding genres and cultural productions resonate in what the subjects say. We are aligned with Brandão (2004), when she recovers Bakhtin within the field of discourse analysis: "the linguistic matter is just one section of the enouncing; there is also another, nonverbal, that corresponds to the context of the enunciation" (Brandão, 2004: 8). The context is also equivalent to the so-called conditions of production that are what "establishes the discourses" (Charaudeau & Maingueneau, 2006: 114).

Thus, we point out some data on the profile of the interviewees, they range from 27 to 58 years of age; two of them identify as being of the male gender and 8 as being of the female gender; 4 of the interviewees are single, 4 of them are married and two are divorced. 7 of the interviewees live in the city of São Paulo – most of them in central neighborhoods or in the South area (Liberdade, Aclimação, Consolação, Vila Mariana e Centro), but also in one neighborhood in the Northeast area (Jaraguá) and one in the North area (Vila Amália) of the capital – the other subjects live in the cities of São Caetano do Sul (Santa Paula neighborhood), São Bernardo do Campo (Planalto neighborhood) and Vinhedo (Chácara Cascais neighborhood); all of the within the State of São Paulo.

5 of the interviewed women were born the city capital; one of the interviewed men lives within the city area of São Paulo (São Bernardo do Campo) and another is from an inner-city state (Limeira). Lastly, there is one participant from a city in the state of Minas Gerais (Alfenas), Southeast of Brazil; and another from the state of Paraná (Londrina), South of the country; and also one participant from the state of Paraíba (Campina Grande), Northeast of the country.

In terms of education, 4 of the participants are graduated and one undergraduate; amongst the others, 4 have a post-graduation degree and one is in course. In relation to professional field of work, there is a data scientist; an image consultant; a salesperson; and one freelancer; 4 teachers and one which is currently not performing regular professional activities.

In relation to house income, we have the following distribution: one of the interviewees earns up until R$ 2.078,00 (two Brazilian minimum salaries); six inform their income ranging from R$ 2.078,00 a R$ 4.156,00 (two to four Brazilian minimum salaries); two inform their income ranging from R$ 4.156,00 to R$ 10.390,00 (four to ten Brazilian minimum salaries); and, one of them informs the range between R$ 10.390,00 to R$ 20.780,00 (ten to 20 Brazilian minimum salaries).

Regarding the sociocultural consumption habits, all of them, even if attested on occasion, read books (printed or digital editions); the majority of them reads the news from websites/news portals with a high frequency; they occasionally or rarely go to the movies; 80% of them watches movies and series trough paid streaming platforms frequently or very frequently, and 90% of them watches videos on free online platforms frequently or very frequently.

Most importantly, it catches our attention the fact that the option "never consumes" was only present for tradition media such as TV, radio and movies; that was not true for digital media (video and music streaming and podcasts). It is unanimous that all of them access the internet frequently or very frequently; as well as they access social media (such as *Facebook*, *Instagram* e *Twitter*) and message exchange apps (such as WhastApp). At last, traveling is more frequent (60% of the interviewees) than attending shows (frequent or very frequent for 40% of the interviewees) and going to the theater (frequent or very frequent for 40% of the interviewees).

3. Basic conceptions: the notions of communication, consumption, and collaborative consumption

Still going for a contextualized perspective on the participants of the research and their speeches, we now present our findings on their conception of communication, consumption and collaborative consumption; because we understand that such broader framework guides the practices and discourses around the studied application devices. It is also a case of intersection with another of our ongoing research (Rocha & Pereira, 2018), which investigates the notions of consumption and consumerism recuring to the same participants involved in the present research.

We were able to gather from our sample that communication is most often understood for its reciprocal and empathic nature; valuing the aspect of information exchange. In other words, there were no mention to communication being a one-sided action; it was understood by all in the form of a *process*, as Hall (2003) would state it talking about reception.

*It would be relationship. I understand communication as human relationship. (M., 40 years-old).

*It is comprehension. (N., 56 years-old).

*The people being able to give and receive information, like that, right?. (F., 36 years-old).

*Communication is to speak and listen in any comprehensible form. (I., 58 years-old).

*It is to have the other understand you. And you give information in a way the other is able to understand (M., 47 years-old).

*Communication means power to speak to the people, to say what you feel, give your perception on everything. And also, to know how to listen to the other, to know how to be informed in the right way. So, communication is that exchange of information, I don't know (T., 29 years-old).

On its turn, consumption appears to be always very centered on economic activity, which is naturized in our way of living, guided by a capitalist system that tends to excess, to the superfluous. Meaning that the speeches in their great majority follow the notion stated by Rocha (2005: 130), according to which:

*consumption is nothing to be thought about, it is to be condemned as consumerism, […] results in a common sense, an ideological ground in which is possible to comfortably state that production is something noble, while consumption is not. Production is a sacrifice that enhances oneself, and consumption is the pleasure to be condemned (Rocha, 2005: 130).

*In a way, it is an economic activity, I don't know (M. 28 years-old).

*It is everything that you use too much. Something that you use a lot or that is needed, right? (N., 56 years-old).

*I think that consumption to me is currently the basis of the world. […] Buying, consumption is happiness nowadays […] (M. 40 years-old).

*Hum, consumption I think it is something that most of the times comes as imposed and that turns out being unnecessary (F., 36 years-old).

*[…] to have things, material things mainly, that we don't need (T., 29 years-old).

Collaborative consumption, on its turn, was always described by the participants in a larger semantic realm including what is in line with conscious practices, the use of collectives and the valorization of small producers:

*I think that it is a healthier and more conscious form of economic activity, you know? From the standpoint of my pocket, but also environmentally (M., 28 years-old).

*I have my consumption, and I don't need that consumption anymore, so I will collaborate with somebody else so that she or he can benefit from the same product I have benefited from, understand? I will collaborate with her in a consumption action that the person would have to go to the store and buy it in 10 parcels (F., 27 years-old).

*So, I think that instead of you buying, I don't now...a jewelry in a big shop like Zara, you go buy it from a handicraft shop that you know the person who made it. Understand? I think that would be collaborative consumption. I think it is when you are collaborating with a small entrepreneur (M., 40 years-old).

*It would be a way […] of getting to what I need without necessarily having to buy the thing like that. Not going through the traditional ways that you would buy and throw away, buy and throw away (C., 38 years-old).

*Oh, collaborative consumption would be to consume, use, have the opportunity to use something that someone lent to you, gave to you, understand? (N., 56 years-old).

*A form of consumption, let us say, more collective, or collaborative, I don't know, is to consume,

first of all, to consume only what is necessary, right? And get it from people or sources that are worth privileging, validating, legitimating, right? The work of the person, that job. (F. 36 years-old).
*

Collaborative consumption, now we are talking. That is when we are talking about renting a car. You don't need to own a car, but rent it just to take a specific trip, or to stay with it for a while. That besides many other things. I think it a way of being concerned about the planet. (M., 37 years-old).

Collaborative consumption, I believe it is everything that we are able to share and that ends up benefiting everybody, right? […] Maybe it is a community Garden. I don't know, a ride system that help many people; however, it does not end up costing a lot to each of these people as if it was individual. So, I think that it is the gathering of people that are able to make use of the same good, be it a product or a service, and it results in financial benefits to all of the involved. (T., 29 years-old).

Considering the enouncings above, collaborative consumption, in the perceptions of the interviewed users, is outlined beyond the limits established by Botsman (2003), that defines it as a fraction of collaborative economy, as a new form of consumption, based on sharing, exchange or rent of material or symbolic goods privileging access and not property.

4. Agency and power of the consumption without monetary investment

In the effective search for evidence and for the most significative traces in the discourses on the social interaction application devices that do not imply monetary benefits, the keywords stated by the interviewees and that are more directly related to the practice are: friendship; cooperation; solidarity; help; exchange; experiences; alternatives; honesty; utopia. The debate we are to put forward now are then crossed by each one of them. It comes to our attention how the dispositive is spontaneously mentioned in the first recovery of the interviewees' life stories. The spontaneous mention of the application happens because it is precisely related to the lifestyle or philosophy of life of the subject:

So, I have recently went to live on my own in as apartment building downtown. The Tem Açúcar?, Where you found me, is a platform I have been using a lot, to furnish my home, to get thing and to give things I don't need as well. (M., 28 years-old).

Regarding the sort of request/offers that the participants have been making through the application devices, we have noticed that the operations performed by the users are extremely diverse considering the wide range of possibilities of actions that the networks themselves provide: centered more on the donation of material goods on *Tem Açúcar?* and more focused on immaterial experiences in *Beliive*; according to the essence and specificity of each platform.

In relation to the bonding through the application devices, we have observed that social interaction is not the main motivation to enter these spaces, but rather bonding can potentially happen and the users are open to it.

So, this girl, she, we have started a friendship, she became a part of our cause, see? So, every time she, for example, gathers newspapers, or if she has anything that she fells that might be useful to us, she gives us a call. Then we go down there to get it. There have been some cases like that. (N., 56 years-old).

Now responding more directly to our general objective and trying to understand how the application devices are invested of significance (Orlandi, 2007: 26), we have highlighted the meanings attached by the interviewed social actors to the application devices. Analyzing such procedures of making meanings emerge, we have identified three main narratives build around those application devices, understanding them as being: an alternative to what is hegemonic; tools for justice and tools for the connection among people interested in offering goods/experiences.

However, to me, if we go far beyond, it is something that enables alternatives. Alternatives to the system, right? [...] We are not ending capitalism, but there are ways of surviving in it. (F., 36 years-old).

I am making a choice that, I am not saying goes against capitalism, but it becomes an alternative to traditional consumption. (C., 38 years-old).

To open the field of vision of the people to a new way of bargaining services. (M., 47 years-old).

Look, I think it means an opportunity to offer and to get services fairly. [...] I think it is only fair, you know? I think it is only fair. When you look at the rates of one hour of a persons' work. It is so different. There are people working a lot to get nothing. I think everything is so unfair, you know? But here what rules is the necessity. You need someone to do something. And the other can do it. So, in times of need, money does not matter, understand? I need someone that can clean. I need someone to clean and a gardener. That is what I am looking for. I teach English language and handcrafting. So, whatever if the woman that does gardening studied only until elementary school. I need a gardener. So, her work hour is so valuable as mine, understand? So that is kind of the reason. (I., 58 years-old).

It brings the vision of being together really, a vision of "I have but I don't need it, I will help someone that does need", see? And that person that I have helped may or may not help someone. But I have to believe that the help that I give today will make a memory in the subconscious of the other person, a seed of the idea that helping one another goes far beyond, you know? You are not just thinking about yourself, you are thinking about the other. (F., 27 years-old).

I think the connection among the people. Opportunities because you can learn a lot there. You get to know a lot of people. And you can take this knowledge for many sectors of life. So, I think that the platform can bring a lot of benefits since it does not have a capitalist interest, right? It is only about the interaction among the people, exchanging what they know, and they don't need to be paid with money. (T., 29 years-old).

The moment the participants are openly questioned if they understand the use of the dispositive in question as a form of political activism, the result is that those who have an understanding about politics on a broader sense, as a human positioning in face of the issues brought by life in society, agrees that their own approach is political. Those who relate the term politics to a narrower view, associated with political parties, disagrees on the pollical use of the application devices.

We have found that the political aspect of the application devices for non-monetary benefits are in the possibility of escaping the hegemonic ruling system, although its political nature Is mainly associated with offering access: to provide access to an experience or product that one would not get if depended on money. Even so we should point out that there are still identifiable contradictions regarding access.

In fact, it is reasonable to state that there is an inherent dialectic to the very conception of the digital application device which does not involve money exchange: those who really need to meet free goods and services are lower socioeconomic classes that most of the times do not even have access to the internet, let alone be aware of the existence of such tools and be in touch with those networks. Are the interviewees informed of such inequality? So, being true to this train of thought, the adoption of such application devices would not be overall political because they do not privilege the access of those in greater need.

Anyway, we feel that there truly are contributions of those tools to the political uplifting of access (even if I still restrictive) for the interested people and that they are in fact able to interact optimizing the searches and promoting a greater spectrum of offer/demand that maybe someone's private network would not reach, besides presenting a satisfactory raise in the spectrum of possibilities. Even if the interviewee is already performing a similar type of action doing donations to closer contacts or institutions or if the person offers services without the mediation of such networks (for example: voluntary yoga lessons in a park and English language lessons for the manicurist), the application devices end up being useful and practical tools to better accomplish the actions.

Lastly, we should highlight how much the matter of the humanization of the relationships is spontaneously brought up on the participants speeches: we have recollected statements such as "the platform raises such a human aspect of the person" and "I would say that this is a human attitude" in relation to the

choice of performing consumption actions not made through conventional paths that would involve monetary benefit, but through application devices that do not:

*Making my Independence stronger, you know? To see that there are people that are really not attached to material goods to the point of trying to ell it. Because I have seen a lot of good products there that if it was the case of greed people, those who only think of the money, they would be selling it over the Internet, not giving it, understand? So, I go by this principle as well. For example, there is a machine here and I put an ad for it. I could easily sell it for 100 reais, 150 reais, especially now. But I prefer giving it to someone that I know is in need as I once was, someone that would not be able to buy it, understand? So, I think that besides everything the platform brings up that human side of people. (F., 28 years-old).

*I would say that it is the human attitude. Mainly because my mother was one to always help the others. My mother came from Bahia, right? She came here to São Paulo young; she was 13, 14 years old. So every time she went to Bahia to visit her father, or when she got married again and went to live there with her husband, or when she traveled to Pernambuco, or to any other place, on the way back she would find someone at the bus station, at the airport, trying to stay in São Paulo for a while and our house would become sort of a hostel. So sometimes one entire family would come. [...] That is because she just wanted to help. So, I have a little bit of her in that. [...] I try to help in other ways because of the opportunities I have had. (M., 37 years-old).

Similarly, as we provoked the interviewees to think about the possible humanization that *Tem Açúcar?* and *Beliive* mobilizes there was unanimous agreement as in the following excerpt:

*Look, I have seen, for example, a young boy that said, I mean, his bio was like: "I don't know much of anything, but I want to help". See? That was in his bio. So, I think that is an example [of humanization]. (I., 58 years old).

5. Final considerations

We have faced directly our empirical data recovering what interested us the most, which were the meanings that emerged from the enouncings on social interaction digital trough application devices that enable consumption without monetary transaction and as a result we observed the establishment of three major narratives that justify the use of such application devices instead of traditional ways of acquiring goods and services. Such application devices appear, in a first semantic layer, as alternatives to the traditional hegemonic capitalist trails for the access to consumption, trying to escape it and then making the choice to use them may be an argument strong enough.

On a second layer, the alternative forms represent by the application devices would be fairer in relation to consumption because they put all the offers and demands at the same level of value and of access. That is different from the usual capitalist dynamic, which values differently and unequally the work hours and products/services of people and does not enable access. In a third semantic layer, the application devices potentialize connections between people that are interested in the same goods/experiencer and that would not be reached without such mediation.

Considering such discursive materialities we have observed, we gather that the signification of the application devices that organize collaborative consumption without recurring to monetarization may be summarized as digital ways of subverting the capitalist system by optimizing a fairer access to consumption. The 3 major narrative carry 3 different meanings and we should develop them further? The (re)humanization of relationships; the political nature of consumption and the feeling of nostalgia.

Within such narrative framework, we have observed coming from the interviewed subjects, the perception on collaborative consumption being unanimously understood as an optimized alternative to consumption itself. Even when the social actor relates the notion of collaborative consumption to the aspect of a consumption consciousness and a prestigious attitude for the small producer, thus expanding the concept as proposed by Botsman (2003), the practice of sharing goods online is implied. Regarding consumption in general, it is recurrently described in the order of excess and exaggeration;

perpetrating a shallow perspective which is not in dialogue with the notion of sociocultural practice aiming at supporting individual and collective symbolic needs (Canclini, 2006). Communication, on its turn, is understood as a two-sided process, meaning the realization that there need to be two poles – production and reception – for the effective stabilization of both meaning and message.

The actions put forward trough collaborative application devices for non-monetary benefits are seen by the users as being political when they understand that it promotes access to goods and that it escapes the hegemonic system. It means that it is political when here is conscious choice for one form of consumption and not the other based on the convictions of those in position to decide on the consumption. In that sense, we understand that the political nature of consumption is legitimated as politicity considering the conceptualization that Freire (2008: 34-35) was already applying in the 1980's as he related politics and education. Politicity would then be the essential quality of the educational practice as an act which implies conscious choices based on conceptions and perspectives on the world (Freire, 2008: 34-35). In our case, consumption is understood as politicity because it also implies decision making underlying positionings and beliefs. They are political actions that escape the traditional political spaces and operate in the daily lives of people (Rocha, 2012). Even if our study is focused on the observation of youth, we are able to profit from what Jurandir Freire Costa (2004) recovers on the raise of the number of young individuals with a "new way of thinking", believing in ideals of justice and respect for the other acting as true agents of social change.

> *I see no way out except if we recover the trust in our power of transformation as the creator that we are. However, I repeat that we need to set back from the position we have been put, that of individual exclusively focused on our own selves. Thus, change demands that we realize that what we do in our day to day lives in any professional or cultural activity is relevant. What each one of us does is important, very important! The world is made of small everyday gestures and the larger beliefs that support it. (Costa, 2004: 88)

Emphasizing what Costa (2004) brings and relating to what we have recovered on the enouncings on the practices engendered in the application devices under analysis we are able to operate within our daily lives in the gaps and creations – with the agency of technical innovation – putting forward a new perspective and new actions over reality and consumption, in that case, can be a positivity enhancing practice. Those activities obviously do not have to be restricted to the agency of young people, who are in the focus of the author because, as we have observed in our research, there is not an age limit to the "new" habits.

As much as the shift in thinking has enabled the emergence of dispositives that articulate consumption without the presence of money and thus without the monetary benefit of one of the parts, it is arguable that the same application devices incentive, on their turn, social change. Thus, we unveil a cycle that feeds itself back; there is an opening for individual and collective consciousness which is in the base of such dispositive as much as it comes from them. In the core of the entering those application devices, there are sociabilities which are indirectly organized as agents of the practices, consumption practices included. And all that put into movement through digital application devices. Technology and consumption seen thus as agents of transformation and citizenship.

The Brazilian/Latin American actors that we were in touch with reveal their agency when they put themselves in the position of making criticism and resistance to what is established and when they choose practices that raise the political quality of consumption and when they fight for more equity in consumption relationships; all of that trough digital application devices that promote consumption without the need of the monetary coin in exchange relationship, that meaning to put changes forward.

Considering all the arguments that are intertwined in our study, we would like to end by emphasizing the potential of invention that Simmel (1998) has observed in early modernity as he recognized the dehumanization of relationships as money was introduced in Modern society. In that sense, we are to reveal the potential to (re)humanize relationships trough digital application devices that without the monetary capital give what is human back to the exchange and making more of them than that just commercial contracts.

So, once we are talking about a recovery of an "old" way of being, of belonging and acting in the world and in everyday life, the matter of nostalgia is present. As we go back to a more human connection even if it is still mediated my digital technology, privileging a relationship that is not profit oriented but is based in trusting a neighbor and even trusting strangers those applications mobilize a certain feeling of nostalgia that, according to Batcho (2013) may be structured as a strategy to overcome times of crisis leading once again as we have mentioned before to social change. Even if the social bonds are built trough application devices for non-monetary benefits are not the hegemonic commercial bonding (because the ruling capitalism would not allow) it is extremely important that they are ongoing. Those networks can effectively enable human connection as they privilege, even if in a restricted way, human rights through the free access to material and symbolic goods.

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3.5. FORMS AND PROCESSES OF THE #RURAL #IMAGINARY AS A FUTURE FOR #SUSTAINABILITY

Conceição Cordeiro[52]
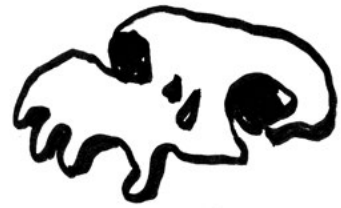
✕ ~~Abstract~~

In the interior of Portugal, forms of the rural imaginary can be found, highlighting Rosa Ramalho, with recognition in the exhibition "All I want - Portuguese Women Artists from 1900 to 2020", at the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation (2021). Like her, many other authors worked on the "figurado", which, disseminated by António A. M. L. Quadros and Ernesto de Sousa (in the 1960s and 1970s) among others, reached a prominent level in the panorama of Portuguese artistic sensibility. However, in this article, we highlight Master José Maria Rodrigues (1906-1999), from Ribolhos, Viseu, Portugal. From the black clay material, we see an imagery of the fabulous emerge. We believe that the notes on these pieces, as well as on their author, contribute to the safeguarding of an ancestral memory, to the safeguarding of a collective memory. Promoting greater sustainability, we will list some projects that work on the reinvention of this rural "know-how" and its adaptation to contemporary times.

1. Master José Maria Rodrigues and the black clay of Ribolhos, Viseu

From the words of Alberto Correia, we learn that José Maria Rodrigues (1906-1999) was the son of a potter, Gabriel Rodrigues. José Maria started working on the low wheel at the age of 8 in his father's workshop until the age of 25. Initially working as a potter, his last years were devoted to the elaboration of three-dimensional forms that we will talk about, and which are called "figurado"[53] in Portuguese language. At the age of 75 he was selling his "figurado" pieces at the Castro Daire fair. Always sitting at the low wheel (Fernandes, 2012: 140), manipulated with his hands, he executed his three-dimensional shapes, simultaneously, using his hands and rudimentary tools. After drying, they would fire in a kiln dug in the ground, called "pit firing" ("soenga"), in a reducing atmosphere, firing without oxygen. It is this firing process that gives the clay its black colour, consecrating its form with such a personal signature. José Maria lived and worked in Ribolhos, a place of potters, of which we highlight Master Albino and Joaquim Ribeiro.

Isabel Fernandes tells us that in 2010, in the parish of Ribolhos, black ware production was considered: "Extinct. Parishes where the art is extinct, not even existing oral memory about the potters and the potteries" (Fernandes, 2012: 49). We can find the pieces of José Maria Rodrigues in the following

Portuguese museum institutions:

✖ - Grão Vasco Museum, Viseu;

✖ - District Assembly of Viseu (Assembleia Distrital de Viseu), Viseu;

✖ - Pottery Museum, Barcelos[54];

✖ - Platform Cultural Heritage-MatrizNet, donation of Prof. Werner Tobias to the National Museum of Ethnology[55] and other regional museums as Municipal Museum of Castro Daire [56].

The recognition given to these forms ("figurado") by the museum institutions where we can find them today, reveal their importance as elements of an intangible identity.

They were also recognised by artists, in particular Ernesto de Sousa and António Quadros, about whom we shall speak later.

1.1. Formal analysis of Master José Maria's figuration

The forms we are going to analyse are zoomorphic forms ("figurado") named Bird (e.g., Figures 3.5.1 and 3.5.2) and *Crocodile* (e.g., Figures 3.5.3), that take us to profound times, to ancestral times, to archaic times, to distant times, making, for us, the counterpoint, the balance with the increasingly global era of technologies. These forms correspond, on the other hand, to an inner expression.

What are these forms telling us about? Of a dreamlike world, very personal, very rudimentary, portraying the life and animals of their geographical and social surroundings. This is the result of the artistic expression of rural areas in the centre of the country, during the second half of the twenty century.

▶ **Figures 3.5.1.** Master José Maria, second half of the twenty century, Bird, black clay, 26x10x7cm
▶ **Source:** Author's archive
▶

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54 *Black Clay Masters José Maria and Joaquim Alvelos*. Exhibition at the Museu de Olaria, Barcelos, from 14 April to 18 June 2022 (*Mestres do Barro Negro José Maria e Joaquim Alvelos*. Exposição no Museu de Olaria, Barcelos, de 14 de abril a 18 de junho, 2022).

55 Retrieved from http://www.matriznet.dgpc.pt/MatrizNet/Objectos/ObjectosConsultar.aspx?IdReg=87742 (1-07-2022).

56 Retrieved from http://www.cmcastrodaire.pt/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=246&limitstart=2 (1-07-2022).

▸ **Figures 5.3.2.** Master José Maria, second half of the twenty century, Bird (detail), black clay, 26x10x7cm
▸ **Source:** Author's archive

▸ **Figures 5.3.3.** Master José Maria, second half of the twenty century, Crocodile, black clay, 22x8,5x4cm[57]
▸ **Source:** Author's archive

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57 We can find the same form at MatrizNet: "Zoomorphic figure in the form of a crocodile. It has a long horizontal body, four oval legs and on the head two printed circles representing the eyes, two holes for the nostrils and a horizontal line representing the mouth. The hue is black". Retrieved from http://www.matriznet.dgpc.pt/MatrizNet/Objectos/ObjectosConsultar.aspx?IdReg=87742 (1-07-2022).

▶ **Figure 3.5.4.** Master José Maria, second half of the twenty century, Crocodile (detail), black clay, 22x8,5x4cm
▶ **Source:** Author's archive

▶ **Figure 3.5.5.** Master José Maria, second half of the twenty century, Crocodile (detail), black clay, 22x8,5x4cm. Signature of José Maria – J M
▶ **Source:** Author's archive

Isabel Fernandes tells us that this black clay forms/pottery is not found in the south of the country (except for Flor da Rosa, Crato, in the district of Portalegre, Portugal), due to the contrast of the mountains with the white-painted plains and of the black clay with the colourful " figurado " of Estremoz[58]. This forms that the official culture, that is, the erudite culture, did not terminate, did not dictate rules. No canons were used. The Greeks and the Romans were not known by the people of Ribolhos, but from an older and inner culture.

The synthetic shapes, the rough but shiny material (it contains mica), the immediate features, the textures, the straight lines, the dots, the incisions that mark the still wet clay, determine the details, without hesitations, without virtuosity, manage to make these pieces of a unique singularity.

The author, Master José Maria, does not place himself in the position of an observer before the work, as Carl Einstein explains (Einstein, 2011: 37-38), when reflecting on non-western art, particularly African art. The maker does not step back or forward to check the state of the work. He does not use perspective. He does not use value judgements. It neither censors nor remakes it. The work is executed, purely and simply, taking only the matter and the imaginary as its focus. No surface finishes are made. The mass is worked and remains so. The pieces are signed with J M (José Maria), in grooved points (e. g., Figure 3.5.5).

Similarly, to the African sculptures studied by Einstein, we point out the work, the "figurado" of Master José Maria as "pure plastic forms" (Einstein, 2011: 38). Another notion that we take from Carl Einstein is that of "primitive", also relative to African sculptures, which we take for the "figurado" of Master José Maria.

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58 The Estremoz Clay Forms Production is part of the National Inventory of Intangible Cultural Heritage, since 2014, being since 07-12-2017 UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity.

According to Charles W. Haxthausen, the term "primitive" for Einstein is synonymous with "immediate", "unmediated", and "unfiltered":

> *The term "primitive" as Einstein used it here is closely linked with the term unmittelbar, unmediate or immediate, which is a critical term in his theoretical vocabulary, [and it means] "Elements that are the foundation of life; the necessary, the long forgotten". (…) To be immediate, then, was to be open to experience unfiltered by conventional signs, to be aware of those functional operations of perception and cognition through which we construct the world - it was to make perception a creative act (Haxthausen, 2003: 113)

This notion of knowledge without mediation and without filters, in a perception that leads to the creative act, is an idea that appears in the first paragraph of Einstein's text "On primitive art":

> *If an art of immediacy is greatly lacking in the European world, we compensate for this with a plethora of artistic exploiters, among whom we must count first and foremost the painters and scribes of paraphrase: indirect artists, second-hand men, rentiers of tradition, in short, European middlemen (Einstein, 2011: 185)[59].

By artistic explorers Einstein refers to gallery owners, critics and painters who lived off the dividends of tradition, who contradicted the idea of immediate art. For Einstein, the "primitive" is a state without a precise time, without chronology, of central positioning (Cordeiro, 2017: 34). The European prejudice and its self-assumed superiority undermine from the outset any possibility of scientific and non-judgemental analysis. We can only observe what we know culturally? The pieces/works of Master José Maria enter a "counter-aesthetic" (Didi-Huberman, 2017: 218) vision that denies the value of the beautiful (intrinsically linked to Western taste), referring us to the value of genealogy, and of origin, which finds resonances in other works, in other times. Carl Einstein leads us in the reading of these black clay forms when he proposes an "ethnology of art, in which the work is no longer considered as an end in itself, but, rather as a living and magical force. Only in this condition will the images recover their importance as acting and vital energies" (Didi-Huberman, 2017: 210). The works/forms of Master José Maria, like the African sculptures, cannot be read from an evolutionist point of view, nor can they be seen as "primitive", as they are read by Western art history. We will find again in Carl Einstein his appreciation:

> *There is hardly an art that Europeans regard with as much suspicion as African art. His immediate tendency is to deny the very fact that it is an "art", expressing the distance that separates these creations from the European conception with a contempt that even leads to a derogatory terminology (Einstein, 2021: 23)

We look at Master José Maria's forms with the same eye that Einstein, at the beginning of the twenty century, reflected on African sculptures, with an unprejudiced, non-Eurocentric gaze. There were several Portuguese artists, such as Amadeu de Sousa Cardoso, Eduardo Viana and Sarah Afo who were delighted with the forms from a profound rural Portugal. The University of P 2022, exhibits drawings by Aurélia de Souza, from the Barcelos´s "figurado" (called P university, the academy legitimizes these "figurado" works to present inedited dra for the commemoration of the centenary of Aurélia de Souza's death. It is anothe of the academy, which contributes to the wider knowledge of Aurélia de Souza's ` her relationship with three-dimensional forms representative of rural experience, construction, as is the "figurado" of Barcelos and by affinity, as is the forms of Master

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59 "Si un art de l'immédiaté fait grandement defaut au monde européen, nous compensons cette lacune par plethore d'exploiteurs artistiques, au nombre desquels il faut compter en premier lieu les peintres et les scribes de la paraphrase: artists indirects, hommes de second main, rentiers de la tradition, en un mot, les intermédiaires européens").

60 Retrieved from: https://noticias.up.pt/universidade-do-porto-apresenta-ineditos-de-aurelia-de-souza/ (16-09-2022)

2. The promoters of "figurado": Ernesto de Sousa and António Quadros

Ernesto de Sousa (1921-1988) was a prolific artist, writer, photographer, director, curator, and art critic. Coming from the neo-realist movement, he knew how to balance the artistic avant-gardes of his time with the ethnological collection of the so-called "folk art" or, as we say "popular/rural art". He recognizes Rosa Ramalho's forms (among others), promotes them, and leads to the exhibition "4 Popular/Folk Artists from the North: Clay and Imaginary", at Galeria Divulgação, in 1964 in Lisbon. This exhibition reconverts the gap between high art and "popular art"/folk art.

António Augusto de Melo Lucena e Quadros (1933-1994), painter, writer and teacher at School of Fine Arts of Porto (Faculty of Fine Arts of the University of Porto (FBAUP)), Portugal. As a painter, he produced work influenced by European artists such as Marc Chagall (1887-1985) and Pablo Picasso (1881-1973) and by Mexican and Latin American surrealist painters. In his work there are references to the rural imaginary and to the pottery/ "figurado" of Barcelos. In fact, it was António Quadros who discovered the legendary creator of clay forms from the north of Portugal, province of Minho, Rosa Ramalho (1888-1977)[61]. Several sources mention that it was António Quadros who discovered Rosa Ramalho at a fair in Fontainhas, Porto, and that he also suggested that she sign the pieces with the two RRs (e.g., Figures 3.5.6), as we know today.

▸ **Figures 3.5.6.** Rosa Ramalho, second half of the twenty century, Pregnant Goat and detail with the RR, glazed clay, 23x19x10cm
▸ **Source:** Author's archive

Recognizing the value of the shapes created by Rosa Ramalho, he publicized them, proposing several orders that would be much appreciated in Coimbra, Lisbon and Cascais, Portugal. Thus, was born the recognition for the "figurado of Barcelos" that has managed to survive to this day.

3. Sustainable projects

The artistic practice of modelling clay forms, with very rudimentary utensils in wood or metal and their firing in pit-firing ("soenga") kiln, a kiln that requires only an open-air space, land to make a circular

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61   Retrieved from https://sigarra.up.pt/up/pt/web_base.gera_pagina?p_pagina=antigos%20estudantes%20ilustres%20-%20ant%c3%b3nio%20quadros (6-07-2022).

groove, wood to create fire and clay to cover up the entire area of the kiln, influenced contemporary artists and it contributes to a sustainable artistic practice. Below, we present two contemporary lines of work, two distinct ceramic production projects, both using the pit-firing ("soenga") kiln.

3.1. Sara Navarro and the approach to archaeology

Sara Navarro (b. 1980), Ph.D. Sculptress with the thesis: "Sculpture, Archaeology and Museums. Contemporary Transfigurations and Mediations" (2014) from Faculty of Fine Arts, University of Lisbon (FBAUL)[62], research focused on prehistoric ceramics, with representation at the Geological Museum of Lisbon, transposed to contemporary artistic practice, using ancient "pit firing" ("soenga") process.

From the revised documentation we can observe the sculptress firing the pieces by the "soenga" process (reducing atmosphere, without oxygen), observe the result of the terracotta pieces after firing, showing lighter and darker stains resulting from the proximity to fire and smoke.

The sculptress explains her work:

> *I set out to create pieces that refer to art and to the culture of other times and other places. Pieces that, by their morphology and production technique take me back to a time when ceramics was a technology, a technological conquest. Through transfiguration, I rethink and reinvent, in a new framework, old Neolithic novelties (Navarro, 2014a: 125).*

Another notion we would like to draw from the same article by Sara Navarro is developed by two authors Kubler (1962) and Perniola (2003): the first one defends the appearance of sequential forms in different historical periods, their actuality being triggered by new techniques or new events; the second author reinforces the idea that forms "have a systemic age" rather than a chronological age (Navarro, 2014a: 133).

These sculptures reflect a journey to the origins of ceramic production, a journey to the most ancestral cultural forms, full of symbolism both in terms of form and textures, incisions, in a persistent need to revisit the primordiality.

3.2. Sérgio do Amaral from Nothing to Creation

Sérgio do Amaral (b. 1959), ceramist with atelier in the village of Santa Luzia, Mangualde, Viseu, Portugal, develops a work of self-training, where the "know-how" of the masters of black earthenware of the region (where the workshop of Master José Maria was also located), is associated with his personal experience, producing pieces in black clay, called "matarrachos"[63], using the typical "soenga" kiln. About the designation of "matarrachos", Sérgio explains:

> *I started with pottery, but that same year, while I was making other pieces, I started with the "matarrachos". One day, I don't know how or why, those shapes, those figures came to me. And I was amazed and asked: "What the hell is this? They can only be "matarrachos". [laughs] And the "matarrachos" remained. It was just like that! For me, the word "matarrachos" had to do with purity, with something primitive. The forms emanated from the earth, almost transforming themselves. They had no anatomy, nothing, but they were significant. And you could say: that's the musician, that's the fishmonger… At that time, I used to portray people around me a lot[64].*

His interest in black clay began in the 1980s, when he was passing through the village of Molelos, south of Viseu, watching the old potters of black clay, and continuing their work was his decision, as he reports in the interview with Bica Magazine:

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62 Retrieved from: https://www.academia.edu/8319898/Escultura_Arqueologia_e_Museus_Transfigura%C3%A7%C3%B5es_e_Media%C3%A7%C3%B5es_Contempor%C3%A2neas (6-07-2022). The images of the pieces created by Sara Navarro can be seen on the following site http://fotoarchaeology.blogspot.com/2011/06/cozedura-em-fogueira-soenga.html (6-07-2022)

63 See the black clay work "Matarrachos" from Sérgio Amaral at https://www.turismodemangualde.pt/olaria.php (6-07-2022)

64 Retrieved from https://www.artepopularportuguesa.org/sergio-amaral/ (6-07-2022)

I saw that there was a huge gap in the continuity of the activity there, and that enthusiasm led me to start working on the wheel, and later to do my firing by the traditional process of "soenga", where a hole is dug in the earth where the pieces are placed. It's a beautiful and quite primitive process[65].

Sérgio Amaral is represented in the following Portuguese museums: Museum of Popular Art, Lisbon; Tile Museum, Lisbon; Pottery Museum, Barcelos; Museum of Anthropology, Lisbon, among others.

Conclusions

Having regard to the works ("figurado") presented, we would like to reinforce Didi- Huberman's idea of "counter aesthetic", Carl Einstein's ideas of the "ethnology of art", the "pure plastic forms" and "immediacy" that underlies the term "primitive". Like the previous authors, Kubler also defends the fact that forms reappear in the course of history and Perniola attributes to forms a systemic age. All these concepts we will apply to the forms of Master José Maria, to the working process of Sara Navarro and to the forms of Sérgio do Amaral.

The works/pieces by Master José Maria, like African sculptures, cannot be read from an evolutionary point of view, nor seen as "primitive", as Western art history reads them. These forms arise from a inner artistic potential. The cases of Sara Navarro and Sérgio Amaral with distinct education and culture, both recover an ancient process of firing pieces: the "soenga"/ "pit firing".

Although the designation of "primitive" forms, mentioned by Sérgio Amaral, we would like to point out that this terminology, since it began to be applied to non-western sculptures, at the beginning of the twenty century, from a very Eurocentric perspective, has caused much debate and much literature. We understand it as belonging to our own quality as human beings, which triggers from time to time, or when times call for it, as a reaction to an excessive rationalism, or as Sara Navarro states belonging to a cognitive *continuum* (Navarro, 2014a: 21). There were/are several artists whose work is intertwined with rituals, with Nature and with human inner natures.

On the question of "primitivism" we are driven towards a formal analysis of non-Western art as Carl Einstein has done or towards an art that sets out to break with academic canons, which reappears whenever it is necessary. In the 1960s, Portuguese artists and intellectuals such as Ernesto de Sousa and António Quadros brought so-called "popular" art/folk art to galleries and museums, recognizing its artistic value, and its study is increasingly current, as it is read as a return to the origins, and to more sustainable ways of developing artistic creation. Nowadays these works are considered by the erudite culture, being part of remarkable exhibitions and museum displays.

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GENDER, HISTORICITY,

MIGR — ATIONS, SYMBOLIC AND

RACIAL-ETHNIC VIOLENCES

4.1. DRAWING GENDER AND STITCHING MEMORIES: AN EXPLORATION ON VISUAL ARTS, CLOTHES AND POETRY

Gabriela Massote Lima[66]

✖ ~~Abstract~~

This paper intends to develop about the female gaze as a strategy to reverse a historical way of looking through the series *My Manly Brazil*. A selection of old photographs collected at antique fairs, in which all of the portrayed subjects are white men in leadership positions has suffered mixed interference in order to provoke changes in the codes of manly representation and claim women artists as producers and no longer in secondary roles according to the historical visual, social and sexual codes.

Keywords: collage, male representation, female gaze.

The collage series *My Manly Brazil* presented at Kismif Conference 22 has been created in order to draw attention to Brazilian's cultural machismo or structural sexism. This work was created in 2018 at a time when sexual freedom discourses began to be more strongly censored and right-wing parties' extreme conservatism was growing in Brazil and the world. Based on a selection of old photographs, collected from antique fairs, in which all of those portrayed are white men in active or leadership positions: politicians, militaries, executives, bureaucrats; the series My Manly Brazil intends to provoke alterations in the codes of domination that repeat a phallic imaginary in its several manifestations, since men's bodies or gendered social representation.

Working with archival images feels like a chance to bring physical evidences from the past to present time. Brazilian politicians who have been active since last century until today have suffered mixed interventions such as collage, clippings and painting. This mixed media collage updates original images from a past time and ironically denounce the old, but still constant, aesthetic of propagating masculinity and its virile codes, especially about current Brazilian government that works in favor of weapons in the hands of random citizens and promotes violence against women among other major setbacks.

In other hand, the main layer to be added to this work brings us to the title, *Female Gaze: The male body as a strategy*. *My Manly Brazil* has been built under a female gaze[67] perspective, focused on the male body as a conscious method of subverting stereotypes of masculine in art, historically constructed by the

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male gaze itself. "Who holds the power to look at the naked male body now is the female artist and not the male artist over his female model or his muse, a bourgeois patriarchal normative condition that has always controlled the gaze". (Oliveira, 2021: 49).

Although male gaze creates an imbalance of power, sustaining the patriarchal *status quo*, this feminine gaze should not be used simply as an inverse way of seeing and the consequent objectification of the male body, which would turn the term reductive. Female gaze should not be seen only under the bias of simple looking or even a mere inversion of the male gaze, but in a way this active gaze affects the conditions of women artists as producers, becoming subject and no longer the other, or the object as traditional art has disseminated for centuries. (Lima, 2021). The series, composed by over 50 images of traditionally considered manly elements, such the Army uniforms for instance, guns or several other male-only institutional meetings, lights us up to the extremely important perception that not only the classical institutions such as the State, the Family and the Church (Bourdieu, 1999), but also the medias, Photography and the History of Art themselves, have had great participation in the symbolic construction and visual strengthening of phallic signs and myths linked to the male body and its compulsory virility.

If gender is a constructed representation itself, it seems that feminist theory should work exactly at representation matters, (Lauretti, 1994) since images affect social reality. Women artists in this actual inverted place of an active observer in Art, have the power to transform the male body representation into her object of study, object of desire or political research. The female gaze towards representations of the male body, added to the theories of gender, allow us to advance in discussions regarding pre-determined social relations and question the very institutional prerogatives of art history that led to the exclusion of women artists as producers, relegating us to secondary roles. Women have always occupied the place of the observed, represented and desired, that meaning, the passive object. If, until the end of the nineteenth century, the practice of live drawing of male nude models was unavailable to female artists, we can affirm that, the erotic imagery related to the male body was also, all this time, constructed by the man himself. In this way, the male body was always perceived as the representation of something universal and never objectified. (Bordo & Jaggar, 1997). To inscribe the female gaze at the heart of our lives is, therefore, to reverse a historical way of seeing things, and to change the patriarchal relations and political strategy of art production. "A woman's gaze can make masculinity unstable and vulnerable". (Oliveira, 2021: 49).

▶ **Figure 4.1.1.** Untitled (thief)
▶ **Source:** Gabriela Lima, 2018, My Manly Brazil.
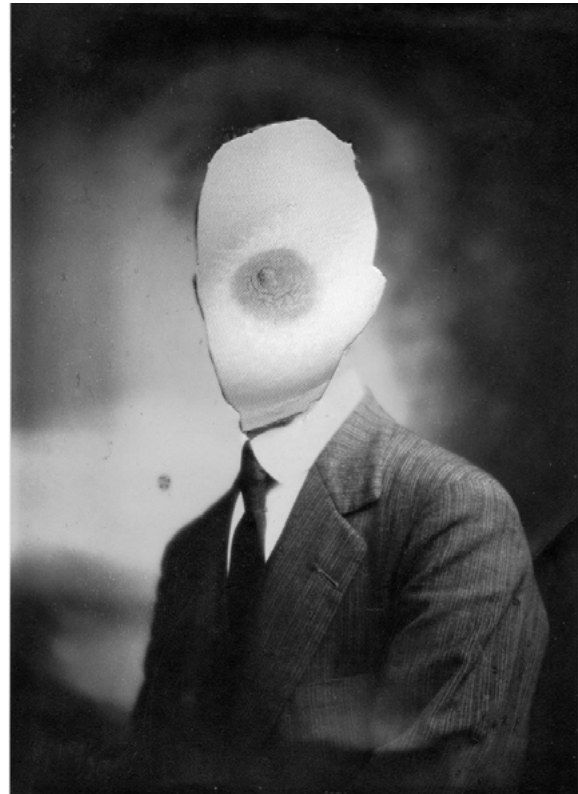
▶ **Figure 4.1.2.** Untitled (nipple)
▶ **Source:** Gabriela Lima, 2018, My Manly Brazil.
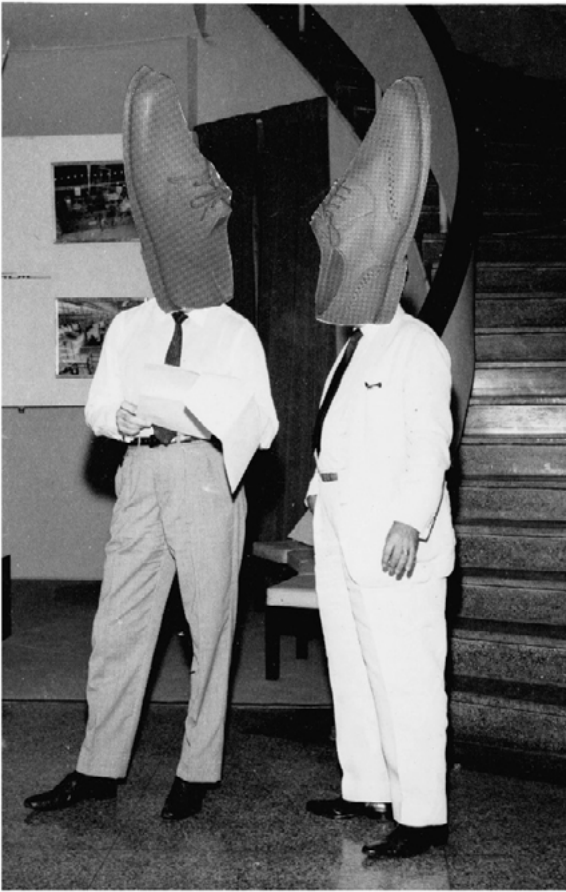
▸ **Figure 4.1.3.** Untitled (shoes)
▸ **Source:** Gabriela Lima, 2018, My Manly Brazil.
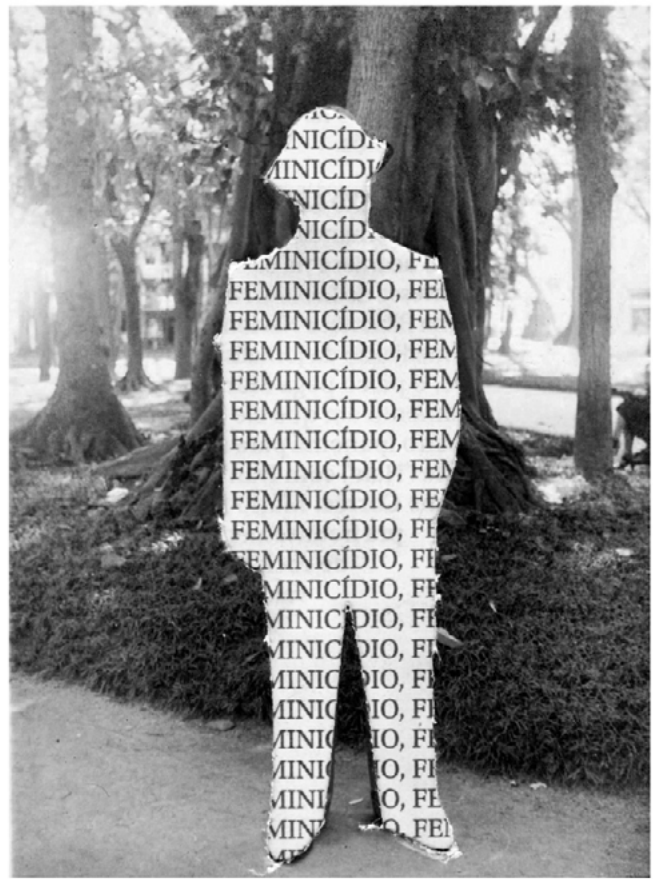
▸ **Figure 4.1.4.** Untitled (femicide)
▸ **Source:** Gabriela Lima, 2018, My Manly Brazil.

▸ **Figure 4.1.5.** Untitled (devils)
▸ **Source:** Gabriela Lima, 2018, My Manly Brazil.

▸ **Figure 4.1.6.** Untitled (Venus)
▸ **Source:** Gabriela Lima, 2018, My Manly Brazil.

▸ **Figure 4.1.7.** Untitled (Picasso)
▸ **Source:** Gabriela Lima, 2018, My Manly Brazil.

- ▸ **Figure 4.1.8.** Untitled (Manet)
- ▸ **Source:** Gabriela Lima, 2018, My Manly Brazil.

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4.2 WOMEN DANCING AND SINGING THE RESISTANCE IN MÉXICO: MUSIC AS A NEW STRATEGY FOR JUSTICE?

Dulce Martínez[68] & Alberto Sánchez[69]

✖ ~~Abstract~~

Since 2020 the societies have been faced a growing crises in ecological, economic, health, politics and cultural aspects. Racism, xenophobia and violence against women are some problems that this pandemic increased. That is why people got organized and went out to the streets -no matter the infections- to ask for justice. Different social movements and collectives organized in times of quarantine, groups with their own objectives and purposes, but in mexican society has been noted those that have been conformed by women where music, singing and dancing have been one way of struggle. In this context we want to reflect about social function of music, dance and sing in the protest of some feminist collective in Mexico City, specially the collective called "Ni Una Menos México Frente Nacional", basically with the purpose of dialogue by one hand how this artivism (Gombrich, 2003) can give agency to women and could be a means of wielding power. And by the other hand, reflect how music, sing and dance allow to express their pain and anger for the violence against women and femicides, and at the same time this way of resistance can constitute collective actions that arise from emotions (Didi-Huberman, 2016) which could build collaborative practices and alternative strategies that looking for justice.

Keywords: women, gender violence, music, artivism, emotions.

1. Introduction

Mexican society in recent years has faced a critical panorama, not only due to the consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic, but also due to other viruses that have not been contained and have even increased: violence, disappearances, discrimination, femicides. These tragedies have caused the emergence of various groups and collectives, with different objectives and forms of action but with the same purpose: to seek justice and promote social change, where artivism has been one way of resistance and struggle.

During the first six months of 2020, the registration of femicides in Mexico increased 9.2%[70], and Fuentes[71] mentions that in the first two months of 2022 it increased by 9.66% in relation to the same period of 2021. This situation has caused collective indignation, anger and pain, which has led to mobilizations in search of justice, where artivism has been an important element. This text seeks to contribute to the reflection

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on the forms of resistance, struggle and action of the collective called "Ni Una Menos México Frente Nacional", who due to exhaustion indifference and impunity in the face of gender violence, so they have sought disrupt social reality through artivism where music, song and dance are one way or resistance, and emotions have been a kind of engine for their fight. Injustice in the face of disappearances and femicides are increasingly constant, which has caused "chronic collective stress" (Sloterdijk, 2017) and discomfort therefore the emergence of solidarities that have constituted social and affective bonds that have induced collective action:

> *Collective action is always the fruit of a tension that disturbs the balance of the social system. The tension produces generalized beliefs that mobilize action and seek to restore the balance of the system. In collective action there is no meaning that refers to class relations, to the way in which resources are produced and appropriated. This action is only a settlement reaction of the functional mechanisms of a system (Melucci, 1996: 68)

The sisterhood among the women who make up the groups, in this case the group called "Ni Una Menos México Frente Nacional", has also allowed forging a cohesive device, which has also favored the constitution of collective identifications: "... collective identifications are the instruments or resources that allow personal identity to operate its mutations. Collective identification begins here, within oneself, during the heart, of the intimate universe. Two people are enough to find a group" (Kauffman, 2004: 127). Alain Touraine (2005) has mentioned that in order to understand and explain new events, such as the case of groups organized by women, it is necessary to start from a new paradigm, a cultural paradigm that provides elements to investigate old problems –such as the violence or discrimination - which are still present in contemporary societies, but in different contexts and fields of action; where micropolitics (culture as reactionary actions) and micro-stories (Lyotard, 1999) have been generated, singularity as production of action and phenomenon. Without a doubt, this collective "Ni Una Menos México Frente Nacional" has built micro-stories and has promoted micro-policies that have shaken the social structures in our society. It is worth mentioning that groups or social movements organized by women are not new, and in this second decade of the twenty-first century they raise their voices again in various cities around the world to denounce exploitation, sexual abuse, sexual harassment, labor inequality or discrimination. In the case of our country, the pain, discomfort and exhaustion in the face of impunity for femicides and gender-based violence have forced women to take action on their own, with their own means, in order to transform the existing social structures and politics, where emotion and sisterhood along with artivism have been fundamental to their struggle and resistance.

The collective "Ni Una Menos México Frente Nacional" is one of many groups organized and led by women in Mexico. This group was started by Mrs. Yesenia Zamudio because in 2016 her daughter Marichuy was murdered. The impunity and indifference on the part of the authorities in the case of her daughter led Zamudio to seek an alternative struggle and began the organization of the collective "Ni una Menos México Frente Nacional" in order to be heard, visible and demand justice. She was joined by other mothers who also lost their daughters or suffered gender-based violence. The case of this group of women has been taken up in this text, to reflect on their forms of collective action because they take up artivism as a strategic form of struggle and resistance, but some members of this group have also resorted to iconoclasm, which has raised different opinions in society. On the one hand, there is a part of society that supports their actions but there is another part that rejects them and criticizes them for the destruction and graffiti they carry out on monuments and buildings of historical value. As happened in September 2020 when they took over the National Human Rights Commission (CNDH in spanish) building located in the center of Mexico City.

Artivism (a term that incorporates art and activism and has an artistic heritage of urban art or avant-garde art) as Gombrich (2003) points out, can be understood as an artistic-political movement capable of reestablishing the social function of art. Fight from aesthetics, where music, dance, singing or performance have been fundamental elements of resistance in the collective "Ni Una Menos México Frente Nacional". Mario Perniola in his text "Contemporary aesthetics", mentions that in contemporary societies aesthetic acts are carried out in daily life that come from feeling: "from feeling; that is, the field of sensitivity, affectivity, emotion" (Perniola, 2016: 13). A daily aesthetic that causes an impact on emotions

but also on biopolitics (Foucault, 2008), and these aesthetic acts have caused a collective empathy, a cathartic release. A collective-aesthetic action where a collective euphoria arises without class hierarchy or dogmatism. In other words, it is a political action that has resorted to musical art, song and dance to express that collective anger. And in the case of music, perhaps it can be said that they have included it as a strategy in their struggle because it is an ineffable metalanguage, capable of saying and expressing suffering, sadness and anger in another way:

> *The music alone constitutes a separate chapter. In it we do not find the imitation or reproduction of an idea of the essence of the world; but it is such a great and admirable art, it works so powerfully on the spirit of man, it affects him in such a powerful and magnificent way, that it can be compared to a universal language, whose clarity and eloquence far surpass all the languages of the world (Schopenhauer, 2016: 34).

Music has been that language that has made it possible to express social unrest by disrupting emotion. Perhaps they have resorted to music, dance and song to shout their pain and demand justice for their dead daughters because words by themselves are no longer enough, as Ocaña points out: "Pain is an undoing: not only disturbs or not only unsettles, but also steals the very possibility of articulated speech, undoes the cultural voice to the point of the animal cry" (Ocaña, 1997: 37).In this sense, music and song help to say, to cry out that suffering when the word itself cannot do it, when the spirits have been hit, then the song helps to enunciate and express those emotions, that pain and that indignation collective. Through the melodies, the rhythms, the dances and the songs, they have found another way of saying, of expressing their anger, their pain, but also of demanding justice and being visible before society and the authorities who have been indifferent to their suffering. Music has allowed them to express their emotions, their discomfort, their sadness, their pain, but at the same time those emotions have been a motor for their collective actions. George Didi-Huberman in his book *Peoples in Tears, Peoples in Arms* (2017), addresses emotions from an action perspective, that is, emotions are not a sign of weakness or passivity but quite the opposite, emotions are viewed as potency, as the origin of action, "as an effectiveness, in Nietzsche's sense: *the effectiveness of the affective*. Heidegger points it out as power, capacity or resource" (Didi-Huberman, 2017: 19).

Emotions together with artivism have been essential to build a form of struggle and resistance from the sensible. A clear example is the power that the "Song without Fear" ("Canción Sin Miedo" in spanish) by the Mexican singer-songwriter Vivir Quintana has given them. This song was presented for the first time during the 8M of 2020 in the CDMX downtown "Zócalo", and from that date it has been sung in several countries and has even been translated into other languages and has been considered as a Feminist Anthem, because this song states and represents their pain, their sadness, their discomfort, their anger and their struggle. From the sensible they have disrupted social reality and have formed a community, but a community in the sense that Roberto Esposito points out, a community due to a lack, due to an absence: "Communitas is the set of people that it unites, not a "property", but precisely... a "less", a lack, or even a modality of lack, for those who are "affected"..." (Esposito, 2003: 29).

2. Final reflection

▶ **Figure 4.2.1.** The "other" Wall during 8M 2021
▶ **Source:** Dulce Martínez Noriega during the 8M-2021 protest in Mexico City.

The groups organized and led by women have carried out actions and strategies of struggle from different spaces but they have all arisen from emotion, sensitivity, affectivity, where pain, anger, sadness, collective stress have served as engine, as that act of power and force that has led them to make the decision to act with their own means in order to disrupt social structures or cause changes in regulatory frameworks. Emotions have led them to proceed in different ways and they have resorted to artivism, where music, singing and dancing have managed to move a part of society and have shown solidarity with their struggle. The sensitive has been essential to be visible to society and the authorities.

Of course there are still many barriers to break down, however their struggles have not been in vain, and despite the fact that progress has been slow and could even be said minimal or that there is a setback in terms of solving these problems, their actions have provided expectations of change, which can be observed, for example, in some autonomous educational institutions, which have begun to include changes with respect to social inclusion, non-discrimination, respect for sexual diversity, and prevention of and attention to gender-based violence gender.

Another essential element is that these women have built their own spaces of struggle and strategies, where their presence and activity in the so-called Information Society, which through interconnectivity and interactivity (Derrick de Kerckhove, 1999) have found new spaces and other forms of organization, action, participation and dissemination. Now also from their social networks they have found another space for struggle and have managed to open up the participation of women in decision-making, fight for women's rights, have a presence and a voice.

Undoubtedly much remains to be done, but these collective actions arising from emotion have allowed some progress, and these women can be an example of the "Third woman" (Lipovetsky, 1999), that contemporary woman who breaks with traditional patterns and drives other women to bring about

changes in social structures. Transformations from emotions and artivism, that is, from the sensitive, affectivity as the origin of new practices, struggles and strategies for change.

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4.3. TRANSNATIONAL SCENE PARTICIPATION AND DIY STRATEGIES OF RELOCATION IN THE MIGRATORY EXPERIENCES OF CROATIAN PUNKS

Jacopo Sanna[72]

✖ ~~**Abstract**~~

Using the DIY punk scene of Croatia as a case study, this paper aims at seeing to what extent scene participation influences the migratory experiences of scene participants who relocate abroad, and how is it simultaneously influenced by them. Drawing from a series of interviews and using theoretical tools borrowed from transnationalism studies and Bourdieu's sociology, the analysis aims at investigating three dimensions of the interaction between migration and scene participation: first, whether being active in a scene has any influences on the decision of relocating abroad and on the destination choice; second, what are the main factors in determining whether an individual will feel compelled to still be active in a scene abroad; third, how intra-European migratory phenomena have an influence on local and translocal DIY punk music scenes in terms of trades of DIY capital between home scenes and host scenes through the mediation of punk migrants.

Keywords: DIY punk, migration, transnationalism, Croatia.

1. Introduction

Participating in the DIY punk subculture has been recognized by several scholars as a life-changing event for many (Moran, 2010; Dunn, 2012; Guerra, 2017). Such participation has proved to influence the ethical and ideological principles of many musicians, record label owners and fanzine producers, other than their relationship with politics. More notably, it allowed many to broaden their social capital and in turn to occasionally convert it into other types of capital. The concept of DIY capital by Guerra (2017, 2018) is particularly useful in this context. Reframing Thornton's subcultural capital (1995), Guerra defines DIY capital as the "competencies, skills, scene-knowledge and networks" (Guerra, 2018: 242) of various natures obtained through participating in a scene. It is an effective tool to better understand to what extent participating in a DIY subculture influence a person's life.

The goal of this paper is to see how participating in such a scene can influence the relationship of a scene participant with mobility and migration, but at the same time, more broadly, how DIY punk scene participation and migration interact with each other and what effect does that have on the everyday lives of scene participants.[73] In other words, this could translate into analyzing how is DIY capital used by

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73 Although there is a clear acknowledgment of the fact that subcultures now tend to support the formation of transnational communities, the way migration and subculture participation can interact has been scarcely analyzed thus far. The way these subcultures form transnational communities, in fact, rarely has to do with the movement of people and face-to-face interactions and relies most often solely on the internet (Bennett & Peterson, 2004; Driver & Bennett, 2015; Hodkinson, 2002). On the other hand, most studies on the effect of immigration on culture have focused on music styles that in a way help connect the migrant to his or her ethnic heritage (Hemetek, 2001; Baily & Collyer, 2006; Kölbl, 2021). The relationship between migration and home-

scene participants in their migratory experiences. I would like to explore this particularly in the European context, due to its peculiarity of having become a transnational space characterized by the freedom of movement for its citizens (Castro-Martin & Cortina, 2015), meaning it could offer a higher amount of case studies to test the relationship between subculture participation and migration.

More precisely, I will focus on Croatian intra-European emigrants, as Croatia is the latest country to join the European Union in 2013, an event that enhanced migration from Croatia to other member states by 30% or 60% (Draženović, Kunovac & Pripužić, 2018). Besides, Croatia also has one of the most active DIY punk scenes in the Southeast European region, with several active bands, venues and festivals emerging throughout the country.

2. Theoretical and methodological notes

Other than being fond of Bourdieu's sociology of habitus, capital and field (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992) and of its subcultural reframing by Thornton (1995) and Guerra (2017, 2018), this research relies theoretically on the transnationalism studies connected to migration that developed starting from the end of the twentieth century. These studies see the lives of (trans)migrants as depending on both their host country and their home country (Glick Schiller, Basch & Szanton Blanc, 1995), with consequent economic, socio-cultural and political impacts on both the migrants and the families and collective groups left in the home country (Vertovec, 2001).

Particularly relevant here is the concept of "transnationalism from below" (Guarnizo & Smith, 1998), that is, the form of transnationalism that describes the transnational daily lives and social relationships of people rather than a macro-analysis of transnational relationships between nation-states ("transnationalism from above"). According to Kennedy and Roudometof (2002), however, as a consequence of globalization, transnational relationships are not exclusive to the experiences of immigrants but can also be extended to different types of communities that share similar tastes, shared beliefs or economic interests. Considering the strong commitment in DIY punk scenes to create and sustain a larger translocal scene, it is clear that DIY punk is not too different from the transnational communities Kennedy and Roudometof (2002) talk about, particularly those that they define as *communities of meaning*, which cohere around "shared lifestyle orientations and practices involving aesthetic, affective bonds and understandings such as sport, celebrity, musical and artistic followings and fanzines" (Roudometof, 2002: 21).

Therefore, thinking about the life trajectories of the migrating members of the Croatian DIY punk scene from a transnational perspective means analyzing the threefold relationship an individual has with their home country, their host country and the transnational community they are part of, in this case the DIY punk scene, and how does that reflect on their activities and everyday lives.

My data was obtained through seven semi-structured narrative interviews with key members of the Croatian DIY punk scene who at some point in their lives moved abroad, selected through snowball sampling. I have tried to interview not only musicians but also what Guerra (2018) calls "mediators", that is, those who engage in "fanzine and/or phonographic production, promotion of concerts, record sales, reviewing, radio hosting and so on" (Guerra, 2018: 246). These interviews were part of a larger research on the DIY punk scene in Croatia, so I generally tried to make sure my interviewees would talk as much as possible in chronological order about the way their participation in the scene shaped their lives. More importantly for this paper, I investigated the reasons for their migration, and I have asked about how both their everyday life and their participation in the punk scene changed in the process. I have also asked what relationship they have cultivated, from a distance, with Croatia (e.g., how often they returned) and with the Croatian punk scene (e.g., if they kept following Croatian bands, if they booked their shows abroad, etc.).

Finally, I asked my interviewees whether they wanted to be mentioned by their real names on this paper.

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making and the participation in a transnational subculture is something completely different, which has barely been taken into account by both subcultural scholars and migration scholars. In the available literature on punk studies, Lohman (2017) is one of the few who has already attempted to understand mobility in a punk scene by also focusing on examples of relocation both within and outside the country.

Most of them picked this option, but some told me they would prefer to be mentioned with a nickname or a pseudonym that would protect their identity. The names of bands, labels and venues are real.

3. Moving abroad

As mentioned earlier, the accession to the European Union by Croatia in 2013 had an important role in enhancing migration outflows from the country to other European countries. The main reasons why people leave Croatia are economic, with high rates of unemployment existing especially in certain regions, but also social, such as a bleak perception of the future in Croatia and high levels of clientelism and corruption permeating the country (Vladisavljević, 2019). Similar patterns can be identified in the migratory trajectories of the scene participants I have interviewed. Studying abroad in what are perceived as better universities than domestic ones, the lack of jobs in Croatia, the will to try something new, the frustration with life in Croatia and with the future perspectives it offered were among the most cited reasons to move abroad.

If scene participation had no explicit role in determining whether a scene participant would move abroad or not, it had on the other hand a crucial role in the destination choice. One of my interviewees, Antun, mentioned that both of his relocations, first to Belgrade and later to Berlin, were influenced by the fact that he perceived the local scenes of the two cities or regions to be particularly active. Another one of my interviewees, Jere, told me one of his main reasons for frustration in Croatia came from how he perceived the local anarcho-punk scene: he claimed he was getting bored of the passiveness, self-referentiality and lack of creativity that dominated the scene. While he went to Rotterdam mainly because of the quality of the university there, the strong squat culture of the Netherlands might have also played a major role in this; as a matter of fact, in Rotterdam, he lived in Poortgebouw, the historical squat of the city.

Other times, participating in the DIY punk scene in Croatia influenced these migration patterns indirectly. Among the most common destination choices of my interviewees are cities such as Berlin, Prague and Vienna. While it is true that these partially overlap with some of the most common destination choices of Croatian emigres (Draženović, Kunovac & Pripužić, 2018), they are also some of the European cities with the most active punk scenes. In the case of my interviewees, it was often the DIY punk experience that allowed them to first visit these cities, often repeatedly, through tours, festivals and shows, and to understand that these could have been places where they would have liked to move. Having established connections with people from the DIY punk scene of a certain city before moving there might also have played a crucial role, as it reassured them of already knowing someone upon moving. Of course, often they also already knew people that they had met in different ways, yet it is clear that in some cases being part of the punk scene certainly weighted the selection of the city where they moved.

4. Scene participation outside of Croatia

Not every scene participant maintains the same level of scene participation that they had in Croatia when they move abroad. In some cases, their subcultural activities grow upon moving; in other cases, scene participation takes a more passive turn. The first factor to take into account to understand the reasons for this is age. The younger individuals are when they move abroad, the more possibilities there are that they will be active in the scene of their host country. The first obvious explanation for this is that those who moved when they were younger often moved to attend a foreign university, meaning they had the chance to manage their time differently than those who work full-time, but also that they could more easily hang out with local youths and quickly learn about local scenes and subcultures and even be involved in them. Another reason is that in many cases, when moving abroad at a very young age, participating in the scene of the host country is the first way to be *really* active in a scene. This means two things: first, not having a particular attachment to the ways things are done in the home country and simply absorbing and embracing the DIY rules of the host country's scene; second, it is at the beginning of one's scene participation that an individual is more invested in it and lives the game that is inherent to the field (Bourdieu, 1995) more intensively: in other words, it is in this period when everything is new and exciting that the will to be involved and to quickly increase one's subcultural capital is stronger.

Another crucial factor is whether there is an available "punk infrastructure" in the city. What I mean is that there should be, in the host city, a place and/or a general set of conditions that make it easy or relatively easy to be active in a local scene. In the case of Jakov, one of my interviewees, this took the shape of SUB, a venue in the center of Graz in Austria that serves as a meeting point for various political, countercultural and subcultural activities. It is at SUB that he *learned* how to book shows, and it is because of the particular way in which SUB functioned, that is, through a system of shared collective money that everyone booking shows there can use, that he felt comfortable learning at his own pace, as he had no financial pressures or impediments. Infrastructures, though, do not consist only of venues, just as punk practice does not only consist of booking shows. Ivan managed to start a band in Prague *also* because in the Czech capital there are several rehearsal rooms with available equipment, which made sure that he did not have to bring the bulkiest parts of his drums from Croatia; Prague is also home to FluffWheels, a company of renting gears and vans run by the founders of Fluff Fest, a historical DIY hardcore punk festival, which he already knew personally and which made it possible for him to book a tour for an American band and drive the van for them.

A third important factor is *saturation*. Some individuals may not be so active in a host scene simply because there is no space for them to be: in other words, there is already someone else doing something they would have liked to do. Berlin is a clear example of a saturated city. Two of my interviewees who moved there talked about the fact that they would have liked to book shows for Croatian bands there, but that these Croatian bands already have contacts in Berlin and are already playing there often; these contacts, consisting of Berlin collectives, have an already better knowledge of how to book and promote a show there than them, and are therefore considered to be more reliable. In some cases, the answer to this saturation was to change one's activities in a scene. It is precisely because he could not be really involved in booking shows in Prague - choosing to take a more marginal role and helping already active bookers - that Ivan started getting interested in booking European tours and driving the bands. In Berlin, Adam used his large subcultural capital to come up with more original and innovative ways of being active in the local scene: among other activities, he organized Underground Europe, a yearly event where labels and private individuals can sell or trade their vinyl records, and he also organized a pub quiz focused on punk rock trivia.

On the other hand, less saturated scenes allowed some of my interviewees to be extremely active and to *dominate*, in a sense, the local punk scene upon their arrival. The best example of this is that of Jere, who lived in the Poortgebouw squat in Rotterdam and started organizing shows there, despite everyone telling him that the city did not have an active punk scene anymore. Over a year, he booked around 80 bands in the squat, becoming the one who, in a way, turned Rotterdam into the punk capital of the region at least for a short period. In Graz, Jakov was certainly not the only one booking shows at SUB. However, he managed to carve his own niche there: he quickly became the one booking Croatian and Serbian punk bands there, and also the point of reference in the city when it came to subgenres such as screamo and post-hardcore.

While as we saw subcultural capital is not enough to explain why some people keep being active in a scene abroad and some do not, it still matters. With an impressively high subcultural capital, one may succeed in becoming a key figure of a city where they just moved, no matter how saturated its scene is. Mišo, for example, who was able to turn his scene participation into a full-time job in Zagreb through intense booking activity, managed to easily transfer the enormous amount of subcultural capital he had gained in Croatia to Vienna. He got in touch with Venster99, one of the main centers of DIY punk in the Austrian capital, explained what he did in Croatia and became one of the people booking shows there. His full investment in the DIY punk scene, together with the central position Vienna has in the European punk scene, quickly made him become one of the most active DIY punk promoters in Europe, while at the same time running a DIY label and occasionally starting bands. In his case, then, the mix of a disproportionately high subcultural capital and strong available infrastructure is what allowed him to be this active. Subcultural capital is not the only type of capital that matters: one of my interviewees who moved to Berlin to work, for example, displayed a relatively high amount of subcultural capital but low economic capital. In his case, this low economic capital - which translated into having to work every day for ten hours for a certain period - together with the highly saturated Berlin scene, meant that upon moving he stopped being active in the scene in any way.

5. Transnational scene participation

Being active in the host scene often did not mean cutting ties with the home scene in Croatia. Transnationalism studies on the concept of "home" showed that its meaning could be attached to multiple objects, such as "family", "homeland/nation" or "community" (Al-Ali & Koser, 2002). In the case of my interviewees, many saw the *local scene* they have left in Croatia as a fundamental part of their "home". Their existence and their identity as migrants saw them becoming *transnational* in a double sense: first, for belonging to a transnational community, that is, the transnational DIY punk scene, even before moving abroad; second, for engaging both with their home country and with their host country at the same time in different ways, often using the punk scene itself as a medium to connect the two.

Booking shows abroad for Croatian bands was possibly the most crucial contribution of punk emigrées, as it led to the creation of a network of Croatian promoters which made it easier for bands from Croatia to tour Europe despite being often marginalized by the main DIY punk circuits. Other similar activities that made it possible for scene participants abroad to keep *connecting* with the Croatian punk scene also took place. An interesting example is the label Ill In The Head, currently based in Canada but originally from Novi Marof, in Northern Croatia, where it was founded in 1991. This label, which re-started in 2013 after an almost two-decades-long break, releases solely punk, post-punk and indie acts from former Yugoslav countries. Not only it is a way to financially support the regional post-Yugoslav scene from Canada, but also an opportunity for its owner to still engage and feel part of that community from afar. It is for similar reasons that Jere, after moving from Croatia to Barcelona, kept doing his fanzine in Croatian rather than in English, Spanish or Catalan. He told me that he wants to be read by people in Croatia with the ultimate goal of still being present in the Croatian punk scene despite not being physically there.

Occasionally, such transnational scene participation could also catalyze a physical return to the country through scene-related return visits. Adam, for example, often toured Croatia with the band he had formed in Rome throughout the 1990s and attended almost every edition of the Monteparadiso Festival in Pula in the same decade. This mode of transnational scene participation, then, not only allowed him to keep in touch with the punk scene in Croatia - he told me that until the end of the 1990s he was very up-to-date with anything punk in Croatia because of his physical presence there - but it was also a key factor in allowing him to maintain a more stable relationship with his family and friends back home.

Being active in the home scene during return visits was especially common among those who were less active abroad, for example in the cases of my interviewees in Berlin. This could mean playing shows with one's band while spending the holidays back in Croatia in the case of Mario, or, in the case of Antun, organizing a yearly fest in Županja and supporting other events and initiatives. Surely, these return visits are also dictated by the will to see one's family and friends, yet scene participation seems to play a crucial role here. One of the main reasons that Antun mentioned to justify his very frequent visits to Županja is to keep in touch with other scene participants he grew close with over the years through organizing subcultural activities.

The relationship between return visits and scene participation becomes more complex in the case when one's hometown and host city are not too far from each other, as in the case of Jakov, who moved to Graz, less than 150 km away from his hometown Varaždin. His case is interesting also because it is upon moving that he really started being active in the punk scene. Furthermore, in that same period, he spent several months in Croatia because he quit his bachelor's and had a vacant semester before starting a new one. This meant that he started and later continued to be active in the scenes of two different countries at the same time. More precisely, he started booking shows in Graz while starting a band and booking occasional shows in Croatia. Crucially, this did not evolve into a strict separation of duties and activities between the two countries, but into a constant interaction between them in what could be called a "pluri-local" (Rouse, 1991: 14) scene participation. Therefore, this led to a constant interaction also between the DIY punk scene of Graz and various local scenes of Northern Croatia and Zagreb. The first and most obvious of these interactions was the fact that he started booking Croatian bands in Graz. Another type of interaction was that he and Tomi, who would have later started a band with Jakov, started booking shows at the same time, and were always in contact trying to learn from each other. This collaboration allowed them to fasten the development of their DIY skills, but also indirectly affected the

scenes they were part of. Scene participation abroad, then, can influence the scene at home through a constant connection between the home and the host scene, and we can think of the skills, connections and knowledge one transfers from abroad as *DIY punk remittances* that can potentially transform one's home scene.

My interviews provided other examples of this kind. Despite not being active in Berlin, Antun still got inspired by the punk ferment in the city. In his frequent return visits, he decided to take some of the initiatives he had seen in Berlin - for example, collecting second-hand punk merchandise and then selling it on donations and forwarding those donations to people in need - to bring them to his local scene in Croatia. Similarly, in his first summer spent in Split while living in Rome, Adam tried to occupy a place inspired by what he had seen in Italy, although he recognized that as soon as he went back to Italy nobody carried on what had been started. The story of this failed occupation is interesting because it reveals several types of problems connected to the influence punk migrants have on their home scenes. Often, trying to transform the home scene through return visits means clashing with a totally different reality that is hard to change, especially in the short time when these visits take place.

However, even longer visits or the permanent return of scene participants after living abroad are rarely effective for the transformation of a scene. That is because the experiences acquired abroad may be incompatible with the infrastructures of the home scene, but also because the previously acquired subcultural capital that allowed one to have an important position in the scene *before* leaving may not be as valuable when returning. As the field changes over the years, the inherent *game* and the resources that are needed to compete in it change as well. Unlike other types of capital, subcultural capital is truly connected to the nature of the subcultural field itself and is therefore subject to these changes too. The consequence of this is that a returning scene participant often may not be able to really influence the local scene. Paradoxically, it is supporting and connecting to the scene from abroad through the activities we saw earlier that has a stronger effect on the scene, as it allows a more gradual process of learning and transformation by giving bands and individuals the chance to see how things are done elsewhere and to slowly develop a stronger scene from the inside.

6. Conclusions

This paper has shown that scene participation has a clear role in defining the migratory experiences of scene participants, by often allowing them to already be part of an existing transnational network upon moving and therefore by integrating more easily into the social and (sub)cultural life of the host country. For this reason, we could argue that DIY capital is even more crucial in influencing everyday life abroad than in the home country; this is particularly evident in terms of social capital: lacking an already established circle of friends (e.g., childhood friends, high school friends, etc.), creating a social network based on scene participation was the main strategy for socialization that many of my interviewees used. At the same time, it has been shown that scene participation can enhance transnational relationships with the home country that spill into other aspects of one's social life other than scene participation itself.

The migration of scene participants can also hugely impact local scenes by creating an exchange of experiences that ultimately benefits local scenes through the creation of "conduits" through which the subculture travels throughout the world (O'Connor, 2002, 2003), and ultimately fuels the existence of DIY punk itself. The connections created through the actual movement of people and cross-national sharing of practices and of what I have called DIY punk remittances are invaluable.

Further studies are clearly needed to assess whether these findings, and particularly those related to the factors determining one's participation in a scene abroad and the ones related to transnational scene participation, are specific to the DIY punk scene and intra-European migration or whether they would be similar in other subcultural and geographic contexts.

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4.4. MUSICAL AND VISUAL REACTIONS TO MISOGYNIES IN AUSTRIAN POPULAR MUSIC

Magdalena Füernkranz[74]

✖ ~~Abstract~~

In this paper, I discuss musical and visual reactions to gender-based violence, hate speech, power abuse and disinformation in everyday life, furthermore I examine performance and staging strategies and the role of languages in the concepts of Austrian musicians and bands such as Dives, Шапка (Schapka), Fijuka and Fatima Spar, as well as the de-/construction of misogyny in popular music. Since the analysed songs and performances correspond to the clichés of masculinity prevalent in contemporary pop culture, I draw on work dealing with misogyny and empowerment in popular music to highlight how the aforementioned musicians deal with experienced threats and criticize hegemonic power relations.

Keywords: Misogyny, Austria, empowerment, performance, feminism.

1. Primer

With Beyoncé celebrating the queer community with her album *Renaissance*, Dua Lipa taking us to the club with electric dance bops, Megan Thee Stallion telling us to love our bodies and that there's always some "Good News" to be had and other female identifying musicians such as Lizzo, Lady Gaga, Miley Cyrus and Alicia Keys releasing highly acclaimed albums during the last two years, one could assume that women are dominating the music industry. Paying attention to similarities between most of these albums, three facts are eye-catching. Leastways, one track addresses sexism or misogyny.

Most of the songwriters and producers are men, consequently we can conclude that men are still dominating the music business. Furthermore, we almost exclusively find women and queer people in their audience. Even though the 2020s opened the door for female and queer talents, misogyny and sexism are still prevalent in the music industry and female identified pop musicians are forced to emphasize that. When we contemplate cliches of dating situations involving cis heterosexual men, questions that imply heteronormative body norms, prejudices and sexism such as "Can you really eat a whole burger?", "Why are you so tense - can't you take a compliment?", or – especially for musicians – "How is it to make music as a woman?" and well-intentioned advices such as "He doesn't mean it that way!" might sound familiar.

In this paper, I discuss musical and visual reactions to misogyny in everyday life primarily concentrating on the works of the Viennese bands Fijuka, Fatima Spar and the Freedom Fries, Dives and Шапка (Schapka). I begin my inquiry with an insight into the research on the relationship between music and misogyny, followed by an introduction of the methodical and conceptual approach, hereby I concentrate primarily on the performing subject in popular music by using a new cross-genre approach to the analysis of musical performance. Throughout the text, I focus the role of languages in the aforementioned artists'

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concepts as well as the de-/construction of misogyny in popular music. Since the analyzed songs and performances correspond to the clichés of masculinity prevalent in contemporary pop culture, I draw on work dealing with misogyny and empowerment in popular music to highlight how musicians deal with experienced threats and criticize hegemonic power relations.

2. Music and misogyny

By researching on the relationship between misogyny and music, we find approaches that focus on the study of aesthetics or musical texts as well as those focusing on the relationships between attitudes and behavior in the context of music by studying human participants. These studies have primarily concentrated on rock, hip hop and heavy metal by researching misogyny through sonic features such as distorted guitars, disturbing chord progressions, discordance and atonality, accented backbeats, screamed, shouted or growled vocals, rapid vocal delivery and fast tempos (Walser, 1993; Iwamoto, 2003; Järviluoma et al., 2003; Weitzer & Kubrin, 2009; McLeod, 2009). In his study "Music and Misogyny: A Content Analysis of Misogynistic, Antifeminist Forums", Sam de Boise reveals through content analysis of 1173 posts, from six "misogynistic antifeminist movement (MAM)"-forums that although hip hop, rap and metal artists are the most mentioned, musical preferences and justifications differ significantly. Even tough masculinist lyrics were the main reasons for music preferences, the musical judgments MAM-communities are a "confluence of sonic and extra-musical discourses which are shaped and amplified within these online communities" (De Boise, 2021).

Already in 1978, Frith and McRobbie stated that 'masculine' traits such as aggression, control, power and dominance can be seen and heard in performances of male musicians (Frith & McRobbie, 1978: 374). When we take a deeper look at the genre rap, we find female artists struggling to succeed in the industry's patriarchal structures. Women are not only underrepresented in rankings but also in other parts of the music business such as award shows. In 2019, Cardi B made history as the first female rap artist to earn a Grammy for "Best Rap Album", however, she happened to be an exception. In 2020, only two female musicians were featured on a nominated album, while no other female rapper was nominated for a Grammy award. When Professor Stacy L. Smith et al. analyzed the artists of 700 songs on the Billboard Hot 100 year-end charts from 2012 to 2018 in a USC Annenberg Inclusion Initiative study, they discovered that only 12.3% of songwriters were female, 21.7% of the musicians were female and only 2% of producers were female (Smith et al., 2018). Music production as a male-dominated environment has not only consistently lacked female representation but prevent female identifying artists from achieving their career goals.

3. Methodological and conceptual approach

Performative aspects such as staging a live performance, acting on stage, the construction of the "performance persona" (Auslander, 2004) or "star personality" (Frith, 1996), audience participation, but also socio-cultural developments, contribute to the overall concept of a performance in popular music. Music styles that do not or only loosely refer to written notation require special methods of style analysis. Ethnomusicology and jazz research have developed a transcription-based approach to the auditory analysis of improvised music; the analysis of pop music generally uses a semiotic approach to combine the interdependencies of music, text and image. Since about 1980, attention has also been paid to aspects of performance (e.g., *Popular Music* Vol. 4). New methodological perspectives have been developed in current popular music studies that have linked historical, structuralist or phenomenological paradigms with the discourse of performativity.

By analyzing a musical performance, we have to consider that we normally only get to see fragments of the 'person' behind the artist or the band, thus the parity between the "performance persona" and the "character" (Auslander, 2008) is usually foregrounded. Musicians participate in contemporary socio-cultural discourses by developing stage personae along the axes of sexual identity, social background, race and other identity categories. The stage persona is usually based on certain conventions and existing models defined by movement, expressiveness, costume, make-up, countenance and gestures. Musicians

on stage and in music videos participate in contemporary socio-cultural discourses concerning these aspects. They are thus not separated from the societies in which they appear, but can be interpreted as comments, projections or spaces of negotiation of socio-cultural topics and diverse forms of identities.

Performance analysis differs from transcription methods of musicologists, notation methods of dance research or analysis methods of theatrical performance. Shifting the focus to performative aspects of popular music means a move beyond the analysis of musical structures. Performance analysis includes aspects of visual imagery, histories of style and fashion, a certain knowledge of popular cultural and economics, and interdisciplinary studies devoted to identity categories as central categories of analysis. Based on analysis of the characters (Eder, 2010: 16) that appear in the theatrical setting of a popular music performance, the central element of a performance is the "character". Characters on stage and in music videos are of fundamental importance for our music experience. They confront us with questions concerning their performance, production, structures, meanings and effects. Performative art is bound to the concrete moment of its performance, consequently it must be experienced by the audience. According to Erika Fischer-Lichte, "Performativity results in performances or manifests itself in the performative nature of acts, as was already apparent in the performative turn in the arts" (Fischer-Lichte, 2008: 29). The audience is thus also assigned to a previously unrecognized position: from a passive observer it becomes an active actor, whose interaction with the performers provides the performance's concrete corpus.

To analyze, describe and discuss characters in differentiated ways, we need a set of conceptual tools. Jens Eder creates a comprehensive analysis model that incorporates and integrates interdisciplinary aspects. Eder's concept of understanding characters includes characters in film and television, their characteristics, their actions and the involved audience. The author describes film characters as "identifiable fictional beings with an inner life that exist as communicatively constructed artefacts" (Eder, 2010: 18). The information contained in films is produced by filmmakers, depicted by actors and actresses and processed by viewers. However, characters are neither described as signs in the film's text or mental representations in the viewer's head, they can be defined as collective constructs with a normative component. Filmmakers and viewers might model similar characters that are built from shared knowledge about media conventions and concepts of reality. Eder's basic schema distinguishes four aspects that may be considered in the analysis: "Characters are, firstly, inhabitants of a fictitious world; secondly, artefacts of a particular mould; thirdly, symbols conveying meanings and themes; and fourthly, symptoms permitting inferences about their production and reception, causes and effects" (Eder, 2010: 24).

"Character as artefact" examines the production side and includes the dramaturgical intentions of the directors, as artefacts characters are shaped by audio-visual information. "Character as fictional being" deals with the character's specific physical, psychological and social characteristics, as fictional beings; characters have certain bodily, mental and social features. "Character as symbol" and "character as symptom" examine different meanings that can be read into characters, their symbolic content as well as the historical and political context in which they were created and unfold their effect. As symbols, characters impart higher-level meanings. By analyzing "character as symptom", socio-cultural causes in the character's production and effects in their reception are revealed.

4. Musical and visual reactions to misogyny: An Austrian case study

In this section, I discuss musical and visual reactions to misogyny in Austrian popular music concentrating on the works of the Viennese bands Fijuka, Fatima Spar and the Freedom Fries, Dives and Шапка (Schapka).

4.1 Fijuka – 'Ca Ca Caravan'

The band Fijuka consists of Ankathie Koi (Katharina Winkelbauer, vocals / synthesizer) and Judith

Filimónova (Judith Walzer, bass / vocals). Founded in 2011, the German-Austrian duo (Burghausen / Vienna) met at the University of Music and Performing Arts Vienna. The band deliberately combines elements of pop music with rock, electronics and jazz. In the music video "Ca Ca Caravan", Ankathie Koi and Judith Filimónova embody the space agents "Caty Cosmos" and "Judy Jupiter". The music video deconstructs the style and content of the science-fiction genre of the 1960s, it projects earthly conflicts, battles, wars and conquests into space. The song is sung by Ankathie Koi and Judith Filimónova. The accompaniment is provided by synthesizer (Patrick Stürböth), drums (Ivo Thomann) and bass (Judith Filimónova). The song's chorus deals with the relativity of space and time:

Time is now behind the times
And we were never here
And you were never born my friend
Time, you can't define the time
And you were never here
And now it's time to leave my friend. (Transcription by the author)

The duo Fijuka uses a short film (duration: 5:32) to promote "Ca Ca Caravan". The music video contains a prologue in the form of a dialog that takes place on a fictitious distant planet. The music starts afterwards. Closing credits are uncommon for music videos. In "Ca Ca Caravan", the closing-credits take forty seconds and list all persons and institutions involved in the video's shot. The video deals with the subject of space and therefore differs from the song's lyrics, opening up further dimensions. The artists move their mouths within the framework of diegetic dialogues, which can be read as subtitles by the audience. "Ca Ca Caravan" is called an episode of "Fijuka Space Patrol". The structure of story-telling in the music video can be seen as pastiche. The short film consists of a prologue, the song, the credits and various visual and musical quotes refering to *Star Trek*, *James Bond*, *Star Wars*, *Barbarella* and Glam Rock.

As artefacts, Katharina Winkelbauer, known professionally as Ankathie Koi, and Judith Walzer, known professionally as Judith Filimónova, embody the space agents "Caty Cosmos" and "Judy Jupiter". Two empowered women are on a space mission; they fight, use weapons, defeat an extra-terrestrial being and control a spaceship. As fictional beings, Caty Cosmos and Judy Jupiter cannot be identified as the singers of the duo Fijuka. Only the name "Fijuka Space Patrol" allows a diegetic reference to the band. Their clothing and styling correspond to the ideas of space heroines in science fiction films and TV shows of the 1960s. The two characters are not musicians but part of space nostalgia. The video was shot in the nuclear plant Zwentendorf in Austria. It was the first commercial nuclear plant for electric power generation built in Austria, but the plant never entered service. As symbols, the musicians represent the aspiring generation of the Viennese pop / rock / electronic scene. Ankathie Koi and Judith Filimónova embody self-confident, successful musicians that are underrepresented in the Austrian music scene. As symptoms, the two musicians become movie characters in the music video "Ca Ca Caravan". The change of name, the science fiction costumes and the setting embeds the music video in the precarious present. As space agents, the two women can act freely, but are still subject to a supervisor. Exactly this imbalance needs to be deconstructed in the music scene of the 21st century.

"Fijuka Space Patrol" visually corresponds to the staging of women in science fiction series and films of the 1960s and 1970s. Both musicians wear tight clothes and wigs. Especially in TV shows and films from this era, we find mysoginist statements and female characters being sexualized. Heroines such as Princess Leia or Barbarella are often dressed in short skirts and tops, or wear less, consequently these characters correspond to patriachal ideas of female power in Science Fiction. The character Leia for example was something new; she was not only a princess, but a senator, a member of the rebellion and the only female character in the Star Wars original trilogy that was allowed to talk. Even though she was kidnapped, an act that could be interpreted as a sign of her weakness, and her rescue failed, she grabbed a blaster and liberated herself along with the characters that tried to save her. As a sign of oppression, Princess Leia was forced to wear a metallic bikini by her kidnapper. Sexualization through clothing such as Leia's bikini, Barbarella's bodysuit with one "bare" breast that allegedly refers to the Amazons or the

short uniforms of female characters in *Star Trek* leads to the visual processing of bodies as objects and can be regarded as a form of sexism in popular culture.

In the music video "Ca Ca Caravan", Fijuka tries to deconstruct androcentric ideas of womanhood in Science Fiction. In addition to its empowered position, the duo uses elements and props that disturb heterosexual desire such as exaggerated make-up, pompous wigs and costumes reminiscent of space nostalgia to construct new empowered identities.

4.2 Fatima Spar – 'Trust'

The Austrian musician of Turkish origin Nihal Sentürkal has constructed an artist's identity for herself called Fatima Spar. The musician lives in Vienna where she is the singer of various projects that crossover into jazz and world music. She writes her songs in Turkish, English and German. Her musical style ranges from swing, Balkan brass and calypso to oriental music. In 2004, she founded Fatima Spar and the Freedom Fries, the band toured through Europe and won the *Austrian World Music Awards* in its founding year. The band consists of eight musicians with different backgrounds. Their musical style combines the musical and cultural heritage of Fatima Spar and her bandmates.

The song "Trust" is accompanied by trumpet, accordion, contrabass, trombone, saxophone, guitar and vocals. It can be described as a mixture of jazz, tango and pop song. After a short intro of the double bass and a single counter ("uno, dos, tres …"), the accordion underlies formal section A: Fm Db Bbm C. The first and second stanzas (eight bars each) are followed by a four-bar interlude of the basic model. This is followed, according to the tango form, by a lyrical-expressive B-part. The song ends with the twelve-time repetition of the line "trust in me". The music video was recorded during an accoustic session in Istanbul. The video's intro was shot in the streets of Istanbul, the performance was shot in the back room of a theater.

As artefact, Fatima Spar represents a female musician who crossovers jazz and world music. The name of the band Fatima Spar and the Freedom Fries already clarifies the position of the singer in the ensemble, she is the bandleader. In contrast to the song's strong religion-critical positioning, the character is rather inconspicuously staged. As fictional being, the singer is the only woman in the band. Fatima Spar wears taupe trousers, a gray shirt and a black coat; a megaphone is used to spread Fatima Spar's message. Her stage name refers on the one hand to the daughter of the Prophet Mohammed and on the other hand to the European supermarket chain "Spar". As symbol, Fatima Spar critises major religious groups such as Islam or Christianity and positions herself as an autonomous individual. During the song she becomes a prophetess:

I would not like to be Jesus
Nor the other great prophet himself
I do not trust in Jesus
Nor the man whose name I do not dare to pronounce

You preach life and immortality
Stay here with wide open doors
The bright side of life you'll always see
But I do not believe in mankind

I woo you
Come trust in me
Rely on me
In your depths of despair, I'll be there. (Transcription by the author)

In Nihal Sentürkal's biography we see two worlds collide. She mentions Jesus as a reference to her

childhood in Austria's countryside, besides she also sings about Muhammad as a reference to her Turkish origin. By regarding the lyrics, the song's character can be interpreted as a critical metaphor for current religious conflicts at the beginning of the 21st century. The persecution and annihilation of dissenters by the religions Christianity and Islam has a long history. Titled as crusades, religious and economically motivated battles as well as the oppression of women already took place in the Middle Ages. Fatima Spar's "Trust" spans a historical arc right up to present conflicts and shows a socio-critical position with ironic and sarcastic elements. The music video captures a backroom session in a theatre in Istanbul. The musicians and the singer perform together in a seated and relaxed atmosphere; the camera documents the performance in a small room without audience by a constant slow panning back and forth. This uncut recording is preceded by a 1:30 minute intro with blurred impressions of Istanbul.

As symptom, the song's character becomes literally a prophet with an offer of salvation to the patriarchal religions Christianity and Islam. The "blasphemous" statement does not take place in public space. It is hidden by incomprehensibility (through the use of a megaphone the lyrics are not understandable), an anonymous location (the session takes place in a back room) and groovy tango sounds. Misogyny and sexism are explicitly woven into the traditions of all mainstream religions. With God being personified as male, his representatives have to be male. They are believed to be of some sort of higher spiritual authority to women, with many religions prohibiting the ordination of women into the clergy, refusing women from sitting at the front in their places of worship or entering places of worship. The song "Trust" can therefore be interpreted as musical and visual statement to sexism and misogyny in patriarchal religions even though the message seems to be hidden in the first place, a closer reading of its lyrics and performance reveals its empowering meaning.

4.3 Dives – 'Burger'

The all-female trio Dives was founded at the Pink Noise Girls Rock Camp 2015 in Linz (Upper Austria). The band consists of Tamara Leichtfried (electric guitar, vocals), Viktoria Kirner (electric bass, vocals) and Dora de Goederen (drums). With their lineup, the band's instrumentation resembles a classic rock band formation, while using elements from punk, indie rock and garage. Characteristic of Dives' sound are the two-part vocals by Kirner and Leichtfried, as well as melodious bass lines. As an all-female band, the band is often reduced to its members' look and outfits, "You often get compliments or comments that are more about appearance. For example, some of our friends say that we look absolutely cool on stage — as encouragement. That is also meant nicely, and you like to hear it. But people often don't get that being on stage as a musician is not primarily about your look". (Dora de Goederen, cited in Darok, 2018) The song "Burger" is described as more than a single, it is also a statement as a unique project against the still prevailing gender gap in the multimedia arts. The single release was accompanied by a video created by 3D animation artist Sarah Kreuz and by an 80s-style video game that was developed by Kinaya Studios, a young, all-female programming collective. The game in the Dives' music video consists of four "lands". They start in "burgerland", followed by „surfland" and „flyland", ultimately the game finishes in "skateland". In an authentic 80s game design, the Browser Game "Mortal Burger Kombat" demonstrates that women can beat burgers, fries and salad. In the game, we follow a talking burger through various stations of sexism towards people identifying as female, while we hear a special 8-bit remix of the single. To a certain extent, it describes the journey and scenarios of everyday misogyny experienced by the three protagonists.

As artefact, the band Dives represent three independet musicians that focus on feminist topics and empowerment in their music. The band combines a certain attitude with garage rock and surf pop, Breeders harmony chants and indie rock with a 90s twist as well as references to their musical ancestors such as the (post) punk band The Slits and empowering lyrics to herald the fall of patriarchy. As fictional beings, the band can be regarded as a sucessfull all-female band in Vienna's music scene. The three musicians are dressed in clothes, they usual wear on stage, additionally their hair is styled differently. The sunglasses and make-up resemble the looks of female popstars in the 1990s. Each band member wears fake plastic wings. The background is animated and looks like an 80s video game with mountains, palm trees, burgers and a red wave that symbolizes monthly periods. Burgers attack the band, but they fight them with their fists, leg kicks or instruments. Song lines such as "can't you take a complement",

"you look so nice today (…) one might be allowed to say", "must be this time of the month (…) you are emotional at once" are inserted. During that insert, we can see the musicians surf on the red wave. The band sings and plays their instruments: bass, guitar und drums. While the musicians perform, points are gained from defeating monsters, burgers, enemies and misogynist statements. In sequence "flyland", the characters fly like superman and are able to choose their superpower: "power of justice", "call of matriarchy", "power chord", "mega slap", "wisdom of the past" and "douche immunity". This sequence shows the support among the band members, while one character "flies", another character uses the "base" and fights the games' enemies. The song ends with the line "he doesn't mean that way". The credits are accompanied with pillars with burning burgers on it and a reference to the video game. As symbol, the trio celebrates empowerment, feminist musicianship und female networks. The lyrics criticize the common assumption that everyday sexism should be taken as a compliment. Questions such as "Can you really eat a whole burger" are just the tip of the sexist iceberg. Such statements imply heteronormative body norms, prejudices and sexism. In a certain way, the three musicians declare war on all those who continue to believe that their everyday sexism should be taken as a compliment. As symptom, the band plays with sexist statements and clichés and packs them into a surf rock tune. The critique of heteronormative ideas and misogyny is underlined with a creative music video and its extension in the form of a video game that shows verbal and visual weapons against misogyny.

4.4. шапка (Schapka) – 'How is it to make music as a woman'

The band consists of Marie Luise Lehner (electric guitar, vocals), Laura Gstättner (synthesizer, vocals), Dora de Goederen (electric bass, vocals) and Lili Kaufmann (drums). шапка (Schapka), which means hat in Russian, was founded in 2012, when the band members were between 14 and 17 years old, in an expression of solidarity with the feminist collective Pussy Riot. Furthermore, шапка (Schapka) was the opening act for Pussy Riot and their stage show "Riot Days – Days of the Uprising" in 2018. The group combines the punk genre with elements of indie rock and rap. Their lyrics refer to queer feminist ideas, address safe spaces, queerness and gender quotas, as well as masturbation and female ejaculation. Marie Luise Lehner describes the band as "queer feminist propaganda" (Karlbauer, 2018). шапка (Schapka) plays with ideas of power and gender performance. In their music videos, the band members perform as lightly dressed women that sport beards and play with heterosexual tropes, such as feeding each other strawberries or ejaculating on each other with spray cream.

Although the band performed on the Red Bull Music Stage at the Popfest Wien in 2018, they did not miss the opportunity to clearly criticize the namesake company and its founder Dietrich Mateschitz. During the very first song, the musicians, whose first album is called *Wir sind Propaganda* (We are propaganda), unfurled a banner reading "We are propaganda, but not for right-wing populists" (Kramar, 2018). Besides, they accused Dietrich Mateschitz of sympathies for Russia's President Vladimir Putin and authoritarian politics (шапка (Schapka), 2018b).

As artefacts, Marie Luise Lehner, Laura Gstättner, Dora de Goederen and Lili Kaufmann embody empowered female musicians that use the video "How is it to make music as a woman" to look back at the almost six-year band history in a snipped archive collage, with behind-the-scenes footage from the album cover shoot, live impressions including nylon stocking masking and roof terrace rehearsals. As fictional beings, the band members can be identified as DIY musicians. We see them performing, recording, rehearsing and feedbacking each other. The clothing and styling correspond to the ideas of queer feminist (punk) musicians. In some sequences they are dressed in drag or visually celebrate their musical ancestors such as the Riot Grrrl Movement und post punk icons such as Siouxsie Sioux. As symbols, the band members discuss insensitive, offensive and marginalizing comments that female musicians are still confronted with on or behind the stage, in interviews and on social media platforms. The lyrics center around the question "How is it to make music as a woman?", that usually annoys female musicians and turn the question into something ordinary, with aspects *taken from their everyday life* such as "How get up as a woman?", "Go by bus as a woman?" entering the next stage with "How to dance as a woman?" to the significant question "How is it, to make music as a woman?". Consequently, activities of music creation such as playing an instrument, carrying the equipment, sound engineering and songwriting are enumerated. The song concludes with "What is a woman? (…) I don't know". Regarding

the performative model of gender in which the categories "male" and "female" are understood as the product of a repetition of actions, the supposedly natural settlement of these categories and the associated heteronormative social classification need to be deconstructed. Judith Butler denaturalizes the construct of gender, "A political genealogy of gender ontologies, if it is successful, will deconstruct the substantive appearance of gender into its constitutive acts and locate and account for those acts within the compulsory frames set by the various forces that police the social appearance of gender" (Butler, 1990: 45). Gender affiliation does not exist as a stable identity from which performative acts emanate; it only arises through the repetition of these acts.

While most of the lines are repeated by several band members in different vocal registers, the rhythm changes only minimally in the first part of the song. By asking "What is a woman?" and simultaneously answering "I don't know", the band deconstructs the heteronormative social classification of woman, consequently the song's rhythm changes. It seems that the second part of the song provides a platform for some sort of radical and angry noise improvisation. As symptoms, the band members connect political activism and empowerment strategies with music. Most of their lyrics are easily accessible to audiences when sung in German, while following familiar rhyme schemes and a stable text rhythm, which makes for easier memorization. The band's lyrics and videos celebrate female pleasure and address the taboos of female bodily excretions, such as menstruation or ejaculation, or the stigmatization of sex work. Overall, it is the feminist slogan "Off to the golden matriarchy" that inspires шапка's (Schapka) art concept. While being part of a feminist network, the band thereby acts independently, as Dora de Goederen explains, "I think if people are interested in queer-feminist punk music, Schapka will quickly become a well-known name" (Karlbauer, 2018). The video has one comment on youtube that states, "Tolle Vagina Musik. Nach all den Jahrzehnten des Penis Sound (*Great vagina music. After all the decades of penis sound*)." (шапка Schapka, 2018a).

5. Conclusions

In the feminist track "Golden G String", on the album *Plastic Hearts,* Miley Cyrus struggles with being a female musician in the pop world, "There are layers to this body/ Primal sex and primal shame/ They told me I should cover it so I went the other way/ I was trying to own my power/ Still I'm trying to work it out" (Transcription by the author). In that specific verse, she convinces the listener that she is not a sex object, but a *woman* dealing with misogyny and sexist confrontations in a patriarchal industry. This paper concludes that there are different ways of dealing with misogyny in the music business; we observe international acclaimed artists such as Dua Lipa, Megan Thee Stallion, Lizzo or Lady Gaga, who wrote and/or perform empowering tunes that react to gender-based violence, hate speech and disinformation in everyday life. Empowerment as a strategy against sexism influences the work of Austrian artists and bands such as DIVES, Шапка (Schapka), Fatima Spar and Fijuka. Fittingly, therefore, the selected analytical approach helps to explain these observations. Jens Eder's scheme of character analysis, the "clock of character", refers to social conditions that are reflected by film, respectively by music videos and documentations of live performances. According to Eder, characters can be analyzed as artefacts, fictional beings, symbols and symptoms. Consequently, a character is embedded in different contexts: as artefact in the music video's textual structures, as fictional being in the diegesis, as symbol in the music video's themes and as symptom in the socio-cultural, historical and political frameworks of its production and reception.

The selected artists and bands show a multitude of different positions in terms of gender, sexual identity and social perception and refer to pluralistic patterns of identification. In the analysed examples, we find ways of dealing with misogyny and performing empowering strategies that are presented by a prophetess and DIY band collectives, that take place in space and in a video game. The examined bands and artists move back and forth between music, performance and social responsibility. The aforementioned musicians focus on playing with identities concerning gender, sexuality, ethnicity and social backgrounds. With these strategies they shift identity politics, as we know them from "established" music traditions. The musicians portrayed here illustrate highly diverse approaches to sexism and empowerment in everyday life and in popular music.

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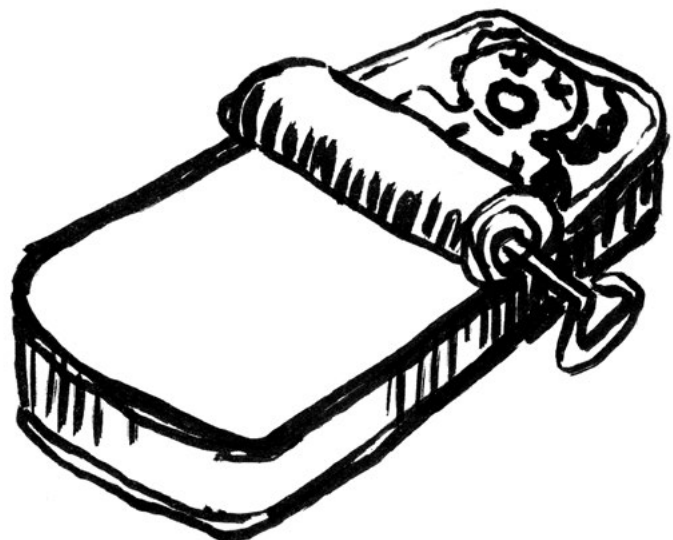
4.5. BRAZILIAN LGBTQI+ SLAM POETRY: POLICITIES, HISTORY AND NARRATIVE INVESTIGATION

Gabriela Cleveston Gelain[75]

✖ ~~Abstract~~

The purpose of this article is to present a historical context of spoken poetry meetings, the slam poetry and to reflect the narrative investigation as a methodology to observe this urban culture endowed with politicities, permeated by productions, such as the do-it-yourself ethos, and material and symbolic consumption. From 2019 to the present time observing Slam Marginália in the city of São Paulo, I noticed political actions, languages aesthetics with a technological and communicational infrastructure in this group. It is questioned whether the transmarginal urban, face-to-face, and digital artistic experiments of the collective as audiovisual policities collaborate to build a network of affection, confrontation, resistance, and survival for LGBTQI+ people. Finally, I briefly present the narrative investigation as a reflection on slam poetry to be understood as a distinct methodological route and assuming the social construction of scientific knowledge also based on speeches of participants.

Keywords: slam poetry, narrative investigation, gender, methodology, urban cultures.

1. Introduction

In this article, I present a historical context of slam poetry, which are meetings where the poetry is recited. The research[76] is based in Communication and Consumption Practices post-graduation program, ESPM (Brazil). The object of the research is *Slam Marginália*, an LGBTQIA+[77] collective in the city center of São Paulo (Brazil), initiated late in 2018. This collective of trans people and dissident genders is permeated by diverse artistic productions, such as: elaboration of fanzines, sale of vegan food, thrift store, arts, conversation circles and above all a dialogue with the trans and non-binary community in the search for strengthening their community, to face the prejudice, focus on self-care and resistance in Brazil. Talking about the productions resulting from Slam Marginália is also talking about consumption. Thus, I understand the cultural, material, and symbolic consumption of slam poetry meetings from Rose de Melo Rocha (2008) who understands consumption as far from "exclusively materialistic approaches or those of a purely metaphysical nature, on the contrary of common sense, to investigate the communication processes involved in consumption and articulated by it. In addition, the author points out that consumption, "in a very special way in youth sectors, asserts itself as a fundamental reference for

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76 The theoretical reflections that are made throughout this article derive from the empirical analysis (Gelain, 2019) developed in the research "Dissident bodies and audiovisual narratives in downtown São Paulo.

77 The acronym LGBTQI+++ stands for: lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, intersex, asexual, non-binary, pansexual and other various dissident genders.

the conformation of narratives, image representation and imaginary universes full of meaning" (Rocha, 2008:.122). In addition to consumption in the field of research, I also think about the way Slam Marginália organizes itself as a political collective based on the findings of Silvia Helena Borelli and Rita de Cássia Alves Oliveira (2010: 6):

> *At a time when political parties are no longer able to organize and give a single meaning to social disputes, it appears that the forms of intervention and political action of these young people at the turn of the millennium express their indignation with the appropriation of territories, bodies and with the constitution of small groups of artistic, cultural, or ideological affinities. These groups are organized through common themes that articulate the meetings and collective productions. Instead of conventional and institutionalized political action, these young people point to a more pulverized and transitory political practice. Performance, immediacy, and ephemerality mark the collective actions and the frequency of their cultural productions. This way of acting presents these young people as powerful subjects endowed with the transforming power of culture. They are agents, subjects; they are consumers/receivers of images and ideas that also produce meanings, aesthetics, forms, and contents. Most of these young communities perform in collectives that go beyond traditional participation; it is a form of organization which also encompasses affective and aesthetic nexus, intersubjective recognition and awareness of individuality. It is the encounter and production with the other that articulates actions, political ideas, and future perspectives.

Based on poetry recited at Slam Marginália, I visualize readings embeded by politics (Rocha, 2016). According to the author, politicity was first used by Paulo Freire (2001), who reflects on a connection between knowledge and emancipation, which are linked to modes of social consciousness of people involved in the construction of autonomy and creation of possibilities of existing and being. in the world. Furthermore, it is a movement of critical awareness, reflective independence and immersion in political, cultural, and social everyday life, a human capacity to see, reflect and express critically. In this way, politics is understood as: what-to-do of everyday life; strategic actions of participation and engagement of these subjects in society. In other words, it is not a concept necessarily linked to politics in institutional terms.

As a result of this brief initial reflection from the perspective of consumption and politicities within the slam poetry collective Slam Marginália, I will present in this article: a) the origin of the slam poetry from a historical context in the United States to its dissemination in Brazil, as well as its specificities, rules and sociocultural contexts, in order to help researchers in the field of communication who are interested in the topic; b) a brief reflection on the Narrative Investigation methodology (Cardona & Alvarado, 2015), which could be a possible path of analysis for colleagues who focus on researching urban cultures such as slam poetry.

2. An historical context of slam poetry: oral narratives and performance

To understand Slam Marginália in the city of São Paulo, it is necessary to historicize the context of slam poetry and the conditions of emergence of these competitive poetic-political communities, which may currently be understood as Fernanda Vilar (2019), an agora [78]for contemporary political debate. For Roberta Estrela D'alva[79] (2019), a precursor of the style in Brazil, slam is currently one of the most democratic forms of poetry performance in the world. However, after reading articles about communities, meetings, and poetry slam performances, we may tell the reader there will not be a single definition for

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[78] The agora was the public square in the region of Ancient Greece, where meetings of Greek citizens took place to discuss matters related to life in the polis (city). In these meetings and assemblies, laws, public works and cultural issues were discussed. Available at: https://www.suapesquisa.com/o_que_e/agora.htm Accessed: June, 2022.

[79] Roberta Marques do Nascimento artistically signs as Roberta Estrela D'alva. She is an actress-MC, director, music director, researcher, slammer from Brazil. She is the creator and slammaster of ZAP! Zona Autonomous of Word, the first Brazilian "poetry slam" and was a finalist for World Cup of this modality 2011 in Paris. Available at: http://lattes.cnpq.br/7830118653290661 Accessed: October, 2022.

this cultural event. It is an encounter, an aesthetic-political-epistemic polyphony; they are, therefore, multiple voices, which cannot be summarized in just one form of poetry or performance. As stated by Zumthor (2018: 81), "All poetry crosses, and integrates more or less imperfectly, the epistemological chain sensation-perception-knowledge-domain of the world: sensoriality is conquered in the sensitive to allow, ultimately, the object search". According to Vilar (2009) the poetry of slam carries cultural and linguistic miscegenation, as it is made mainly by people whose history derives from conflicts.

Zumthor (2018) analyzed the literature characteristics and its relationship with the voice, reception, and performance from the 1930s onwards (based on the works of D. Vasse, A. Tomatis and I. Fonagy), he established some thesis on the voice. Among them a symbolic place de per se and it would be unobjectable, it cannot be defined otherwise than by a relationship, a distance between subject-object, object-other. Furthermore, it is from the voice the relationship of otherness is recomposed and meets the subject's word. Another thesis states every object starts to have a symbolic dimension when it is vocalized, something that is clearly perceived in the meetings of slam poetry.

In addition to the voice, another fundamental pillar to reflect the collective is the concept of performance, fundamental when observing a collective of slam poetry that raises questions of sexualities and dissident genders, vogue dance, poetic declamations, the open microphone. According to Taylor (2011), the word performance causes theoretical and practical complications both due to its ubiquity and the ambiguity of the term, being known especially in Latin America as "the art of performance" or the "art of action". In Spanish, it is curious that there is no feminine or masculine article for the word, it has no gender: it can be called la performance or el performance. For the author, performance also arises from everyday life, showing normative and sometimes repressive social systems that have often been accepted and naturalized. The artist's body in performance makes us re-signify and rethink the body and the sexual gender as social constructions. For example, the practice of drag queens demonstrates that gender is a performance and a way of acting, even though in everyday experience most people end up limiting themselves to certain ways of being and acting their gender.

In a historical context, performance would have emerged in the 60s and 70s to break the institutional and economic ties that left out artists from contact with theater, galleries and official or commercial art spaces and refers to a specific way of art, a living art, in action. The anti-institutional, anti-elitist, anti-consumer performance provoked a political act almost by definition, "although the political is understood more as a posture of rupture and challenge than as an ideological or dogmatic position" (Taylor, 2011: 8).

Regarding the sociocultural context, the poetry slam has origins in the United States in the 1980s, and, according to Warley Pires and Julio Souto Salom (2020), they seem to have a format that achieved a certain international standardization. For the authors (one researcher and the other slammer), this competition model which involves urban practices and poetics began in 1986, at the Green Mill Jazz Club, a bar located north of Chicago, and was created by Mark Kelly Smith (construction worker and poet) and the Chicago Poetry Ensemble group. It is in this context that the Uptown Poetry Slam appears, the first meeting of this model, which has been replicated in several regions of the United States. One of the highlights in this historical line is the first National Poetry Slam, which took place in the city of San Francisco, in 1990.

Despite Marc Smith being the pioneer of this type of poetic competition, D'alva (2004) reassures the slam has a copyleft character, none of the communities pays to use the name or the method, the information is made available on a network for everyone and dialogue and transit between different communities are encouraged. Daniela da Silva de Freitas (2020) points to the historical context of American slam poetry as a diasporic cultural practice, demonstrating how this gathering of people speaking and listening is:

> *heir to the vast tradition of spoken poetry which already existed in the United States – from the Reading to the beatnik poets; the spoken words of black poets, such as Gil Scott-Heron, who already recorded their LPs long before the existence of MCs; the poetry of Langston Hughes with its emulations of jazz rhythms; and, according to some critics, of Walt Whitman's project to reach the general public through poetry - and influenced by the emergence of performance art in the 1960s, slam poetry (in some parts of the United States, especially New York) was associated to hip-hop culture and, as a diasporic cultural practice, has spread around the world. (Freitas, 2020: 2)

Carlos Cortez Minchillo (2020) states the format Marc Smith created still guides the countless "slam communities" which exist around the world and, in many cases, are certified by a non-profit organization, for instance, the Poetry Slam Inc., a non-profit organization started in 1997. The objective of this institution is to oversee the international coalition of slam poetry, and it became responsible for stimulating the idea of this community worldwide, through events such as the National Poetry Slam (NPS), the Individual World Poetry Slam (iWPS) and the Women of the World Poetry Slam (WOWps). D'alva (2019: 282) states that "belonging" is something inseparable in **slam poetry**: "being heard also means belonging. In the agoras which are formed, voices become audible and poets visible, from the irreplaceable act of presence which, as Zumthor (1993) would point out, is already autopoetic". Marc Kelly Smith and Joe Kraynak (2009) assumes, in the support of slam poetry meetings, five essential topics are present: community, poetry, performance, interactivity and competitiveness.

Susan Sommers-Willett (2005), a reference author for the studies of slam poetry, expresses one of the most important specificities which defines slam is the frequency of what he calls "identity performances" assuming one's identity seems fundamental to hold on the attention in a competitive slam poetry. In addition, several poets, and participants (the public) who attend these communities use it as a platform for political action, which causes many slammers to be named as activists, even if only discursively:

> *However, in rewarding poets for authenticity in marginalized identity performances what is considered authentic may be constructed by this reward process; that is, the political subject emerges as a process of identification and recognition (…) thus, the slam becomes a space for the formation of identities and, consequently, for the formation of a political identity (…). The analysis of poetic performances suggests that this political identity is composed both by the character of protest aspects and members of institutional politics and by the articulation of the struggle of various minorities" (Silva & Losekann, 2020: 4)*

Why are these meetings called "slam"? Vilar (2019) explains the origin of the word itself comes from the English verb "to slam", "which means to hit or criticize, being also used in the context of sports tournaments. In the case of slam poetry, the words agreed upon poetry, when uttered, act as a slap in the face to those who hear them during the competition. D'alva (2004) also describes it was in this environment that the term poetry slam was coined, borrowing the slam terminology from baseball and bridge tournaments, first to name the poetic performances, and later the poetry competitions. However, for Cynthia Neves (2017), the word slam comes from an onomatopoeia of the English language, created by Smith, which was based on the sound of a strong knock on a door, a sound like "pah!". The organizers of spoken poetry communities first proposal were the quest to challenge an academic and elitist view of poetry reading. According to D'alva (2004), Smith, in collaboration with other artists, organized nights of poetic performances, to popularize spoken poetry as a counterpoint to closed and aseptic academic circles. One of the perceived convergences between these communities is the political and social criticism content (Silva, 2018).

In reading Sommers-Willet (2005), the performative discourse in a slam poetry is usually in first person, with confessional and protest narrative – points that I have also observed in all the slams I have witnessed during the development of this research. In this space of sociability, some rules (although not always fixed[80]) and recurrences are observed: a) three poems of their own authorship will be recited during elimination rounds, of up to three minutes each; b) ornaments or props, costumes or music accompaniment are not allowed (musicalities such as the beat, which accompanies rap, one of the pillars of hip hop culture, cannot be used); c) the marks are given by a popular jury, chosen at the time of the event among the participants, who evaluate the poems from zero to ten; d) there is a score average at the end of the event, which usually has three rounds of poetry for each participant. The text of a slam must be authorial, even if quotes are valid during poetry. From the field of face-to-face research, I realized that part of the audience that is a jury during a week can also be a poet competing or be part of the audience in the next meeting. In short, there are no fixed functions, although, in the analyzed collective, the organizers are always the same.

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80   D'alva (2019: 270) clarifies "the rules used, in most slams and in major world championships, are those described in the text, although there are slams which have their own rules and even some that are not competitive but use that name".

Still regarding the reception by the public in the slams, Minchillo (2020) states that it is characterized not only by the silence that generally prevails during the performance of each text, but also by the manifestations of interaction by the audience – shouts, whistles, laughter, applause – which usually integrate the performative event. For Freitas (2020), the poetry of slam takes place through orality, writing, and image. In this way, it is carried out in the written, visual, and oral interface. It is written by the poet and desirably memorized, but it is meant to be heard and immediately understood after its first performance.

There seems to be a space for mutual help between the participants, whether they are poets, friends and supporters, the curious audience, long-time members or, often, some passers-by, captivated by the scene and who are part of the audience experience. Although there are thematic differences in the way slams are presented in different parts of the world (and even in Brazil), D'alva (2014: 113) summarizes: "In most communities there are three fundamental rules that are maintained: the poems must be authored by the poet who is going to present them, must be no more than three minutes long and no costumes, props, or musical accompaniment must be used". In addition, interaction with the public is one of the essential features in the meetings, with boos and applause depending on the marks given by the chosen judges at the beginning of the slam.

Groups practicing poetry slam could be defined as "communities". D'alva (2014) states the meetings have been collectively organized with a common interest, under a minimum set of norms and rules, and communities cultivate respect for the founders of the movement and knowing in detail its recent history, its foundations, and "philosophy speech", appreciation of the performance, regardless whether (or not) you agree with the content presented in the event. Due to the few elements necessary to perform at slam poetry, events and communities of this model ended up influencing their participants to perform other artistic activities, in addition to recognize themselves as artivists. For D'alva (2004), one of the significant particularities of slam poetry is the multiplicity of voices from different generations, narratives, styles and professions. Finally, Vilar (2019) interprets encounters of this type as a hybrid and democratic art form.

3. Spoken poetry meetings, the "slams": from the United States to Brazil

It was during the 1990s, according to Pires and Souto Salom (2020) and Vilar (2019), that slam poetry became popular in the United States and gained international attention, with films such as the documentaries Slam Nation (by Paul Delvin, 1998) and Slam (by Marc Levin, 1998). The last one portrays the decrease in violence in cities and power through the word and was carried out by the poet and MC Saul Williams, who received awards at the Sundance festival and was the winner of the Golden Chamber at the Cannes Film Festival. These two films were essential for the poet, actress and MC Roberta Estrela D'Alva to have her first contact with the spoken poetry competition model and bring this idea to Brazil, founding the first Brazilian poetry slam scene, in the city of São Paulo: the Autonomous Zone of Word (ZAP!), all together with the collective *Núcleo Bartolomeu de Depoimentos*, in 2008.

However, it is important to highlight, even this model of spoken poetry did not exist before in Brazil, it is easy to understand its rapid acceptance and the growth of this cultural and sporting modality, considering the place which oral tradition has in the country, particularly the competitive oral games, such as challenges, battles and the "Repente Nordestino" or Northeastern sudden (D'alva, 2019). According to Freitas (2020), the second slam to take place in the city of São Paulo was the Guilhermina Slam, which started in February 2012 next to the Guilhermina-Esperança red line subway station, located in the East Zone of the city. Pires and Souto Salom (2020: 386) explain in São Paulo, there were already important movements of peripheral marginal literature and meetings of spoken poetry, as well as black Brazilian literature, in addition to a consolidated circuit of soirees in bars and other peripheral cultural centers.

Araújo (2018), analyzing events in the capital of São Paulo, interprets the slam as a literary movement, a poetry competition which would influence what we understand here by slam poetry (the author seems to separate concepts, understanding slam as engedered from slam poetry) and spoken word. In addition, it locates the encounters of this model as integral movements in the concept of marginal literature and in the idea of culture of the periphery, both for internal issues to spoken poetry, and for

external issues, linked to social and joint actions. For Araújo (2018), the acquisition of the term "marginal literature", in addition to specific language and thematic, starts from the social and cultural significance through which these agents want to see themselves represented.

For Minchillo (2020), soiree-type meetings and slams converge from what is most essential: the public and the poets present. Besides there is the objective of enunciation, face-to-face expression of a literary narrative, but specifically poetry, both events highlight which is being said, how it is being verbalized. In other words, it is a

> *event in which speaking, and listening are permeated by gestures, facial language, clothing, peculiarities of the environment in which they occur and by the emotional connection established between artist and audience throughout the performance (Zumthor, 1997). (Minchillo, 2020: 136)

As well as saraus, peripheral literature and black Brazilian literature, other communities have similarities to slam poetry: the rhyming battles, also called MCS battles, inserted in the hip-hop movement.

When searching the ZAP! blog, a pioneering poetry slam scene in São Paulo that was first pioneered by Roberta D'alva, it was possible to observe a pedagogical perspective throughout the sessions already on the homepage, with categories such as "What is the ZAP?" and "What is SLAM?", something that was also noticed during my immersions in the field of Slam Marginália. In other words, it seems to be a common disposition of organizers to instruct the public and new listeners to learn the specifics and rules of these meetings, as well as making use of digital social networks to disseminate the poetic-performatic making of the meetings.

As per the post in the link "What is Slam?" on the ZAP! blog, spoken poetry is the "spoken word", a mode of performance where people recite their textual narratives, developed in musical, literary and artistic environments, with a central focus on the issue of orality D'alva (2004) understands that spoken word is related to different universes, such as beatnik poetry, black American movements and their political discourses, hip-hop and contemporary literary performances, having its origin in the beginning of the 20th century, in the United States, attributed to written contents that were recorded and disseminated by radio:

> *It achieved great repercussion in the 1990s with the emergence of the slams. Somers-Willett refers to the relationship between spoken word and the genres of black American music, especially hip-hop. It emphasizes the commercial origins of spoken word, which, as a manifestation that can be recorded, reproduced, and commercialized, mainly by the phonographic industry, has become a profitable commercial product, something that many of its participants and lovers are unaware of (D'alva, 2004: 112).

From the perspective of the blog ZAP!, slams or poetry slams are poetry meetings where spoken word performances are modes of competition. Such performances brought an innovation to oral poetry and extolled the art of poetic performance. "Slam is made by and for people. People who, appropriating a place that is rightfully theirs, appear in front of a microphone to say who they are, where they came from and what world they believe in or not" (D'alva, 2014: 119-120) According to this blog post, the slam aims to democratize poetic work and give back to the population something that was often quite limited to academic environments.

In addition to a space for speech, participating in a slam poetry, whether as a poet or a listener, is an invitation to listen (Duarte, 2019). In Brazil, spoken poetry championships had a rise after 2018, often circulating through face-to-face, textual, and digital means, with an emphasis on feminist, anti-racist and peripheral themes (Pires & Souto Salom, 2020). Despite the dissemination of this poetic and face-to-face performance of spoken poetry in the country, here I observe a significant difference in relation to American slams. According to Freitas (2020), in the United States battles always take place inside closed spaces, like theaters, bars or concert halls where it is necessary to buy a ticket to participate in the event. In Brazil, even on occasions that take place in closed spaces, slams are usually free of charge.

Poetry slams have also developed a dynamic and profound trajectory in almost the entire Brazilian territory, in addition to reviving, according to Pires and Souto Salom (2020) the practices of oral

poetry with new technologies of production, recording, dissemination and reproduction, in addition to proposing interesting expressive forms. They appear as an "activation" of the so-called "peripheral marginal literature". Also, regarding slam in Brazil, since 2014, a national championship has been held, entitled "SLAM BR – Campeonato Brasileiro de Poesia Falada", administered by the hip-hop theater collective Núcleo Bartolomeu de Depoimentos (D'alva, 2019). According to D'alva (2019), whoever wins this slam goes to the final of the Poetry Slam World Cup, held in Paris (France). In Brazil, there is also an international championship, the Rio Poetry Slam, which has taken place since 2014 during the FLUP (Festa Literária das Periferias), in Rio de Janeiro (Brazil). In addition, there are slams in national territory that escape the "original" format.

From an empirical look at slam events in the state of Espírito Santo (Brazil), Silva and Losekann (2020: 5) noticed the recurrence of themes in the poems that surround the intersection of three points that I understand to be relevant from our perspective of research: a) social causes in slams (issues against prejudice of race, sexuality and sexism); b) affirmation of spaces (description of peripheral places, such as favelas, hills); c) subjects (minority, subordinate). However, researchers understand that in this process of political identity formation through slam, not all participants suffer the social problems that are posed in poetic productions, they identify with these social causes. The slam-type meeting would also be a space to experience adversity. One of the controversial issues is the competitive character present in the meetings, "and as the championships became known and drew the media's attention, criticisms of the "cold" and "not very deep" way in which the scores are attributed to the players increased poems (D'alva, 2004).

In Brazil, according to Mel Duarte (2019), poetry slam has already reached at least 26 states, 8 of which have a female focus, where only women can compete. In countries such as France, Belgium and Brazil, slammers hold slam, creativity and writing workshops in schools and other public institutions. Most of them are educators or multiple artists, working not only in the slam universe, but participating in film, arts, and literature projects. In this way, the contact between artists and students results in writing and questioning practices that go beyond school curriculums (Vilar, 2009).

4. Narrative Investigation, a possible methodological route for urban cultures

I understand the use of narrative investigation (Cardona & Alvarado, 2015) as a methodological bet in this research, where there is no neutrality in the analysis of the researcher and where the relationship between him/her and a community is assumed. How do I choose to narrate what I narrate in a research, based on what was narrated by others?

Based on this question, I bet on this methodology that extrapolates a content analysis of what is being said, because this narrated text is a real crossed, also constituted by a symbolic universe – both my narration and what the research participants narrate. As a researcher, the perspective I propose is also to recreate, rename and retell a series of events, which, according to Paul Ricoeur (2006), would be an articulation of norms, rules, signs mediated by the symbolic.

More than responding to a chronological order, narrating is responding to a logical and subjective structure, which accounts for the particular and complete configuration of the lived events (Cardona and Alvarado, 2015). This methodology implies an approach to the epistemological postulates of hermeneutics and the configuration of a methodology of dialogue, a "distinct methodological route".

Thus, from the reading of Cardona and Alvarado (2015), I understand the audiovisual narrative of Slam Marginália participants as a polyphony of genres and sexualities in a slam poetry competition. The "own" narrative of each of these participants is not a linear voice or a singular construction; are products of intersubjectivity. In narrative investigation, the meaning that social actors elaborate in their textual expressions, in their interactions and verbalizations are the central focus of the investigation, which also seeks to attribute an interpretive perspective of the narrative's complexity of the research participants. This is because they feel, omit, and express themselves consciously or unconsciously.

Narrating does not emerge from a void or without intentionality. For the authors (Cardona & Alvarado,

2015), the intention to carry out a narrative investigation is a methodological bet for the social construction of a scientific practice based on the voices of the participants. However, it is extremely important that the researcher remains in constant observation and communication with the research field, for a better understanding of the senses and meanings expressed by the observed individuals – considering the historical period when it was narrated, the generational issues, the universe where this group is inserted, the specificities (historical, social, economic) of the moment in which it communicates.

5. Conclusions

According to Sommers-Willett (2009), slam poetry competitions are spaces where a portion of the identities which are marginalized by society can celebrate and express themselves in community, with an attention focused on black identities in public spaces within cities – which become the stage, urban agoras of political meetings such as Slam Marginália, a meeting of dissident genders spoken poetry that took place in person in the center of São Paulo until the beginning of the pandemic and migrated to the online in its poetic performances endowed with politics.

For Milton Santos (2012) in the coexistence with the need and with the other, a policity is elaborated, the politics of the low ones, constituted from their visions of the world and places. It is a new type of politicity, which has nothing to do with institutional politics. In this article, I present the historical context of slam poetry in the United States until the beginning of this movement in Brazil. About Slam Marginália specifically, throughout 2019 until 2022, I noticed political actions, aesthetic languages with a wide technological and communicational infrastructure in this meeting of dissident genres, trans, peripheral, racialized, and indigenous trans (as they say in the poetry), in the pajubá language present in the narratives and in their ways of being and (re)existing in the world.

Finally, I also presented in this text a brief introduction to narrative investigation as a methodology for analyzing slam poetry encounters. This research mode may be understood as a distinct methodological route by the researcher. It presupposes the social construction of scientific knowledge also based on the speeches of the field participants and explains the possibility of enunciation of the participants, in this case, the slammers, or poets. I understand that reality is a process of social construction, where the approximation of the "objects" of investigation is not carried out directly, but rather mediated by the participants (in a connection between researcher and researched), who can also be in an interrelation along the construction of a research, as during a doctoral thesis.

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an AMPLIFIED WORLD connected: sounds, images, apps, digital culture and FICTIONS

5.1. FROM SMART TO MASTR – A POST-INTERNET SUBCULTURE IN CONTEMPORARY CHINA

Kai Aberg [81]

✖ ~~Abstract~~

Smart, also known as Sha-ma-te (杀马特), are a well-known group of people in China that have a distinct culture and sense of identity. They have been shamed by China's urbanites for their outlandish hair with some calling them "tasteless and low-brow". The Smart community was created by China's rural youths born in the 1990s and is found mostly in Southern China's factory towns. Their fashion sense is inspired by Japanese Visual Kei, known for their punk rock hairstyles and makeup. We can also observe some primitive tribal customs present among the Yi and Hmong people; The aesthetics of Smart can also be viewed through the Chinese version of Hauntology, combining Sino-futurism, Chinese post-Internet aesthetics, folk culture, utopian landscapes, and "aesthetic disorder" in the place of mass production. This hybrid folk culture shows a strong capacity for self-organization, constantly deriving and developing new content. The emergence of the Smart group is closely linked to the process of urbanization and the popularity of the internet in China. From the perspective of media archaeology, Smart's history can be traced through the development of the civilian internet. the internet becoming a window to the outside world for many young people in small towns. The virtual nature, anonymity, and convenience of the internet greatly stimulated people's enthusiasm for online socialization. The existence and maintenance of the Smart group rely on the production of a shared culture within the group. By imitating, improving, and innovating the "visual look". This examination was combined with my artistic practice in the form of project collaboration with the Smart group, working particularly with Smart's "godfather"- Luo Fuxing, to create a series of participatory art projects with Smart cultural overtones with the smart group.

Keywords: internet subculture, Chinese internet, suburban, folk art, hairstyle.

1. Short history of Smart group though Internet archaeology

Before writing about the work made with and in relation to the Smart People, I give a more in-depth account if the culture. The term " Smart" does not seem to have a folkloric meaning, because it is an alternative translation of the English word "Smart" in Chinese. The initial motivation and ultimate result of the subculture is at best the pursuit of fashion, from the East and West, and it has now become considered an underclass culture. This is perhaps where the destiny of consumerism comes into play and

the unfashionable associations of the term in Chinese culture. This limitation stems from their choice of word, and in the diversity and openness of the subculture, it is difficult to find the qualities of "Smart" in English. Is there anyone in the West who would use Smart to describe its wild and overgrown state? So, when translated back or restored to English, it seems a bad translation or a word meaning something bad. However, a courageous subculture is perhaps wild, poor, unregulated, unguarded, urban, and above all, rebellious, and should often show disdain for the mainstream or elite culture, which should be precisely anti-smart and elite (Lu, 2022).

The emergence of the Smart group is closely linked to the process of urbanization and the popularity of the internet in China. From the perspective of media archaeology, Smart's history can be traced through the development of civilian internet. Beginning with widespread internet access in the home in 1999, it was followed by the Beijing Blue Extreme Internet cafe arson incident that shocked the country in 2002, then the Chinese "villages and towns connect to network" project; and finally emerged with countless rural youths in internet cafes using low quality cameras at 45-degree angles, tilting their heads to make their first non-mainstream avatars.

The rapid development of the internet in China in the past few years has made the distribution of internet cafes more common in towns and cities at all levels, and the price of internet access is very low (according to Luo Fuxing's recollection, the charge to use internet cafes started out as0.5RMB/hour). This led to the internet becoming a window to the outside world for many young people in small towns. In its infancy, it was easy to access foreign websites, and to learn about foreign culture and trends, which allowed domestic youths to be influenced by European, American and Japanese pop culture. At the same time, some early online communities were emerging rapidly, such as Tianya bbs and Baidu, as well as chat in social media QQ[82] (Figure 5.1.1). The virtual nature, anonymity and convenience of the internet greatly stimulated people's enthusiasm for online socialization.

» **Figure 5.1.1.** The main body of the QQ menu bar with Smart Family groups
» **Source:** Author's own arquive.

Online games and the web 2.0 era contributed to the birth of the Smart family. In 2005, Tencent started to develop the communication software QQ into Qzone - a platform that collects personal homepages and blogs; this provided the basis for the organization of Smart. Players on the dance game "Audition" (Figure 5.1.2 Chinese translation: wu tuan劲舞团) have set up "union" - the game's family. As a result of the marriages and warfare between the major clubs in the game, the early "Funeral of Love family (Zang

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82 QQ is unquestionably the biggest social media platform in China. Besides IM, Qzone (QQ kongjian) is another important part of QQ's digital service. Strictly speaking Qzone, 16 the personal social networking platform on which users update statuses, write blogs and upload and share articles, photographs, music and videos with online contacts, is the social media platform usually compared with Facebook (Wang, 2016).

Ai Jia Zu葬爱家族)", "Smail Family（Xiao jia笑家)", "Left Blood Family（Can xue Jia Zu残血家族)" and other families appeared. They set up group chats in the instant chat tool QQ and followed the unified format and names of the clans. The fashion setting of the game's characters was also important to each clan as it allowed them to develop a distinct dress and hairstyles, which were designed with reference to Korean fashion at the time. The game characters' fashion setting also had a large impact on the future hairstyles and aesthetic concept of the Smart family. In addition to Tencent, you can also see them in Baidu post, 51space, and YY voice.

» **Figure 5.1.2.** The typical screenshot of the dance game "Audition" in 2010s.
» **Source:** Author's own archive.

Smart's most iconic features are their dramatic hairstyles. As mentioned in the Foreign Policy article, a Smart's single most distinguishing (and derided) feature is considered to be his or her exaggerated hairstyle. Shaggy blow-outs, or spiky do's, all held together with considerable abuse of hair coloring or wax. Clothing bought from a street market, some body piercings, and an off-brand cell phone often complete the look. Smart usually linger in the social purgatory of small hair salons, smokey internet cafes, or street market stalls in China's big cities. Similar to subcultures such as hip-hop, the socially underprivileged Smart worship fashion, money and the power that comes with class. After coining the term, Smart has developed its own logic of "class" and "elite", which is implemented in tightly organized online groups. For example, the core members will divide the duties of other members; some are responsible for beautifying the shape of the group members by Photoshop, some are responsible for producing videos of members' activities on QQ space, some are responsible for producing videos of members' activities to QQ space, and others are responsible for network promotion and external contacts. It is important to understand the role the platform of QQspace is for engendering these developments. As Wang writes:

» **Figure 5.1.3.** The decorative elements and Dressing up avatars on Qzone
» **Source:** Author's own archive.

At a time when much work on China's internet is focused on urban areas, and on more recently

established networks such as Weibo or WeChat, the instant messaging service QQ and the Qzone personal page remain essential platforms among social media in China, especially in the rural milieu and among migrants, even though the latter have recourse to a much larger panel of services. The studies thus add significantly to a very limited number on these subjects. (Wang)

The Smart family group has its own strict norms and standards; new members must go through a round of photo screening, change their QQ nicknames and Qzone information, beautify their avatars, and promise to obey the group's internal arrangements. Some Smart groups also charge members a certain amount of Q coins to fund activities (Figure 5.1.3). The Smart group's organisational characteristics are displayed in their regular online meetings. If members are in the same city, there will also be organised offline activities. The third aspect of the organisation of the Smart group is the hierarchy of status within the group, with clear boundaries of respect between the senior members and new members. Of course, this power relationship is not entirely dependent on the length of membership to the group but is mainly determined by the degree of recognition the group's members have of a person's "smart image", which then results in a degree of idolatry. Those who are good at dressing up, getting other members' "likes" and competing to imitate other more prominent members, are more likely to become the object of worship for the rest of the group, with other members becoming their fans and "followers". In its heyday, there were hundreds of official Smart groups, often with "sub-departments", a family branch with a certain degree of autonomy, just like the feudal dynasty's remote regions. Some sub-departments even had their own derivative groups. Smart culture contained several hundred groups, not to mention the number of uncertified QQ groups. As with real businesses in general, there are a bunch of titles in the group, such as patriarch, president, director, governor, chief auditor, endorsement, etc. These seemingly absurd and quite structured organizational structures actually came from the hands of minors. One important member being Luo Fuxing, who claims to be the founder of the family (Figure 5.1.4).

» **Figure 5.1.4.** Photos of "godfather of smart" Luo Fuxing in 2008
» **Source:** Author's own archive.

A considerable part of the Smart people come from the rural and urban-rural interface, and a small number of them are urban youth, and there are "urban " and "rural " non-mainstreams within their group. However, regardless of their specific family-background situation, they often lack parental control and have more freedom in their personal lifestyle choices. According to the movie *We Were Smart* (Li, 2022), many of them are the second generation of farmers who work in factories, they do not have the ability to work in agriculture, which is why they often choose to work in urban factories or in-service industries such as hairdressing. At the beginning of the 21st century, after China successfully joined the WTO, the manufacturing industry rapidly developed, and a large number of small factories emerged in

the Yangtze River Delta and Pearl River Delta regions. Since these small factories were more relaxed in terms of age, status, and dress code, they became the first choice for the second generation of migrant workers who dropped out of school at a young age. China had a one-child policy, but families from rural areas often had more than one child, and many of the working teenagers did not have the official status of citizenship. Due to the high intensity of the work and the boring and poor daily life experiences in the factories, many of these migrant youths shared a common sense of confusion and loneliness, leading to psychological traumas, which laid the foundations for the group seeking solace on the internet.

Smart groups aren't just "internet elves". They boldly and courageously bring those frightening, bizarre and individualistic dresses on the internet into their real lives, and they go to work, go shopping, and seek entertainment venues and parties wearing Smart style and makeup (Figure 5.1.5). As a result, they are bringing their online roles into the real world, breaking through the prescriptive roles and limitations that mainstream society has predetermined for them, and fully exploring their "multiple selves". With their trendy style, Smarts "take the best of all worlds", playing and imitating the essence of the visual image of several different subcultures. Male Smarts are keen on "cross-dressing" and show a tendency to drag like women. Even though the majority of them are heterosexual. This is also a manifestation of the desire of the young Smarts to be seen by the outside world, to be self-confirmed and to express self-consciousness, which in a Chinese context may have a more profound meaning in the construction of gender roles. They use their appearance of the "perfect gender" to break the traditional image of men as "masculine" and "rugged" and complete the construction of their gender roles how they see fit. Those who dress up as ghostly female Smarts can claim the differences between themselves and the fixed idea of femininity. They release repressed desires in their daily lives and change the weakness associated with the female roles in China by constantly acting with a frightening and violent temperament.

» **Figure 5.1.5.** A typical photograph of smart "family gathering" in real life
» **Source:** Author's own arquive.

By sparing no effort to accumulate a shared culture, the Smart group reinforces its identity. Through symbolic and ritualistic attire and behavior, the group constructs a distinction between itself and other sub-cultural groups, further enhancing their sense of belonging. The existence and maintenance of the Smart group relies on the production of a shared culture within the group. By imitating, improving, and innovating the "visual look", certain members of the Smart group establish their own authoritative status, while others worship and follow them, eventually gaining the recognition and respect of other members of the group. According to Hebdige, there is a "totem" of subculture, is the way the people of a subculture negotiate and express their cultural and social identity. Various youth subcultures have tried to expand their influence through the use of surprising styles which challenges the mainstream culture and forces it to recognize their ideas, values and structures.

The phenomenon of Smart reflects the increasingly obvious social compartmentalization in contemporary China, such as the compartmentalization of mainstream culture and youth subculture. This can be seen in the compartmentalization of "Little Fresh" and "Smart" within the youth cultural groups, and the compartmentalization of the new generation of migrant workers and urban civilization. The Smarts have

been ridiculed and derided since their emergence, especially by other internet youth groups, and they are often teased and ridiculed by the youth groups who claim to be "Fresh". (Figure 5.1.6)

» **Figure 5.1.6.** Typical image of "Little fresh' images on social media
» **Source:** Author's own archive.

The emergence of Little Fresh came about around the year 2010. The term Little Fresh came from the word "freshness", which initially referred to a fresh and beautiful, mild, mostly independent music-oriented style similar to Indie Pop. Later, with the expansion of the internet and this literary youth group, the scope or use of the term spread to literature, film, photography, clothing, and design. Little Fresh who love nature, travel, pets, Lomo photography, foods and other lifestyles, and have become particularly active on Renren (Chinese Facebook-like site), Weibo and Douban. Little Fresh, as a contemporaneous and similar-age internet subculture to Smart culture, represents an educated group of literary youths with an aesthetic standard of natural simplicity and elegance, and they are mostly urban-born college students. In contrast, the Smart people lack cultural education, come from rural areas, and are seen as culturally inferior. The literary youth, who claim to be Little Fresh, stand on the moral high ground of the cultural elite and wantonly belittle the Smart youths, saying that their bones always reveal their association with the countryside and that makes them a veritable "grassroots culture". Although simultaneous cultural phenomena, the power discourses of the Smart and Fresh groups are completely different, which has caused them to be treated differently by society. Some cultural critics view the Fresh as a major change in the aesthetic tastes of the new generation, containing a return to the classical oriental taste that was excluded from western enlightenment literature. (Zhang, 2013).

In 2010, there was a post in the online community Tianya Forum, titled "We Smarts want to set up China's 57th ethnic group", which caused hundreds of thousands of netizens to gather around. The mischievous image and rude words and actions of the Smarts angered the netizens at the time who denounced their behavior and abused them publicly. Even though this post was later suspected of not being by a member of the Smart community but by a spy for an anti-Smart group, Smart has become an infamous and derogatory term in the language of the internet.

In 2009, 2011, and again in 2013 the famous "Anti-Smart War" campaigns were launched in Baidu postings, calling the Smart post-90's generation a "permanent disgrace"(Ye, 2022), insulting and attacking them. These people who call themselves "Anti-Smart", are mostly urban youths from better cultural and educational backgrounds and enjoy better socioeconomic conditions. They have set up a number of accounts on Weibo dedicated to killing the Smarts, ridiculing them as rustic and uneducated. A large number of "self-hacking" videos of the group, spoof novels, and jokes, have caused the public's common disgust toward the Smarts. Among this consumer society, they have become the consumer goods of the ugly orgy and have encountered a lot of online violence.

Unlike other subcultures such as Cosplay and Hip Hop, Smart is too rustic and abrasive to be consumed by the pop culture market. In this case, these kinds of subcultures have to be seen as "dangerous aliens

and boisterous kids, wild animals and wayward pets" (Hebdige, 1979: 97). The dominant culture, with the growth of capitalism and globalization on their side, will force them to become something else. Either trivialize, naturalize or domesticate the Other, or simply deny their existence altogether. Alternatively, the Other can be transformed into meaningless exotica, a pure object, a spectacle, a clown (Barthes, 1972).

What is even more worrying is that the Smart are powerless in the face of these derogatory comments and lack the voice to interpret themselves and the cultural controversies surrounding them. They have been deprived of the right to express themselves and subjected to discipline from other "higher" cultures. Even in reality, young people who dress up as Smarts are subjected to the ridicule of everyone shouting at them. Under the force of social pressures, they gradually lose their self-esteem and hide, with many of them cutting their distinctive hairstyles and giving up their identity. In addition to the external attacks and pressures, the Smart family has also deteriorated internally, with some executives and founders beginning to sell their management positions at high prices, as many Smarts become disillusioned with the "family". Some executives have also led core members of their families to split off and set up other groups because of their dissatisfaction with their treatment.

The following are quotes from posts about the creation of the "57 individual nations":

*Friends, I know. I certainly know. I have looked it up on the Internet. They are the evolution of thousands of years. At this time, there are some small tribes progressing through a slow development, which has finally formed their own unique dress language and writing and have finally been accepted and recognized by the world. Until now we have had 56 ethnic groups in China.

*We Smart and non-mainstream have our own Martian language. We have despised the ground stall clothes and trinkets, etc. As for how to develop and expand the family, I think the map of China at the top of my space is the most convincing! It is obvious by looking at the distribution of Smart in today's China! Except in the regions where the networks are backward like in Tibetan areas, and the vast majority of Hong Kong, Macau and Taiwan using MSN, Smart has been all over the country. Although there are no specific statistics on the number of people, it is enough to set up a nationality. Here I would like to say that each minority ethnic is a product of the development and evolution of hundreds of years or even thousands of years.

*Although the Smart is established in the virtual network space, at least the members of Smart are human beings. We are living creatures. I have to admit that we are young, and we can even say that we do not even have the ability to feed ourselves. But we will grow up, sooner or later we will have our own jobs, careers, families, children. As long as the members of Smart continue to maintain and develop in this way, I am sure that one day we will be accepted and affirmed by the world.

*Others will ask: 'If the Shenzhen Tencent QQ Network Limited Liability Company breaks down one day, how will you promote, contact, develop, and grow?' Oh, I want to tell you: 'Even if QQ disappears, there is 51blogs, 360circles, 163blogs. As long as there is a network, we will continue to grow and develop! You don't need to worry about this. I estimate that the development of the network will only become more and more bullish, more and more rapid and convenient, the network will not disappear into the universe'. In a word ----- Smart×will not disappear into the universe because of objective reasons! ("We Smarts want to set up China's 57th ethnic group", 2022)

The words are still ringing in our ears, regardless of whether the author of the post is really Smart; we can see the collective sense of belonging, honor and ownership that once belonged to the Smart group here. Nowadays, the Baidu posting bar named after the Smarts has rarely been updated. Occasionally, the former Smart will come out to reminisce about their youth; the once glorious QQ, has only a few remaining groups left. With technology development, a transformation to the online platform is a significant factor in the group's declination. China has come to the era of live streaming and short videos on smartphones, causing most of the Smart group to disappear under the suppression of netizens gradually, the decline of the platform, their growth, and the changes in fashion trends. Others have transformed into "influencers" for the streaming era, gaining flow in self-deprecating nostalgia. With the development of internet technology, the activity space of netizens has shifted from the web to the mobile phone. Platforms for short videos like Kuai and Tik Tok have become the first choice for self-expression and connection for this group. Faster internet transmission rates also mean higher resolution,

more real time, more playing and interaction anytime, anywhere. (Kuai, 2021)

There was a short-lived revival of the Smart movement around the year 2015. At that time, the live streaming of Smart on Kuai was more prosperous, and some former group members began to revisit "the scene", with some even becoming full-time anchors. However, these were only short-lived, and the Smarts' accounts were soon banned by the official Kuai platform on the grounds of their "vulgarity" and for "endangering social security". The introduction of official internet regulations and censorship has made the voices of the Smart disappear more rapidly.

In my field research, I found that a small number of Smarts are still active in Guangdong, Zhejiang Suzhou and other areas with high factory concentrations, with most of them coming from the villages of Hunan, Yunnan and Guizhou. Every Sunday, during their break time in the Dongguan Shipai village, Smarts dress up in their trademark grotesque hairstyles, sing, dance, and shoot short videos together in the Shipai Park. Also in this park, Smart people often encounter Hmong youths dressing in traditional costumes who also come to this area to hold a party. Ethnic minorities and subcultures, new and old marginal discourses, coexist in harmony. Some even do both. Some of the Hmong ethnic group, dressed in traditional costumes with Smart hairstyles, sing Yunnan folk songs that have been transformed into electronic dance music - a form neo-folk art that cannot be denied.

The Smart group constantly visually challenges mainstream forms of public aesthetics to seek identity and a sense of existence. In the struggle to change their own destiny, there is an uncertainty to their political demands, and the dialectical relationship between rural and urban, traditional and trendy, marginal and mainstream, they are once again, stagnating in their process of this development and are unable to change with the times. Although a "family", their members generally have a strong individual subjectivity, and everyone is free to create and express themselves through their hair and clothing and manage and maintain their daily lives actively and independently.

It is important to note that none of today's subcultures, fan clubs or gaming clubs are heavily influenced by the power of capital. In fact, because of their explosive new visions and grassroots nature they are impossible to commercialize. This makes, Smart avant-garde[83]: if someone despises Smart, it proves that the group are rebelling successfully against the so-called elite of culture and mainstream aesthetics, and that it is in fact the critical individual who has lost their vanguard. If a person was to acknowledge and appreciate the spontaneous vitality that comes from the collective unconscious, it proves that they are really avant-garde.

2. Work with Smart people: Field works and art practices

After I met Luo Fuxing in person on my field trip to Shipai village in Dongguan, I started to consider collaborating with him to make an art project. Through this collaboration, he is able to work as an artist, and we can create a new movement just like Smart. Before we met, he was not an artist, but after we talked, he had an interest in creating a new movement with me. He used to appear as a model or performer in my other art works, such as a Father of Smart, but now we are collaborating as artists, and he has magnificent things to express. (Figure 5.1.7).

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83 Avant-garde is the advance force, originally a military term it has a cultural meaning referring to innovators in art and other cultural production, usually creating products that are on the edge of contemporary comprehension. Avant-garde is a term mainly used in the analysis of art movements and styles. Derived from the military sense of an advanced scouting party, avant-garde came to refer to those artists who produced art that broke convention.

» **Figure 5.1.7.** Gathering photo with Smart group in Shipai village, Dong Guan, 2020
» **Source:** Author's own arquive.

As with my own art projects, I used to turn myself into an art institution through being an Exhibitionist. This brought to life daily actions like nail art or hair styling, in an effort to show how we are living in an age of exhibitionism. During the process of this collaborative project with Luo Fuxing, everything was decided through negotiation, whether it was the visual style of the space, the placement or the content of the event, the hair salon signage and the price. It was a process of mutual understanding and compromise, and one in which the project became more uncertain.

The Smart Gallery (in 2.8 portfolio) followed the *Exhibitionist project*. It was a pop-up hair salon in C5cnm – an alternative space in the 798-art district. We created a temporary hair salon and the "Godfather" himself, Luo Fuxing, did the artistic hairstyles for the participants. The pop-up hair salon was open for a week in Beijing and 5 days at the Picnic art festival in Shanghai (reference in portfolio). In addition to the daily hair styling and selfie broadcasting, we organised a VIP tour of the 798-art district and took the hair styled Smart participants on a tour of the many art galleries and Museums located there. We also organised a sketching workshop in the Smart style and a karaoke sing-along event. These attracted a lot of participation and onlookers, some of whom came specifically to express their interest and feelings about this culture, and many who passed by and took photos with a curious mindset. But this hair salon was a trap, and as long as they were there, all of the visitors, observers and enthusiast participants became part of the Smarts, caught up in this tense, provocative, see-and-be-seen performance.

After that, I created an Avater group "Mastr", as an icon to make a metaphor of institutional criticism and the systematically role exchange between 'high' and 'low' art. I started to compare the Smart people (bottom to top) with the people in the art world (top to bottom). By mimicking Smart subculture in the art institutions, I tried to parody and ironicise the existing system of the contemporary art world. By miming the Smart subculture in art institutions like museums and galleries, I tried to parody and make ironic the existing system of the contemporary art world, through this term "Mastr" (Ma-Shi-Te玛仕特, a concept invented by me. Its name comes from the English word "master," but has obtained new meanings in Chinese in the same way as the word "Smart" is a quasi-homonym of Sha-ma-te. The word "Master" has lots of different definitions.

According to the Cambridge dictionary (2022) one definition is that of owner, lord or people who have gained control, over a particular situation, and who usually have people working for them, such as slaves, as well as a term meaning a man in charge of an organization or group. There is also a phrase "future master", which is used to describe children in socialist countries, which also has resonance with my

phrase. The idea of being the "57th minority" in the post (mentioned above) refers to a "mastery" that once belonged to the Smart. "Be your own master" is the desire of young migrants in urban and rural areas, both online and in reality. This definition led to my work *Neo-Mastr: A Post internet Folk Memorial*.

A second definition of master relates to a person who has great skill or proficiency, especially in academic areas or art. In the education system a master is a postgraduate degree; a master is also a term of respect in the art world for an elite, influential artist who creates historically important works or shows great skill which called masterpieces. In the field of traditional Chinese arts and crafts, a "Master" is a ranking title awarded by the State Council after an evaluation by their peer associations. The term represents an exclusive, intellectual, and empowered artistic and intellectual hierarchy, revered and admired by ordinary people. Yet, it is somehow synonymous with a corrupt, conservative and conceited, western-centric and patriarchal social elitism. Do the Smart people dream to be the Master in this sense? In my works *Master Concept Store* and *Master, you are marvelous!* I have created an Avatar, an idol - the Master. His work is awarded, collected, prized and he himself is doted upon by a multitude of students, fans and the media. Through this work, I envisage the mutual encounters, the clash of identities and the consistency of the Smart and the Master.

My final interpretation of the word master refers to a teacher or driver who is extremely experienced. In Chinese colloquialisms, we often call drivers, masters. In Chinese internet slang, however, the term has gradually taken on multiple meanings, with "old master" referring to someone who is experienced in social resources and skills. This meaning comes from a quirky contemporary Yunnan folk song - *Old Driver, Take Me* - which has been widely circulated on the internet as a meme. The song describes the story of two ethnic minority girls from a village who chat up an old driver and want to take his car to the provincial capital city. The lyrics are full of strong and provocative sexual hints and their ambitions of travelling to the big city and beyond. During my fieldwork in Guizhou, I re-mastered and re-enacted a music video for this folk song with local ethnic minority groups. I also asked them for interviews and created the piece *Old Mastr, Take Me Away*.

I see the Smart hairstyles and subculture as a part of neo-folk art. They correlate with the term folk art in many ways. However, after all my social engagement events and art projects, I have had to ask myself whether art can keep this culture alive. By customizing it and presenting it internationally, creating a recognizable product that will sell, should I even try to change it or adapt it? Since it is not a traditional folk culture but a new one, should we let it go and see how it will develop naturally? Is my involvement with Smart people detrimental or helpful to Smart culture and the ambitions of Smart people? These questions only grow as I get closer to different group members. I find myself involved with divergent group activities and finally make art with them. Either it will be beneficial to the people by introducing them to the art world, or my work will only help address and perhaps solve the art system's structural or hierarchical issues. These are the questions I face and try to discuss in my future practice.

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5.2. *CONNECTED RHYMES: A LOOK AT RAP BATTLES AND THE PERFORMANCES OF BRAZILIAN RAP IN DIGITAL CULTURE*

Rômulo Vieira da Silva[84]

✕ ~~*Abstract*~~

This study sheds light on the reconfigurations of Brazilian RAP in digital culture. It looks at the crossings produced by the social networking sites in the RAP battles, with a focus on the performances of two MCs at the 189th *Batalha do Tanque*, one of the most popular events of Freestyle RAP in Brazil. For this, it discusses the development of the Brazilian RAP battles in association with YouTube, proposes the notion of Battle Mode and presents an analysis of the 189th *Batalha do Tanque*. The research demonstrates that the digital culture helps to produce shifts in the performances and in the socio-spatialities of the Brazilian RAP.

Keywords: hip-hop, brazilian rap, rap battles, digital culture, youtube.

1. Introduction

The RAP battles are some of the frequent attractions of the Brazilian metropolises in the 2000s and 2010s. These are mostly free and weekly events, which articulate, in several of the street corners, squares, metro stations and cultural centers, a new way of occupying public spaces through art (Alves, 2013). A relevant characteristic of this phenomenon is its articulation through digital platforms, since social network sites are configured as fundamental channels for the organization, interlocution and dissemination of these RAP battles. The present text is interested in these crossings between digital platforms and RAP battles and seeks to reflect on the role of digital culture in the circulation and performances of contemporary Brazilian RAP.

It is no longer news that the expansion of the internet has produced remarkable transformations in the music industry. If in the 1960s and 1970s the success of LPs and magnetic tapes and the emergence of television media expanded the sector, and in the 1980s and 1990s the recording companies were forced to invest in new niches and on the CD as a new format, in the 2000s and 2010s the advances in microinformatics and digital technologies and culture helped to decentralize phonographic production, evoke alternative distribution systems and consolidate a digital phonograms market (Vicente, 2014; Vicente & De Marchi, 2014).

The virtualization of sound data was intensified from this scenario, which stimulated the emergence of new ways of music consumption. These ways were sometimes related to the sharing and enjoyment, often free, of light digital files, such as MP3 and WAV formats, and sometimes through listening mediated by streaming services that were beginning to emerge (De Marchi, 2005; Vicente & De Marchi, 2014). This is the panorama that creates the bases for the expansion of music consumption through the

internet, including the rise of YouTube. The globally known YouTube is a free[85] and intuitive platform that encourages audiovisual sharing and debates about the products published on its site, acting as one of the main music thermometers of the world (Burgess & Green, 2009). If some of the most popular artists of the 2000s were discovered on YouTube (such as Justin Bieber in the United States and Luan Santana in Brazil), the relevance that brazilian MCs from the new generation of RAP achieved through the platform reaffirms its prominent place in the circulation and consumption of music products. Considering that digital culture mediates the music scene (Pereira de Sá, 2013), this study seeks to reflect which are and how are the impacts caused by digital culture in the Brazilian RAP's scene of the 2010s, given that the main events and sociability of the genre in this period, like the RAP battles, have the YouTube as a relevant circulation and consumption channel.

2. Brazilian RAP battles and YouTube

If the genesis of Brazilian RAP has the city of São Paulo as its basis (Herschmann, 2000), the Brazilian RAP battles have Rio de Janeiro as their territorial origin. The neighborhood of Lapa, in the central area, recognized for its diversity of bars and cultural spaces that house multiple manifestations, was where Freestyle RAP[86] took its first steps and articulated part of its specificities (Alves, 2013). Lapa was an important place for the formation of RAP in Rio de Janeiro (Herschmann, 2007), since in the 1990s it already served as an aggregator for the growing scene. The Zoeira party, initially promoted in 1998, was an event that collaborated with the development of RAP in the neighborhood, becoming a well-known meeting point (Leal, 2007) from which Freestyle RAP began to take shape in Rio. The event revealed MCs and served as a link to partnerships, such as *Melô da Zoeira* (1999) by Marcelo D2, Marechal and Aori, who became closer after the event.

The interruption of this event stimulated the organization of a new meeting. This is how the first big RAP battle of Brazil, the *Batalha do Real*, emerged[87] in 2003. The Batalha do Real, and its practice of sharing videos of its combats on the internet, served as inspiration for various RAP battles that took place in Rio and beyond the city in the subsequent years. Even today it is possible to access historical battles[88], posted and reposted on YouTube, coming from the first editions of the Batalha do Real.

Batalha do Real also gave rise to the *Liga dos MCs*, institutionalizing and expanding the practice of improvised RAP through a national event in Brazil. The Liga dos MCs (2003-2012), known today as *Duelo de MCs Nacional* (2012-2022), is the most disputed event of the modality in the country. One that brings together, annually, the best MCs from each state to decide who is the best improviser of Brazilian RAP. Due to the importance of the Duelo de MCs Nacional, many of the new generation's MCs began to rap by watching past editions of the event on the internet. This is the case of artists like Orochi, winner of the 2015 edition of the Duelo de MCs Nacional. In an interview[89] for the YouTube channel of *Batalha do Tanque*, one of the main RAP battles in the city of Rio de Janeiro, Orochi states that the first RAP battle[90] he saw in his life was that between Emicida and Gil for the 2006 edition of Liga dos MCs, in which Emicida defeated the 2004 champion.

The evidence that the new generation of Brazilian MCs made their first contact with improvised verses through digital platforms is an indication of how the propagation of the RAP battles came to be associated with these sites. And more than that it also shows why many of the RAP battles used the internet as a fundamental medium: the popularity achieved by the first battles seems to have served as a basis for the creation of new events. The multiplication and public recognition of RAP battles allowed Brazilian RAP to

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85 Although this gratuity can be relativized by the use of advertisements on the platform, "paid" from the audience's viewings.

86 RAP free of style, presented or written in free style, without committing to a specific mode of expression, form or theme. In recent years, it has become synonymous with improvised RAP in Brazil.

87 Aori explains the emergence of the event: https://goo.gl/g9mbvv. In an article for Noise, Matias Maxx adds details: https://goo.gl/U1Xc72. Accessed on 18 November 2022.

88 For example, the battle between Kelson and Gil in the 2007 edition of Batalha do Real: https://goo.gl/V7pn1C. Accessed on 18 November 2022.

89 Orochi's interview for the Batalha do Tanque channel on YouTube: https://goo.gl/6QstFM. Accessed on 18 November 2022.

90 Battle between Emicida and Gil for the 2006 edition of Liga dos MCs: https://goo.gl/Rsrjy3. Accessed on 18 November 2022.

circulate in places that were not in its original circuits. The realization of the *Batalha do Conhecimento* at the Rio Art Museum in 2014 is a demonstration of this process of valuing RAP as an artistic manifestation, which suggests new socio-spatial configurations to the music genre in Brazil.

Another appearance that confirms this change is the one that happens from *Jornal do Almoço* on TV RBS, an affiliate of Rede Globo, the biggest Brazilian net television. In 2017, the broadcaster promoted an event based on the Battle do Conhecimento during its television journalistic program. The grand final of the battle, aired live on 05 August 2017 during the newscast, had its champion chosen through a poll on the broadcaster portal with more than 94,000 votes. This episode demonstrates that RAP battles, initially aired on YouTube from independent initiatives, ended up reaching the Brazilian mainstream media.

When talking about RAP battles, among the different formulations tested over the last few years, two models and their variations are presented as the most recurrent in Brazil: the *blood battles* (based on the Batalha do Real) and *battles of knowledge* (based on the Batalha do Conhecimento). While the former (blood battles) focus on direct offense to the opponent, the latter (battles of knowledge) seek to assess how the MC articulates his rhymes without necessarily offending the opponent. *Blood battles* are focused on direct and personal attack, while knowledge battles are focused on the minimally sophisticated articulation of knowledge. In the first, offending morally and using curses are permitted and desirable practices; in the second, they are prohibited. In contrast to *classic* Brazilian RAP, strongly linked to political and social consciousness, the most popular RAP battles in the country in this period are not the battles of knowledge (consonant with the classic Brazilian RAP), but the blood battles, in which almost all types of verses and offenses are acceptable.

3. The Battle Mode

The analysis presented in this chapter considers the cultural and situational context that crosses and determines the RAP battles. These events bring together specific elements and characteristics, which constitute their bases. Thus, observing a RAP battle may require a prior understanding of how it works, since the content presented there is crossed by specific formatings. Although this text does not discuss the structural specificities of a RAP battle, an incursion that can be found in more detail in my dissertation[91], it is possible to point out that: 1) the *circular arrangement* of the battles, with challengers surrounded by the audience as if they were in a MMA octagon; 2) the *formatting of the combat* from a confrontation, in general, man to man and divided into up to three rounds; 3) the unsophisticated *infrastructure* of the events, with tight spaces and sometimes even without a microphonation; 4) the award more centered on the notoriety achieved by the victory than on the material award received; 5) the *importance of the audience* in defining the winner and the combat dynamics; 6) and the *centrality of digital platforms* in the organization and promotion of events; are fundamental components to RAP battles, which influence its combats and serve as the basis for its Battle Mode.

The Battle Mode in a RAP battle is the spirit or state updated by an MC to act as he or she acts during an improvised RAP combat. The Battle Mode is always transposed by these fundamental components of RAP battles since they are what shape in the first place the rhymer's performance.

The conception of a battle mode is related to the notion of performance by Paul Zumthor (2014), who, when thinking about the set of laws that impact an artistic performance, states:

> *The rules of performance – in effect, simultaneously governing the time, the place, the purpose of the transmission, the speaker's action, and, to a large extent, the audience's response – matter to communication as much or even more than the textual rules set in the work in the sequence of the sentences: of these, they engender the real context and ultimately determine the scope (Zumthor, 2014: 34, our translation).*

If for Zumthor (2014) performance implies competence, and competence in performance always requires a know-how, an understanding of what can and should be done from a specific context to be competent in a RAP battle is to use its formatting to establish a great performance. Thus, if RAP battles

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91   FLOWS E VIEWS: batalhas de rimas, batalhas de YouTube, cyphers e o RAP brasileiro na cultura digital (Vieira da Silva, 2019).

introduce a configuration that allow, and often require, rude behavior as a desirable form of action, being competent in that environment is precisely being rude (and of course, presenting good rhymes). This is the foundation of Battle Mode. Because they are transposed by multiple stimuli, which influence how the combats are fought, this analysis does not only deal with the textual content, but with the extralinguistic signs that also produce meaning and enhance or even modify what the text of the rhymes seems to say, always with focus on the crossings produced by digital platforms to the dynamics of the battles.

The study presents the full description of 01 (one) video of the *Batalha do Tanque*, physically held in São Gonçalo, in Rio de Janeiro. The choice is due to its high popularity on YouTube and in the Brazilian RAP scene in the period observed. The selected episode is a productive example for discussion because it evokes relevant debates, and its popularity is not artificial[92].

The examination presented below uses the following methodological procedure: 1) visualization of the video; 2) description of video events; and 3) discussion of the main events of the video. The option for the full description of the events in the video is based on an attempt to record and understand, as far as possible, all parts of the battle presented by the audiovisual work posted on YouTube, in order to mirror the same group of stimuli that the public that comes into contact with these events through the internet absorbs. Although the artists' verses have been kept in Portuguese, the reflections presented about them allow even non-speakers of the language to understand the context and controversies of the combats.

4. The battle: tensions of a shared protagonism

The video[93] examined below comes from the 189th Batalha do Tanque, between Jhony and Orochi, posted on February 26, 2016, on the YouTube channel of the Batalha do Tanque. The audiovisual work is one of the most viewed on the event channel, with more than 6 million and 200 thousand views in November 2022.

The video begins with a vignette, which features sequential images: it begins with a flash of an interview with the creator[94] of the channel where the video was published and continues by highlighting different editions of the Batalha do Tanque. As background music of the vignette, the audio of the TheFakeCypher released by the group A Firma. After the end of the vignette, the viewer is introduced, for the first time, to the main characters of the video: Jhony and Orochi. In the first few seconds, the MCs face the camera, each smiling in their own way and showing some tension due to the clash. While in the background it is possible to hear a RAP instrumental, the event presenter says into the microphone: "Gaspary, tá filmando? Vem, geral! Vem, geral! Aí! Roda Cultural, Batalha do Tanque, o que vocês querem ver?"[95]. The audience responds in unison: "sangue!"[96]. The presenter then repeats this motto one more time, being completed by the audience. With the introduction to combat, Orochi can introduce its first rhyming sequence. The MC shoots: "*Aí, Jhony: eu vou perguntar seu truque/ desafiando seus crias no Facebook/ Que papo é esse? Deixa eu te falar/ Tá igual mulher de bandido, cuzão? Pedindo pra apanhar*"[97]. The audience present screams and Orochi continues:

Que bagulho louco, vem comigo sem neurose/
Tu sabe que seu terror se chama MC Orochi/
Tá ligado, mano, tua mente ainda tá na jaula/

....

92 The video presents a high number of interactions, including recognized actors of the Brazilian scene. The event's channel has a high number of subscribers, registrations recognized by YouTube through the YouTube Creator Awards. And the participating MCs have gained relevance in the Brazilian RAP scene after the battle.

93 Battle between Jhony and Orochi for the 189th edition of the Batalha do Tanque: https://goo.gl/n2Wvbc. Accessed on 18 November 2022.

94 Felipe Gaspary, the main organizer of Batalha do Tanque.

95 "Gaspary, are you filming? Come, everyone! Roda Cultural, Batalha do Tanque, what do you want to see?"

96 "Blood!".

97 "Hey, Jhony: I'm going to ask your trick/ challenging your homies on Facebook/ What's this talk? Let me tell you/ Are you like a thug's wife, asshole? Asking to take a beating".

> *Chegou agora, quer reinar, então agora tu vai ter aula/*
> *Tu vai sentar, tu vai aprender certinho/*
> *Oi, tá ligado que tu tá rimando no sapatinho/*
> *Tu bota bronca de rei, tá ligado, é o seguinte/*
> *Mas você se acha foda, menor, tu é desumilde/*
> *(Orochi, 189th Batalha do Tanque, Jhony vs. Orochi, first round, 2016).*

With the opponent's statement about his supposed lack of humility, MC Jhony expresses himself, during the verses, disagreeing with the statement, nodding his head negatively. Orochi follows the improvisation by saying: "Na moral, vamo além/ Acha que é brabo, mas pra mim tu não é ninguém/ Te vejo como porra nenhuma, e sem tirar teu mérito/ Se tu é rei do Tanque, Orochi é general do exército"[98].

The audience manifests itself positively in relation to Orochi's rhymes, now waiting for Jhony's response. The presenter summons the MC's response and the audience, in a demonstration of support for Jhony's next rhymes, melodiously shouts: "vai morrer, vai morrer!"[99]. Jhony, before starting, says: "Aí, com todo respeito, volta pro exército, mano! Volta pro exército que o Tanque[100] é meu"[101]. And then the MC starts his response:

> *Você diz que não me conhece como porra nenhuma*
> *Veja como eu pego no bang tu se acostuma*
> *Porque, se liga, mano, no corte que nem navalha*
> *Bota seu ego pra batalhar, que assim você ganha a batalha*
> *Porque você que é o mais desumilde*
> *Você quer falar de humildade, mano? Eu sou simples!*
> *Na moral, vamos fazer no Zap*
> *Levanta mão a pessoa que eu não respondi no WhatsApp*
> *(Jhony, 189th Batalha do Tanque, Jhony vs. Orochi, first round, 2016).*

After stating through the rhymes that he is humble because answers his fans on WhatsApp, the audience remains silent for Jhony's verses, in apparent agreement with the argument posed by the MC's rhetorical question, until one of the competitors of the Batalha do Tanque who was not participating of that combat, MC Choice, raises his hand and implies that Jhony does not answer him on WhatsApp. The fact that Choice is not just any spectator, but a well-known MC in that circle, lends a humorous tone to the rhyme articulated by Jhony, making part of the audience laugh at the situation. Jhony continues his verses looking at Orochi and saying: "Agora, quem tem humildade? Isso que é ser humilde de verdade!"[102] Orochi laughs at the phrase presented by the opponent, expressing surprise and disagreement with the argument". Jhony continues:

> *Você virou as costas e quer falar que você é quem?*
> *Você, babaca, não fala com ninguém*
> *Ah, trocou de número, não fala comigo*
> *Você, MC Orochi, pra mim não é ninguém, você tá fodido*
> *Porque, se liga, eu te mando pra lona*
> *Cê é TremO?30 Eu sou TremON, porque trem desligado não funciona*
> *(Jhony, 189th Batalha do Tanque, Jhony vs. Orochi, first round, 2016).*

....

98 "Fine, let's go further/ You think you're brave, but to me you're nobody/ I see you like shit, and without taking away your merit / If you're king of the Tanque, Orochi is the general of the army".

99 "Gonna die, gonna die!".

100 Name of the battle and the place where it is held.

101 "With all due respect, go back to the army, bro! Go back to the army, because the Tanque is mine".

102 "Now, who has humility? This is what it means to be truly humble!"

The audience shout out with enthusiasm at Jhony's attack on Orochi and their allies, as Jhony continues rapping: "É isso que você tem que entender/ Você é babacão, eu vim pra te matar, no proceder"[103]. The time of the first round runs out and Jhony, to start the second round in sequence, requests a new instrumental to the DJ. The MC starts the second round through self-affirming verses, attacking Orochi and his allies:

Menor, aí, você é do exército, vou te falar
Veja como o Jhony chega aqui pra te matar
Aí, calafrio, tu é do exército
Hoje, meu tanque vai afundar o seu navio
O bagulho é muito louco, pega a visão
Você tá achando que você é o bom
Mas na moral, mano, deixa eu te explicar
Pra mim você não é porra nenhuma e chega aqui pra criticar
Porque o bagulho é louco, deixa eu te falar
Você tá crente, mano, que você vai me ganhar
Começou a fazer música, se submeteu
Abandou o Tanque, abandou o lugar que você cresceu
Pra mim, você não é porra nenhuma
Veja como eu pego no bang, neguinho, se acostuma
Porque, se liga, eu mando o free
Eu falei que te aposento foi pra sua máscara cair
(Jhony, 189th Batalha do Tanque, Jhony vs. Orochi, second round, 2016).

Time ends for Jhony and the event presenter takes the microphone: "Direito de resposta para MC Orochi, o que vocês querem ver!?"[104]. The audience responds to the call with the traditional "sangue!"[105] and Orochi starts his second-round verses: "Quantas pessoas você respondeu? Pra mim você é um boçal/ Minha humildade é em pessoa, tua humildade é virtual?/"[106]. The public screams in favor of Orochi while Jhony tries to diminish his opponent's verse. Orochi responds in a mocking way, saying that he does not understand the opponent:

Não dá nem pra te entender
Por isso, eu tenho que mandar tu se foder
Então, menor, eu chego tranquilão
Você quer levar pro coração, dá papo de visão
Mas pega a visão, meu mano, eu vou te gaxtar
Tu falou do Modéstia Parte? E o dente no céu da sua boca igual remo de caiaque?
Tá ligado, menor, tô tranquilão
Você só falou merda, quer resposta, dicção
Não dá nem pra te entender: falou de máscara, sagaz?
Máscara é o seu dente: 'ele tá demais!'
(Orochi, 189th Batalha do Tanque, Jhony vs. Orochi, second round, 2016).

The audience reacts, screaming with intensity, and Orochi continues now for the second round stating that he doesn't care about social networking sites and that Johny's ego is inflated:

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103 "This is what you have to understand / You are an asshole, I came to kill you in the right way".

104 "Right to reply to MC Orochi, what do you guys want to see!?"

105 "Blood!".

106 "How many people did you answer? For me you are a boçal / My humility is in person, is your humility virtual?".

Mais uma vez, mané, tô tranquilão
Vamo aqui te dar aula de improvisação
Foda-se seu YouTube, seu Facebook, seu WhatsApp, TremOFF
gangue manda nude
O bagulho tá doido, mano, tu tá ligado, não nja
Aquela ali foi mais decorada que meu pau de toca ninja
Na moral, Jhony, sujeito homem
Você fala de ego na porra do microfone
Falou que meu ego é alto, mas pra mim tu é um veado
Teu ego tá mais cheio que a barriga de Fajardo
(Orochi, 189th Batalha do Tanque, Jhony vs. Orochi, second round, 2016).

At this moment, two members of the audience, who appear throughout the video interacting with the rhymes and sketching reactions, take on the protagonism of the battle for a few seconds, pointing to the camera and joking. This dynamism of the event, in which the public is active and is also part of the show, even talking to the camera, demonstrates part of the reconfigurations of the battles established through its relationship with YouTube, in which artists and fans get mixed up. After the interaction of the two characters from the audience, the presenter of the event takes over the microphone and states: "Última batalha da noite, barulho para a batalha!"[107], being obeyed by the audience that responds to his request. As soon as the screams become milder, the presenter reintroduces the MCs participating in the duel, repeating their names and invoking the public to scream so that the best improviser of that clash is chosen. As the screams seem to have a similar intensity, making it impossible to verify the preference between one or another MC, the presenter suggests a third and final round, which is accepted by the audience.

Orochi starts the third round. The MC rests his hand on the opponent's shoulder and says: "Eu tô fodido: tu é brabo, hein, rapaz!/ O mal desses menô de hoje em dia é achar que tão sendo foda demais/ O bagulho tá muito doido, meu mano, tu tá fodido/ Faz metade do que eu fiz, depois tu mete bronca comigo/". The audience screams and Jhony replies: "Aí, deixa eu te falar como é que é/ Mano, agora, você vai voltar de ré/ Porque se liga, mano, agora é minha vez/ Eu sou sujeito homem, eu vou fazer o dobro que um dia tu fez". Orochi replies: "Aí, parceiro MC/ Quando você fizer, eu vou tá lá pra te aplaudir/ Vou te aplaudir de pé e tomar um Red Bull/ Mas, hoje em dia, eu te falo: tu é pau no cu". The audience reacts by screaming and Jhony replies: "Aí, na moral, deixa eu te falar/ Você vai me aplaudir, mano, deixa eu te explicar/ Falou que Jhony é rei do Tanque, esse é meu proceder/ Então aposto, sou rei do Tanque, ganhei em cima de você".

The audience screams again and Orochi adds: "Tá ligado, irmão!/ Na moral, agora, papo de visão/ Eu vou perguntar, porque aqui tem vários parceiros/ Rei do Tanque é quem ganha uma batalha só ou quem se destaca o ano inteiro?". The screams from the audience after the rhyme are more intense than the previous ones, being enhanced by the reaction of one of the audience members, who puts his hand on his head, widens his eyes and opens his mouth, emphasizing the power of the verses.

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107 "Last battle of the night, noise for the battle!".

» **Figure 5.2.1.** 189th Batalha do Tanque, Negão da Reação, 2015

» **Source:** Picture from Youtube video https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H65yKu1tStY

The exaggerated expression of the member of the audience, despite appearing at first glance to be a common manifestation, is actually a recognized mark in different videos of the Batalha do Tanque. A behavior that came to be identified for its theatricality as one of the symbols of the event. Since then, that spectator who was just a witness to the combat has also become one of its protagonists: the one called by the audience (and by himself) as Negão da Reação[108]. A recognition only possible through the recording of the battles.

Continuing the clash, amid the screams of the public, Jhony retorts: "Aí, deixa eu te falar/ Aí, na moral, deixa o Jhony te falar/ Se destacou o ano inteiro? Deixa eu te falar/ Chegou a primeira edição do ano, o Jhony foi pra te aposentar". Orochi counters: "Tá ligado, meu parceiro: tranquilão, mano/ Eu não levo isso a frente não, sem neurose/ Porque o bagulho é doido, o bagulho é tudo improvisado/ Cê sabe que mesmo perdendo, não vai passar de aprendizado". Johny attacks: "Não vai passar de aprendizado, escuta o que eu tô te falando/ Então começa a aprender que o Jhony tá te ensinando". Orochi himself reacts positively to Jhony's rhyme. Johny complete: "Bagulho é muito sério, não tem pra ninguém/ Tu pode ter o que quer, mas humildade você não tem/". Orochi replies: "Tá ligado, mano, tu tá de marola/ Quando eu quiser um professor de merda, eu vou pra dentro da tua escola/ O bagulho é doido, menor, se acostuma/ Prova pros menó, pra mim tu não é porra nenhuma". Jhony encerra a batalha: "Aí, na moral, cê deve tá de brincadeira/ Porque, cê sabe, que eu rimo em plena quarta-feira/ Não adianta você gastar, você se fodeu/ Seu nariz foi a árvore que o Luã Gordo se escondeu".

With the last verse, Jhony closes the third round and hands the microphone exactly to one of the two members of the audience who were expressing reactions throughout the recording of the battle. The two characters in the audience highlight the final rhyme of the MC, saying into the microphone "gaxtou, gaxtou!"[109] and the presenter again takes command of the clash, asking the public: "barulho de quem gostou do terceiro round!"[110]. The audience screams, while the presenter reintroduces the name of each MC and takes the decision to the audience. The MCs face each other and exchange few words, while the presenter repeats their names a few times and sees who the audience screams the loudest for. After the verification through screams, a vote count is performed in which the presenter speaks the name of each

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108 *Nigga of the Reaction*, in a free translation to English.

109 "You got it, you got it!".

110 "Noise from those who liked the third round".

artist, and the audience raises their hand to choose their favorite. Orochi himself votes for Jhony, but the audience's choice is different: Orochi wins.

5. Discussing the battle

After the description of the events present in the video of the battle, it is possible to deepen some points that stand out and seem to evoke productive discussions. The following paragraphs seek to address these issues. Although the portrayed episode may evoke debates about the performance of masculinities, verbal aggression or the place of improvisation in contemporary Brazilian RAP, this text focuses on the intersections of digital platforms in RAP battles based on their power to shape the performances of these events.

5.1. Peripheral protagonism and digital spectacle

If only some of the first Brazilian RAP battles, emerging in the early 2000s, were recording, even small events of the modality have audiovisual recordings today. With the expansion of digital culture, technical artifacts have become fundamental items for the realization of the RAP battles, now constituting part of its spectacle. It is no coincidence that amplification, recording and audiovisual reproduction devices (speakers, cameras, cell phones, microphones) and the digital platforms themselves became part of the rhymes of the MCs, even being mentioned in the battles. In the duel between Jhony and Orochi it is possible to see clear mentions of YouTube, Facebook and WhatsApp. The relevance of social networking sites in the lives of these peripheral artists is visible both in their rhymes and in the way in which they promote the events that host their verses.

In the case of RAP battles, which are physical events, with a specific place, day and time, there are fundamental variables for the performance of the show, such as the physical presence of the MCs, good weather conditions, audience interaction, and other material factors. In this context, the existence of technical objects also becomes a vector that influences the performance and dynamics of combat. This happens especially for a reason: the most prestigious rhyming battles, such as the Batalha do Tanque, are events designed for digital platforms, mainly YouTube, since their initial production process.

But it was not always like that. As digital culture starts to cross the multiple spheres of contemporary life, mediates the music scene and becomes fundamental for the organization and promotion of these events, the organizers of the RAP battles see an opportunity to expand their reach. With the consolidation of digital platforms as spaces for sharing the battles, they also become spaces that house their circulation, consumption, and sociability. The fact that the MCs frequently mention these sites seems to be a demonstration of how platforms are present in their lives, possibly due to their links to the context of the battles.

YouTube participates in this chain. As spreadable media (Jenkins, 2012), it introduces an ease of sharing that allows RAP battles – previously restricted to a small group of young male adolescents and adults in a peripheral stronghold of the metropolitan region of Rio de Janeiro, as is the case of Batalha do Tanque – reach audiences and spaces that were unimaginable. This displacement, which not only alters the logic of one battle or another, institutes a change in the process of conceiving and producing these events, including agreements and rules, dynamics and performance possibilities, ways of documenting the combats, among other particularities.

The show, impacted by the demands of digital, acquires new forms (microphonation, audiovisual production, creation of profiles on social networking sites, vignettes, brands), new problems (problematization of rhymes, inefficient sounding that compromises the understanding of the combats, requirement of constant publications on social networking sites etc.) and new potentialities (reach of new audiences, high popularity, possibility of monetizing videos etc.). The effects of this set of changes are notable even in the rhymes of the MCs, who start to use these elements during the combats as natural part of its environment.

5.2. Lights, camera, mediation

In the seconds before the battle analyzed here, the MCs face the camera as if they were protagonists of a fight. The oppositional gaze shows not only the spirit suggested for that battle, which reinforces the confrontational posture particular to RAP, but the role played by the camera and social networking sites within the battle. By establishing contact, first of all, with the object responsible for capturing sounds and images, the artists ensure the importance of that artifact for combat. They clearly demonstrate the understanding of the importance of filming to promote the show, in a sense that that event is not just physical, but it is integrated, above all, with its subsequent reproduction.

Another notable aspect of the battle is the mention of digital platforms: the MCs mention the Facebook, YouTube and WhatsApp during their verses, placing the sites as the focal point of their controversy. The platforms appear as representatives of the popularity achieved by the artists, who discuss ego and humility through the rhymes. The materialization of these sites in the MCs' rhymes, presented here as basic elements of the combat, establishes a dialogue with the discussion articulated by Simone Pereira de Sá (2013), by highlighting aspects of the Theory of Materialities (Gumbrecht, 2010) and the Actor-Network Theory (Latour, 2012) as relevant to Communication and Music studies. The author points out that the space of digital platforms is a central element for the construction of the music scene. They are channels that participate in the production of meaning, interfere with the message, and act as co-authors in networks established with humans.

Observing the mention of the MCs to the platforms during their improvisations allows us to verify that the technical objects, in this case, produce meaning and reframe the event even in its most fundamental product: the improvised verses.

5.3. The effects of high visibility

The controversy that guides the plot between Jhony and Orochi in the combat examined is configured from a common link: the success of both MCs in the Batalha do Tanque. This is the reason why, in addition to the mutual attempt at disqualification, their verses revolve around a disagreement about who would be, between the two, the sovereign of the event. The controversy was not just allegorical: Jhony and Orochi were the two MCs who won the most editions of the Batalha do Tanque until that moment.

But the rhymes of the MCs sketched there also seem to expose other tensions. A frequent word (repeated four times) during the improvised verses is the term ego. In that context, the word seems to be related to an idea of an exaggerated self-esteem. But, after all, why do the characters in this battle develop their verses questioning each other's humility?

Although personal vectors may exert an influence on this tension, what seems to be a determining factor for the debate is the very public recognition that those artists gained from the RAP battles. What arises there is the discussion of which of them, given the success achieved through the event, would be the greatest and the humblest. It is a set of small disputes typical of the RAP battles, driven by the growth of these events from its connection to the digital universe. The high visibility, made possible by the confluence of social networking sites as elements of the sociotechnical network of contemporary Brazilian RAP, mediates these behavioral and discursive issues that come to life through the performances.

5.4. The protagonist spectator

In RAP battles, the audience also helps to drive the trajectory of the event. The dynamic demanded by the battles is the participation of those who watch them. The rituals inscribed in the combats stimulate oral and gestural actions from the audience, as well as the winner is chosen by her. In other words, if performance, in its most immediate and general use, is related to an oral and gestural event (Zumthor, 2014), in RAP battles, the audience also performs. Therefore, there is, on the part of the audience, a recognition of its role in that space, which articulates the theatricality of a show through elements of everyday life. It is in this interim that certain performances by the audience emerge, which also gain prominence for exceeding what would be expected as a usual reaction and, at the same time, for occupying a place that should really be occupied by the spectators: the fascination with the performances of the MCs.

An example that fits well into this scenario is the one that emerges with the character Negão da Reação, a persona who became one of the symbols of the Batalha do Tanque by reacting to the rhymes of the combats. The fact that he expressed intense and funny reactions to the verses of the MCs during battles, sometimes talking directly to the camera, ended up to raising him to public recognition. More than in dozens of battles in which he is mentioned by fans in the YouTube comment system as a well-liked figure, the Negão da Reação also started to acquire other forms of prominence on the Batalha do Tanque channel. He is retracted in at least two exclusive videos: one in which he gives an interview about how he got to know the event and started making the faces for which he is recognized, and another with some of his reactions.

The protagonism achieved by this character demonstrates the game of rearrangements evoked by digital culture, which shakes up the established arrangements. Without recording the event, without editing and publishing the videos on YouTube, and without the possibility of audience interaction with that content, it is likely that the prominent role of this spectator would never have been achieved. It is also interesting to note how the figure of the Negão da Reação appears exactly at a time of proliferation of reaction videos, in which youtubers record their emotional reactions while watching, usually for the first time, new series, trailers and video clips, a practice that is also common now to the rhyming battles.

6. Final considerations

With the mediation of digital culture in the Brazilian RAP scene, social networking sites become highly relevant for the organization and promotion of events and end up shaping the performances of MCs. This text looks at this scenario from the analysis of a combat coming from one of the biggest events of its kind in Brazil, the Batalha do Tanque. In this foray, it is possible to observe that the digital platforms produce so much sense in the RAP battles that become part of the MCs' verses, being mentioned from controversies about the popularity of the artists, digital interactions and number of views.

The study also demonstrates how YouTube started to be used already in the early years of Batalha do Real, the inaugural event of improvised RAP in Brazil, so that the association of RAP battles to the social networking site makes the platform a new space for circulation and consumption of the musical genre. This is how the development of the virtual Brazilian RAP scene through YouTube evokes new local scenes. The national protagonism of events such as the Batalha do Tanque (São Gonçalo, Rio de Janeiro), physically based in a metropolitan region far from the central zones, is an example of the contours of this scenario and points to the highlight of the city in the new national RAP circuit in Brazil. Digital culture produces socio-spatial shifts in Brazilian RAP.

With the rearrangements produced by this new scenario, the protagonism is no longer exclusive to the MCs, and other actors start to acquire the status of main character, reaching public recognition, such as the presenters of the battles, cultural producers, videographers, youtubers and even members of the audience of the battles. This is how high visibility affects actors associated with battles at all levels, projecting young people from the Brazilian outskirts to positions they did not usually occupy. This scenario allows new characters to emerge and lead the RAP to new spaces.

These are some of the aspects that stand out in this investigation, shedding light on a heterogeneous network that involves Brazilian RAP from the digital culture. Far from exhausting the theme, the overview presented here serves as one of the first looks on the interweaving of the genre with digital platforms.

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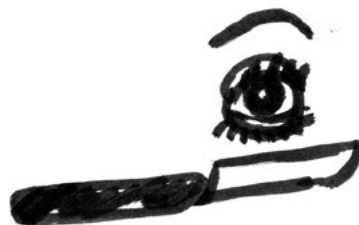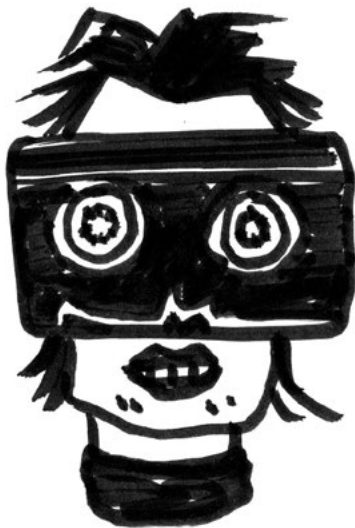
5.3. POETIC GAMES FOR REMOTE CONTACT APPS

Fernando Gerheim[111]

✕ ~~Abstract~~

Poetic Games for Remote Contact Apps is a questioning work of art conceived in conjunction with the classes of UFRJ post-graduate courses taught remotely during the period of confinement of SarsCov-19 pandemic. One of the games created under those conditions will be theoretically approached: e-memo: oblivion and memory game. In this game, the computer screen is a board, and each participant is both a piece and a player, giving rise to a dialogue with some ideas of Walter Benjamin, like "game space", "second technique", and "aura", as well as with the reflection of the philosopher Boris Groys on the relation art/life "in the age of biopower".

Keywords: contemporary art, pandemic online classes, *poetic games for remote contac apps*, *e-memo*.

1. Introduction

Poetic Games for Remote Contact Apps emerged during the confinement of Sars Cov-19, in 2020 and 2021, when three semesters of classes of UFRJ post-graduate courses were taught remotely. In this very singular context, we not only were forced to have classes by a videoconference program - we used Zoom - as the comunication trough internet was associated to the Brazilian far-right political use to spread misinformation and fake news. The subject of classes was art, and the way through which we were communicating ourselves became a theme for our theoretical discussions and practical exercises.

After the three remote courses, I did, together with a student participant, the hotsite https://www.jogospoeticos.com/, publishing, like in a game, instructions to everyone could play their own matches. The hotsite also provided some recorded documentation - video, text, a statement of the poetic ideas envolving this mix of exercise of class and proposition of time-based artwork and encourages the players to upload the recorded documentation of their own real time poetic matches. Or maybe their Game Mods.This horizontal process of creation with students aimed merge practice and theory, feeded by a critical refletion about the merge between intelect and intuition in a stronger concept of experience. We can say that teorethical questions both led to e-memo and e-memo led to them. Our actions and thoughts in this very singular context had in horizon, insofar as they reacted, to interfere and to contribute to change it.

2. Zoom as medium

One central theoretical approach to our meetings was the distinction between two ways of understanding the idea of *medium*. We comprehend it, in accord with Walter Benjamin, in the sense of environment,

space where occurs the perception, in opposite to an instrumental acception used by common sense in which *media of communication* means "*medium for a determined end*" (Benjamin, 2012: 26). To this acception, normalized nowadays with the idea of generating content to the social media, the germany language has the specific word *Mittel*. Walter Benjamin has a crucial argument discussing the question of medium related to philosophy of language: if we communicate something through the language, we communicate "mere signs", not a "spiritual essence". This is the "bourgeois sense of language", and scientific point of view of the linguist Ferdinand Saussure. But Benjamin says: "language never gives mere signs"[112] (Benjamin, 2018: 13). At the same time that the philosopher contests the *signifier* as nomenclatura of the things, and as a empty entity that results of a mere cultural convenction, he empowers the signifier. More than ever during the pandemic, each one in front of its screen, our question was inquiry and search how to empower the language and maybe create life - or anti-art - from copy.
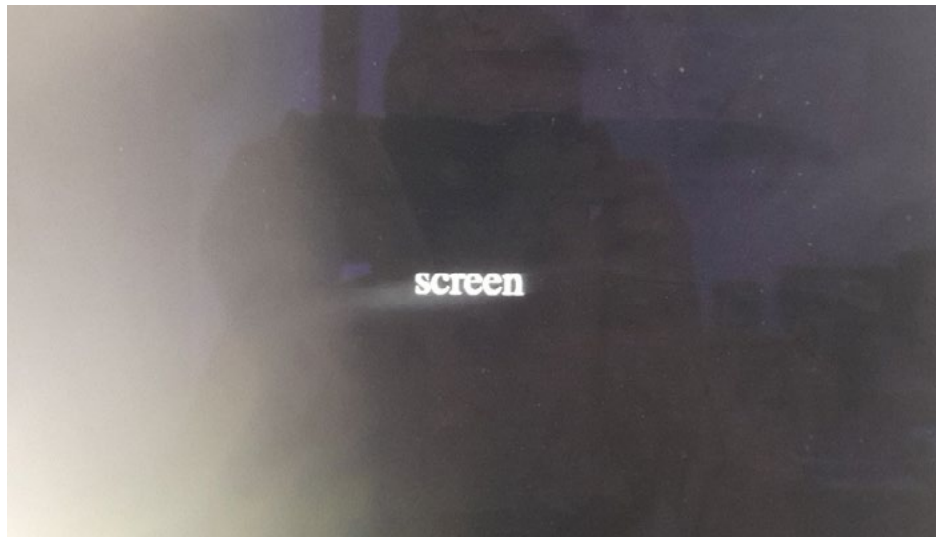
» **Figures 5.3.1.** The two photos above show a homeoffice computer screen in two diferent moments of the videopoem/statement in the hotsite of Poetic Games for Remote Contact Apps. In some cases, I prefered to take photos to also show the situation of the individual in front of the screen.

The common sense would lead us to use media just as way to abolish the distances of space - and insofar we were each one in his/her private space, contributing to weaken the already fragile public space, while the *real time* synchronized us in a group-virtual meeting, we remained each one in an individual-actual

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112 See *About language in general and about human language*. Ed. autêntica, 2018. All the quotations and titles of portuguese language texts was translated to english by the author of the article.

reality. Another theoretical reference, as important as Benjamin, was the art philosopher Boris Groys, that not only actualize to contemporary art one of the most important concepts of Benjamin - "aura" - but thinks *real time media* in a context of biopolitics. Groys helps us to see the screen not as something we look through, as an invisible and immaterial media, but before as a square of emitting light, where we see many windows, each one corresponding to the camera of one of the participants. Our meeting in Zoom makes clear how, nowadays, the relationship between art and life undeniably concerns to the biopolitics.

Groys argues that the true reach of the biopolitic's technologies happens in the formation of lifetime - in the formations of life as "pure activity" that occurs in time. From Michel Foucault and Giorgio Agamben to Antonio Negri and Michael Hardt, many authors wrote about biopolitics as the true sphere in which the political desire and the power of technologies of shaping things are manifested today. This means that if life isn't more understood as a natural event, fate, lucky, but as artificially produced and shaped time, so life is automatically politicized, once artistic and technical decisions related to the shape of lifetime are, always, political decisions. The technologies used in home-office during the pandemic were, of course, in this case. "The art that is made under these new conditions of biopolitics - under the conditions of a artificially shaped lifetime - can't do nothing besides facing this artificiality as an explicit theme." (Groys, 2015: 77) . That is what we did.

3. Game space in the era of biopolitic

The pandemic stressed the fact that what is lived becomes simultaneously image, copy, reproduction. The life is already staged to cameras. The streaming doesn't mean more realism, but more artificialism. From 1960's ahead, when art and life mixed up, borders between the documentation of art and art itself were blurred. Objects of art became indiscernible from the art process insofar art became critic to the object that produces its reification. The entry of documentation in art, one can say, try to prevent that art to be confused with common consumer goods, that art be considered the materialization of art in an object of art, as tradicionally ocurred. But I dare to say, in the biopolitics era, the documentation doesn't state so much the process in a critical sense as an emancipation of the referent, this is, a gain of the artificial. If the natural thing - or the living thing - can be reproduced and substituted freely, so it loss its unique and irrepeatable inscription in time - its unique and irrepeatable lifetime that, in the end, is what makes of a living being a living being.

It's exactly at this point that the documentation becomes indispensable, producing the life of the living being as such: the documentation inscribes the existence of an object in history, gives a lifetime to this existence and gives life as such to the object - independent of the fact of this object had been "originally" alive or artificial. So, the classes' question was: how to give to life its unique and irrepeatable inscription in time, once Zoom's meeting happens in a virtual space in which we can be reproduced and substituted at ease by the documentation?

We are back to the Walter Benjamin's question: we give power and emancipate the artificial, but we contest that it is empty and results of a mere document inscription, of a mere narration, no matter which. In other words, we contested an exclusive arbitrary relation between life and its documentation, like Benjamin contest that relation between signifier and signified be empty and merely conventional. We want to empower the language to create life from artificial, unique from copy, magic from semiotic - or maybe anti-art from an exercise of class.

This realtime technology, that artificially shapes the lifetime, typical of the era of biopolitcs, sincronizes us in time and dismembers us in space. With the pandemic, its presence becomes even stronger. The social isolation forced almost everyone to stay at home and stredded even more its characteristic of weaken the public space. This technology makes, as Benjamin said in the seminal text *Art in the era of its technical reproducibility*, that the *hic et nunc* doesn't be anymore unique and irrepeatable. Besides the spacial distances, insofar we communicate ourselves through a supposed transparent media we cancel the "irrepeatable phenomenom of a distance", as Benjamin defines aura. The synchronization in time, that compensates the lost of the indiciality proper of the photochemical process of the analogical photography, is in consonance with, as written by philosopher, that "signature of a perception whose

'sense for the equal in the world' grows up in such a way that, through the reproduction, extracts its even from what is unique". (Benjamin, 2019: 60).

According to Groys (2015: 62), life is a "pure activity without final results and defined goals" that occurs in time, and can't be showed, just lived. Contemporary art intends to become life itself, not merely to portrait life or to offer life art products. Thus, once life itself becomes object of artistic and technical intervention and art gets this as raw material, art becomes biopolitics, because it starts using artistic media to produce and document life as pure activity. The originality of this situation is not to present art, once art is equal to life, but to documentate it. "The art became a form of life, while the work of art became no art, mere documentation of this form of life." (Groys, 2015: 75) We can say that our games for apps of remote contact is not art itself, but anti-art, insofar they are a slice of life, whose narration and documentation allude to art.
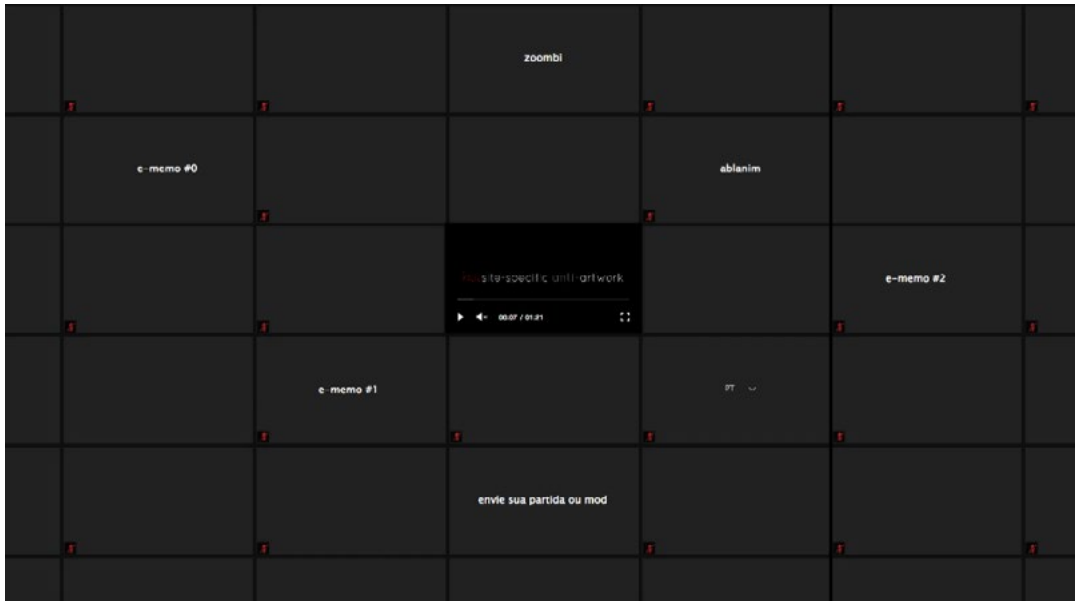
» **Figure 5.3.2.** Printscreen of the opening page of the. hotsite
» **Source:** Author's own archive

» **Figure 5.3.4:** Photo of the screen in a moment of the videopoema/statement
» **Source:** Author's own archive.

If in his theory Groys considers that in the era of biopolitics we can no longer distinguish between natural and artificial, and life must be narrated and documented to get its historic inscription and statute, we problematized the relation between life and its narration/documentation. Our question was how to create life from artificial, something unique from copy and, eventually, the magic dimension from the semiotic one, that in the biopolitics era seems to false spin like a screw without helical thread.

Once we get Zoom, a technological media in real time, life overlaps its double. Starting from this biopolitical situation, we take our sudden appearance in front of the screen during the classes less as a semblance than as a game, in the sense of the opposition, done by Benjamin, between these two aspects that rules mimesis as a originary phenomenon. So argues the philosopher: someone who imitates do what he does just apparently. And the raw material which it forms is the body. Dance and language, gestures of the body and of the leaps are the oldest manifestations of the mimesis. It can be said that one interprets, plays the object. Mimesis, as originary phenomenon of all artistic activity, is governed by a polarity between these two aspects, *appearance* and *game*, that slumber folded in each other like embryonic leaflets. Dialectically, Benjamin confronts this theory of mimesis as an originary phenomenon, that he gets from the botanical theory of Goethe, with his historical view according to which there are two technics. While the first opposes technic to nature, the second is a game performed jointly between them. Benjamin establishes a relationship between these historical views of the technic and the two elements of the mimesis: appearance corresponds to the first technic and the game to the second one. "What comes with the withering of the appearance, with the lost of aura in the artworks", he concludes, "is a huge gain in game space". (Benjamin, 2012: 76) The game moment of the second technic strengthens the game moment of the art.

4. e-memo as reading and profane lighting

The idea of this huge gain in game space is what was missing to complete what was already being suggested by the surface of the screen when we were staring at it: a game board. That's how we came up with the idea to the first poetic game for apps of remote contact: *e-memo*: *oblivion and memory game*. For not have good connection or don't wanting expose themselves or their houses, many students stayed with closed camera, what increased the resemblance of the screen with a game board. This idea responds to our critical view of the media, in correspondence with the idea that language isn't a mere conventional system of signs, but there is a bond between the things or signifieds and the words or signifiers, like in onomatopoeia, that makes language motivated, not arbitrary. Namely, there isn't only a semiotic dimension in language, but inseparable of that, a magical one. And this takes us to the main idea, beyond that similarity between the screen and a game board. If mimesis as an originary phenomenon has two poles - appearance and game -, we were privileging, in correspondence with the second technic represented by Zoom, the second one, explored in our post-auratical experiment. When we were staring at screen, in spite of looking through it, we were reading. Only the surfaces can be readable. Here we arrive, simultaneously, to the nuclei, as theoretical as practical, of the question. What connect the semiotic and the magic dimensions of language is the concept of reading, more exactly, the segment of time intrinsecal to it, that, according to Benjamin, links reading to perception, and to a immediacy, and makes language not a media, as in the meaning of the common sense, but, as we said before, a medium, in which what is communicated is the own language. Although the magic dimension of the mimetic faculty has migrated to the language, their old powers remain in its intrinsecal temporality, in which magical and semiotic dimensions can merge. This merging means that signifier and signified have a motivated bond, like in an onomatopoeia, because language communicates immediately, and is understood as what is communicable in a spiritual essence, not as a simple media. But the bond isn't inside the thing itself. If the bond is motivated like in an onomatopoeia, the motivation isn't like in a imitation of the sound of the thing. The bond isn't at the appearance; it is in time. In what Benjamin calls similarity "extra-sensitive". The oldest form of reading precedes all languages, as Benjamin writes, quoting a sentence of baroque inspiration of Hugo von Hofmannsthal: "Read what never was written." (Benjamin, 2018: 53). There is a double layer in the reading, one magical or sacred, another semiotic or profane. Another quote of "About mimetic faculty":

These [magical] strand of the language and of the writing doesn't develop in isolation, without link with the other, the semiotic. On the contrary, every mimetic element of the language is, like the flame, something that only can manifest itself through any support, that in this case is the semiotics. Then, the context of signification of the words or phases is the support from which a similarity emerge, in an instant, immediately. Its production by the human being - just like its perception by him - is, in fact, linked to a sudden erupt. It passes and disappears. Its very likely, therefore, that the speed of the writing and reading enhances the fusion within the scope of language. (Benjamin, 2018: 55).

Some rules of e-memo can clarify by themselves how the questions exposed above were put in practice:

✖ 3 - Each player enters the game with 2 cameras closed. What they see on the screen is the screen itself, black squares on the board."

✖ 4 - In order not to be identified, the players should use an encrypted name: the abbreviation FIG. (of FIGURE), in the manner of the artist Marcel Broodthaers, followed by a number (from 0 to 9) and a letter of the alphabet (from A to Z).[113]

» **Figure 5.3.5.** Printscreen of the biginning of one match. Point of view of the host
» **Source:** Author's own archive

✖ 5 - Through the audio, the dealer calls players to make their bids, beginning from the top left corner of the screen, like in the alphabetic writing orientation.

✖ 6 - The goal is to guess one player behind two closed cameras, like in a memory game.

✖ 7- Bids are made by indicating two houses through the chat.

✖ 8- The players indicated have to open their windows.

✖ 9 - When one same player opens his two cameras, appearing simultaneously in two game houses, occurs an "unrepeatable phenomenon of a distance". In this *real time* the present is not identical to itself. Each player has two images. At the moment of this double appearance, in which a unique encounter takes place, the game changes.

✖ 10 - When a player opens his two cameras some correspondence occurs, and the revelation "emerge, in a instant, immediately", on a *jetztzeit* (now time) that "erupt suddenly", making the copy, original; the multiple, single; the double, alive.

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113 Broofthaers equalize all things - images, objects, films etc - naming all them with the abbreviation FIG. in his work *Museum of Modern Art - Eagles Department*, of the beginning of the 1970s. Rosalind Krauss interpret this, in *Voyage on the North Sea - Art in the Age of Post-Medium Condition* (1999) as a questioning done by the artist to the role of the art in a consumerism society, that equals all the heterogeneity of the things by the monetary system. By quoting Broodthaers naming that way ourselves we were both relating *e-memo* to conceptual art and actualizing the institutional critic of the belgium artist to the data capitalism that Shoshana Zuboff refers to in *Age of Surveillance Capitalism* (2019).

Streaming programs like Zoom simulates the "pure activity" of life. But the fact that each player is in the game with two cameras puts the question of which of the two is it. Both are just imagens. But these put a true question about the identity. If mimetic faculty makes human being able to percept and produce similarities, a characteristic of the subject is to produce similarities to itself. And the double image is a kind of parody of this process. It is in relation with the other that one can find himself. In the game, it's paradoxically a movement from the exteriority, beyond the control of the individual, that unify the intrinsically divided identity in a precise moment of time. The identity isn't what is totally equal and doesn't eliminate the distance. Remember and be remembered in a spacial memory, when a player chooses the exact two game houses that hide a same other player, is a winning game move. Its a happy moment when, instead of an act of pass through the screen, the encounter with the other is a topological and synchronized encounter. Then happens an "unrepeatable phenomenon of a distance".

In *Aura Topology*, Boris Groys makes a new interpretation of the benjaminian concept of aura in which there is not only the possibility of doing a copy from the original, but also of doing an original from the copy. Aura, according to him, is a modern concept that becomes necessary because the technology of reproduction makes, at least ideally, impossible all the material criteria to distinguish between original and copy. "Aura is", to Benjamin, "the relationship with its external context. The spirit of the artwork there isn't in its body, but the body of the artwork is found in its aura, in its spirit." (Groys, 2015 :85) In other words, the distinction between original and copy independent of the material nature of the work, it is exclusively topological. The aura isn't destructed because the work is a copy, but because the work doesn't have a localization and, consequently, isn't inscript in history. We are using a slice of life as stuff of our game and ourselves as the pieces. That is to say: we are equaling the life to a game, using game as a metaphor of life[114]. Benjamin says that the "reader, the thinker, the idle, the *flâneur* are types of *iluminati* as well as the opium eater, the dreamer, the ecstatic" (as cited in Groys, 2015: 86) These figures of the lighting are figures of the movement. We are each one in front of our own computer screen, playing *e-memo* as a reader, that is one of the types of the *iluminati*. We are trying to memorize the spaciality of the faces, invoking alphanumeric signs by chat, looking for two images of the same player, a double, a similarity, some correspondence in time between squares. Benjamin writes in the first version of *About mimetic faculty*, titled *Douctrine* of the similarities.

> *However, the rhythm, the speed at reading and at writing, inseparable of these process, could be as the effort, or the gift, of makes the spirit participates of that temporal segment in which the similarities erupt of the flow of things, transiently, to disappear after. Then, even the profane reading, to be understandable, share with the magical reading the characteristic of having to submit to a necessary time, or before, to a critic moment that the reader, at no cost, can forget if he doesn't want to leave empty-handed. (Benjamin, 1987: 112-113)*

It's through the time that magical reading pass as profane reading. Two cameras are suddenly opened at once. One could say that, like readers, we are respecting and not destroying the unlikely aura of the revelation that occurs on the flat surface of screen in which players search by each other and are searched instead of looking through. We go to the other, we look for him on that glass surface of emitted light instead of demand him to come to us, as usually makes the modern consumer, that prefers copies rather originals.

Groys says: "The figure of the profane lighting is the inversion of the 'lost of aura' that comes of put the copy in an indeterminate circulation topology, in spite of the modern mass media." (Groys, 2015: 86) He considers that the installation can be counted between the figures of profane lighting, because transforms the spectator in flâneur. Maybe the movement of staring at the screen and looking for the squares in a certain way could be compared to a kind a flânerie, the possible one established in conscting through in a streaming program of videoference during the pandemic social isolation. Groys argue that the (post) modernity plays the complex role of deterritorializing and retorritorializing, of removing and restoring aura. His new interpretation of the concept of Benjamin proposes that, in this condition, the originality of a work of art isn't determined "by its material nature, but by its aura, by its context, by its

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114 Curiously, this is the plot of the most sucessfull *Netflix*'s serie during the pandemic, *Round 6*, that used it as a form of sadistic voyeurism.

historic local". In modern era the originality does not disappear at all - it becomes variable. To be original, has an aura, signifies the same that to be alive. "But the life isn't something that the living being has 'inside him'. It is, instead, the inscription of certain being in some context of life - in a time and space of life." (Groys, 2015: 86) Insofar *e-memo* is a kind of reading, a game with time in a profane lighting, can reveal another path to the biopolitics: instead of fighting against the modernity, we developed with this experiment created in the virtual classes an strategy of resistance and inscription based in situation and context, making possible transform the artificial in something alive and the repetitive in something unique.
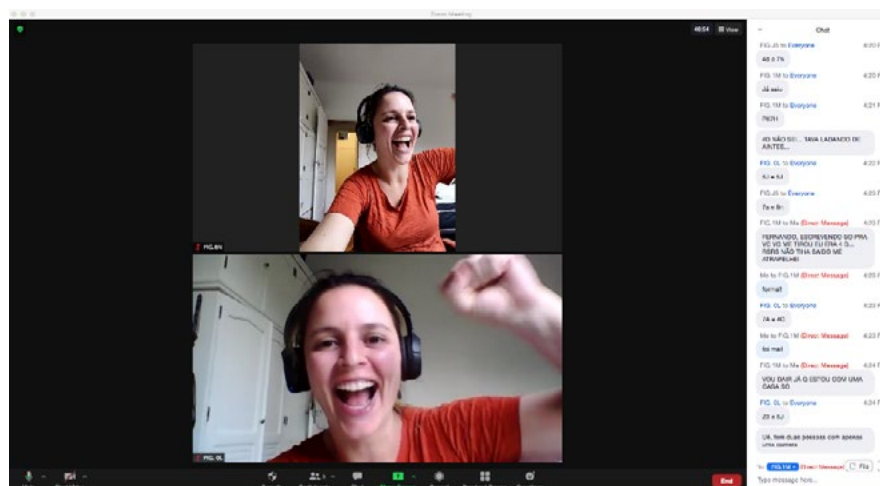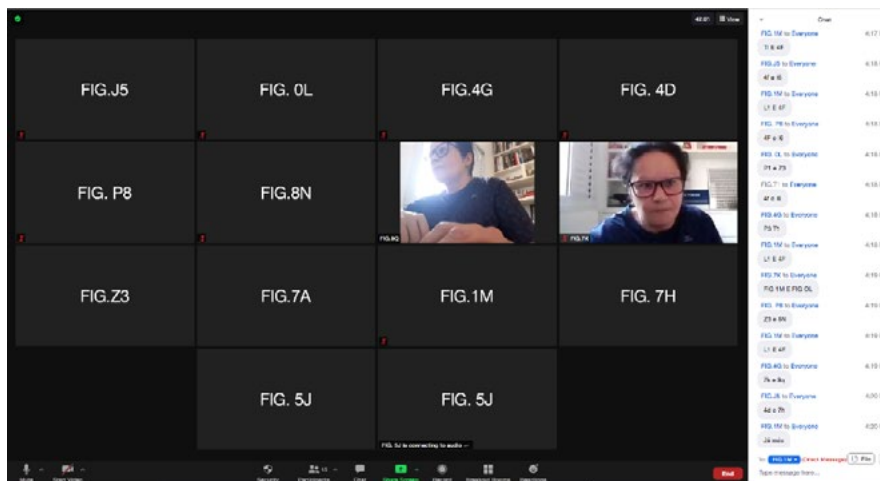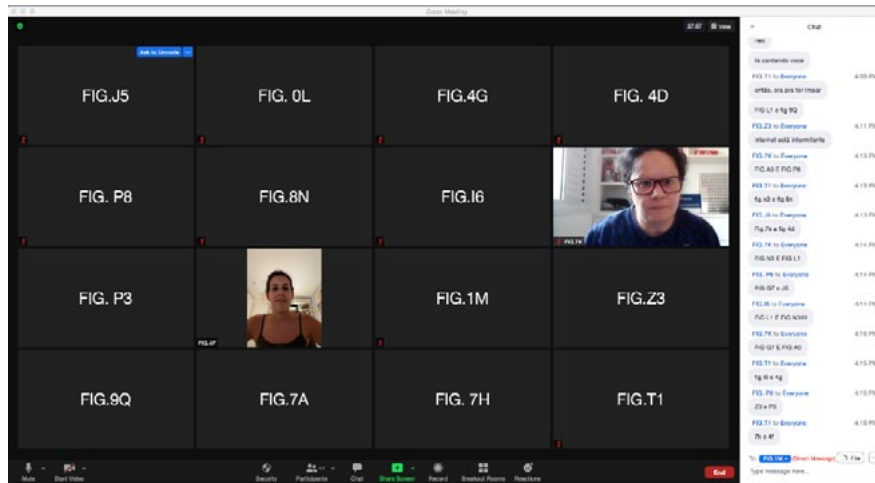
» **Figure 5.3.6.** The three pictures above are printscreens of students playing one match of e-memo: oblivion and memory game.

» **Source:** Author's own archive

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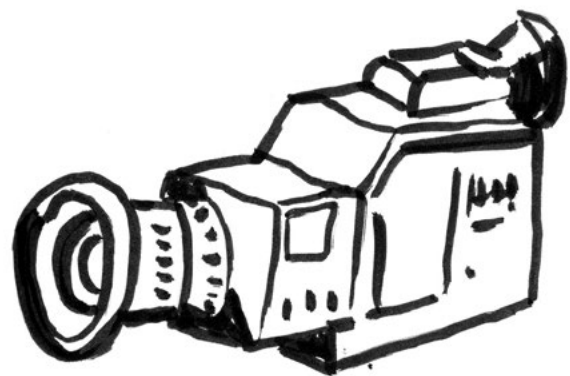
5.4. DIGITAL CULTURE AND MUSIC: THE INFLUENCE OF FANDOM ON MUSICAL CONSOLIDATION IN PANDEMIC TIMES THROUGH DIGITAL PLATFORMS

Mariane Borges[115] & Emília Simão[116]

✖ ~~Abstract~~

This study aims to identify the influence of fandom on the consolidation of artistic success in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, analysing the behavioral phenomena related to the audience on digital platforms of independent artist Ana Cañas. The pandemic caused the cancellation of in-person concerts, bringing major difficulties for the artists. In the middle of this scenario, Ana Cañas achieved artistic success, made possible due the intervention of fandom. This research is based on qualitative and quantitative approach and is classified as a case study, using document analysis and netnography as research techniques for data collection and selection and analysis of comments generated from fan activism, around three digital platforms - Facebook, Instagram, and YouTube. It was found that fandom activism effectively helped in the musical consolidation of the independent artist, but represented, above all, a political act of resistance.

Keywords: digital platforms, fandom, resistance, independent music, pandemic.

1. Introduction

The digital culture, with the emergence of the internet, brought the possibility of the musical consolidation of an independent artist through the intervention of fandom's activities, a term used to characterize the meeting of fans in digital platforms, regardless of sociocultural factors or geographical limits. Fans act in the divulgation of their idol for the legitimation of the artist success through network participation. For Jenkins (1992), "the fandom is, therefore, one of manifestations more representative of the participatory culture. When talking about fandom what is in question is not only the individual behavior of a fan, but a collective experience." (Ribeiro, 2016: 11). Fans for a long time were seen as passive people of mass culture, however, with contemporary studies and the emergence of digital culture, they came to be seen as an engaged audience that actively participates in culture. The resources present in digital platforms enables their participation in the flow of communicational processes. This research is based on the assumption that fans offer alternative solutions as well as represent resistance: "Fan activism is a form of resistance in the creative and cultural ambit" (Amaral et al., 2015: 141).

This research aims to analyse the influence of fandom on the musical consolidation of the independent

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music artist Ana Cañas, through digital platforms, during the pandemic period. We considered that online fandom activism has enabled the artist's success through the resources available on the internet generating network dialogues, debating agendas, offering creative solutions, and enabling a crowdfunding campaign. Through this research, we intended to analyze how the fans' communities on digital platforms are constituted and to identify how the resources available made possible the proximity between fandom and artist in order to mediate the communication. For this reason, we analyzed the dialogue and interactivity of fans to understand the power and degree of the fandom's influence on digital platforms, and how this has reflected in the artist's success, identifying the main factors that were determinant for this singer's artistic success. As mentioned before, for the purposes of this study, Facebook, Instagram, and YouTube are used as digital platforms of analysis, more specifically the official profiles in which the artist is registered to communicate with the public. It will also be carried out an analysis between the social activism of fandom of the independent artist Ana Cañas in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic.

This research hopes to be a contribution with clues to be followed by other artists in the independent scene, providing a reflection on the subversive and activist role of the online fandom, considered as an agent of social mobilization in digital culture.

2. Digital culture and music

The digital culture has brought revolutionary changes to the music scene, offering new possibilities for the consumption, production, and dissemination of the product as a cultural asset: "Digital Culture is transforming the manifestations of musicality and people's relationship with music" (Cuervo, 2016: 28). The main milestone in the music scene in the digital era occurred with the emergence of the Peer-to-Peer (P2P) networks that made it possible to consume music easily and informally in MP3 format by simply connecting to the internet through a computer, without the need for a physical reproduction media. It is notable that the digital culture has brought new consumption habits that strongly impacted the growth of music industry globally, mainly due to the streaming consumption. Digital platforms emerge together with digital culture, allowing the computer-mediated communication through information transmitted and recorded in the communicative process. Digital platforms are understood as "the technologic space of inscription and transmission of the information, visible from the access screen, recorded on the respective disk and memory, in order to be communicated" (Passarelli et al., 2014: 116).

3. Fandom and social activism

3.1. The origin of fan studies

Etymologically, "fandom is an English term originated of two terms: fan and kingdom. It's used to designate the fan communities of a specific cultural product, usually provided on the Internet" (Souza & Martins, 2012: 5). A fandom can integrate several participants and is usually associated with destitute groups of social influence, regardless of sociocultural characteristics.

> *Fandom is typically associated with cultural forms that the dominant value system denigrates – pop music, romance novels, comics [...] It is thus associated with the cultural tastes of subordinated formations of the people, particularly with those disempowered by any combination of gender, age, class and race (Fiske, 1992: 30)*

Communication between fans and artists passed through transformations and got a greater prominence with the emergence of digital culture. Amaral (2009) corroborates that, through online forums and social networking sites, audiences give visibility to the idol's work, which before was restricted to correspondence, fanzines or others alternative media. For Jenkins: "None of this is new. What has shifted is the visibility of fan culture. The Web provides a powerful new distribution channel for amateur cultural production" (Jenkins, 2006: 131). Fandom activities and their segments have won a greater

prominence with the internet. Fans identify themselves with other fans and debate and exchange information, regardless of social differences, because they share a common objective, and are united "in a kind of alternative society, which acquires characteristics of a complex and organized society, fans share references, interests, and a common sense of identify that makes them feel like they belong to a large group" (Ribeiro, 2016: 10). Fans' studies originate from the dichotomy between passive and active audience, the result of a new contemporary configuration. According to Carlos and Gelain (2018), fans' studies arise from the discussion of a passive versus an active audience in the United States and Europe, the fan being differentiated by the engagement with the media industry and its texts. Furthermore, for Escosteguy (2001), in contemporary studies, proposed by the Centre of Contemporary Cultural Studies – CCCS, of the University of Birmingham (Souza & Martins, 2012), the figure of the fan is described as that of an active and critical individual, and not just as a simple passive and submissive receiver. The fan is someone capable of interpreting the message intended for them and of reacting in an interventional manner.

In relation to media content, fans are characterized by being active, claiming their right to participate, being "(...) the most active segment of the media audience, one that refuses to simply accept what they are given, but rather insists on the right to become full participants" (Jenkins, 2006: 131). Therefore, the fan, in contemporary thinking, starts to be conceived by the logic of a resistant and critical individual, who does not easily accept what is imposed on them, and who becomes a participant of the culture, re-signifying the received media contents. The fan can be considered a subversive subjective, because, besides the interpretation endowed with critical sense, they also react and contest, thus, the fan activism can be understood "as a quotidian resistance" (Souza & Monteiro, 2015: 152). In this dichotomy, fans legitimize and strengthen a cultural movement by actively participating in culture through online communities, playing a social role.

> *After the confrontation between two antagonistic theoretical aspects, we show fans as members of communities that share the same tastes and preferences. In them develops what Henry Jenkins (2008) calls participatory culture, a series of sociocultural behaviors that transform the fan into an active, critical and intervening consumer (Souza & Martins, 2012: 1-2)

3.2. The independent scene and the alternative fandom

The emergence of the independent scene, referred to as "indie", is linked to the idea of freedom on the artist's part and had its historical origins in the 1980s, under the premises of production based on Do It Yourself – DIY. Ito (2017) remembers that the independent records labels, also known as indies, "invest in creations that escape the pattern instituted by major music corporations" (The phonographic industry, para. 25).

> *The term 'indie' is associated with the concept of 'independent,' which refers to the freedom of artists in comparison to large conglomerates and music labels. The movement was established in the 1980s, in England and in the United States, through small initiatives that worked as labels launching artists under the order of Do It Yourself (DIY), which meant a way to produce based on low-cost and strongly creative practices (Cavalcanti, Souza-Leão, & Moura, 2021: 3)

According to Mcneil & Mccain (2013), the DIY ideology can be seen as a form of struggle, resistance and survival (Medeiros, 2015). Because of their subversive characteristics related to the forms of independent music production, such as the denial of socially imposed values, the fans of independent artists are also connected to the ideological premises and positions that surround the indie scene. In this ambit, "the DIY philosophy and the expression of rebellion also extends to audiences who perceive the value of the indie universe and seek proximity to it" (Guerra, 2010: 167).

Therefore, this form of music production also involves an alternative audience, in this context, "music consumption within music scenes considered independent is seen as differentiated, often linked to an idea of alternative music" (Medeiros, 2015: 32). In the musical universe, indie represents a philosophy of life that involves artists who have chosen to break away from the structures of a mass system, expressing the

real meaning of music. This way "indie refers to a musical production aligned with the experimentation discourse, with lack of concern with the interest of mass audiences and with the rejection of profit as a purpose" (Cavalcanti, Souza-Leão & Moura, 2021: 3). The independent scene is consolidated by its ideological values, and is characterized, therefore, by the disassociation with a major recording company, establishing itself, above all, for the denial of submission to the prevailing social values. For this reason, being independent in the music world goes beyond the debate that involves indies or majors, indie is a state of mind that sets itself against corporate hegemonic values (Herschmann, 2011).

From this perspective, fans of indie music play a relevant role in consolidating the success of independent artists, because they constitute a segmented audience that is faithful to the artist's precepts, strengthening the spirit of the music and the values it represents through their idol.

> *The genre was consolidated along the way thanks to its fans, whose features make them different from other music fans; they do not often align with mainstream products, they defend the movement´s concept and follow their idols regardless of fashion cycles (Bromwich, 2014; Coscarelli, 2017; Maloney, 2011). Thus, they take opposite positions to that of labels and artists who distance themselves from the ideal of independent production and musicality (Sanneh, 2005); besides, they make voracious criticisms to artists who prioritize success over the musicality and originality of their productions (Daly, 2016) (Cavalcanti et al., 2021: 3).

The internet comes to assist in the strengthening and consolidation of independent artists who use the available resources to publicize and increase the visibility of their work, from this perspective "the popularization of internet benefits independent artists who, before, could only promote their work through of in person audience" (Medeiros, 2015: 34). In this culture of production and consumption on the indie scene, Ana Cañas, the object of this research, chose to position herself outside the space of a record company, becoming an independent music artist. Her ideological position also involves a different kind of audience. The album named Todxs[117] was the artist's first independent album. The album affirms the singer's critical position and presents lyrics in defense of feminism and of issues related to political minorities. It received a Latin Grammy[118] nomination in 2019.

4. Ana Cañas: resistance and music in pandemic times

As a methodological tool in this case study, it was used the document analysis of the artist's life, which brought a better context understanding. The virtual netnography was used for the analysis within the digital platforms. The post made on Ana Cañas' official Facebook fan page, in which the artist speaks about the cancellation of a live and the lack of sponsorship during the pandemic, generated a number of 1,600 reactions, among these 958 "likes"; 379 "sad" reactions; 280 "care" reactions; 70 "love" reactions; five "wow" reactions; four "angry" reactions and three "haha" reactions. It also obtained a number of 123 comments and 50 shares. The artist has a total of 299,000 followers on her official fan page. The same post made on Ana Cañas' official Instagram profile generated a number of 7,852 likes (Figure 5.4.1) and 369 comments. On this digital platform, the artist has a total of 226,000 followers, until the date of this analysis. The number of comments on Instagram compared to Facebook was significantly higher. The image was posted on both digital platforms on 10 June 2020.
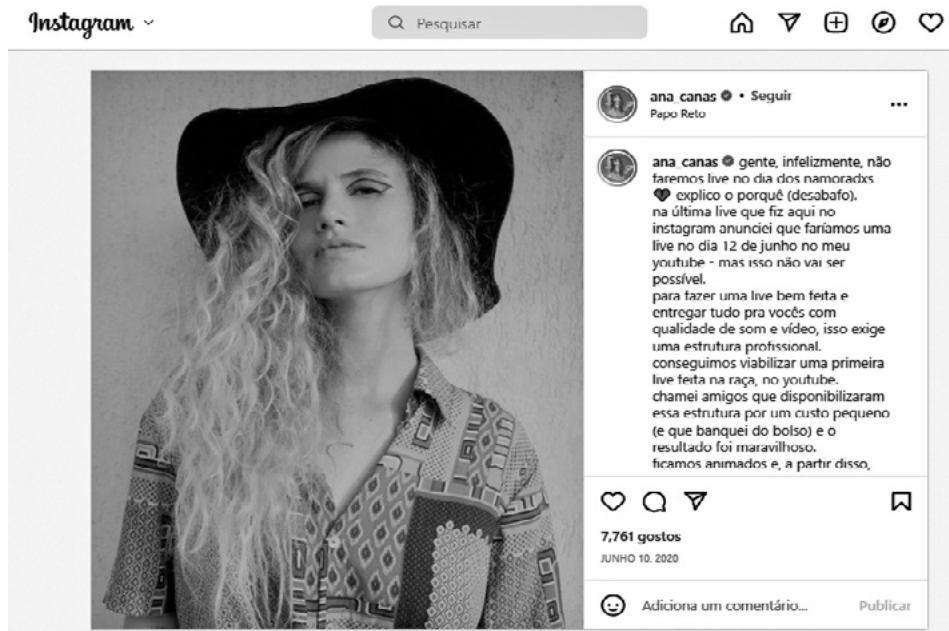
On the artist's official YouTube channel, the stored video of the live streaming (Figure 5.4.2), which took place on 9 July 2020, got a number of 537,428 views, 29,000 likes, and 2,214 comments, until the date of this analysis, on 17 June 2021. The artist has a total of 350,000 people subscribed to her video platform. As we can see, the number of views of the live streaming was higher than the number of people subscribed to the channel. Thus, 58 Facebook comments were selected to be analyzed, this number totals 47%. We also analyzed the interpersonal communications, which are the response to comments: on Instagram, 173 comments were selected, which also totals to 47%, following the same percentage of comments. On

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117 Ana Cañas releases fifth album independently. See more at: https://www1.folha.uol.com.br/ilustrada/2018/12/ana-canas-abraca-ativismos-e-feminismo-em-seu-quinto-disco.shtml

118 See more about the Latin Grammys at: https://www.latingrammy.com/en

YouTube, 10% of the comments were selected, which totals a number of 221. This approach uses a smaller sample, only part of it was used, given the high number of comments on the live video clip.

The cancellation post of the live was made because Ana Cañas had performed a previous live that was used as publicity material to obtain sponsorships during the pandemic. The live show scheduled for 12 June 2020, the date Valentine's Day in Brazil, was canceled, because the artist wasn't successful in raising sponsors. The artist wanted to offer a quality broadcast to the public, and to do so it would require the work of an entire music production chain.

» **Figure 5.4.1.** Post on the artist's official Instagram that originated the fandom's crowdfunding campaign[119]
» **Source:** Instagram, Ana Cañas, 2020. Retrieved from: https://www.instagram.com/p/CBQfwjmIhTV/

» **Figure 5.4.2.** Videoclip take from the live on Ana Cañas' YouTube channel
» **Source:** YouTube, Ana Cañas, 2020. Retrieved from: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mvb6Qtu9hS8

The comments were categorized (Graphic 18.1) according to the degree of importance and with a qualitative analysis as the criterion, with an interpretative approach to each selected platform. The graphics indicate the representation percentages of each subject in the online fandom debate and show

the quantitative approach. In this context, one approach complements the other.
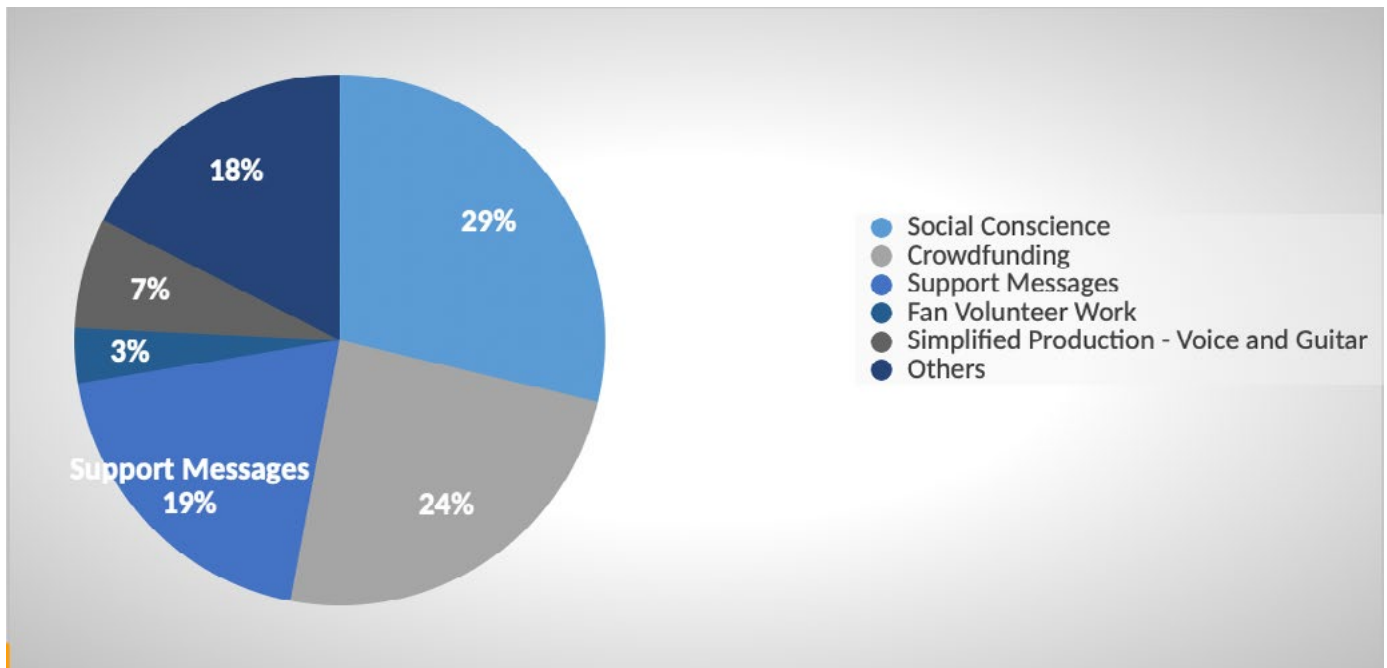
» **Graphic 5.4.1.** Categorizing the analysis on the artist's Facebook and Instagram profiles

» **Source:** The authors, 2021

In category social conscience, political nature comments and criticisms of the system were analyzed, in response to the singer's post. From this analysis, it was seen that political comments and criticisms of the dominant model were made by fans who think in alternatives to confront these questions. We can see that the members are also conscientious citizens who seek to debate issues of extreme relevance to society, especially social issues, as the inequalities that arose in the music industry during the pandemic. Thus, we notice in relation to the members of the fandom that:

> *There are points of proximity and confluence among them, constituting a new way of being and exist in the world, of acting and reacting to politics, aiming at a collective action and performance, both in terms of organizations and claims (Soares, 2019: 56)*

This means that fans use digital spaces as a form of activism for social transformation with the resources that are available to them, being collaborative citizens. According to Jenkins, "we may also want to look at the structures of fan communities as showing us new ways of thinking about citizenship and collaboration" (Jenkins, 2006: 246). Therefore, fans within a fandom have a politicized dimension of social problems and unite to promote changes and transformations in the social frameworks on which they debate. The political factor is also an indication of cultural identification, in which "fans not only appreciate the music, they buy the same causes, defend the same flags" (Medeiros, 2015: 26).

About crowdfunding, the fandom engagement help to the artist is the topic of discussion. The fans unite through dialogues which take place in the comment section and reach a consensus that on crowdfunding as the best option to make the live streaming happen. Crowdfunding is one of the collaborative activities that occur within fandoms.

> *Crowdfunding allows projects to be made possible thanks to the fan contribution of fans, be it large or small. The popularization of collaborative projects has grown vertiginously in the last two years. In crowdfunding, contributors donate whatever amount they can afford (Amaral et al., 2015: 149)*

Therefore, it can be directly observed the fandom mobilization around the proposal to make the live streaming as something carried out through the union and mutual help of the others fans, which are "extremely organized and planned, to be able to achieve the goals of the actions and impact as many people as possible, increasing visibility for their idol" (Ferreira et al., 2019: 13). Communities have

characteristics in common such as the "co-action of their participants, who share values, goals, and attitudes of mutual support, through interactions in the online universe" (Rheigold 1993 in Ribeiro, 2016: 15).

The fandom communication, through mutual support and encouragement in form of messages, are seen as a motivation for the artist to keep going, despite adversity. According to Soares: "The term 'resist' etymologically comes from the Latin *resistentia* and the verb *resistere*, which means to stand firm, to persist, to repeatedly oppose without losing one's position" (Soares, 2019: 136). Despite the uncertainties of the pandemic, fans urge the artist not to give up, to stand firm, and this is also interpreted as an act of resistance. These messages of support directed to the singer Ana Cañas bring a greater proximity through dialogue and communication, strengthening the affective bonds of the fandom with the artist. About this:

One of the reasons that motivate a fan is affectivity and it is because of this that he/she devotes him/herself to one or more kinds of artists, building his/her own identity according to the diverse products of the cultural industry, with which he/she emotionally connects (Medeiros, 2015: 26)

About the category *simplified production – voice and guitar*, fans suggest that the singer perform a live with a simpler production, only voice and guitar. The Do It Yourself - DIY is an element of punk culture to the music, where "grassroots experimentation generated new sounds, new artists, new techniques, and new relations to consumers which have been pulled more and more into mainstream practice" (Jenkins, 2006: 132). However, homemade and resource-free forms of production are linked to DIY practices, which is also associated with indie music. Many independent artists have been launched under the premise of DIY "which meant a way to produce based on low-cost and strongly creative practices" (Cavalcanti, Souza-Leão & Moura, 2021: 3).

In this section *fan volunteer work*, fans participate directly in the dissemination of the artist by asking for sponsorship from companies to help make the live possible, by tagging official brand's profiles that could be potential supporters. This strategic form of requesting sponsorship constitutes what is called to as fan volunteer work. "It can also be said that fans feel a greater need to participate in the promotion of their object of interest, becoming more visible and relevant to the artists. This need has become greater, and they ended up being a new way to help leverage the idol, becoming strategic in this middle, especially for bands without much budget" (Ferreira et al., 2019: 5). Ito (2017) points out that these "activities performed by fans can be inserted into the conception of free work, that which is voluntary, unpaid, and based on the pleasure of those who performs it" (Life and Death of a Musical Social Network, para. 52). The author complements that "among the motivations for working for free for the artist are the affective rewards implicit in such actions - an individual feeling of helping those you like and doing your part" (Ito, 2017, Final considerations, para. 11). Therefore, the fans are not only participative, but also collaborative, acting as cultural mediators of the artist.

The categorizations the *result of the crowdfunding campaign* indicate the activities performed within a fandom, embedded in digital platforms such as Facebook and Instagram. As seen, from the fandom's mobilization, the singer conducted a crowdfunding campaign suggested by the fans, whose focus would be to raise the necessary funds to make the cultural project happen (Figure 5.4.3). The project included the realization of a concert in live format, in tribute to a singer from Ceará (Brazil), Belchior, held on 9 July 2020 and broadcasted on YouTube. The categorizations bring a mapping of the activities of this specific fandom, from the observation of behavior patterns that were repetitive throughout the comments.

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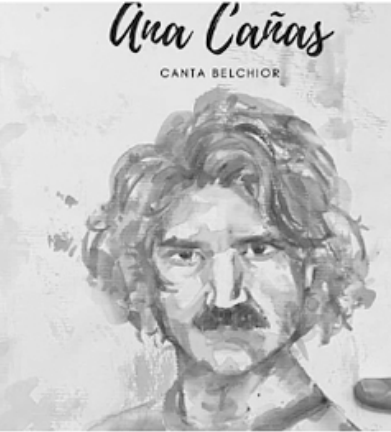
» **Figure 5.4.3.** Result of the crowdfunding campaign proposed by the online fandom
» **Source:** Vakinha, Ana Cañas, 2020. Retrieved from https://www.vakinha.com.br/vaquinha/ana-canas-canta-belchior

5. YouTube

Next, we present a graphic that contains the categorizations referring to the manifestations expressed by the audience through YouTube comments, and that are related to the concert in the live format displayed on YouTube, thanks to the fandom crowdfunding campaign. The audience's opinion generates valuable marketing feedback for both the producers of cultural assets and the artists, who can get a better knowledge of their audience. As seen, the fan culture "provides valuable free feedback on market trends and preferences" (Fiske, 1992: 46-47). Thus, we start understanding that categorized comments constitute a form of feedback provided by the audience and help in the production of a cultural asset or project.

For this analysis, the following categories were used: (i) positive feedback that relates to reaction comments by the public that expressed feelings such as excitement and gratitude, as well as praise directed at the live, which indicates the intense relationship of the fan and potential fans with the artist, especially after the music experience offered; (ii) the album recording involves the comments that asked the artist to make the recording of a new album, comments indicating they wanted to revisit the live and requests for concerts after the pandemic. This shows the public's involvement with the work, indicating that the recording of an album would be successful; (iii) the category Belchior relates to all the comments that mentioned the Ceará singer, indicating that part of the lives' audience was attracted to it by the fact that it was a tribute to the singer, configuring a new niche of fans for the artist and expanding her audience; (iv) the social conscience involves the people who were a part of the politically charged debate, which had already been identified on Facebook and Instagram, to the YouTube live comments. In the live, several times she mentioned political issues that had been experienced in the country. The audience, as

a form of response, also expressed themselves politically; the Defense from critics involving part of the public that engaged in comments in defense of the artist because of the criticism she received, acting as ambassadors.
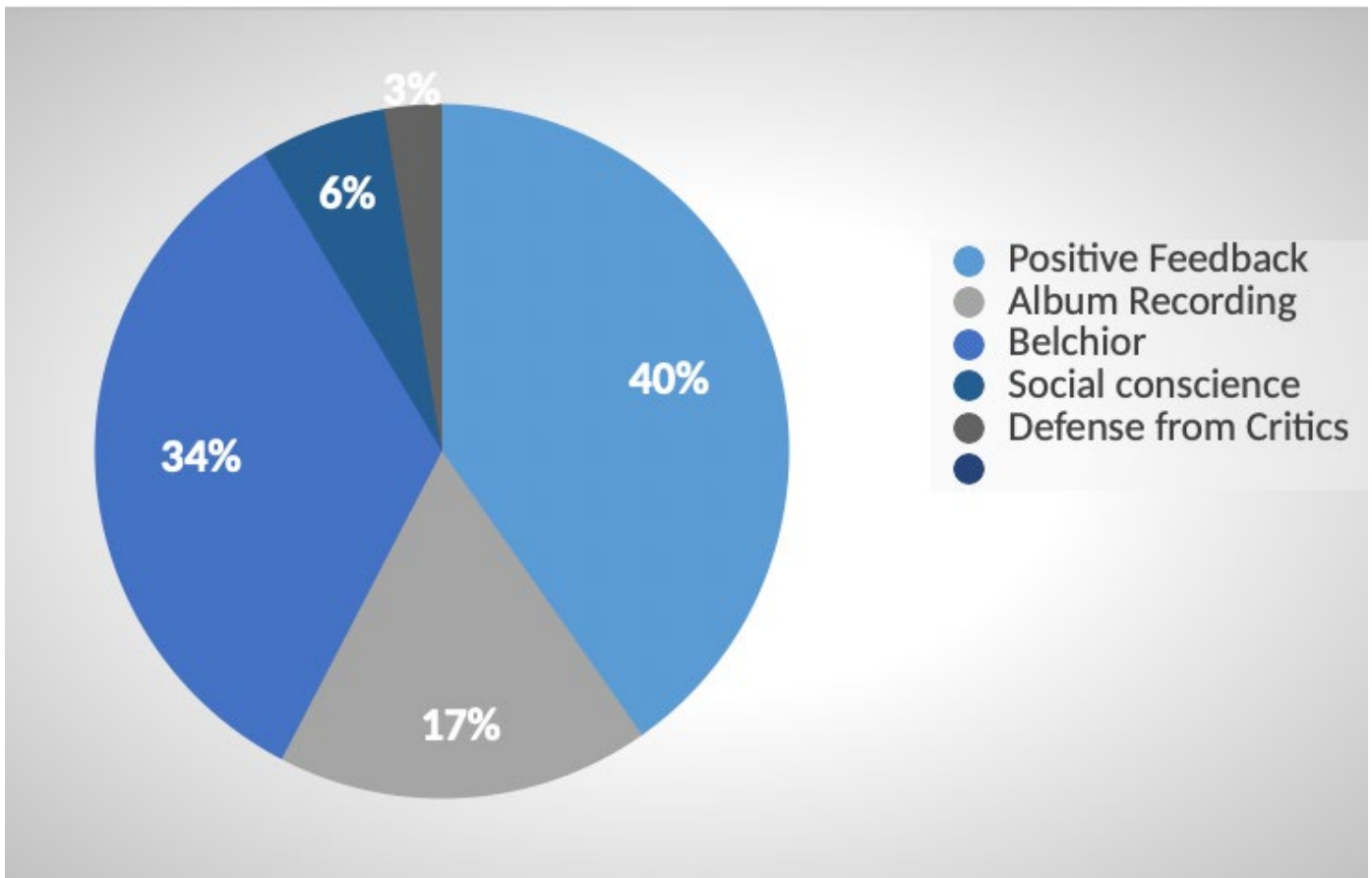
» **Graphic 5.4.2.** Categorization of the audience regarding the live broadcast on YouTube
» **Source:** The authors, 2021

The objective of this categorization is to map the main common characteristics of the collective dimension of audience behavior after the live. We understand that the categorizations indicate key success factors that contributed to the recording of the album. A factor that confirms the success of the live was the completion of a new crowdfunding (Figure 5.4.4) that resulted in the viability of funds for recording the album, again with the help of the fandom and the audience.

6. Final considerations

This study showed that fan activism, through participation in digital platforms, enables the consolidation and success of artists in the music segment, as is the case of independent artist Ana Cañas. Thus, we clearly perceive the role of "artivism" present in the singer, a concept that relates to the artist who uses their art as a form of activism and militancy. In this way, we understand this social role as a reflection in the fandom's activism. The social impact that the fandom has had in times of crisis, as it was in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, is extremely important. Fans played a social role in promoting the artist, using digital platforms as a space for intervention, debate and criticism. Alternative solutions were proposed through the union and collaboration of their members, who acted independently to achieve a common objective, breaking with the dominant power structures. In fandom, fan activism can be seen "as a practice of resistance, that is, as an intentional action against a force considered hegemonic in order to bring about change" (Amaral, Souza & Monteiro, 2015: 144).

Fandom activism has taken into account the segment of the indie scene, which offers freedom and provides a greater connection between artist and audience. The fandom acted as a movement of social mobilization and political participation, claiming their rights based on the participation and engagement

of the fans themselves. They themselves carried out the changes and transformations they wanted, which represented a political act of resistance through the use of alternative paths. The union of fandom, crowdfunding and digital platforms favored independent artists, allowing them to continue their work during the pandemic, and in some cases, even increasing their notoriety and success. In this ambit, digital platforms have amplified the transformations in a given social framework, especially through fandom's mobilization and resistance practices. The nonconformism of the fan provided this change by its subversion character, because, for the intervening fan, after the end point, there is always a starting point for new possibilities, debates, and alternatives.

» **Figure 5.4.4.** Crowdfunding for the recording of the album originated from the live streaming.

» **Source:** Vakinha, Ana Cañas, 2020. Retrieved from: https://www.vakinha.com.br/vaquinha/ana-canas-canta-belchior-vamos-gravar-o-disco

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5.5. SIMPLY LONGING FOR WILDERNESS. FICTIONS OF NATURE PRESERVATION IN WESTERN POP MUSIC

Thorsten Philipp [120]

✕ ~~Abstract~~

The individual and social longing for an intact and untouched nature is a core element of environmental crisis dynamics. To what extent is the reinvention of an authentic nature and of compatible lifestyles a theme of pop music? Can cultural production promote lacking communicative capacity to moderate environmental conflicts and sustainable living? This article reflects the societal dimension of pop music to examine its communicative potentials in processing the problem of environmental degradation and nature preservation. It is particularly the Western trope of wilderness, the idea of an unaltered, virgin nature, that deserves interest. With its origins in the 19th century land ethic, it still today offers an entry to renegotiate fictions, norms, dreams and futures of nature in times of major environmental destruction and apocalyptic disasters. The selected songs show recent attempts to reconcile wilderness and modern life, staging the colonialist narration of the Noble Savage – the Indian as a wise steward of nature. These and similar ideas of wilderness, indigenous knowledge and compatible lifestyles address the core postulate of sustainability for global and intergenerational justice. The analysis of textual and sound regimes not only offers a hybrid mirror of political communication on sustainable development through politainment; it additionally permits to discover latent structures of social systems by unveiling conflict dynamics which are mostly ignored in the public discourse.

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1. Introduction

One of the many facets of the ecological crisis concerns its communicative dimension. Mitigation and adaptation strategies require mutual understanding and dialogic processes to manage new social conflicts. With its high need of developing and narrating explanatory stories to pass resistance between interest groups, the "ecological crisis, broadly construed, is a crisis of communication" (Homestead, 2021: 7). Sharing and understanding environmental changes and targeting perspectives in the face of ecological change is a basic prerequisite for political action, as system theorist Niklas Luhmann concluded as early as the 1980s: "Fish or humans may die because swimming in the seas and rivers has become unhealthy. The oil-pumps may run dry and the average climatic temperatures may rise or fall. As long as this is not the subject of communication it has no social effect" (Luhmann, 1989: 28). Although global climate change

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is becoming increasingly noticeable in all parts of the world and the issue of environmental protection has long occupied a broad space in public, contemporary societies' ongoing task is to discover and use forums of communication creatively to negotiate change in times of turmoil. Is a lack of communicative ability in the end one reason for insufficient action on climate and environmental protection?

These and similar challenges may give reason to reflect on the communicative dimension of cultural production and in particular to pop music to examine their potentials within sustainability communication. Already one of the key writings of the ecological movements, Limits to Growth (Meadows, 1972), points out that addressing ecological problems is not a purely political or economic task, but requires a profound analysis and reform of a society's cultural foundations. Hence, the question is: Can cultural production promote communicative capacity in environmental conflicts? Can it strengthen a language to enable politics and ecological crisis management? The following reflections start from these considerations and examine the communicative capacity of pop music contributions. It is particularly the Western trope of *wilderness*, the idea of an untouched and unaltered nature that deserves interest. With its origins in the 19ᵗʰ century, it still today offers an entry to the social longing for living in harmony with nature and practicing simple, sustainable lifestyles. To what extent is the definition of nature, the search for harmony, simplicity and concealed lifestyles a topic of pop music?

The analysis of textual and sound regimes in pop music addresses political communication on sustainable development through *politainment* (Riegert & Collins, 2016). But by doing so, this approach does not focus the artists' intentions or the music's effects and will not bring to the surface what individual artist groups really had in mind when they launched their contributions. This article rather focuses the latent, unspoken, and unnegotiated dimensions of conflict dynamics of environmental conflicts. It is based on the initial thought that pop music through its lyrics and sound experiences can reverberate under the surface of public discussion. Pop music therefore needs to be explored as an agonistic social resonance body of conflict processing, in which politics and music permanently mutually stimulate each. For systems theorist Niklas Luhmann, the discernment of latency is based on the capability "to observe what another observation does not observe, or, to radicalize the issue, when an observation specializes in observing what another observer is incapable of observing" (Luhmann, 2000: 94). Science and arts constantly develop practices, which permit to discover latent structures, partly unspoken realities of social systems (Luhmann, 2005) by unveiling conflict components which are mostly ignored in the public discourse.

To understand the communicative and unveiling potential of pop music in ecological communication, this article (1) provides an overview of the discourse on wilderness and integral nature in its Western expressions and in its impact on the environment movements, (2-4) explores selected pop music examples which play with the wilderness trope, and (5) concludes with a summary analysis. The songs discussed here are based on a subjective selection. They are not representative or complete, but in the clarity of their reference to the wilderness issue they seem particularly suitable to depict central problems and cornerstones of the debate.

2. Defining wilderness: modern nature preservation norms and their origins

A prominent trope to shape the motivation, inspiration and self-definition of large parts of forming environmental movements concerns the longing for a whole, unspoiled nature, in which of human actions do not bring harmful consequences. The modern, popular conception of wilderness has its origins in the testimonials of US colonial and postcolonial male writers as John Muir, Henry David Thoreau, Theodore Roosevelt, Aldo Leopold and Ralph Wald Emerson, who profoundly transform the meaning of the term with their contributions: Whereas in the early 18ᵗʰ century wilderness still referred to a deserted, savage and desolate landscape, a sort of "antithesis of all that was orderly and good" (Cronon, 1996: 9), Thoreau can affirm emphatically in 1862 that "in Wilderness is the preservation of the world" (Thoreau, 2019: 35). According to the US government's Wilderness Act of 1964, drafted by environmental lobbyist Howard Zahnizer and signed by US president Lyndon B. Johnson, "a wilderness, in contrast those areas where man and his own works dominate the landscape, is [...] recognized as an area where the earth and its community of life are untrammeled by man, where man is a visitor who does not remain" (The US

Department of Justice, 2015). In contrast to European ecologists who never had the privilege of working in an environment that was not affected by human intervention (Whitney, 1994: 4), the US civilization was largely interpreted by researchers who were convinced to analyze "plant and animal communities as they must have been in some blissfully innocent era before the advent of man" (Anderson, 1956: 776). Wilderness, by its protagonists, was evoked as a – partly reproducible – resource, and at the same time a natural environment to generate social values (Leopold, 1998). The US National Parks movement's leader John Muir, co-founder of the Sierra Club, explored wilderness as a concealed, spiritual and anti-modern space of peace and counter-civil education (Muir, 1981, 56; 174). His wilderness concept was latently directed against the scientific explanation and demystification of nature as it had been pursued since the Enlightenment. For Muir, nature was a "display of god's power" (Muir, 2007: 228), a "god-like majesty" (Muir, 2007: 828): its most important power consisted in redeeming a fallen human culture, created by God but fallen through sin (Edwards, 1998). Such an interpretation of this landscape was based on a specifically female and fertile character of nature in need of being tamed: it was *virgin land*. The narration of the domestication, based on violence as a prerequisite of success and survival (Sturgeon, 2009: 54), became a central element of US nationalism. A new public pride turned to the monuments of nature, particularly to massive canyons, to surpass the architectural heritage of the Old World (Radkau, 2014: 38).

One central element of this narration was the fact that the first settlers had to conquer the land on the edge of civilization and make it habitable. When Fredrick Jackson Turner coined this land *The Frontier* in 1893, the story of westward expansion and of domesticating wilderness was told as a myth of origin, defining what it meant to be equipped with American character traits. Self-reliance and simplification of needs were gained by taking up the challenge of defying wilderness and pushing the frontier westward (Birch 1998: 502). When the expansion was halted by a natural border, the Pacific Ocean, and when industrialization let to a decline in landscapes, the remaining nature needed to be protected for coming generations to be able to grasp the concept of wilderness as well as the frontier myth. With nothing left to conquer, protection of the wilderness was now needed to preserve the nation's myth of origin.

According to the wilderness lobby, much older than the environmental movements, the idealized reconciliation between humankind and nature was due to the fact that humankind had left (Muir, 1981: 15). Their first affected persons – and victims – were Native Americans: "We did not think of the great open plains, the beautiful rolling hills, and winding streams with tangled growth, as 'wild'", stated Chief Luther Standing Bear (1998: 201) to counteract the colonialist fiction. "Only to the white man was nature a 'wilderness' and only to him was the land 'infested' with 'wild' animals and 'savage' people." Despite this alienation and insurmountable tension, the wilderness rhetoric formed the communicative arena to transfer the Native Americans – at first perceived as wild, uncultured, violent and cruel – into a new, bright and serene image: the *Noble Savage*. In contrast to the white civilization (culture), Indians (nature) now appeared complete in their relationship to the entire creation, closer to nature, and practitioners of a single-minded, pure, and honorable lifestyle that was not in tension but in harmony with nature (Sturgeon, 2009: 58). The legendary speech attributed to Chief Seattle, in reality written by a white scriptwriter, was its most popular example: "Every shining pine needle, every sandy shore, […] is holy in the memory and experience of my people. […] We are part of the Earth and it is part of us" (Chief Seattle, 2003: 67).

Applying the wilderness idea on a global level, the claim for preservation and protection raised conflicts in many places where the presence of indigenous communities seemed to interfere with humans as "a visitor who does not remain". When in the 1980s, WWF, IUCN and finally Greenpeace started their powerful global campaigns to save the tropical rainforests, the ethical claims were nourished by a mix of anti-colonial, but also colonial rhetoric (Radkau, 2014: 172). The argument was captious and highly attractive to the extractive industries' lobbyists: In Brazil, the degradation of the rain forest was in the 1980s publicly attributed to the cooperation between government, enterprises and indigenous peoples: the destruction of the Amazon even became perceived as an "Indian Problem" (Hecht & Cockburn, 2010, 230).

3. Beauty and wisdom: Neil Young

Wilderness tropes, concepts of nature as an endangered life-resource and the plea for an intact

environment form a consistent motif in Canadian singer-songwriter Neil Young's works. The allusions in lyrics and sound are wide-ranging. In the early years for instance, Young's folk-rock song Broken Arrow, released in 1967, conjures up the image of a Cree Indian standing alone at a river with an empty quiver. The Indian with his broken arrow is subjected to the unstoppable force of modernity and endangered to vanish. Young's dream narrative *After The Gold Rush* from 1970 contemplates nature as a nostalgic home and a therapeutic quantity in the face of its destruction. In 1990, *Mother Earth*, subtitled *Natural Anthem*, takes the listener into the soundsphere of a light rainfall, softly supplemented with harmonica, leading to the emphatic address to "Oh, Mother Earth". Additionally, throughout his career, Young's engagement for nature is linked to a critical involvement with American identities and farming: In 1985, *Are There Any More Real Cowboys?* provides a reflection about the American contemporary cowboy, a family man who struggles against capitalism.

Whereas nature is a returning element in Young's work, the particular trope of wilderness is at the core of *Natural Beauty*, a ten-minute wistful live track released in 1992. In a drifting and meandering melody, characterized by the high tenor of his voice and surrounded by a discreet instrumentation with guitar, harmonica, banjo, pump organ vibraphone, pedal steel guitar, and bass marimba, Young processes the topic of preservation, expressing a longing for simple, complete nature, untouched by humankind. "A natural beauty should be preserved / Like a monument to nature" exacts Young, backed by female singers in the chorus, pleading implicitly for landscape conservation. Addressing the correlation between nature and beauty, neglected in contemporary environmental debates, but fully developed in Muir's and Thoreau's writings, the speaker presents himself on a roller coaster ride, at the mercy of outside forces. The normative comparison to the monument-like quality of nature finds its counterpart in pop music itself, which works as a knowledge resource to evoke memories of a fictional past (Philipp, 2019: 334). It also picks up on a central notion of the park movement, which explicitly highlights the monumental character of nature to call for protected areas. In a time when natural phenomena such as a "perfect echo" disappear, as Young notices, and the world is re-shaped by digitality, natural beauty provides consolation: "What a lucky man to see the earth before it touched his hand", affirms Young allusively in reference to an unadulterated primal state of time. In the third verse, the American rodeo is experienced only distantly through the media and as a drama of failure: "We watched the moment of defeat / Played back over on the video screen." Epitome of US Western country identity, the rodeo works as a competitive arena of measuring equestrian skills, dramatizing the rivalry between the wild and the tame (Lawrence, 1984: 271), but in Young's world remains televised and played back. Wilderness turns out to be inaccessible, fictious, and un-real. Bird and insect sounds from a rainforest design the end, while the keyboard fades out on the song's basic chords.

Natural Beauty was recorded live in Portland (Oregon), produced by longtime collaborators Neil Young and Ben Keith, and became the closing track of *Harvest Moon*, Young's commercially most successful album. The compilation's title was undeniably an intertext to Harvest, Young's country rock album from 1972 with which he became a major star in North America. The black and white album cover shows the silhouette of a person, dressed in plant material, walking in a field, the head slightly tilted to the ground. Supporting the lyrics, Young's stubborn and fragile voice, in warm vibrations, in alto vocal style, characterized by critics as "hesitant, whiny, masculine and feminine conveying sadness and fear" (Halliwell, 2015: 36), is a phonetic technique to integrate masculine-coded with feminine-coded style properties, creating ambiguity and mobility (Bigot & Houellebecq, 2002: 2207): The vocal expression is linked to suffering and mournfulness, but also to youthfulness and memory. The song's sound regime situates nature in the realm of femininity. Drifting harmonica solos, pedal steel guitar and banjo, a nod to country music and in general to older music traditions, nostalgically interlink the song to a fictious historical past, as does Young's hillbilly fashion style on tour, made up of flannels, jeans, leather vest and reminiscent of cowboy style. Young's music and appearance which has always been able to bring together a heterogenous audience (Petridis, 2000: 134), is nourished throughout from an imagery that evokes the beginnings of America, the Native American population and the Wild West of the late 19th century – in his concerts often with Indian totem poles placed on stage, and on the record covers with images of Indians, Western towns and teepees (Echard, 2005: 25). Young's stage companion Woody, a Native American wood figure introduced in concerts as a dialogue partner and a wise counselor, is just one of several expressions of lamenting the vanishing Indigenous culture while idealizing Native Americans as wise onstage (Halliwell 2015: 117).

4. Grandeur and disillusion: John Denver, The Eagles and Dan Fogelberg

John Denver, one of the strongest representatives of integrating environmentalist causes into music, picks up wilderness motives from the beginning of his career. Deeply rooted in the culture of rural American West, Denver was a constant campaigner for environmental concern, advisor of the Wildlife Conservation society, and co-founder of the Windstar Foundation, an education institution to inspire people "to live lightly on the planet", as Denver stated (Collis, 2003: 126). Mentored by architect Richard Buckminster Fuller, the foundation's purpose was to buy large surfaces of wild landscape in Colorado in order to conserve it. The title track to his third album Whose Garden Was This, released in 1970, talks about a lost paradise, accessible only through memory. *Take Me Home, Country Roads* from 1971, full of feelings and thoughts during a ride home on a country road trip, was a Gold record. *Capypso*, released in 1974, was intended to be a tribute to oceanographer and filmmaker Jacques-Yves Cousteau with whom Denver was tied by a personal friendship (Ingram, 2010: 92). When the Exxon Valdez oil spill contaminated the Arctic wildlife in 1989, Denver visited Prince William Sound to draw global attention on the 500 miles oil slick. *Raven's Child*, meditating about arrogance and greed of the economy, was his musical response. "To be human is to be nourished by the wild country", stated Denver in a comment on the oil pollution (Collis, 2003: 162).

Denver's title track of *Rocky Mountain High*, released in 1972 with music of Mike Taylor, reached Top Ten in 1973 and leads back to Muir's rhetoric about the grace and sublimity of natural monuments: "He climbed cathedral mountains, he saw silver clouds below", and in the chorus "And the Colorado Rocky Mountain high / I've seen it rainin' fire in the sky / Talk to God and listen to the casual reply / Rocky Mountain high." Denver's song anchored Colorado in the national and international consciousness and established it globally as a natural wonder (Wright, 2021: 96). The wilderness of the Rocky Mountains returned in 1973 with *Rocky Mountain Suite (Cold Nights in Canada)*, inspired by working on a nature documentary movie together with producer Robert Rieger about a drop-out who spent his living in the wild with a wolf pack. The film brought the core question of the park movement back into focus: could a person live in the midst of intact nature without disturbing or destroying it? The song assures a conciliatory perspective: "The man and the mountains are brothers again / Clear waters are laughing, they sing to the skies / The Rockies are living, they never will die." Named poet laureate of the Rocky Mountains state Colorado, where he had taken his residence, Denver was among the most popular pop singers in the US in the late 70s and believed, it is "important that we always remember that nature, environment, wild places and wild things are a big part of what makes us who and what we are as human beings" (Collis, 2003: 157).

Apart from Denver, the tension between the longing for nature and human induced environmental degradation forms a broad panorama in the rock and country-rock genre across the board. One of the most popular examples, The Eagles' The Last Resort, written in 1976 by band members Don Henley and Glenn Frey, is an epic ballad about the dream of escaping from civilization, the hidden heritage of the indigenous people, and the yearn for paradisiac nature, destroyed by human intervention: "Somebody laid the mountains low / While the town got high". The white man's missionary-clad quest for power replaces the given bliss through an untouched nature with a new, artificial reality: "They call it paradise / I don't know why." In the end, the destruction of a natural world is a result of ruthless satisfaction of needs, as the penultimate verse suggests. The song poetically processes the identity-forming narrative of the frontier myth and of the American Dream: the expansion of US civilization, seeking felicity and growth, and thereby destroying the paradise everybody is eager for. The final lyrics statement "We satisfy our endless needs / And justify our bloody deeds", is a frank criticism of the expansive domination of nature and blind consumerism. *The Last Resort* was part of the The Eagles' fifth studio album *Hotel California*. Grammy awarded and Platinum certified, it topped the US charts for eight weeks and became one of the best sold albums of pop music history. Henley was far from thinking to change the world but insisted in the music's transforming influence on individual lifestyles (White, 2000: 81).

Concepts of wilderness and its endangerment also define country-rock singer-songwriter Dan

Fogelberg's work in the 1980s and 90s. While his early albums evolve around reflections on everyday life, memory, and social relationship, Fogelberg's *High Country Snows*, released in 1985, and *The Wild Places* from 1990 are outright inspired by wilderness tropes, operating between land ethic, indigenous heritage and nature preservation ideas. On the latter album, *The Spirit Trail* is a fragment-like play on wilderness and on indigenous nature conceptions like brotherhood to all living things. Including Native Americans' song fragments into the fade-out, Fogelberg's work is a gest of advocacy with a marginalized community and a conciliation attempt between wilderness claims and indigenous worldviews: "And as the moon rises / the black mountain mourns […] I sing to your spirit where all my dreams dwell". In Cry in the Forest, launched in 1991 and dedicated to the Sierra Club, the speaker hears the call of the bird and recognizes the voice of eternity: "Once they've passed into the timeless, they can never more be found." The oppression of nature is culpable, and the recognition of guilt is the only way out: "Will we ever seek forgiveness / will we ever earn the crown / Or are we in turn eternity bound." The disappearance of the wilderness only preludes the disappearance of humanity and its transition into timelessness.

5. Reimagining the Noble Savage: Aurora

Far from country aesthetics and conventions on US-American identity, the Norwegian singer-songwriter Aurora Aksnes revitalizes the wilderness trope in 2019 with her outstandingly successful production *The Seed*. Aksnes, who according to her own statement grew up among forests and lakes (Aksnes, 2017: 55), processes with her song her emotions in response to advancing climate change. The sonic image comprises experimental folktronic and indie rock patterns, complemented by nature sounds, electrifying tribal drums and spherical electronic sounds. While the verse consists of light birdsong and restrained instrumentation, the chorus is accompanied by intensive percussion, supported by piano, violin, and choir. Starting with a calm head voice in the verse, the singer compares herself to a seed, fighting to reach for light "through the struggle", "dirt and shadow". The chorus, in contrast, is dominated by Aurora's chest voice and picks up a sentence that exists in different traditions: "When the last tree has fallen / And the rivers are poisoned / You cannot eat money, oh no." The historical root of this phrase is unclear, but its popularization goes back to the organized environmental movement: When the German branch of Greenpeace started one of its first global campaigns in 1981, activists fixed a banner on a smokestack in Hamburg which said: *Erst wenn der letzte Baum gefällt, der letzte Fluss vergiftet und der letzte Fisch gefangen ist, werdet ihr merken, dass man Geld nicht essen kann* ("Only when the last tree is cut down, the last river poisoned and the last fish is caught, will you realize that you cannot eat money.") The activists attributed their sentence to the Cree tribe, one of Canada's largest First Nations, but in truth, the origin of the text was doubtful. Greenpeace's affinity with First Nation wisdoms was a heritage of the organization's co-founder Bob Hunter, who in 1971 became inspired by Willoya and Brown's Warriors of the Rainbow (1962) a compilation of native American prophecies, which essentially contributed to stabilize the myth of the ecological Indian, a central theme of the environmental movements in the 1970s (Zelko, 2013: 100). In 1993, the Kelly Family processed the proverb in their song When The Last Tree

Wilderness themes and associations of indigenous heritage also characterize Aurora's music video, in which studio dance scenes change with fragments of youth-climate demonstrations and footage of melting icebergs, renewable energy plants and nature, smoking factory chimneys and natural phenomena such as lightning or the growth of the seed. The focus of the studio shots is the artist herself, Aksnes, dancing to the beats of the drums in front of a red, round surface in the background – an open allusion to planetary aesthetics and to the spaceship earth trope (Philipp, 2022). Black plants proliferate in front of her, while Aurora is positioned on a spinning disc of black grass. The artist's expressive dance is a shimmering play, changing between fine and hard movements and contrasting facial expressions. While Aurora moves softly in the verses, her dance and her mimetic expression get stronger as the chorus sets in, ending up in fight-like poses. Distinctively, The seed is a reflection on wilderness under the condition of the Fridays for Future movements and their inherent struggle with climate anxiety (Philipp, 2021).

6. The latent structures of wilderness: redefining nature through pop music

The overview shows that wilderness, although developed as a concept in the 19th century and from a colonialist perspective on taming *virgin land*, until today provides a multifaceted trope to produce yearnings, fictions, stories, nostalgia, and lifestyle patterns of the "age of ecology" (Radkau, 2014) and its pop music culture. Although the original concept is long since inapplicable as most ecosystems have been influenced by human activity, in times of ecological degradation, wilderness has become a place of longing more than ever, and not surprisingly it finds its expression in pop. The fiction of a stable, balanced future through restoration of an authentic relationship with nature implicitly touches the core idea of sustainable development and its inherent postulation of justice, a core motive of modern environmental debates. Pop music popularizes this process of renewal and utopias' construction, shortens it to stereotypes and complements it with aesthetic stimulus. This is of particular relevance for the US, which due to the US Wilderness Act became one of the first countries in the world to protect wide stretches of land as wilderness territory.

Turning back to the initial question of latent structures, hidden and partly unspoken conflicts, a major trouble of the wilderness discourse concerns the stylization of indigenous people as stewards of nature and carriers of genuine natural knowledge. Whereas wilderness is symbolized by Indians, the imaginary of civilization is expressed by white city dwellers. After the crisis experiences of the late 1960s, the Noble Savage turns out to be an ecological Indian, an epitome of a nature that promises redemption, consolation and power against an environmental destruction caused by a white, colonialist majority. The reductionist narrative of wilderness and the Noble Savage reconstitutes the discernment between (white) culture and (Indian) nature (Sturgeon, 2009: 64). Pop music makes visible what is still hidden behind the façades of the conservation idea: Wilderness, as The Eagles show, is used as an argument against colonial exploitation by the white man, but nonetheless remains a product of the white man and his mission. The concept behind Young's contributions is the idea that Natives are stewards of nature and born trustees of wilderness. Also, Denver explores wild nature as space of reconciliation toward indigenous communities, although in reality, many Native communities, far from being perfect land stewards, in their practices are long since compromised by the erosion of cultural practices and capitalist market ideology (Dowie, 2009: 111).

Obviously, it is the moment of innocence that until today constitutes the fascination. As Fogelberg's songs show, the wilderness trope is embedded in a renegotiation of guilt and forgiveness, and this regards rather an ontological relationship than an intergenerational one: Can non-humans ever pardon us? Until today, the protection efforts and their musical counterparts are tied to a feeling of innocent nostalgia – the longing for a seemingly better, salvageable past. In times in which more and more people feel detached from nature and potentially wish to be able to return to an ideal wilderness, pop music – and particularly country and soft rock music – provide lyrical and sound experiences to process the deficit and to deliberate from a problematic history, full of stories of alienation. There is, however, no way back to untouched nature; everything is determined by human interaction, and the access to a nature before exploitation, greed and human induced destruction, is blocked, as Young's work suggests. Most landscapes are a historical product of human activity. From this point of view, it is no surprise that, in contrast to the early ideas of the wilderness, even agriculture finds a new, concealed position and the classical opposition between wild nature and (industrial) farming is overcome. In Young's and Denver's contributions, often in context to Farm Aid campaigns, rural economy and lifestyles appear reconciled with nature, although Rachel Carson's research had already in 1976 proved that the environment was increasingly endangered by the industrial practices of modern agriculture (Carson, 2000). The preservation of wilderness is the communication strategy to spread and conserve a certain definition of culture, and its conciliation with farming has an immediate economic impact.

The wilderness myth and its images help a wounded society to process their losses. If it is true that "we are in trouble just now because we don't have a good story" (Berry, 1988: 123), pop music may contribute to redefine dreams, objectives and ideas of an equitable future for all – and thereby music can serve the need for public communication that Luhmann – as discussed at the beginning – presupposes for any

political problem solving. Such a strategy however cannot escape its past and its inherent conflicts. In the end, pop music shows that the image of wilderness remains a myth built on ignorance. Wilderness was never a natural state, but the result of an aesthetic order that emerged under historical conditions. Creating fictions of wilderness will not serve as an antidote to the ills of the influence of humans. The reality is that in capitalist systems "the enjoyment of nature is an integral part of the consumer society" (Guha, 1998: 239), and so is wilderness an exploitable resource in the entertainment industry.

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Performing arts, collaborative creation and

utopian worlds

6.1. IN SEARCH OF COLLECTIVE AUTONOMY: 'D.I.T' PRACTICES IN PERFORMING ARTS PRODUCTION

Vânia Rodrigues[121]

✖ **Abstract**

Over the last two decades, in Portugal and elsewhere in Europe, independent performing arts structures have had to downsize and became increasingly precarious, gravitating towards the now pervasive project-based model of work. This evolution notwithstanding, organization models remain fairly unchanged, with artists setting up micro-structures centred in their individual or collective practice and failing to fully integrate production and management. There is, however, a growing number of artistic organizations which are experimenting with different, more collaborative models. These are often cooperatives or consortia jointly managed by artists and producers that do not rely on charismatic leadership; share administrative, production and financial resources but follow autonomous artistic paths. Building on the case of Belgium-based SPIN, we discuss these experiences as manifestations of a transition towards 'DIT' - Do It Together approaches, which encase the potential to substantially reshape the relationship between the spheres of artistic creation and production/ arts management.

Keywords: performing arts, organisational models, creative producing, alternative management

1. Introduction

Stemming from a broader research project analysing the intersection between artistic creation and production and management in the performing arts (Rodrigues, 2020; Rodrigues, 2022), this article focuses on observing emerging dynamics in terms of collective organization practices. Specifically, we investigate the possible variations in terms of the practical and symbolic place occupied by production and management vis-à-vis distinct organizational models in performing arts collectives. In order to do that, we compared individuals' work experiences in standardly-modelled collectives (e.g., theatre and dance companies) to the experience of those who were working in alternative artistic structures, namely six different collectives across Portugal, Belgium and France. Here, we delve into the case of SPIN, a Brussels-based collective, and discuss their experience as a manifestation of a "D.I.T – Do it Together" ethos, which may have the potential to substantially reshape the relationship between the spheres of artistic creation and production/ arts management.

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2. Permanencies: organisational models and production as service

Since the mid-80s, in Portugal as in other geographies, artistic structures have steadily been slimming down, becoming atomized and increasingly precarious, gravitating towards the now pervasive project-based model of work (Borges, 2020; Van Assche, 2020). The neoliberal setting is the strongest explicative factor for the model 'one artist, one career' (Menger, 2001) remaining the paradigmatic organizational model in the performing arts. Van Assche further complicates this assertion by arguing that "a sense of community — or solidarity — cannot truly exist in a field like contemporary dance, since career paths are structured around personal development" (2020: 161). Sectoral-specific nuances notwithstanding, research has consistently shown that the process of economic neo liberalisation, and the resulting precarity, is the biggest intensifier of the dynamics of individualisation (Pewny, 2011; Quintela, 2017; McRobbie, 2016). Somehow paradoxically, however, artists and arts professionals insist on coming up with ways of working collectively that resist and defy prevalent individualistic ethos: they set up theatre and dance companies, associations, charities. Even in a context where individual, hyper-flexible careers are preferred over more stable forms of collectiveness such as companies or ensembles, and despite the arguable loss of symbolic predominance of such organizational forms, some patterns of collective organisation in the performing arts remain, to a certain extent, unchanged.

According to Kjulavkovski (2021) the "standard model" of organization in the performing arts is a homogenized model, organized through a vertical hierarchy (which can be informal), and whose management model is based "on the artistic preferences of an individual", around which the structure is organized (2021:75). According to the author, as well as Fitzgibbon (2001), this model can be found both in public theatres and in independent theatre and dance companies. Rex, Kaszynska and Kimbell (2019), who have proposed an interpretative typology of management/ organizational models that were more frequently found in the cultural and artistic sector, also concluded that the most commonplace in the performing arts was the performer model, where the organization was not more than an 'envelope' around the artistic practice of an artist or group of artists.

Indeed, whether we consider the format of 'companies', or the more recent forms of 'collectives', 'groups' or 'projects', regardless of their scale and artistic preference, the organizational common denominator seems to be, judging by the composition of its founders and mission statements, the organization as an administrative, extra-artistic apparatus, to which not much attention is paid, even though processes, structures and rhetoric are "constitutively inseparable" (Rogoff, 2015:1) and ethics and aesthetics are often held as mutually interdependent dimensions. Our research greatly endorses this point by indicating the persistence of this organizational behaviour and corresponding contradictory discourses, pointing towards a shortfall in reflexivity, professionalization and specialization (Rodrigues, 2022). This amounts to a situation where, even if creative practitioners publicly signal organization and management aspects as relevant, they largely tend to regard them as mere 'technicalities', and systematically belittle the organizational dimension of their artistic projects. With regard to this, our analysis of individual statements[122] from both students and early career artists on their professional trajectories and plans revealed four main tendencies:

a. the decision on how to organize themselves is often underestimated, due to the fact that they are usually "all friends" (Brilhante and Martins, 2021:79), with the groups forming "at the end of a period of shared training (internship, graduate school)" and almost always bringing together performers or "actors, often of the same age" (Hamidi-Kim, 2014: 50);

b. that decision is often triggered by public funding opportunities that require them to be formally established as a legal entity:

c. We applied for our first grant as an informal group. However, since there was no legal way to

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122 These statements have been collected through individual interviews, in the case of professional producers and managers, and through an online survey, in the case of students enrolled in performing arts higher education programmes. We held 32 interviews and received 58 valid answers to the survey. Further methodological details, as well as scripts, can be found in Rodrigues, 2022.

protect and differentiate the project budget from our individual income, we ended up setting up a non-profit cultural association. It basically serves as a way to issue invoices, to organize ourselves financially and apply for public and private funding.[123]

d. the decision on how to organize is mainly taken based on instrumental motivations (such as the need to create their own employment) and operational reasons (such as the most favourable tax regime, for example); and finally,

e. decision on how to organize does not benefit from the contribution of producers and managers, since artists mostly continue creating structures among themselves (Hamidi-Kim, 2014), composed almost exclusively of artists, with neither producers nor managers participating in the initial stages of artistic collectives.

The lack of qualified participation of producers and managers, especially in the 'foundation' and leadership of artistic collectives emerged in our research as another long-standing feature. In one sample[124], 8 out of 11 respondents declared that they did not have anyone from production/management among the founding elements of the structure and more than 20% claimed "not [having] knowledge about the topic" or even "never [having thought] about this issue".

We consider this habit of artists establishing their structures primarily among themselves (e.g., among artists) only in a second moment (if they have the financial resources) hiring producers a relevant *organizational permanence*. Additionally, there seems to be a lack of organizational diversity in the performing arts realm: standardly-modelled organizations largely outnumber both artistic organizations founded by producers, organizations that bring together more than one artist or collective, and organizations jointly founded and led by artists and producers. This is the background against which we develop our argument about production and arts management remaining, first and foremost, a service to artists, an extra-artistic dimension not completely interwoven with overall artistic choices, in spite of the recurring evidence that shows such understanding of production and management to be narrow and ill-defined (Bilton & Leary, 2002; Kuesters, 2010; Kay, 2014; Sampaio, 2020), not to mention detrimental to producers and managers' well-being and professional satisfaction (Rodrigues, 2022).

Moreover, based on the characteristics of our pool of respondents, we can exclude the hypothesis of this being solely determined by the contractual position of producers or managers in the organization. Indeed, our field research has shown that, regardless of the nature of the employment relationship — whether the production/management corresponded to a fixed contract or if it was carried out on a freelance basis — the production/management, being something acquired by the artistic collective, and not part of it from the beginning, leads to it being "destined" to be something external to the 'real artistic work' (Rex, Kaszynska & Kimbell, 2019). Production and management, therefore, instead of being considered integral to the artistic project, remain captive of a *transactional* dialectic: a dialectic of internal service (in case the organization hires permanent support) or external service (if the collaboration of the producer is one-shot, time-limited or project-based), but a service, nonetheless.

3. Reinterpreting artistic collectives

Having pointed out some organizational permanencies and the corresponding practical and symbolic 'place' occupied by production and management, our research set out to investigate possible variations vis-à-vis distinct organizational models in performing arts collectives. In order to do that, we compared individuals' work experiences in "standardly-modelled" collectives (e.g., theatre and dance companies) to the experience of those who were working in 'alternative' artistic structures. These were either creative or production structures which were jointly managed by artists and producers, or, more generally, artistic collectives which had implemented alternative organizational models, less anchored in the individual leadership of artists and with a declared interest for organizational experimentation. These cases can be associated with contemporary discussions around the need to reshuffle artistic institutions (Campenhout

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123 Statement by a Portuguese theatre company, which has been edited for length and clarity.

124 Here we draw on the answers to an online survey carried out in the context of two independent study programmes in performing arts. Further methodological details, as well as scripts, can be found in Rodrigues, 2022.

& Mestre, 2016), as well as with a renewed curiosity for philosophical-practical attempts into cooperative and mutualist ideals (Mophradat, 2022).

It has indeed been noted that the current atmosphere of individualism and hypercompetition has paradoxically originated a strong desire to live differently, and a predisposition to rethink conventional forms of organisation. The case of SPIN, which we will now investigate, can be seen as one of such manifestations. Bringing together several artists with separate practices and careers and producers who also take part in the leadership of the collective, they are testing governance models that may signal a significant transition from individualistic models to (new) forms of collectiveness: a move towards a 'Do It Together' rationale bearing important implications for the way we understand collaboration between artists and arts managers and producers.

4. The case of SPIN: towards 'collective autonomy'

4.1. Working together separately

SPIN is a Brussels-based organisation, currently with active collaborators in Rotterdam, Berlin and Mexico City. It presents itself as an "independent platform of support and research for artistic practice" whose mission is to provide "high-quality long-term structural support" for "individual and collective practices", including "research, development, production, external collaborations…"[125]. Several of its characteristics in terms of structure and governance model are relevant to our research, namely the fact that the two people occupying production and management positions - one of them identifying more as 'producer' and the other more as 'manager' — are currently part of the leadership of the structure, along with the three artists who originally founded it, Hans Bryssinck, Kate McIntosh, and Diederik Peeters. When it was founded, SPIN was the result of the three founding artists' desire to move away from the prevailing organisation models at the time in Belgium, which did not satisfy their wishes for "independence, flexibility, sustainability and solidarity"[126].

One of the models they had experienced was the 'alternative management office', which were specialised production structures, led by independent producers which managed different artistic projects and careers under one roof. The three artists' decision to break away from this model was not, according to them, related to the degree of professionalism or even to an assessment of the effectiveness of those structures, but rather linked to an awareness that some of the values they stood for encountered obstacles in that model. Specifically, they referred to the fact that, on the one hand, the model of production structures, mainly oriented towards production and distribution, was not "sufficiently flexible" to adapt to the constant transformations of their artistic practices and, on the other hand, because they felt that they were thus "externalising a sustainable solution". In Peeters' words: "As soon as the sustainable solution is externalised, the sustainable support for a practice, it ceases to be sustainable, because it is external to me and I have no agency upon it". However, the fundamental reason for setting up SPIN was the wish to move away from the classic model 'one artist, one structure': "None of us were interested in building a structure around our individual artistic practice, having your own company and that. We felt that this did not correspond to our idea of collaboration and solidarity." (Peeters). One of the first relevant aspects in the analysis of this case is precisely the distinction that they establish between the idea of professionalisation and the need to create their own structure, so commonly confused.

Their experience makes it clear that building an artistic practice does not necessarily amount to establishing an artistic structure, but also does not inevitably mean aligning with the individualist model. An individual artistic trajectory can maintain its autonomy in the context of a collective structure that does not correspond to a collective artistic identity, an 'artistic language', an 'artistic director' or even common artistic projects — this is a clear example of the W.A.T. Working Apart Together structures (Hesters, 2019).

125   Extracts from their website at spinspin.be and internal documentation provided in the context of this research.

126   This section will include quotes from interview with Diedriek Peeters and Sarah Parolin. Most of the time, their statements refer to SPIN as an organization and, therefore, we have not considered it relevant to identify one or another. Whenever what they say is directly related to their individual practice/position (as an artist, in the case of Diederik Peters or a producer, in the case of Sarah Parolin), the citations are identified.

It is this practice of working together separately that SPIN members call 'collective autonomy'. The concept of collective autonomy minted by SPIN implies that the three artists maintain fully autonomous practices, on the one hand, but that converge, as a collective, "not in the art that each of us does but in the other things we do together, for example, in the organisation itself". According to Peeters, this means that for most of the time, their artistic projects do not intersect — they do not create together or collaborate with each other, maintaining fully autonomous careers, which are even quite distinct in terms of language/medium (cinema, performance, visual installation). However, Peeters acknowledges that from time to time they do happen to collaborate around a common artistic project; and he considers that to be important to keep the artistic connection between themselves alive. However, what corresponds most to their daily collective practice is, in fact, the organizational component, i.e., "taking care of the organisation together". This is in fact another of the noticeable aspects of this case: that it should be the organisational aspects, usually depicted as boring and extra-artistic, which ultimately justify and define their collective practice: "We found out that by investing in the collective, we were also making our autonomous [artistic] practice stronger".

4.2. Organizing as micro-politics

SPIN members claim to have discovered that their artistic autonomy and the robustness of their collective project were mutually reinforcing, something that they maintain has to do with the fact that they never perceived the organisation as a technical-practical solution for three people to enable their artistic projects, but rather as "a place where three people want to support their practice and therefore find ways to support each other". The governance and production model that they have designed very clearly corresponds to "a desire to live differently" (Deniau, 2014). Parolin's and Peeters' commentary on SPIN's organizational and governance model is acutely political. Strikingly, however, that political standpoint is not directly or even necessarily transposed into the art they produce but is instead interwoven into the way it is produced — it is not the art, but its mode of production that constitutes a site for political intervention. They express this by recurrently using words such as "mutuality, co-dependence, solidarity", while permanently underlining the articulation between "being together" and redistributing their resources. In a recent study, Hamidi-Kim found similar iterations of this "desire to live a collective management experience rather than collective creation" (Hamidi-Kim, 2014:50) among recently established French theatre collectives, in which, she underlines, "the aggregator principle is not aesthetic, but organizational" (2014:50).

Concretely, SPIN's management model is quite an open process, in permanent (re)construction, and has not always taken the same shape. In fact, they amusingly refer to the present moment as "the Fourth Republic of SPIN", given the considerable transformations that the organization has already undergone. They assign their ability to remain "in crisis, questioning and constant reinvention" as a fundamental element of their story of survival (they resist being identified as a success story…), which is consistent with reports on similar self-organizations practices in other art fields, in that "these practices occupy a messier space (…) and may have to grasp at productive failure" (Mophradat, 2022:9). It is not, therefore, the question of them having found a perfect model, but rather that they remain committed to nurturing an organizational context that serves and stimulates them — and to change it whenever they deem necessary.

One of the most significant makeovers of their trajectory has been precisely when their producers joined the original founding artists in the leadership of the structure, as co-directors.

> *Producers are artistic collaborators who define the artistic project as much as other collaborators (…). In my projects I try to involve them as much as, for example, a scenographer or an actor. That for me was an important change, so inviting Laura and Sarah into co-direction was, to some extent, a natural evolution. (Peeters)*

This change propelled a change in nomenclature: from presenting themselves as "artist-led" to "multi-practice-led", thereby refusing the binary language of 'artists and producers', with all the dichotomies it encloses.

At first, we called ourselves an 'artist-run' initiative because we felt the need to draw attention to the role of artists in an environment where it was the artistic institutions that had a lot of public prominence. Over time, our understanding has totally changed. We were quickly aware that this was not only about artists, but about many other people who were also freelancers in the field of performing arts, namely producers — this made us fed up with this designation of 'artist-run'. (Peeters)

We are all practitioners of the field of performing arts, only we have different roles, we are busy with different things. But whoever works at SPIN is contributing to the metaphorical space that we share, so we realised at a certain point that we are all the same here, it makes no difference if you are leading your artistic trajectory or if you are a producer. (Parolin)

As already mentioned, SPIN's organisation and management model has changed overtime. Initially, like other similar initiatives (Manyone or L'Amicale de Production[127]), their model was based on sharing one producer, who worked with the three artists. They soon realised, however, that such sharing was unbearable, partly due to the immense workload that this generated for only one position (since financial conditions rarely allowed more than one producer to work full-time), but also since they came to realize that each artist, each trajectory, had different needs and would require a different type of approach to production.

At first, we were all more or less doing things for the stage, and so we needed production, someone who took care of the tours, etc., so it seemed a good idea and mutualised the resources/production. (Peeters)

As their practices kept diversifying, and their artistic paths increasingly led them to be geographically distant, they had to find another model that kept the essentials of what united them and defined SPIN. This had a tremendous impact on the management model. SPIN began to set aside the financial amount with which they previously paid the producer. That money was assigned to a "common bucket", which was then divided equally among the three artists. Nowadays, the "common bucket" is used to pay for the most obvious shared expenses (such as accounting, website, communication, insurance and other equivalent items) but also goes into part of the coordination salaries of the structure and some external consultants/advisors. This means that, for the great part, each artist is now responsible for searching and securing their own funds to finance direct costs of their creative activity, since the common bucket, SPIN's structural funding, is not consumed in those production and management activities. To produce new work, the artists must apply for grants, persuade co-producers, etc. What, then, is the most compelling feature of their updated internal system and how does it circle back to the producers/managers' role?

4.3. 'SPIN Solidarity Fund': arts management meets mutuality

The "sexiest" aspect of SPIN's internal structural funding, in Parolin's words, is that they establish an annual "bucket" of money - the SPIN Solidarity Fund - to be distributed directly among all members, who can make use of it as they wish and need outside the periods and direct needs of their artistic productions. They can use it to fund the more invisible research phases, to bring in external conversations and collaborations, to survive periods of inactivity - all aspects that are fundamental for building a long-term artistic trajectory. The cycle is completed with the constant re-financing of this fund: all the revenue that each artist collects (whether through project support, co-productions or sales) is 'taxed' reverting directly to this Solidarity Fund. Depending on their specific needs, on the characteristics of the projects they are working on, their budget, etc, each artist decides how much to contribute – although minimum and maximum percentages are established (3 and 10%, respectively). This Solidarity Fund re-enters the overall budget of the structure, and again becomes available to support the collective, in a new annual redistribution of 'buckets'. The decision on how much to contribute (within the established flexible percentages) is an autonomous decision of each artist, who also decides when to make the transfer, whether at the beginning or end of a project, depending on the risk they have, or their cashflow situation. Everyone manages in their own way. Similarly, the annual amount assigned to each one can be used in any way — all at once, or in monthly instalments — and for any purpose, as long as this is known

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127 These are also discussed at length in Rodrigues, 2022.

to everyone for the sake of transparency and collective accountability. It is important to clarify that the "tax" system reverting to this Solidarity Fund is upon revenue rather than on the possible profit: it is a principle of their collective work and not the result of the financial success or failure of a project.

SPIN's internal governance system – and its implications upon the production and management dimension - can be interpreted as an experience corresponding to "a desire to live and produce otherwise, in which there is a search for forms of non-monetary/non-profit exchange, (…) practices of community participation, and a set of other micro-trends that are decisively related to cooperation and mutualisation" (Deniau, 2014: 55).

These two terms — cooperation and mutualisation — are sometimes used interchangeably and referring to very heterogeneous and evolving realities. The distinction between the two is not completely clear. Philippe Henry (2013) distinguishes three categories of practices (without establishing any hierarchy of value): *simple mutualisation*: it generally related to sharing resources: spaces, technical materials, skills; *double mutualisation*: in addition to those we have just mentioned, it usually entails sharing risks and possible negative results; and, (c) *triple mutualisation*: considered by Philippe Henry as very exceptional — includes all of the prior and the sharing of positive results (revenues and notoriety generated by the cooperation). Marie Deniau (2014) offers a relevant alternative. According to this researcher, mutualisation refers more to tools (which are put in common) and methods (which define how resources are used). It can have a purely economic aspect (rationalisation and cost reduction), and be guided by principles of exchange, reciprocity or mutual aid and solidarity. Cooperation, on the other hand, refers more commonly to the notion of a common project and is part of the family of collective actions. Discussing these concepts in detail is outside the scope of this text, but both are very adequate to analyse the case of SPIN. Indeed, SPIN's model seems to perfectly translate the definition of "cooperation" proposed by Deniau, in that it implies "acting together" deliberately and voluntarily, going beyond the sharing of resources. It is a system of complex interactions that is based on the sharing of, rather than simply resources, a common purpose of collective responsibility — an effective 'care policy'. Importantly, as a corollary and inextricable characteristic of the whole process, it is organised in a non-hierarchical way, both among the artists (whose annual 'bucket' amount is equal regardless of how much they have been able to contribute in the previous year) and between them and the producers and managers, whose role is not only not eminently pragmatic or subordinate, but gains particular importance and visibility in the design, coordination and implementation of this whole process. Comparing Henry's categorisation (2013), SPIN is a rare case of 'triple mutualization', since - in addition to putting together material means and competences and sharing risks - it incorporates the sharing of positive results (revenues).

As we have stated at the beginning, since support for artistic activities is increasingly project-based, artists increasingly depend on changing workspaces and organisational models. It is in this increasingly fragmented working environment that alternative production models such as SPIN's can offer a valuable alternative to either highly individualist models (working solo on a freelance basis) or conventional collective models (each artist or artistic group sets up their own self-serving organization). Systems such as SPIN which rely heavily on an intentional production and management design importantly offer a range of support services as well as solutions to deal with time between projects and during research and experimentation periods: "[F]or increasingly nomadic artists, permanently traveling, the production office serves as a source of continuity and a base of operations (…)" (Margarita Production, 2013: 9).

5. Learning from SPIN: a DIT practice in performing arts production

If we consider SPIN's case as an example of self-organization in the context of a resurgent interest for ideas around the 'commons', we can reckon that it reflects an extraordinary coherence between the discursive dimension (the ethical and political values they claim in their oral and written statements) and the practical dimension (the concrete ways they implement them). They seem, therefore, to be quite far from what Manchev (2016) designates as 'discursive fetishisation', in which the adjective 'collaborative' is more virtue-signalling than indicating concrete practices. But the decisive reason to learn from SPIN as a DIT Do It Together practice is the fact that their model allows for a different kind of relation between

producers/managers and artists, by building a cooperation that is not only based on transaction/service, and that puts all parties in equal-footing. In that, they put forward a different way of affirming the professionalisation of producers and managers. Their case shows that professionalisation can be done without necessarily putting producers and managers at an internal service logic (translated into labour relations tendentially corresponding to employment contracts in which one hires the other), nor considering them as an external service (in the case of production structures that are service producers to artists). Their model is an inspiring example of alternative forms of organisation; in this case, an example for organizations wanting to experiment becoming structures that are *co-directed by artists and producers*).

From an organizational point of view, they can also be seen as an example of self-determination, counteracting the phenomenon of institutional isomorphism (Powell & Dimaggio, 1987). They do not pretend to be 'like the majority', nor as 'the successful ones,' nor even as "the State thinks artistic structures should be". As Kjulavkovski states: "[p]olitically, self-organisation can be seen as a model of resistance to existing organisational models" (2021: 68). Referring to the time when they founded SPIN, and when the funding context was frankly unfavourable to that type of model and initiative, they recall:

> *It was very liberating to feel like we were inventing things that didn't exist yet. It took a lot of effort and a lot of time to convince the funding bodies that this was a good idea. But it was amazing when we realised that we didn't necessarily need to follow what the funding structures were proposing or advising, but that we could also do just the opposite, that funding structures can adapt to what you want to do and the way you want to organise yourself. It was hard — it's still a fight — but it was very empowering.*

Their collective ethos effectively translates into a model in which they share resources (administrative, management, production and even financial) but follow autonomous artistic paths, thus 'working apart together', in a process of 'collective autonomy' in which artistic practices remain fully independent but in which everyone converges to take care of the organisation together. Altogether, in these experiences of alternative organisation, the sphere of production and cultural management is reconfigured, providing relevant evidence for the consideration of diverse organizational models and internal practices, namely:

✖ (i) there seems to be greater knowledge about, and appreciation of the organizational dimension, i.e., greater consideration of the organizational structure and arts modes of production as an axis of action and not only as a bureaucratic and market-enabling platform;

✖ (ii) there seems to be enhanced coherence between the discursive and the practical dimension, with regard to participatory and horizontal practices: organising in a non-hierarchical way, between artists, and between them and producers and managers, creating conditions for a reconfiguration and renegotiation of relations between artists and producers. In these contexts, producers and managers are able to work with artists and not only for artists. In fact, along the lines of SPIN's ethos and work practice, the practical and symbolic place of production and management is not defined by its utilitarian nature (*pragmatism*), nor constrained in a hierarchical situation (*subordination*) or relegated to the background (*invisibility*) (Rodrigues, 2022). This backs the idea that the subordinate, pragmatic and invisible or invisible place that producers and managers seldom feel they occupy (Rodrigues, 2022) is neither a fatality nor an inextricable characteristic of the profession, but rather the result of a set of constraints, combined with the prevalence of dual and non-integrating organizational models, which can be challenged;

✖ (iii) these experiences embody a system of complex interactions based on the sharing, more than just of resources, of a common purpose of collective responsibility — an effective 'care policy', which in some cases even corresponds to advanced practices of triple mutualisation.

In conclusion, this case represents an impressive illustration of how redistribution of power can be an important lever for creativity and social justice, and a strong indication of how much remains to be critically reassessed in the field of arts management. As the arts are tainted by poor work conditions and maintain an ingrained culture of competition, singular experiences cannot be misinterpreted as

solutions to systemic problems – but can be otherwise known, analysed, and discussed as tentative models for building a more democratic artistic ecosystem. In the context of academic research, a case study sometimes means more than a methodological mechanism to work through a series of intellectual hypotheses. For us, SPIN has also been an inspiring example of how artists and producers can do it together, inventing and reinventing strategies for collaboration, and contributing to ways of working based on sharing, enthusiasm and affinity.

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6.2. THEATRE AND THE BLANK CANVAS

Andrea Copeliovitch[128]

✖ ~~Abstract~~

This article reflects on certain issues such as globalization and its aspects of internationalization, cosmopolitanism, hegemony, contributing to a debate in diverse contexts of cultural studies and, consequently, expanding studies in the field of music and communication, from an analysis of the positions occupied by the Colombian singer living in Canada, Lido Pimienta, as an artist, activist and immigrant. This article is part of the postdoctoral research done at McGil University, which is based on thinking about pop music produced by immigrant artists in territories that are called multicultural.

Keywords: pop music, activism, transcultural.

Through theatre, we present an actress´ journey through Buddhism and mindful practices, intending to demonstrate the necessity of quietness for creation. A painter usually paints over a blank canvas, but how could an actress with all her story inscribed in her body become a blank canvas?

When does a performance work? We could answer that a performance works once the audience is touched by it. Stanislavski said the audience must "believe" in that actress or actor. This verb To Believe is an emblematic verb, what is it to believe?

Jacques LeCoq was rehearsing an actress and he couldn´t believe in what she was doing. Why? For once, she was making unnecessary movements, and probably he has noticed that she was focusing her interpretation on her face, so he covered it with a white cloth, and she changed completely. Jacques LeCoq proposed to neutralize the face with a mask, so that the performers became something other than themselves, re-learning how to be on stage. Could we consider a performer trained with a neutral mask a blank canvas? Does theatre need a blank canvas?

Peter Brook talks about an empty space in theatre: "I can take any empty space and call it a bare stage. A man walks across this empty space whilst someone else is watching him, and this is all that is needed for an act of theatre to be engaged" (2006: 11)

But what is an empty space and how do we achieve it?

Shakyamuni Buddha sat in meditation for 7 days and nights until he achieved a state called Nirvana, that is a Sanskrit word used in ancient India to describe the ashes left by the kitchen´s fire in the morning, when they were already cooled.

Here we propose a way through mindful practices to achieve this kind of neutrality, discussing it as Stanislavski´s Second Nature while we narrate how those practices led an actress to the path Buddhism.

Experienced people understood that I was only advancing a theory which the actor was to turn into second nature through long hard work and constant struggle and find a way to put it into practice. Imperceptibly, each of them accepted, as best he could, what I was proposing and shaped it in his own way. But anything in my 'system' that was still rough, confused or vague produced severe criticisms from them…. Much worse was the fact that many of the actors and students accepted my terminology without

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looking into its meaning or understood me with their heads and not their hearts. Worse still, this satisfied them fully and they started circulating the ideas they had heard from me and started allegedly teaching my 'system' (Stanislavski, 2008: 300). Stanislavski proposed a method for actors to prepare themselves throughout their lives, developing a second nature, in which we could say they would achieve a much more fluid state to create (or embody) their characters. What is that state? We actors are composed by all our humanity: memories, thoughts, actions, feelings, perceptions. A painter usually starts painting on a blank canvas, can we become a blank canvas, an empty space? What does compose this second nature we should develop?

The great master Peter Brook in the documentary Brook by Brook (2001), shows his son, Simon Brook, a pre-Colombian object he had acquired in his first trip to Mexico, a clay doll from Vera Cruz called the Laughing Lady, and he said that she has changed his idea of how an actor should act:

> *...because until that encounter, I thought that an actor was someone that built in a very complicated way what we call a character, until I met this character here and I saw it was not true. The actor is someone who must empty themselves. So, although this object (the doll) is an empty object, in its attitude one can feel fulfilment. It really is an expression of pure joy. (Brook, 2001) And he explains that in the 60´s he started taking that object to workshops and in the beginning of rehearsals to ask the actors to assume that posture, that smile in order that they could understand what is to be alive as an actor.

The hollow clay doll is a hint for us to understand theatre and ourselves for she is able to show such contentment with her smile and trough her empty mouth we see the emptiness of her whole body. Many scholars pursued Artaud´s image of a body without organs (Artaud, 1958), the Laughing Lady is clearly a body without organs. Many years ago, I experienced a clown initiation with Luiz Otávio Burnier and just like Brook understood acting through that clay hollow doll, the clown experience completely changed my vision of acting. The clown is initiated in a circus arena, and she must prove that she has interesting skills in order to get a job in the circus. The interviewer is called Monsieur or Madame Loyal. So, I got there and tried to be funny, for that is what I thought a clown is supposed to do, I was wearing many hats and sunglasses, a basket full of stuff: maps, dictionaries, camera and a flute, like a tourist... I spoke an invented language that resembled Swedish. And I thought I was really funny. Monsieur asked:

> *What can you do?"
> *I can speak many languages: Russian, Swedish, Chinese, Greek...
> *This is not useful here, and I have heard you speaking invented languages, there´s no use for that. What else can you do? – and all the time the other clowns were booing me, calling me names.
> *I can sing.
> *Ok. Sing.

And I tried to be funny and sing out of tune.

> *Stop right there, do you want to take my circus bankrupt. I am afraid I cannot give you the job.

If a clown doesn´t get a job in a circus, they stop existing, so this means Death for a clown. Oddly enough, this conscience of the need of getting accepted was so real and so strong that you would do anything to enter the circus. At that time, Monsieur had striped of my accessories and layers of clothes, leaving me just with shorts and a top, I was being stripped from my ego, from the way I thought people saw me, from the way I thought I was. The clowns were so excited, calling me names, making remarks about my physical and psychological aspects that they could see affected me the most, the more I tried to hide those aspects, the more they noticed them. I didn´t want to cry in front of them, I felt so exposed.

> *So, madam, what can you do in my circus?

I got the flute in the bag and started playing. I was an alto flute, and I felt a little less exposed behind it. I played because there was nothing else I could do. I was defeated, so I surrendered myself to that

moment and just played my flute. I am not a great musician, and I didn´t try to be great, I just played. The room became quiet. The clowns stopped yelling and Monsieur Loyal did not interrupt me. I was accepted in the Circus, he gave me a name and a red nose (the smallest mask in the world, that shows exactly what we try to hide).

After that experience, my colleagues told me that it was so beautiful when I was playing the flute, that it was magical, but I spent a week crying, I couldn´t get out of the house. I had to write about it, and I wrote that there must be a less painful way to achieve that state of Presence that I had achieved, that an actor could put aside their ego and just be there though a ritual process, involving chanting and dancing. That was my hypothesis and became my research. But what I had written ended in the hands of a mathematics professor, Arnoldo de Hoyos, who initiated me in Buddhist meditation practices.

I have to go back to this idea of "surrendering myself to the present moment" as Zen Master, Thich Nhat Hann used to say. Dogen Zenji Sama, founder of Soto Zen order in Japan used the expression "Drop away body and mind", as we can see in the extract of Fukanzazengui, Zazen universal rules, from 1227:

> *You should therefore cease from practice based on intellectual under- standing, pursuing words and following after speech, and learn the backward step that turns your light inward to illuminate yourself. Body and mind will drop away of themselves, and your original face will manifest itself. (Dogen, 2002: 3)*

According to Master Dogen, Zazen (sitting meditation) is the basis and the only aim of Buddhism, we are not supposed to search for enlightenment but to practice being here at the present moment, and the practice itself is enlightenment for there is no duality (practice x enlightenment), there is no aim, for there is only here and now. In my clown experience I had to surpass aiming, the only way to get to the circus was by being there at that moment, but I had to be undressed of so many prejudices and concepts, judgements, thoughts of likes and dislikes just to get there, to that moment of just being, body and mind playing the flute, nothing else. Brook´s hollow doll´s smile. This state has become my research throw-out life, that moment that I achieved in about one hour with such a great amount of pain took me more than ten years of Zen practice to begin to realize, for that is what Dogen meant when he said:

> *Body and mind will drop away of themselves, and your original face will manifest itself.*
> *That is why the master alerts the practitioners:*
> *And yet if there is the slightest discrepancy, the Way is as distant as heaven from earth. If the least like or dislike arises, the mind is lost in confusion.*

And yet we believe that we have understood ourselves and that we are able to look at our true selves. Zazen is sitting in front of a white wall, eyes half opened, we observe our body, our breath, the way our thoughts dwell in our minds, acknowledging them without pursuing them. We don´t move. Body and mind should be synchronized, we don´t move even if the position hurts, we don´t move even if we obtain pleasure from letting go of our body and mind. We wait till the bell ring, looking at the white wall. Looking at that mirror that shows ourselves mercilessly, we have to drop our idealizations of being more or less in comparison to others, go back to our breath and just be. And it can be very painful to observe this person, her difficulties, anger, greed, ignorance, until she surrenders herself to the present moment, and at that moment she becomes the Laughing Lady.

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6.3. HOPEPUNK: SCIENCE FICTION WRITTEN BY WOMEN AND HOW IT CAN HELP US ORGANIZE FOR A LIVABLE WORLD

Taline Frantz[129]

✖ **~~Abstract~~**

If science fiction like Minority Report by Philip K. Dick., and its eventual film production provided us with imagery of what real-world technology would look like a few years from its release, what else can we absorb as inspiration from the science fiction genre as possible tangible changes? And what can we absorb in terms of economic models, and subjective ways to shape a future in which we as humans and minorities would not only survive but thrive? In the hopes of answering these questions, the present exploration aims to look at science fiction written by women as a way to speculate what productions by writers like Octavia E. Butler, Becky Chambers, and Ling Ma, can provide us when it comes to not only daring to imagine kinder futures but also achieving them.

Keywords: futurism, science fiction, speculative, women, worldbuilding.

1. Introduction

The ultimate intention of this paper is to explore science fiction written by women and how, through history, women have been using science fiction to think about subjective ways to empower change. In the first half of this work, the definition of what has been popularly understood as science fiction, and some counterpoints to its nomenclature will be discussed. Along with that, a brief description of aspects of what science fiction written by women has been telling us in terms of world-building, and a description of what were some of the demands of women authors from the 17th to 20th century, will be presented, with the goal of laying a base to contextualize the reader of such themes. Moving forward in the text, there will be an introduction to the concept of hopepunk and what are some of its elements. This will lead to the presentation of works by Octavia E. Butler, Becky Chambers, and Ling Ma, which will be explored along with the hopepunk elements of said stories. Finally, I will conclude the paper by presenting how such works denunciate and try to offer subjective alternatives as a way of beginning to tackle current global problems such as climate change and social inequality.

2. Delineating science fiction

In a broad sense, the science fiction genre can be defined as stories written with the goal of wonder -- not without the restriction of the realm of reality as the fantasy genre stories, some authors will argue[130] -- but in the sense of imagining about different scenarios, conjunctures, and worlds that could have been a reality, or can still take shape. These stories typically imagine the potential consequences powered by

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130 See genre science-fantasy for more details on the intersection of science and fantasy.

new scientific advances, technologies, policies, and legislation on various aspects of human life. The range of scenarios and topics have created a vast number of subgenres of science fiction, ones which have become more widely known, through popular culture, than others, such as Space Operas or Solarpunk.

For writer and scholar Joanna Russ, science fiction can be described as *What If* literature, as she proposes, there are two essential elements in the definition of science fiction, which are The *What If* and *The Serious Explanation* (Russ, 2007). Russ also says that science fiction presents aspects of life not as they normally are, but instead, as they can potentially be. She explains that once the author presents the scenario of what might be, they have to provide a reasonable explanation that cannot go against widely known aspects of scientific knowledge -- such as gravity, time and space, the existence of the sun, or that the earth is round. In this sense, science fiction is speculative fiction, once it reads the world it is located in and proposes scenarios that might have not been considered previously. The idea of science fiction as speculative fiction is not new by any chance, and in fact, a lot of writers in the field prefer that their writing be referred to as speculative fiction instead of science fiction. One example of said writers is Margaret Atwood, the author of *The Handmaid's Tale*.

The preference for the term "speculative" instead of "science" when referring to this type of fiction can take place for a variety of reasons. One of them, explained by Margaret Atwood herself is that she wants her stories to be differentiated from squids in space as the author explained in an interview that she gave for the British Television channel BBC in 2012. This apparent need to differentiate the author's work from space operas, the subgenre of science fiction that explores space travels and encounters with otherworldly species, seems to come from a place of wanting to express that Atwood's work is focused on scenarios that take place on the social fabric of planet earth, as her books on religious dystopias, such as *The Handmaid's Tale* (1985) extensively suggest. The impression that social aspects presented in speculative/science fiction are an uncommon thing, or even an aspect that would differentiate speculative from science fiction and other literary genres is a known one.

This brings us to the fact that science fiction does not exclusively stream from STEM, it also streams from the social sciences and humanity field. It can be about not only speculating new technological products and types of industry, or imagining a high-tech world, focusing on the logistical use of such technological aspects, leaving other aspects of the story in the second plan, but also the social consequences of said advances, how these advances or setbacks affect people's day-to-day lives, and what are the preferable scenarios and not-so-desirable scenarios shaped by it. It's only natural that we understand science fiction as this majorly tech-aesthetic type of story, and this happens mostly because it's not an easy task to speculate things about humans, we're very complex, given that, contrary to technology, human nature does not have an update in its settings or a new model with advances every other year. For those reasons, what ends up coming out in much more quantity, and consequently gaining much more traction, are stories that speculate technology, making us much more familiar with these types of stories and understanding them as the blueprint of science fiction (Russ, 2007: 206).

3. Worlds imagined by women: a brief outline

The discussion of what constitutes science fiction could not go too far without considering women's contribution to the genre. So, what have women been telling us through these types of fiction? The historically called "literature of estrangement"[131] (Donawerth & Kolmerten, 1994: 1) has, at the beginning of its existence as a genre, shown us approaches to structural problems mining women's lives throughout the centuries. Women authors have, since the 17th century been using writing as a means to imagine worlds in which they would thrive, and how, if they as women, could live different lives, ones in which they have some sort of autonomy and emancipation. Authors like Mary Griffith, the author of *Three Hundred Years Hence*, (1836) who was the first North American woman to write science fiction (first anonymously, and then later using her own name) imagined a world where women have property rights and access to college, and where cooking is done in community centers. All of that in 1836, which was the same year that academic institutions started opening their doors to white women, and about 26 years before white women had the right to own property in the US.

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131 Term writers used to classify what we now are familiar with as texts of science fiction.

Of course, unfortunately, these privileges were not granted to black and native women, as they were still considered property at the time. The history of women's emancipation ends up also being a history of racism, a problem that Griffith's vision was too limited to tackle given the century, and the fact that she, as it happens, was part of the protected classes at the time (Purdy, 2018). On a similar note, in 1880, Mary Bradley Lane, the author of *Mizora* (1999) imagined a world in which there was a country located at the North Pole whose entire population was constituted by women. Lane's fiction was a utopia that emphasized the benefits of technological advances in fields such as food, about which she envisioned nutritional efficient "foods", which consisted of a type of chemical alternative that would supply all the human body needed for nutritional value. As for the household chores, Lane made sure to professionalize all of them in her fiction, freeing women of the obligation of spending their time bound to housekeeping.

As exemplified, this and many other early stories set in the 17th and 18th centuries focused on creating worlds where women would have the same privileges and autonomy as men, be compensated for housework, raise children, and overall reach emancipation (Taylor, 2022). Some of the subjects the authors portrayed in their writings shifted when *The Frankstein*, by British author Mary Shelley was published. Shelley's work, which still remains as one of the most famous works of science fiction to date, set new standards and broadened the issues that were brought to the fiction realm. Shelley's writing posed questions that could, and did, engage in many philosophical debates around ethics, the limits of human exploration, and posthumanism. Topics such as the consequences of technology and science during the Industrial Revolution were also part of the relevant topics brought up by Shelley in her second novel, *The Last Man* (1999).

Fast forward to the 20th century, the subject of fiction written by women shifted, at this time, the authors also included themes such as reproductive rights, race, and climate change and challenged established notions around gender in their writing. On reproductive rights, *Memoirs of a Spacewoman*, and *Solution Three*, written by Naomi Mitchinson and published in 1962 and 1975, respectively, are pieces that shed light on the problems and lack of autonomy women experienced regarding their own bodies. Mitchinson proposed that raising a child should be compensated, as women were, and often still are, the primary caretaker of children, but such a task is not considered labor.

Along those lines, writer Ursula K. Le Guin challenges gender roles by extinguishing them in her fiction works. This is particularly discussed in her novel, *The Dispossessed* (1974), where responsibility in society is shared equally by men and women, there is no such thing as gender roles, which applies to both genders. Pregnancy still is beared by women, but motherhood is a choice instead of an obligation (Nalivaike, 2018). When it comes to including debates both around race and climate change in her fiction works, Octavia Butler has an extensive repertoire. Among her most famous works is *The Parable of The Sower* (2019), the first book of Butler's Earthseed series, one of the books that will be discussed in more detail later in the text, and *Kindred* (2018). Butler's writing, just like much of other 1970s writers challenged the utopian settings previously used in the early stories of estrangement. This approach critiqued an idealized view of the future, where problems such as different human oppressions, like racism, were not discussed in many early utopias. In light of that, the writers used elements of difference to impulsion their writing and shed light on problems instead of avoiding them (Donawerth & Kolmerten, 1992).

4. Unraveling Hopepunk

The term "hope punk" is a term coined by the writer Alexandra Rowland, which gained some traction among fiction readers through a post the author made on their Tumblr account in 2017. In a general description, Rowland presents Hopepunk as a subgenre of science fiction, also explored in the fantasy genre, which argues that "kindness and softness doesn't equal weakness and that in this world of brutal cynicism and nihilism, being kind is a political act. An act of rebellion" (Rowland, 2017).

According to a Vox magazine article published in 2018, by Aja Romano, the idea gained even more acknowledgment in 2018, when a panel on hope punk fiction was included at a Nebula conference, preceding the actual Nebula Literature Awards. Later that year, writer N.K. Jemisin won a Hugo Awards threepeat for her trilogy *Broken Earth* (2016), which conveyed themes of resistance and other elements of hopepunk style. In their original Tumblr post, Rowland points out that an essential element of the entire idea is to understand that hope punk is the counterpoint to grimdark. Grimdark is another subgenre of science fiction that mostly proposes nihilist worlds and focuses on the idea that humans are inherently

bad and deemed to do harm. Rowland proposes that hope punk would be looking at the glass half full, using feelings like rage and dissatisfaction as fuel for doing something good despite the bad happening. The author points out that the focus on hope and doing good should not be seen as a relation to noble right, a third subgenre, where characters fight for what is good and moral, and usually, there is only one big fight, and whatever is disturbing the good is then ended, and utopia arises. In an interview for the British entertainment website, Den of Geek, Rowland explains that:

> *The instinct is to make it only about softness and kindness because those are what we're most hungry for. We all want to be treated gently. But sometimes the kindest thing you can do for someone is to stand up to a bully on their behalf, and that takes guts and rage. (Rowland, 2019: 3)*

They propose something different, arguing that hope punk stories are based on knowing that there will always be a fight to fight, that because of the major structure of things, like patriarchy and capitalism, things like minorities' rights will always be at risk, and that instead of falling into a nihilist position, characters will have this stubborn attitude, which she deems as the punk part of it, which is to always keep fighting, and move through the world like radical change is possible. In the same interview, Rowland finishes by saying that "You can do a lot when you decide to be a stubborn motherf****r who refuses to die" (Rowland, 2017), a sentence that speaks with elements of resilience, taking action in the face of despair, all of which are brought up in texts that will be discussed in the next section of this analysis.

There is a bigger debate about whether hopepunk should be recognized as a subgenre due to its lack of definition of itself via "clear, consistent, shared formal qualities" (Mancuso, 2021: 18) that would normally establish a genre/subgenre[132]. For this paper, hopepunk will be used as its isolated elements, understanding that they can be found in a variety of science fiction stories, including ones that were written before the term was coined.

5. The stories

For further exploration of the elements of hopepunk, three stories written by women authors were selected to be briefly discussed and give examples of problems to be overcome and raise questions that shed light on how to untangle them in the hopes of achieving livable worlds. The first book of the selection, called *Severance* (2018), was written by Ling ma, and published in 2018, and it was set in New York, in 2011. It tells us the story of Candance Chen, a first-generation Asian American young woman, and unfulfilled Bible product coordinator, before and after an incurable infection slowly obliterates global civilization, which leads to the ending of the normalcy and monotonous existence the character had known. *Severance* feels particularly eerie as its story is set during a pandemic. It pictures the day-to-day life under capitalism, and how dull everything tends to feel, it has endless details about the protagonist's skincare routine, and what brands are part of her life. It is a story not only about a pandemic, but also about immigration, and trying to find a home in an economy where everything is a commodity.

> *To live in a city is to live the life that it was built for, to adapt to its schedule and rhythms, to move within the transit layout made for you during the morning and evening rush, winding through the crowds of fellow commuters. To live in a city is to consume its offerings. To eat at its restaurants. To drink at its bars. To shop at its stores. To pay its sales taxes. To give a dollar to its homeless. (Ma, 2018: 242)*

Ling Ma's writing shows how the structures of cities created for consumption create a volatile feeling of belonging, and consequently home. It narrates a dull capitalist world that happens to end just as apathetically and absurdly as its structures allow it. It is a tale of how things just happen, and people are desensitized by it, because there are bills to pay, and employees can't afford to stop showing up, even

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132 For a deep understanding of this discussion, and a possible solution for the problem, see Cecilia Mancuso Mancuso, Cecilia. 2021. The Two Speculations: The Poetics of Contemporary Speculative Fiction. Doctoral dissertation, Harvard University Graduate School of Arts and Sciences

when there are unprecedented things happening. It is a story of how "The End begins before you are even aware of it. It passes as ordinary" (Ma, 2018: 8). *In Severance*, Ma includes that "The seriousness of the epidemic varied depending on which news source you trusted." (Ma, 2018: 180), and in this sense, it pictures some of what we as a world already went through with the 2020 pandemic. It poses questions like the reliability of news sources, and what should we hold on to, in such a crumbly world, where even such a subjective thing as the feeling of home and belonging seems to be a commodity. The big question of the book seems to be on who we should rely on in times when institutions supposed to address the situation, fail us.

While *Severance* portrays a setting of despair, and no apparent solution, the second selected book, the novel *The Parable of The Sower*, written by Octavia Butler is set in 2024 and follows Lauren Olamina, a young black woman who is migrating from her Southern California gated neighborhood to Northern California to escape climate change and societal collapse due to extreme poverty. It narrates her journey meeting other people in the same situation, and the making of her own religion. And if Severance narrates the story of a world that has to end, Parable of the Sower narrates a similar world but in flames, quite literally. Lauren, the protagonist has a hopepunk attitude, as Rowland would describe it, from the very start, and that is because the character is trying to understand her spiritual beliefs at the same time as she is moving through this dystopian world. The character is very aware of the cause of the problems she and her peers are facing, as she describes:

> **I have watched education become more a privilege of the rich than the basic necessity that it must be if civilized society is to survive. I have watched as convenience, profit, and inertia excused greater and more dangerous environmental degradation. I have watched poverty, hunger, and disease become inevitable for more and more people. (Butler, 1998: 6)*

Lauren is trying to use this deeper religious understanding as fuel to keep moving, keep fighting, and building community. She ends up understanding God as this imperative element of constant change, and she seems very ok with the need to adapt, and how the need to adapt can also mean you get to shape God, as she poses in this part where she says that "The essentials are to learn to shape God with forethought, care and work; to educate and benefit their community, their families, and themselves" (Butler, 2019: 176). Octavia Butler was the first black woman to get recognition in the science fiction genre. This book was published in 1993, but like many things written by Octavia, it feels contemporary and predictive. The reason for that sensation of it being predictive should be granted to Octavia's own efforts to accuracy. The author was known to spend a lot of time researching for her books as she, like Joanna Russ, had great respect for accuracy when it comes to the scientific part of her writings, as she famously said in an interview with Charlie Rose in 2000. Overall, *The Parable of The Sower* proposes that a world is ending, but something can be born from it. It also proposes community living as a form of guaranteeing that everybody works, and everybody gets to enjoy the fruits of their work, in a safe setting.

The third and last book selected, *To be Taught if Fortunate*, by Becky Chambers, published in 2019 is set, as Chambers herself describes, in a near-ish future astronaut fiction and it tells us about a crew of astronauts on an ecological survey of an exoplanet system fourteen light-years from Earth. It begins more or less in a century from the 2020s, during a time in which space exploration is citizen-funded and astronauts make use of genetically engineered technology to survive life on other worlds (Chambers 2019). This story speaks with the element of understanding collective efforts to solve structural problems, and although it does not give many answers, it poses questions that can help us get there. It speaks to current issues of effort and global focus on space exploration, while the problems on planet earth itself get no attention. An example of it is the following passage:

> **It's understandable why humans stopped living in space in the 2020s. How can you think of the stars when the seas are spilling over? How can you spare thought for alien ecosystems when your cities are too hot to inhabit? How can you trade fuel and metal and ideas when the lines on every map are in flux? How can anyone be expected to care about the questions of worlds above when the questions of the world you're stuck on — the most vital criteria of home and health and safety — remain unanswered? (Chambers, 2019: 18)*

Following Russ and Butler's praise for precision, the story is accurate in its scientific usage, and it also makes use of technologies that are being developed at the moment. It imagines how such technology can be used in a non-invasive way when it comes to both human bodies and the planets that humans plan to visit. As the protagonist, Ariadne points that "I'm an observer, not a conqueror. I have no interest in changing other worlds to suit me. I choose the lighter touch: changing myself to suit them." (Chambers, 2019: 19), and in doing so, it creates a scenario that argues for some key points that are essential to shaping a livable and desirable future. Chamber seems to focus on shaping curiosity on a collective level, in her story, the author proposes exploration as opposed to a product for rich men or private companies, but as property of people. As a thing, that benefits humanity as a whole and can't be sold, because it is essentially public, as the author mentions:

If you want to do good science with clean money and clean hands] if you want to keep the fire burning even as flags and logos came down, if you understand that space exploration is best when it's done in the name of the people, then the people are the ones who have to make it happen (Chambers, 2019: 20)

6. Conclusions

As Donawerth and Kolmerten suggest, science fiction written by women not only challenges the systemic binary oppositions which are a set of elements widely present in works of literature of the kind written by men, these works also reassess "generic forms to generate means other than opposition or conflict to structure a story" (Donawerth & Kolmerten, 2011: 14). This is not to say that science fiction written by men hasn't elucidated or even denunciated systemic problems through their writing, which they extensively did, given how much we go back to certain pieces of literature as a reference for the debates surrounding these problems. This is to say, that even in those recognized efforts, the stories depicted women in such a way, that women, as a class, did not see themselves, at least not how they wanted or how they experienced things. This naturally leads to the desire of writing oneself's world. The worlds women chose to shape through their writing have evolved along with their emancipation. If in the 17th and 18th centuries authors depicted worlds where house tasks were done by robots, so they could pursue education, these themes changed along with the rights women have conquered. Now that some of these demands have been met, women want a world in which they thrive, and to thrive, first, women have to have an actual world. This is why women have been, once again, through fiction, alerting us of the danger of not having a world anymore, which is where the element of hope comes in handy and can offer readers ideas on how to organize for shaping a world worth living in. Firstly, *Severance* paints the world that needs to end so that it doesn't cause our end first. The idea that our current economic system does harm to a significant sphere of our lives is not new in fiction by any means, but its roots are so settled that readers have to be reminded about it from time to time. Parable of the Sower points towards the mitigation, the fighting, the punk if you will, such as the inevitable migration to colder places, it also advocates for resilience, as we have to move through a fast-changing world and the building of communities that focus on collective work and mutual care. To be Taught, If Fortunate, provides us with a scenario where science is made by and for the people. It imagines collective and open-source knowledge. It poses questions about the nature of exploration, and it offers us curiosity without colonization.

In conclusion, all these books portray the need to adapt, and also not the end of the world, but the end of a world. They suggest that when institutions fail us, we have no other option but to adapt and build a whole new world from the ground up. They are based on research about the most awful things happening, or about to happen, and still dare the reader to imagine scenarios where there are things to be stubbornly hopeful for, and build a life after it. Hope isn't about knowing exactly how the future will take shape; it's about how you build it. (Chambers, 2019).

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6.4. ITERATIVE MUSICAL COLLABORATION AS PALIMPSEST: SUITE INVERSÉE AND THE HEADROOM PROJECT

Jonathan Crossley [133] & Cameron Harris [134]

✖ Abstract

Suite inversée is a musical work, co-composed by the two authors asynchronously online by means of file transfer alone and digitally presented using a self-made web app called The Headroom Project. The Headroom Project mediates the compositional project during creation as well as allowing the listener to browse a historical thread that weaves through the developmental process: through this app, each audio file that was shared between the two composers can be heard and considered both in and out of the context of its creation. The framework of the project provided the opportunity for the authors to reflect on issues of remote digital collaboration and the palimpsest nature of a work revealed in varying stages of evolution through a novel mode of presentation. This paper discusses the mode of creation by situating it within narratives of composition and technology.

Keywords: collaboration, improvisation, composition, electronic music, creative process.

1. Introduction

There is something deeply habitual about being human, it is in our nature to pursue habits, some of these beneficial and some to our detriment. In habit we find both pathways to excellence and traps toward mediocrity, simultaneously developmental and impetus towards stasis. For instance, it is assumed that the pathway towards musicianship of any type is filled with repetition and practice; so many scales and arpeggios per day, or so many hours in the rehearsal space with a band are lauded as core elements of creative practice. However, bands can remain together too long, creating a stale (however excellent) environment where the creative sonic works may lose their efficacy and vitality even resulting in the practitioners themselves fading from public memory. Many great musicians have known this, from Miles Davis and his continual search for the new young great jazz musicians to fill his bands with, to David Bowie's continual re-invention and invigoration of his artistic output using a similar approach. These practitioners are evidence that breaking habits, no matter how successful, through intentional intervention and change can often open the door to new ways of working, new sounds, creative kindling that can propel practice forwards.

One significant problem is that we can often be blind to our own habits in creative practice, even going so far as championing them as superior approaches to be adopted universally. Defence of a particular modality is common in musical fields such as composition, where opinions as to modes of working,

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expressions of support of interaction with others are debated and defended, polarising groups of practitioners. Even practices such as improvisation and collaboration can be regarded as inferior, debated viscerally from different viewpoints and their negation defended academically in practice and writing. In 2020 the onset of the Covid-19 epidemic, resulting lockdowns and periods of isolation impacted society in well documented ways, and habit as a process was removed from our lives as routines were interrupted. As creative practitioners and academics it was the experience of the authors of this paper that two distinctly different periods can be observed in musical and educational practice post the onset of the pandemic and the implementation of restrictions.

At the beginning of the pandemic and lockdowns the main aims were to find ways in which things would be able to "continue as normal online". This natural impulse was expressed in a frantic race to move teaching and meetings online, whilst musicians desperately tried to find ways to perform online even when co-performers were separated and to move all potential revenue structures online to ensure that artists could still generate income. In music industry practices this led to dynamic changes in concert presentations, social media relationships, character or artist development and the splintering of identities, both personal and public (Szostak & Sulkowski, 2021). Over the past two years much research has been undertaken into how the music industry has dynamically shifted to accommodate and embrace these changes (Khlystova et al., 2022). These have included the obvious shifts seen early in the pandemic with live streamed concerts and interviews through to subtler nuances such as narrative storytelling and personality hyper-fragmentation as in the work of BTS (Ju, 2020). The actions of the Korean group BTS, along with many other Korean groups, have iteratively embraced a plurality of realties where the development of multiple identities has allowed fans to engage with these pluralities whether openly fictional or hypothetically real (Hahm et al., 2022).

In 2021 the authors of this paper recorded a free improvisational album titled son0_morph:03 duo[135] in a gap in the South African lockdown. This work represents the first mode of response, where they used a tiny window in the South African lockdowns to create work in a pre-existing modality. But, as the periods of lockdown continued, artists, musicians and even big business began to embrace the changes, narratives and objectives shifting away from the aim of replicating and reverting to older modes to questioning the efficacy of previous modes of practice. In effect a new innovative, interrogative, and adaptive set of impulses began to embed themselves in society, first out of necessity and later migrating towards user choice. The technological, creative, and artistic adaptations first emerged and secondly coalesced as cogent responses to the dysconnectivity and new connectivity that were parts of the dystopian pandemic experience, for "public policy and technology are major contextual forces in developing new habits as well as giving up old habits" (Sheth, 2020: 282).

Crises, whether economic, geopolitical or epidemics are often linked to advancements, changes, innovation, and interrogation of the various hidden habits of work and practice. For instance, when reflecting on the relationship between war and technological advancement Michael Martin (2021, par. 6) notes that "[o]f the past 3,400 years, humans have been entirely at peace for 268 of them, or just 7.9 percent of recorded history." He continues by saying "Calamity seems to go hand-in-hand with invention."

The relationship between technological advancements and changes and periods of conflict or pandemics are clear, however unsavoury the narrative may feel; wars have fostered technological advances such as in Bletchley Park and medical advances emerging from both world wars are well documented (Hoyt, 2006; Gross & Sampat, 2020). The internet was built on a military backbone and most recently the Covid-19 pandemic led to significant advances in vaccine developments. However, the speeds of adaptation and transformation during Covid were unique: Business research company McKinsey considered the responses of business during the pandemic and noted how "digital adoption has taken a quantum leap at both the organisational and industry levels" (McKinsey, 2020). Their report revealed how Covid-19 "pushed companies over the edge" (2020) and accelerated the pervasive adoption of digital systems and related innovations in working methods and modalities. The advances they observed were extremely fast, what previously took companies seven years to develop and implement through the various decision-making structures was now realised in a matter of months.

Aside from the technological advances, adaptations and adoptions, the McKinsey report centres around

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135 https://jonathancrossley1.bandcamp.com/album/son0-morph-03-duo

a key area, that of collaboration. They noted that dynamic changes, ones which are dependent on collaboration and discussion, were achieved during Covid up to 43 times faster than previously. In these inter-personal, behavioural and organisational changes one can observe the embrace of change, to habits and organisationally normative behaviours precipitated by the pandemic to practices dependant on collaboration and consultation. These represent our observation of a second mode of behaviour, observed as the pandemic persisted, where it was no longer an aim to find alternatives to continuing or replicating previous work practices and hierarchical structures of habitual dynamics through digital or organisational means, but rather an intentional set of dynamic changes to working, inter-personal and creative practices through accelerated adoption of collaboration and innovation. Thus, by the second period of the pandemic in 2021 the authors set about creating music using a new mode of collaborative compositional creation, one which embraces emergent innovation and embeds collaboration.

2. Creating Suite inversée

The initial frame of this project was relatively simple: the music would comprise a series of tracks, with each possessing its own discrete structure and a duration suitable for release as an EP; there would be no prior discussion of intent or genre between the co-creators and there would be no-real time collaboration. The act of generating the initial "seed" audio file for each track would be divided between both musicians, so that neither one generated all the initial audio material. From the creation of the initial compositional seed onwards, the musicians would react and respond to the audio files they received by processes of layering, addition, erasure and processing/reprocessing the audio. An interesting approach was taken with one of the seeds, where rather than creating a sonic artefact for the second musician to react to, the initial musician created a framework of effects that would act upon any sounds that were inputted into the environment. As such, possibilities were suggested, and reactions solicited not by existing audio but by the way that audio generated by the second musician was perceived when playing sound into the system created by the first.

An important point to note regarding the design of this project is the extent to which the two collaborators know each other, as professional, social and artistically familiarity affects the nature of musical interaction (King, 2013; Doğantan-Dack, 2013). The level of applied musical interaction between the two contributors prior to this project was low, as they had only collaborated previously on one musical work. However, in a broader context their level of familiarity was much higher as both taught at the same institution for eleven years and co-taught a course in electronic music for most of that time. As such, each had a relatively strong awareness of the musical aesthetics and/or ideas of the other. This awareness has shown that while both possess a distinctly different relationship to electronic music, they nevertheless share certain core musical values which centre around the importance of clarity of intent and expression in musical creation. Both are drawn to music that reveals a clear purpose that can be perceived in the unfolding of the sounds themselves and find less interesting music that, intentionally or otherwise, draws a veil over such clarity.

From the point of view of their musical backgrounds, Cameron Harris was first captivated by experiences of music for loudspeakers in the UK in the 1990s, examples being the electroacoustic works of composers such as Jonty Harrison and Denis Smalley. All his work since 2006 has used electronics/computer manipulation in some way and includes music for acoustic instruments and fixed media, music for ensembles/soloists with interactive electronics and some purely acousmatic works. Jonathan Crossley began as a performer on the classical guitar, secretly indulging in sub-cultural music and sub-cultural styles. As such, his catalogue of albums ranges from classical to chamber jazz, rock-funk, and electronic music; however recent works which were synchronous with this project's development have explored how a "system" for live performance or improvisational practice shapes engagements between collaborators in both free improvised and composed circumstances.

The strict application of the simple frame and method given above has brought us to reflect on the following questions:

✖ What is our position regarding collaboration in musical creation in general (be it in person or remote) in relation to the paradigm of single composer – performer – listener?

✖ What is gained and what is lost when one engages in digital remote collaboration, and how does working asynchronously affect this?

✖ What insight does revealing/laying bare stages of development in a musical creation bring to its audience and how does this affect the concept of the finished work?

Defining collaboration in general terms, Nicholas Rowe (2020), states that it:

involves people working together towards such a common goal in ways that are new, and emerge from the process of collaborating, leading to outcomes that are not always predetermined (Raelin, 2006). The intention to explore innovative, shared directions and ways of doing things can be understood as a creative process, leading to the innovation of new ideas that have value (Robinson, 1982). ... [It] expand[s] the conceptual approach to the shared task. [It involves] an openness to the possibility 'that something new or unique might arise from a mutual inquiry that could reconstruct the participants' view of reality' (Raelin, 2006: 155).

The above quotation is a useful benchmark against which we can assess our own experiences of digital remote collaboration in the creation of *Suite inversée*. Regarding "outcomes that are not always predetermined", and the reconstruction of "the participants' view of reality", as stated above, we approached the project with few preconceptions concerning how it may develop. Nevertheless, we could not have predicted the project's stylistic outcomes from our previous awareness of each other's style, nor is it likely that either of us would have created a similar work in terms of style or material individually. This includes aspects of the instrumentation of the piece: the use of recorder, for instance, which became a characteristic sonic imprint on much of the work, came about as a direct response to material created by the other collaborator in the first movement of the work. In turn the material that had inspired the use of recorder had been generated in response to a seed which contained very different characteristics in terms of texture and shape. The predicted outcomes of this original seed, if any existed at all, were not in the direction of music stylistically typical of the recorder or the style of baroque dance-like material that eventually contributed to the work's title.

The question of what is gained and what is lost by the deliberate approaches in the chosen method of remote collaboration opens up several points. An asynchronous approach was used because the authors' previous project, *son0_morph:03 duo*, involved structured improvisations and we wished to explore a complementary workflow that would provide detailed but not preordained control over structure whilst maintaining a non-discursive approach through each iteration. This was not only an artistic intention but had pragmatic roots, given observations of the challenges experienced by musical artists worldwide attempting engagements and presentations over the internet during the first year of the pandemic. Despite advances achieved during this period in mitigating latency issues and in the digital interaction and visual representation of geographically separate performers, the "uncanny valley" effect continues to concern the authors. This term, coined by Masahiro Mori (1970), refers to human representations and actions that are not close enough to be perceived as real but are too close to be perceived as artificial, with resulting perceptual alienation of viewers and participants. Although the work was originally presented with abstract visualisations at an online music festival, *Suite inversée* was conceived of and created entirely acousmatically and the presentation of the various iterations on the Headroom online application involves only waveform visualisations of the various audio versions.

The body of performers, the individual performative gestures of these performers, and the interactions between the various gestures of performers collectively are a core element of musical performance and creative interaction. Even "the Ancient Greeks recognized the centrality of the body in all artistic performance expression" (Davidson, 2009: 1). The absence of visual gestures between musicians is clearly a main lack of any method of creation that is centred on file sharing. The impacts of this absence can either be experienced due to being completely separated, or in terms the aforementioned "uncanny valley" effect. This is of particular interest as one of the mainstays of the structure of acousmatic music[136]

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136 Acousmatic music is defined as music where the true sound source is not visible during its performance. The term originates from Pythagorean declamation and was reintroduced by Jérôme Peignot in 1955 as part of Schaefferian listening theory (http://ears.huma-num.fr/560010e6-b263-45aa-a93c-4eda0d261c44.html).

is the use of sonic gesture and the play of gestural imagination in the mind of the creators and listeners alike. It has been argued by Denis Smalley and others that the lack of a visual aspect to gesture, rather than constraining opportunities for gesture to gain a central aspect to a composition frees perceptual imagination to conceive of a wider repertoire of gestural sound shapes (Smalley, 1997). Smalley's concept of gestural surrogacy is relevant to this argument (Smalley, 1996): Surrogacy considers sound shape as a surrogate of real-world physical gesture (which, by implication can be physically perceived) and codifies orders of surrogacy from sound shapes that have a clear link to a physical act to sound shapes (normally of sounds that have undergone a large amount of digital audio processing) that have a remote relationship. Smalley works within the paradigm of a single digital composer creating purely acousmatic work that is perceived by a concert audience through loudspeaker diffusion. The concept of gestural surrogacy can therefore be thought of as an issue involving audience perception. The aural feedback loop that is always present for any composer who works hands-on with digital sound processing will, however, always involve higher modes of listening, to use Pierre Schaeffer's term (Schaeffer, 2017), that carefully scrutinise aspects such as sound shape and its relationship to gesture. Likewise, co-creators who are collaborating in real time and have recourse to visual cues can fall into the trap of working habitually in terms of gesture and through the visual, physical communication of gesture pull their collaborators also into a limited repertoire of gestural sound shape and creating music and interactions that can become ephemerally habitual. A positive aspect of working via file sharing is that there is time between iterations to consider the implications of each iteration's input, including the gestural possibilities. This time for repose can combine with the freedom of gestural imagination possible when working acousmatically to positive effects. The authors feel that combination of these two elements were certainly present during the creation of *Suite inversée*.

In terms of overtly presenting the stages of the evolution of a piece of music publicly, collaboration via file sharing alone facilitates a workflow between collaborators that allows this to occur in a natural way. It is also conducive to a certain type of systemisation of the creative process that may not always be present or otherwise may be obscured from view when working using different methods. This is because, when exchanging files, there comes a point at regular intervals where the collaborator must make a conscious decision to share the file with the other collaborator or collaborators. Therefore, there is a quasi-process of "finishing" the iteration to make it "ready" for the next collaborator. The iteration is then documented in the file that is shared and it is an easy task to ensure it is not overwritten but rather preserved when the next iteration is created. When ideas are exchanged, shaped, and morphed in a real-time creative environment, the journey of transformation can be buried, destroyed completely or forgotten. Even if the entire real-time session work is preserved in comprehensive video or audio recordings, the landmark moments of the creation would not necessarily be clear in the process and analysing the recordings could be excessively cumbersome. The method of identifying moments in such a creative continuum would also be subjective. Naturally, it must be accepted that it is a subjective decision for a collaborator to decide when a file is ready to be shared. However, it is in this case an *overt* decision made by the collaborator during the process, not *post facto*, and its subjectivity as part of the creative process is transparent. Creative processes are messy and non-linear in their nature and this is as it should be. A file-sharing process can be criticised as an inflexible and artificial process that can regiment the work of the collaborators to such an extent that moments of creative inspiration are reduced. However, it is intriguing to consider that the opposite can also be true, that with time to reflect between iterations, the identification of clear moments within the process can serve to highlight crucial aspects of the work's evolution.

The simple, almost outmoded act of sharing discrete files over the internet can therefore have creative advantages; It provides agency to listeners to judge the evolution of the creative work, to decide whether they agree that the last evolution is the one they feel most engaged with. It also brings to the front of one's imagination what further evolutions may be like: that what is presented may not be the end of the story. Indeed, such presentation allows the possibility of the original creators returning to the work at a later stage and to take it further. It raises the idea that no work may be considered a final version, always charged with the potential of becoming something new. In many ways this idea has already manifested itself in numerous fields of music. Composers such as Kevin Volans (working entirely in the acoustic realm) have often obsessively returned to core material and re-worked it to the point that their output

can be seen as a number of meta works with lifespans covering many years but presented as smaller discrete compositions at certain points in time (Lucia, 2009). The same can be observed in popular artists such as Brian Eno where a select set of procedural tactics are present in works spanning his career. (Marshall & Loydell, 2016) In the sphere of popular music, the concept of re-mixing material, and even remastering material that essentially retains much of its original character further erodes the idea of a finished work. Artists have even gone so far as to subvert the idea of authorship altogether. Aphex Twin's 2003 album titled *26 Mixes for Cash*, includes a remix of a track by Nine Inch Nails which is a remix by title only. The track "At the heart of It All" is a completely new composition although it is said to have used samples from Nine Inch Nails (Beta, 2003), this calls into question the concept of authorship altogether. This possibility has existed ever since it was possible to make recorded copies due to the technologies of mechanical reproduction and its discussion can be traced back at least as far as Walter Benjamin's famous contribution to the subject (Benjamin, 1935/2008). Additionally, music without its traditional frame as conceptualised by experimental, generative and minimalist composers is also relevant.

From a technological point of view in the current era, this approach has links to the concept of "version control" as applied in software development systems such as GitHub, where previous versions remain extant and can be "forked" to create more than one current existing version of a piece of software. This approach has also been developed in music by platforms such as blend.io (2022), which allows users to post audio files for others to modify, potentially creating an unlimited number of forks of the original recorded artefact. While this philosophy is like *The Headroom Project*, as it makes transparent the development of the audio online, it differs in two key respects. Firstly, users normally present their seed audio as finished works, ready to be remixed by others, whereas the audio files on *Headroom* are understood to be incomplete steps in a developmental process. Secondly, *Headroom* deliberately creates a liner chain of history: each iteration must develop from the previous one – there is no possibility for creating a "fork" from an earlier iteration and therefore no parallel development. The collaborator must deal with whatever possibilities and challenges are inherent in the most recent iteration. The "rules of the creative game" are therefore subtly different and the concept of "completeness" therefore also differs.

3. Does collaboration erode authorship?

The processes of creation and interaction used during the creation of *Suite inversée* raise a variety of questions around modes of collaboration, artistic exchange, ownership, and authorship. The cases of authorship and ownership are of particular interest as they challenge the conventional practices of the lone composer as well as the collective compositional approaches of bands or groups. Composition in one sense, expressed as a solo activity by default, glorifies the singular author and owner of the creative work whilst group composition or improvisation relies on physical proximity for compositional development. However, challenges to compositional rights and ownership are not limited to this field or area of focus, even the groups who collectively compose or contribute towards works in studio arrive at challenges in compositional rights assignments.

One of the authors has also worked extensively in the music industry as a popular music producer and can share how many, often difficult, conversations have required mediation by the producer before the weighting of the compositional elements in completed works were agreed upon by the contributors. These conversations are never concluded with any empiricism (which would be a pragmatic if somewhat non-artistic approach) and rather are achieved through wrestling with the various perspectives of group members in consultation as to the importance or weight of contributions. The nature of popular music is such that small music fragments may be where the core impact or financial value of a composition may be felt. Take for instance the guitar riff from *Thunderstruck* by ACDC or the saxophone melody of Gerry Rafferty's *Baker Street*. In the two examples above, smaller elements of the musical work are the sources of their reach, impact and continued consumption.

Suite inversée's mode of creation and the design of *The Headroom Project* present a range of challenges to evaluating the weighting or presence of composers within the work at a given point, and in the future, as other composers join the iterative process. For instance, as two of the works from *Suite inversée*,

"Alam&06 (It02/06)" and "Sarab&03 (It03/03)"[137] are now released on streaming services and registered with the authors with 50% compositional assignments, what would this mean if another composer took these last iterations and created a new work base on it. Current copyright legislation means that this would be classed as a remix, with the original composers as authors, but this may not reflect the aesthetic goals of the project. Does this affect the efficacy of the project itself, or should one entertain a situation whereby commercial release of music resulting from iterations is discouraged?

However, technology in this case is at the core of the emergent creative questions and challenges and can also lead to unexpected artistic outcomes: As previously discussed, the composers elected in this case to avoid discussion in their responses to the iterations in part to simulate the way in which *The Headroom Project*, as an audio technology would be used. This led to a type of genre diversity, hybridity, and fragmentation in the resulting creative outputs. This type of hybridity and fragmentation can be observed more broadly in the impacts of music technology across creation and consumption practices. In *Hybrids and Fragments: Music, Genre, Culture and Technology,* Justin Gagen asks "how genre relates to the socio-technical environments within which it fits" (Gagen, 2019). In the case of consumption practices such as streaming, the removal of industry gatekeepers such as recording company A&R departments has allowed diversity and fragmentation to proliferate:

Hybridity and fragmentation, and the existence of vast numbers of artists on alternative music platforms and concentrated in local markets, seems an inevitability in globalised society. These views are reinforced by our findings: hybridity can be found in data from disparate systems, and increasing hybridity is the norm. (Gagen, 2019: 172). Hybridity and fragmentation as practices and aesthetic principals seem at odds with traditional compositional linearity or the fixed sonic and aesthetic identities of popular music groups, for example, the composer or group working piece by piece, iterating a style in isolated evolution. The complexity of contemporary commercial fields seems to embrace this, and *The Headroom Project* provides fuel to diversity, by design and the election of a non-discursive approach.

In *Mashed Up: Music, Technology and the Rise of Configurable Culture*, Aram Sinnereich discusses a shift, fuelled by various changes brought about by emergent digital cultural practices within music creation from "[l]inearity to Recursion. Several of the modern framework's fundamental binaries are characterised by linear processes and organizational precepts" (Sinnreich, 2010: 201) yet these linear processes now seem either abandoned, or viscerally challenged or defended. Sinnreich is specifically here using the word "linearity" in reference to genre myopia, where in actuality fragmentation and the blurring of "the binary borders between many conventional classifications" (Wang, 2523) is an aesthetic reflection of the current milieu and potentially is newly normative.

4. Conclusions

The Headroom Project and the works created by the authors in its initial implementation presented outcomes that were not expected by the creators, nor were they representative of their individual creative outputs. It would seem, through creative research as practice, that by intentionally breaking the habitual, on as many levels as possible, one can mediate a creative output that transcends previous practices and frameworks. The aim in the future is to embrace this by disseminating the application to as many composers as possible, across as many genres and modes of practices to allow for new works to be generated.

Acknowledgements

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137   https://open.spotify.com/track/2gSMJt1kjAcEspjAvzifir?si=87f6d9161a8e4062   and   https://open.spotify.com/track/6VEqNxY6ns64iL2PK9v48O?si=8df34ff0bd6042e5

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6.5. THE FIRST SUBCULTURAL TURKISH FANZINES: AN ANALYSIS OF MONDO TRASHO & LANETH

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✖ ~~Abstract~~

Due to various phases, it has been through and its geographical location, Turkey is a very cosmopolitan country with many subcultures. Some of these subcultures are local while others are exogeneous. The exogenous subcultures in Turkey have their own communication methods and one of them is the fanzine. The term fanzine, the mix of *fan* of fanatic and *zine* of magazine, is a multi-paged publication designed and published by fans/followers of particular topics and/or interests in amateur ways. The neo-liberal economy in Turkey after the 1980s, and its introduction of Western culture brought the communication processes of punk and metal cultures into the country. Following that, two Turkish fanzines (*Mondo Trasho* and *Laneth*) emerged in May 1991 with different aesthetic motivations. This research examines the differences between the aforementioned fanzines in terms of design and content.

Keywords: fanzine, subculture, Turkey, metal, punk.

1. Introduction

Modern institutions started to be established in the Ottoman Empire from the 19th century onwards. With that, a new generation emerged and aspired to save and protect the state. This generation was called "Young Turks" (Lüküslü, 2015). With Young Turks, "The Myth of Youth" was formed and played an important role in Turkish politics (Lüküslü, 2015: 15). Starting within the Ottoman Empire, the myth of youth maintained its existence in the newly founded Republic of Turkey. It was reinforced by Mustafa Kemal, the founder of modern Turkey, in his appeal to the youth, which granted the Turkish youth the duty to preserve and defend the Turkish republic forever. The myth's spirit was evident in the Turkish youth of the 1960s and 1970s. After the military coup of 1980 and with the Özal government, Turkey's opening to the Western world amplified its interaction with the West and liberal politics, which was effective in the promotion of cultural exchange (Baykal, 2019; Daban, 2017; Özen, 2013; Yıldız, 2018). As a result of such developments, Turkish youth isolated itself from politics and for the first time a new type of generation, which was indifferent to the myth of youth appeared.

Music was one of the most notable examples of this cultural exchange between Turkey and the West. The interest in punk and metal music notably increased after this period (Boynik & Güldallı, 2014). Turkish folk music and Turkish classical music genres have always been mainstream in Turkish culture. However, in the early Republican period of Turkey, a Turkish segment favouring the Western lifestyle appeared.

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Jazz music started to be listened to in the 1930s, Pop music in the 1950s, Rock's roll in the late 1950s and late 1960s, and Psychedelic music in the 1970s were some of the Western-oriented music genres that were noticeable in Turkey (Erkal). Furthermore, a new period started with the 1980 Military Coup; metal, punk, electronic and rap music became prevalent among Turkish youth (Erkal, 2014).

Turkey's Westernization facilitated the emergence of new music genres in the country. Music magazines, records, cassettes and band T-shirts that were imported by the retailers and also brought to Turkey by the expatriates who came from Europe also played an influential role in this matter. Further, Turkish students who went to study abroad enabled the cultural introduction of metal, punk, electronic and rap music to Turkey. Shops that sold such cultural products were opened. Areas of Istanbul such as Kadıköy, Sultanahmet and Taksim became frequented by young people interested in these cultures. Music markets and passages played an essential role in spreading this new culture. Young people easily adopted these cultures and lived by their norms. As a result of such developments,they started consuming *fanzines* to express themselves.

The fanzine, a combination of the words fanatic and magazine, has been printed and distributed in various ways by the Turkish people of various interests since the early 1900s to the present. With the introduction of rock and metal music cultures, two different fanzines appeared in Turkey: *Mondo Trasho* and *Laneth*. Both had different types of aesthetics, design and content. These two publications have been the source of inspiration for the succeeding fanzines. The aforementioned fanzines compensated for the lack of information on many issues regarding the new emerging music cultures in Turkey. In this article, we aim to analyze both fanzines to examine their aesthetic, design and content differences. *Mondo Trasho* has a composite structure and covers topics from every walk of life such as literature, philosophy, music, art, cinema, politics and sociology. *Laneth*, on the other hand, is Turkey's first music-themed fanzine. When access to the Internet was almost nonexistent, *Laneth* provided extremely abundant and extensive information on Western music. The research questions we aim to answer are as follows: 1. What are the differences between the first two Turkish fanzines? 2. What are the aesthetic and technical concerns and qualities of the first two Turkish fanzines? 3. What are the primary conditions for the emergence of the two Turkish fanzines?

2. Literature review

The word fanzine, formed by the combination of *fanatic* and *magazine*, refers to "an amateur, printed magazine prepared by fans and subcultural enthusiasts" (Destici, 2019: 25). Disregarding financial and legal concerns, the fanzine focuses on the topics of subcultures and deviates from the mainstream communication mediums in the way it is formed and delivered. Serbes and Güzel (2020) state that the fanzine is a subcultural iconography that produces counter-public spaces. According to Rau (1994), fanzines are based on the amateur journalism activities in the USA and amateur sci-fi magazines published in the 1920s. The oldest fanzine to date is "The Comet", which was produced in the USA in May 1930 by Raymond Palmer and Walter Dennis. The Comet was distributed by the Science Correspondence Club (Atton, 2006). After publishing The Comet, many fanzines engaging with sci-fi were published.

Although the emergence of the fanzine dates back to the sci-fi movement, the main breakthrough and popularisation of it dates back to the punk movement. Fanzines (like Sniffin Glue, Ripped and Torn), were basically magazines made by individuals or groups that worked on reviews, articles, and interviews with elite punks. Their production was cheap, and they were distributed by a few punk-sympathetic shops (Hebdige, 1991: 104). Fanzines generally consist of A4 papers, they are folded and stapled together with A5 size papers. The production, reproduction, and distribution costs of the fanzines are undertaken by the zinsters. The general tendency in their production process is their being produced in black and white because of the lower cost. However, some zinsters prefer coloured ink and coloured paper. There are also different types of fanzines in various sizes. Further, different folding and joining methods are used in some fanzines.

The visual and technical styles of the punk fanzines involve collage, appropriation, and aggression, which are based on the underground publishing techniques of the Dada (*Cabaret Voltaire*, *Dada*, *291*, *391*, and *New York Dada*). Utilizing collage, cut-ups, and visual interventions, which are technically easy to make

also show that the visual and technical styles of the fanzines are based on the Dada movement (Wright, 2001). The structure of the fanzine, which can be interpreted as a reaction against institutionalized art practices and theories with its style, content and design situates it in a position outside the mainstream media traditions (Serbes & Güzel, 2020). According to Destici (2019) "fanzines are the amateur medium of unofficial historiography" (Destici, 2019) in the unique way they are able to keep a record of the subcultural *zeitgeist*.

Fanzines played the critical role of being a medium of communication within subcultures till the spread of the Internet. However, after the spread of the Internet, they were gradually replaced by e-zines (electronic zines) and later forums and websites. However, some subcultures continue to publish fanzines to sustain their traditional methods for yet they remain anonymous.

3. The fanzine in Turkey

The foundations of the fanzines in Turkey dates back to first sci-fi publishings followed by punk/metal issues. The early examples of Turkish fanzines were created in the 1970s when political issues were at the top of the agenda both in the world and Turkey. Kılıç (2017) argues that *Antares* started its publication in October 1971 with the leadership of Sezar Erkin Ergin as a sci-fi fanzine, just like the first fanzines in the world. It was a product of science-fiction fans who could not find the opportunity to speak for themselves. Antares started in October 1971 and was published in 13 issues until February 1978 (Destici, 2019). With the leadership of Sezar Erkin Ergin, many local and foreign authors such as Giovanni Scognamillo, Selma Mine, and Zühtü Bayar contributed to *Antares* with their original stories, translations, book and movie suggestions about science fiction. After the publication of *Antares*, many sci-fi fanzines began to be published in Turkey. Some of the names are: *X-Bilinmeyen*, *Atılgan*, *Galatika*, and *Bilim-Kurgu*.

Just as it was in the world, the rising of the fanzines dates back to the proliferation of punk and heavy metal music. After the 1980 Military Coup in Turkey, the transition to a liberal policy under Turgut Özal›s government enabled many European and US-centred cultures to come to Turkey. One of those cultures was music. First metal, then punk music took the attention of the Turkish youth. According to Boynik and Güldallı (2007), heavy metal constituted a place to breathe for the Turkish youth that did not want to accept the corrupt arabesque culture imposed on them. The Turkish youth adopted the culture, styles, attitudes, and communication tools of metal and punk music. 1991 was the date of the first fanzine shaped by the punk and heavy metal movements. *Mondo Trasho*, published by Esat Cavit Başak in May 1991 can be considered Turkey's first fanzine. *Laneth*, on the other hand, published by Çağlan Tekil in 1991 also shares the identity of being the first fanzine with its similar form, style and structure.
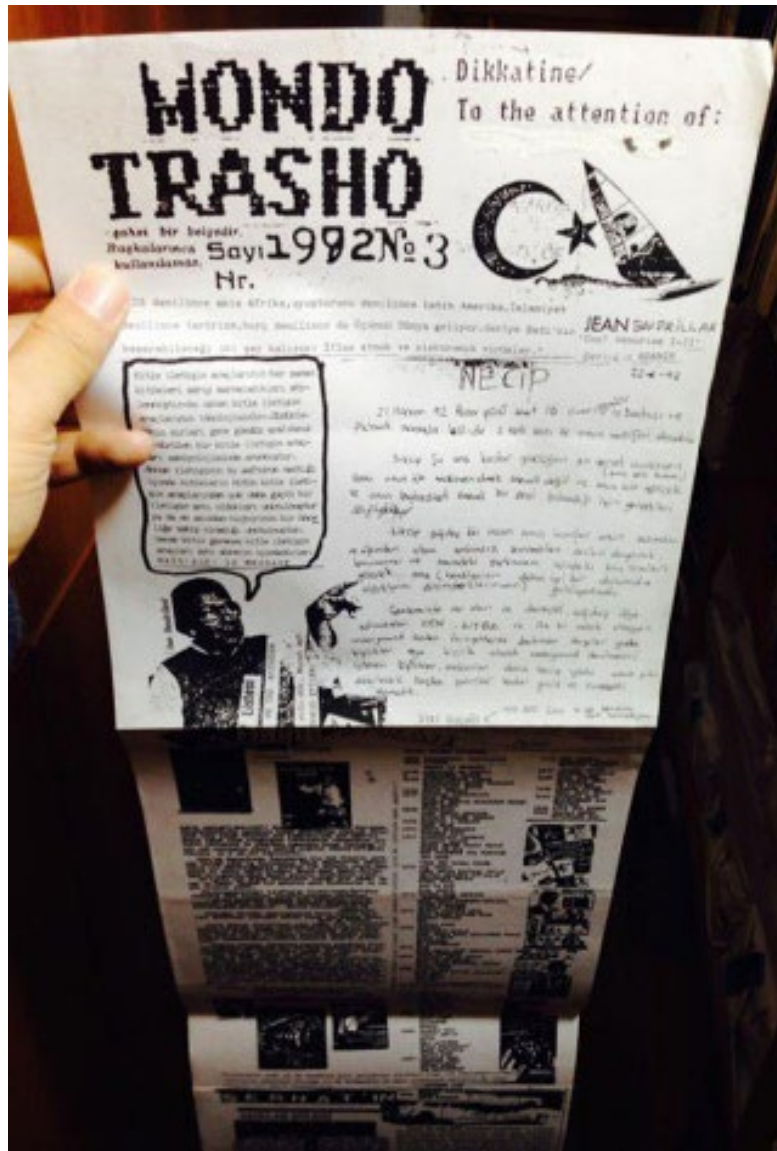
3.1. Mondo Trasho

The name *Mondo Trasho* means "the world of garbage", and it was buit on Başak's idea that garbage can be reused. Başak (Boynik & Güldallı, 2007) explaines this as follows:

> *Recycling came in as a new word with the environmentalist movement and settled. Material can be transformed. Nevertheless, information, visuality, anything that is auditory, everything can be transformed, and this is a world of garbage; Anything you think does not help you can be used. I mean, it is ridiculous to try to go around looking for stuff. […] nothing is discarded; it can be changed again.*

On average, each issue of *Mondo Trasho* was printed in 100 copies and, if necessary, reproduced on demand. *Mondo Trasho* could be obtained from Narmanlı Han and Deniz Bookstores in Istanbul. It had a symbolic price but was usually distributed free of charge. There were demands from cities outside of Istanbul (Boynik & Güldallı, 2007: 256). Twenty-four issues have been published with names *Mondo Trasho*, *Mondo Atropo*, *Mondo Akinetono*, *Mondo Porno*, *Mondo Desparado*, *Dumpling World* and *Mondo Pyro*. The most distinct issue is the one prepared on the fax paper (Figure 6.5.1).

A wide range of techniques can be observed in *Mondo Trasho*'s production. At the time, computer technology was not widespread in Turkey. Thus, the use of computer-generated texts was hardly seen.

Instead, photocopy machines and manually generated forms and texts were observed. Pages featured many techniques and design features ranging from the 1970's punk fanzines to Dada practices. On many pages with collages, there was a deliberate confusion. Texts were sometimes printed from the computer, sometimes photocopied directly from the source, sometimes written by hand or a typewriter. Images taken from the foundling journals were frequently used. Photocopies of some productions were copied over and over, and visual deformations were made with the resulting large grains. Thus, experimental production methods were applied. Sometimes, concrete objects were scanned and transferred to the pages. In addition, the hand-made glitch method was also applied by sliding the material to be scanned on the scanning surface during scanning.

» **Figure 6.5.1.** Mondo Trasho Fax Issue[140]
» **Source:** Photo by Gizem Kiziltunali, 2019.

Until *Mondo Trasho*, it was difficult for the reader to determine whether a publication was a fanzine or a conceptual artwork. However, in *Mondo Trasho* the way of presenting information was very different. This was mostly because artistic and design touches were added to the copier's mechanical system. Many of the concepts in *Mondo Trasho* had been removed from their context and had taken on new meanings. Nevertheless, according to Başak, *Mondo Trasho* was not an art product or a conceptual artwork:

> *I do not have such a connection. I am concerned with the object. I mean, after you get something, how can you evaluate it, or what can you do with it? Copier is a friendly, accessible format that is quickly produced and easy to distribute when doing something with paper. (Boynik & Güldallı, 2007: 259)*

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140 This logo is available in other colours too. See www.kismifconference.com

Perhaps one of the most critical features of *Mondo Trasho* lies in the way it engages with the deepest, heaviest academic themes endowed with the highest artistic meanings by the aesthetic trends of punk, new wave and dada. In addition, when internet technology was unavailable, *Mondo Trasho* provided information on foreign bands and music styles. Playlists were published, writings and evaluations about different films and movies were written. The source of any quotation was always presented, which gave it an academic vibe as well. The presentation of certain topics in unconventional visual styles created a unique product. Although the methods used were similar, no page was alike. The provocative and attractive images on its cover and pages made it one of the most radical works of its time.

In the following image, akin to conventional magazine forms, the title can be observed on the top of the first issue cover (Figure 6.5.2). Further, the number and date of publication, the symbolic price of the fanzine presents a conventional magazine cover format. A scene from the 1977 film *Eraserhead* by US director David Lynch can be seen on the cover like any other magazine. However, unlike the conventional magazines, *Mondo Trasho* used large grainy photographs, irregular and complex letters created by the collage technique, making it distinct from standard magazines. With minor differences, the conventional magazine cover design continued until the sixth issue of *Mondo Trasho*.
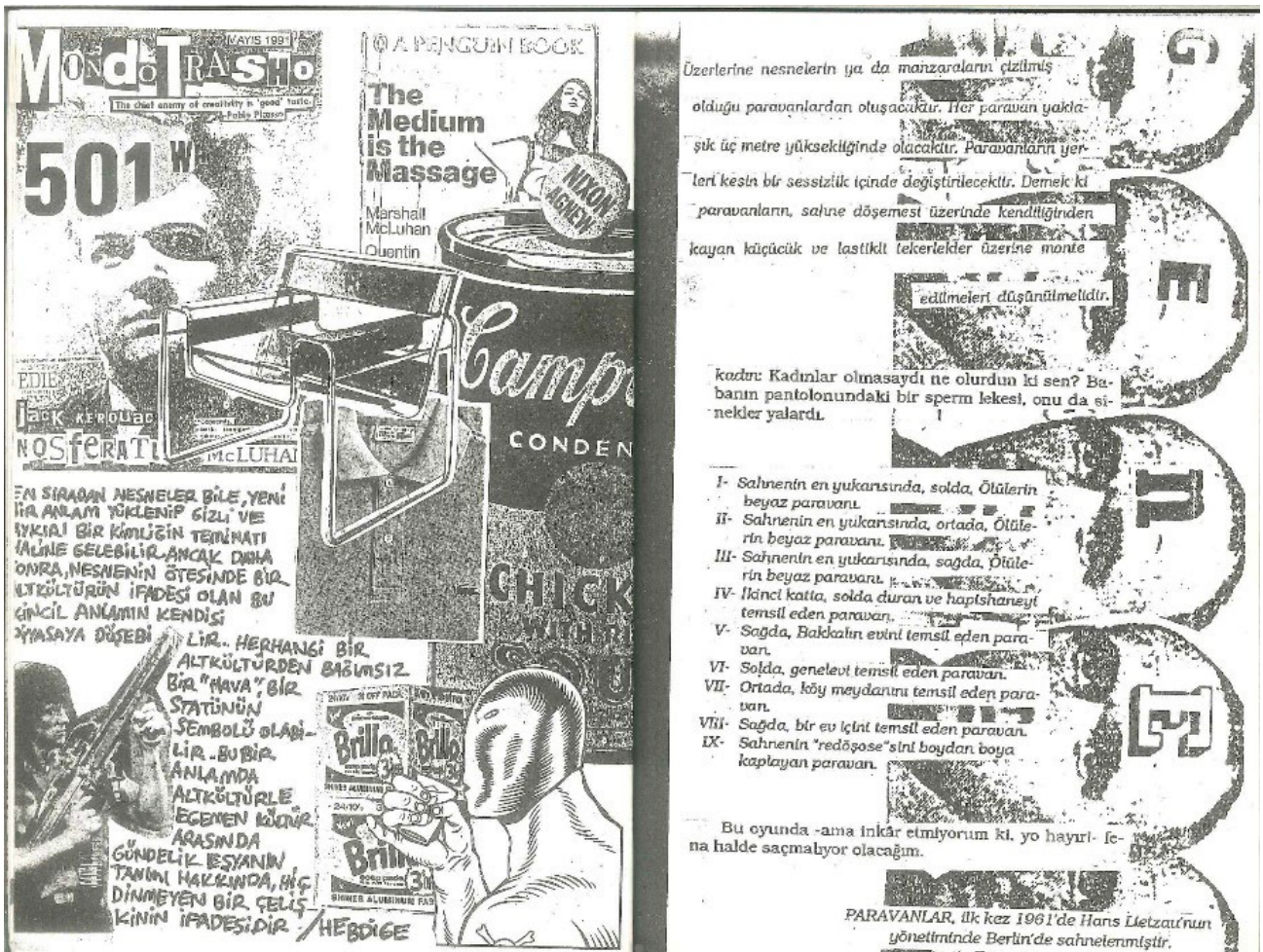
▸ **Figure 6.5.2.** Mondo Trasho 1ˢᵗ Issue Inside Page
▸ **Source:** Photo by Gizem Kiziltunali, 2019.

From the seventh issue up to the eleventh issue, the production of *Mondo Trasho*'s covers wholly changed as computer-aided designs were included. At this point, the cover of the seventh issue can be interpreted as a transformation between two different styles. It carries traces from the covers of the magazines before and after itself. As seen in Figures 6.5.3, and 6.5.4, the covers have generally been simplified, and additional information has been excluded. Further, content information on the cover has been eliminated. Photos prepared by the halftone pattern method were also removed in the ninth issue. In the twelfth issue with the name *Mondo Akinetono*, two drug box lids were scanned using the concrete object method (Figure 6.5.5).
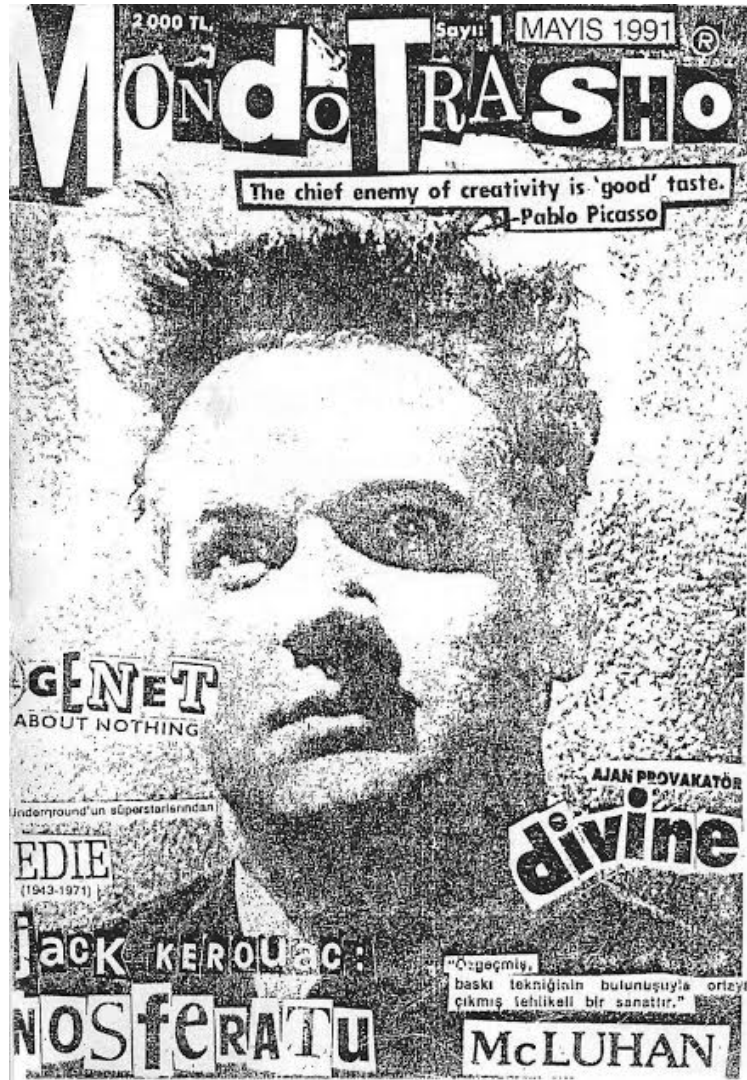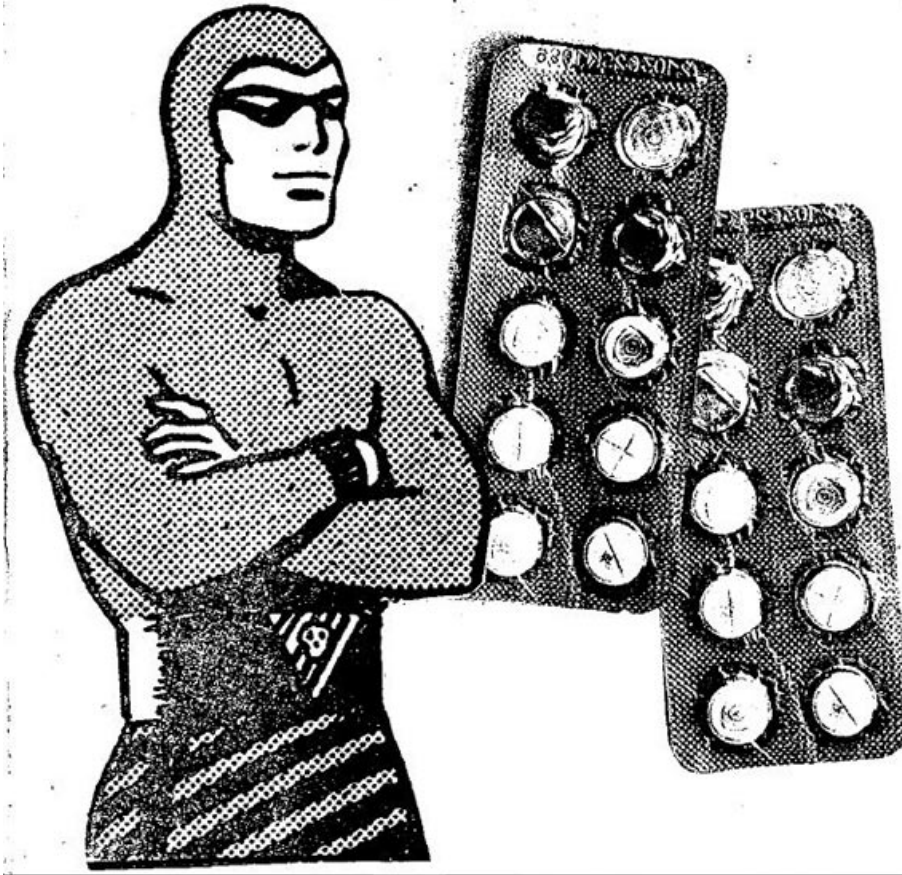
▸ **Figure 6.5.3.** Mondo Trasho 1st Issue Cover Page
▸ **Source:** Photo by Gizem Kiziltunali, 2019.

▸ **Figure 6.5.4.** Mondo Trasho 2nd and 3rd Issues Cover Pages
▸ **Source:** Photo by Gizem Kiziltunali, 2019.

▶ **Figure 6.5..5.** Mondo Trasho 12th Issue Cover Page
▶ **Source:** Photo by Gizem Kiziltunali, 2019.

The fake advertisements published in *Mondo Trasho* were reminiscent of newspaper coupon and promotion advertisements. These critical references were generated out of the consumption frenzy and shopping fury brought by the neo-liberal economic policy after the coup. In this respect, *Mondo Trasho* was not only a publication that provided information about various music genres, but it was also a reflection of its *zeitgeist*. The intense articulation of consumption culture has been discussed in other fanzines of the period. Tolga Özbey (2016) held that:

The boom of advertising was huge, and something was being sold all the time, and it seemed funny and meaningless to us as we knew the time when nothing was sold as a generation. Fanzine advertisements first aimed at destroying certain things in your inner world. To do so, they displayed unreal products on one page that focused on an ironic situation with a chaotic approach. This advertisement type was then our reaction to marketing and capitalism that was being adapted to Turkey at the time and is an indispensable aspect of our present day.

Mondo Trasho's foundations were laid in 1991 with the suggestion of Esat C. Başak's photocopying works and Naki Tez's suggestion of bringing these photocopying works together. The fanzine transformed into an art practice with the contribution of various participants and became one of the best sources of information for the Turkish youth culture. It rapidly increased the number of its followers with its wide range of topics and aesthetic appeal. It became a representation of an eclectic structure of a multi-paged work by the various styles it included. *Mondo Trasho* pushed the copier's limits and used the semantic and visual deformation method in its structure. The techniques of revolutionary art movements such as Dada and Fluxus were blended with the copy machine, making it a precursor in the field and becoming the source of inspiration for many upcoming fanzines.

3.2. Laneth

Just like Mondo Trasho, under the leadership of Çağlan Tekil, Laneth started to be published in Istanbul in May 1991. Between 1991 and 1994, it was published with the slogan: "Turkey's least-selling music magazine", and it became a source of inspiration for the following music magazines and fanzines. The emergence of Laneth was based on the place Metal Music holds in Turkish society and Çağlan Tekin's relation with metal music. Tekin's story started when he saw *The Scorpions*' sticker on his friend's notebook in high school. His interest was further reinforced when he came across I*ron Maiden*'s "Live After Death" album in a music store. Tekin (in *Danışmend*, 2016) buys the album and explains:

> *It was deafening. First, I was studying. Then there was a section in the Running Free song where only the drums and the bass remained, and suddenly everything became clear in my head when the guitars came out (laughs). I was fourteen years old. I stopped doing my homework, listened to it again, and then proceeded to the sections with the guitar. It all started like this.*

Unlike the known fanzines, *Laneth* was glued together with paper glue and printed in 30-35 copies in total. It was left to Pentagram Metal Shop and instantly sold out. There was an excessive interest in *Laneth*; it was demanded even outside Istanbul. Unlike the usual fanzine forms, *Laneth's* first three issues were prepared in A4 size, and after the eleventh issue, colour printing started to be used for the cover. Tekil (in *Destici*, 2019) describes the emergence of *Laneth* as follows:

> *We printed the first issue in the law firm of Hakan Savaşel, the bassist of Metalium. We could print only 35 because we had run out of toner. The man chased us in the office, not metaphorically, literally chased. When interest in this business grew, 100 and 150 copies had to be printed. We continued till 1994. Laneth was never legal.*

In terms of content, *Laneth* included news, promotion and evaluation articles about local and foreign rock and metal music groups. In an era where there was no internet and when access to information was limited, *Laneth* provided a flow of information and aroused severe interest among the readers. The information on foreign groups was vital, and it was provided by the writers of *Laneth* who went abroad. In this respect, the information hunger of listeners interested in domestic and foreign groups was fulfilled. The fact that *Laneth* provided a place for local music groups, which mainstream media did not pay attention to, rendered the fanzine addictive for music listeners and its makers. Finding themselves a place in a fanzine triggered the development and propagation of native metal music in Turkey.

Although *Laneth* felt different from a conventional magazine, traditional journalism methods were used in its covers and page designs. Just like it was in *Mondo Trasho*, a background image and a name at the top of the page was observable in *Laneth* as it is in a standard magazine cover. Methods such as placing the content on the edges of the page, the symbolic fee, the number of publications, the history and the slogan around the name maintained the familiar magazine cover format. Additionally, the evil eye bead in the upper part referred to the cultural codes of Anatolia. Writing the content information on the cover was discontinued in the upcoming issues. The evil eye bead symbol transformed into the image of a skull after a while (Figure 6.5.6).

► **Figures 6.5.6.** Laneth 1st and 2nd Issues Cover Pages[141]
► **Source:** Photo by Gizem Kiziltunali, 2019.

Wishes for success can be observed on the first pages of Laneth. These wishes remind one of greeting cards sent to a newly opened place. The imprint and editor's article on the following pages maintained the familiar magazine format. The reason for this was that Laneth was aimed to be a music magazine rather than a fanzine. A second reason was that Laneth's team preferred to use the design style and page preparation methods they were familiar with in other magazines.

4. Conclusion

In this paper, we sought to give an account of Turkey's first two subcultural fanzines that have left an imprint on a particular generation. We explained the aesthetic and context-wise differences between

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141 Note: this logo is available in other colours too. See www.kismifconference.com.

them with sociological underpinnings. In doing so, we tried to provide an insight into the subcultural practices of the Turkish youth at the time. Further, we tried to shed light on how they still continue to affect the upcoming generations of Turkish youth by being a muse for them. As sources of different subcultures, *Mondo Trasho* and *Laneth* still maintain their prominence as historical documents of a certain subcultural periods of Turkey.

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6.6. BORDER THEORY IN JOSÉ TOLENTINO MENDOÇA

Keli Cristina Pacheco[142]

✖ Abstract

The co-creation of collective identities through popular culture has a very rich tradition in Poland. This phenomenon can be traced in patriotic plots in popular music visible in the songs of The Peoples Republic of Poland and in popular music after 1989. This overlaps with the phenomenon of subcultural nationalism, the folklorisation of popular culture and the so-called high culture and the official historical politics. In our paper we will analyse the chosen lyrics of popular songs (including rock and rap music) and present how patriotism has been defined and how its significance has changed over the course of years. Our analysis will encompass popular song lyrics in the years 1996-2016. We conclude that whereas in communist Poland, patriotic popular songs were in accord with the political reason of state, which was forced from above, however contemporary patriotic songs of Polish popular artists are particular and party-oriented. These texts can be described by the expansion of chauvinist subcultural nationalism (in the authors'definition: patriotism), which found an institutional frame in organizations and parties such as Law and Justice (the governing party in Poland), The National Movement and Solidarity 2010.

Keywords: popular music, patriotism, nationalism, historical politics.

The main purpose of this article is to recognize the content of discourse of Polish patriotism in selected texts of popular music. We argue, that after 1989, Polish patriotism evolved from pro-European attitudes towards nationalistic attitudes. One can even put forward the thesis that currently in the public space in Poland (also in the field of popular culture) we are dealing with a specific war of cultures, a symbolic dispute between cosmopolitan liberals and isolationist (neo) conservative collective identity (Burszta,2013).

Tim Edensor (2002) in his famous book *National Identity, Popular Culture and Everyday Life* rightly notes that the affective power of traditional cultural forms and persuasive practices related to the nation are complemented and increasingly replaced by the meanings, images and actions taken from popular culture. He also efficiently analyzes complex relationships between broadly understood entertainment and national identification, that appear in a variety of situations, such as sports spectacles, contemporary forms of carnival, or attempts to reactivate national myths, as for example is the case of the film "Braveheart" (Ibidem). Edensor's analytical work concludes with a notion that today, unlike, for example, 50 years ago, the association field around "patriotism" begins to include the pop culture and entertainment, while national identification is lacking pathos and certain formality, which was obligatory in the past. Indeed, ceremonies full of pathos are still being practiced, but more and more often you can hear and see that cultivating patriotism consists of contexts of a feast, festivity and an entertaining spectacle (it is very visible in Poland during the debates about the celebration of Independence Day).

After 1989, at first, patriotic themes in Poland came down from large stages, locating themselves in

specific niches, such as the skinhead subculture's scene, or the scene of so-called identity rock (Wojdyła, 2005). The situation changed only in the second decade after the fall of communism, with the 60th anniversary of the Warsaw Uprising in 2004 as a direct impulse for implementing patriotic themes in popular music. In 2005 Lao Che, a rock band, released its "Powstanie Warszawskie" (Warsaw Uprising) album, which paved the way for similar initiatives. This album abandoned the worn-out martyrdom code for the sake of literality, sometimes even using some drastic metaphors. It also tried to convey emotional climate. Specific expressionism, or better: neo-expressionism, dethroned a kind of ideological national elation. It is worth mentioning that the songs from the album, unlike most patriotic lyrics written for special occasions, do not have any propagandistic character, nor can they be directly written down in any political project.

Above all, they implement the original vision of its authors, as it usually happens in the formula of a so-called concept album, Lao Che's specialty (they have always released a "religious" or a "folk" album). Historical events are not a political emblem but a subject for the artist. The main author of the idea, Hubert "Spięty" Dobaczewski, tried to give the album a polyphonic character by combining the original text with various quotes – from speeches, film dialogues, or poetry from the Uprising period. There are attempts, however, to update the expression, for example in the song "Stare Miasto" (The Old Town), where phrases like "Welcome to the place / Where Fryco[143] dies" are heard (Lao Che, 2005). The paraphrase of the modern football hooligans' slogan conveys its contexts and has its consequences, as the last anniversaries of the Warsaw Uprising became the stimulus for a so-called new right-wing art (murals in which "canonical" insurgent ethos is mixed with the hooligans' ethos), as well as the opportunity to manifest a new kind of patriotism, which we can call "a patriotism of a football hooligan". It need not be and probably is not the sole merit of Lao Che, but without their album the band would not have moved on a wave of patriotic intensification, with many others alongside.

There have been a lot of CDs, concerts and musical performances over the last 10 years, mostly (but not only) devoted to the Warsaw Uprising, which is commonly perceived as a manifestation of the renaissance of patriotic attitudes and general interest in history. They are accompanied by numerous so-called historical reconstructions. In a research report on reconstructions and re-constructors, written in 2012, Tomasz Szlendak (2012) notes that patriotism can be a motivation, but it can also be a consequence of participation in reconstruction movements, that mainly refers to those reconstructing Polish troops from World War II.

Many facts and events from the area of current popular music, such as L.U.C's album "Zrozumieć Polskę" (To understand Poland), a compilation "Gajcy" devoted to a famous poet from Warsaw Uprising time, De Press's album "Żołnierze Wyklęci" (Excommunicated Soldiers), a concert and album untitled "Morowe Panny" (Brave Maidens) in homage to Uprising young female participants are undoubtedly a sign of a new trend among Polish musicians that explore the history of the war and occupation period. Nevertheless, all these performances and albums represent very different models of understanding of patriotism. L.U.C is closer to Braudel's historical sensitivity focused on the details, or a sense of humor embedded in the realities of the war cataclysm. Andrzej Dziubek from De Press leaves no doubt singing: "Fight Bolsheviks in any form, because this is your biggest enemy today". "Morowe Panny" in turn generated an unprecedented model of patriotism: a feminist patriotism (De Press, 2009).

Apart from attempts to create new approaches to history, as well as unconventional manifestations of patriotic feelings, more traditional expressions are also functioning. Paweł Kukiz, once the first scoffer of Polish rock, has recently played a role of a defender of allegedly endangered Polish national feeling. One of the manifestations thereof is his song about Erika Steinbach, who is a German conservative politician known for her anti-Polish sentiments (Kukiz,2012).

The same singer also appeared in the rock-opera "Krzyżacy" (Teutonic Knights), a peculiar performance representing a nostalgic patriotism based on school curriculum novel by Henryk Sienkiewicz, who wrote patriotic novels during the partitions of Poland at the turn of the 19th and 20th century. Similarly, guitarist Andrzej Nowak, co-founder of the heavy metal band TSA, at the moment a frontman of Złe Psy (Mad Dogs), wants to be considered a patriot according to a nationalistic understanding. The evidence thereof consists of lyrics of his widely commented song "Urodziłem się w Polsce" (I was born in Poland): "I proudly

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143 "Fryco" means a German.

wear Polish colours. As knights, and soldiers. If needed I am obstinate" (Złe Psy, 2012).

Some Polish rappers also use the nationalistic or even chauvinistic tones in their lyrics. Our analyses show that lyrics of musicians that constitute the Polish scene of patriotic rap, often contain anti-immigrant and anti-Islamic threads (Zańko, 2018). The pedagogy of hatred towards the Other (who in this case is a Muslim), used by right-wing and ultra-right-wing circles, including Prawo i Sprawiedliwość (Law and Justice) party currently in power in Poland, is for example present in a song titled "Eurokalifat" (Eurocaliphate) performed by Szejk Biforjuz (2016): "I am terrified to see how many are coming here. No more pork in menu, but they are all swines. They want our public money and produce kids. In two generations you will have three mosques standing in the neighbourhood. They conquer Europe with their birth rate. That is how you do it today, no need to use guns. You must be happy, that is end of discussion. If you say something contra, they'll call you a fascist".

Basti, another rapper, uses even more aggressive anti-islamic poetics. In one of his songs, he predicts the imminent end of western, liberal Europe, flooded by radical "Islamic hordes": "We don't want any war, but we have it today. Crazy people make Jihad in Allah's name. European governments and their leftist policy. Versus radical Islam and intentions to have a caliphate. They hate us, they don't know democracy. They don't respect our laws, they want Shariat all over the world. They are stronger with Christianity's weakness. They are happy, those murderers from ISIS. That is the consequence of deviated tolerance (...) don't look at the West, because its end is near. We need to be wiser than they were there. They are doomed, they will lose the war. That is the end's beginning, they will be flooded by the Islamic hordes" (Basti, 2016).

We should add here that patriotic rap has recently been heard more and more often at the so-called Independence Marches in Warsaw that take place every year on Independence Day (November 11th). This patriotic manifestation, intended to commemorate the day Poland regained its independence, is in fact the greatest manifestation of Polish nationalism. Even though the threads of martyrdom and national patriotism seem to dominate the lyrics of popular music, we can also find artists who oppose such narratives (Zańko, 2018). A good example is Maria Peszek, who in the song "Sorry Poland" is in favor of open, constructive patriotism, whose essence is working for the common good of citizens: "(...) I pay subscription. And I pay for a ticket. I go to elections. I am not a stowaway. Just don't tell me to die. Just don't tell me, don't tell me. Don't tell me to fight, don't tell me to die. Don't want my blood, Poland! (...) Better an alive citizen than a dead hero" (Peszek, 2012).

Analyzing "patriotic" expressions of contemporary Polish artists and pop music performers, it can be noticed that today's pop-patriotism is different in relation to that of the times of the communist regime. First, it is not associated with the imposed "raison d'état". Mostly it is of original character. It also has a particular character, or that referring to political parties. It also noted that a multi-current expansion of chauvinistic nationalism subculture (in the words of its partisans: "patriotism") expands in a much larger scale than even in the last decade of the communist regime.

It has also found a convenient institutional framework in such organizations as Ruch Narodowy (National Movement). The contemporary music scene does not, of course, divide in the same way as the political scene, but now and then the consequences of the aforementioned historical policy propagated by the ruling party are shown. The new work of Kukiz or Nowak are not the only examples, as we could see during the celebrations of the 70th anniversary of the Warsaw Uprising, or recent Independence Marches. Maybe it is not the same as "Patriotism of Tomorrow" invented by Law and Justice Politicians, but we certainly can see here a vision of national unity with a strong nationalist-clerical tone. Sevenfold attempts to set fire to the rainbow at Warsaw's Zbawiciel Square, along with commentaries made by right-wing politicians who saw in this artistic installation by Julita Wójcik a symbol of LGBT, find their artistic expression in the song "Niezwyciężeni" (Invincible) of Konkwista 88, a group that has many merits in expanding a nationalistic way of thinking: "Contemporary streets. Addiction and homosexuality. Did they fight for it? Did they die for it? They should be back. At least for some time. Brave and firm. The pride of our nation" (1996).

To sum up, the peculiarity of our times is a subcultural war of nationalist radicals with anarchists, which is a detachment of a larger whole: culture wars. These culture wars – whose sources date the youth revolution of the 1960s in the United States – are understood here metaphorically as a political and

symbolical dispute over the collective identity and a shape of social reality, which is a result of having different sources of moral interpretation. The actors in this dispute are liberals and conservatives, two axiologically different camps that embody two different visions of the nation as a moral community (Burszta, 2013). On the one hand, we have heirs (ers) of the contestation movements of the 1960s and their love of freedom, people who imagine the social world as a place for everyone regardless of race, origin, religion or sexual orientation. On the other hand, we have the so-called guards of tradition and Christian values, for whom all manifestations of the liberalization of social life are perceived as a threat to the Western civilization. Unfortunately, in Poland the voice of the former does not reach everybody. The voice of various patriotic-nationalist (sub)cultures is much louder. The same refers to politicians that proclaim national pride, as well as the Church hierarchs who warn about a moral corruption of the cosmopolitan West. We claim that the modern redefinition of patriotism against such powers unfortunately has no greater chances.

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