



EST 1892

**London
South Bank
University**

UNDERSTANDING MUSICKING ON SOCIAL MEDIA: MUSIC SHARING, SOCIALITY AND CITIZENSHIP

Raquel Campos Valverde

<http://orcid.org/0000-0003-3712-6152>

A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements of London South Bank
University for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

This research programme was carried out with an ACI Doctoral Scholarship

March 2019

Abstract

Based on online and offline ethnographic fieldwork among the Spanish community in London, this thesis investigates why people circulate and share music on social media platforms, particularly within a context of migration. Written from the perspective of an insider-outsider, it combines research data from ethnographic participant observation and interviews to understand how music media circulates online, studying the different roles it fulfils within these contexts as different forms of musicking. The thesis responds to these questions by addressing six areas. Chapter 1 explores the uses of music to perform and articulate cultural and gender identity on social media profiles. Chapter 2 investigates how music sharing and compiling can be used to maintain relationships and social capital and to participate in transnational sociality. Chapter 3 addresses how the circulation of music parody as citizen engagement in contexts of political conflict such as the Brexit and Catalanian referendums gives rise to temporary political alliances in the form of citizen assemblages. Chapter 4 considers the circulation of music on social media from the perspective of fandom and how it is influenced by post-object ephemeral and reflexive practices. Chapter 5 analyses how the ubiquitous and imagined character of online music media fosters its circulation as a silent and visual element of online sociality, effectively generating practices of imagined listening. Chapter 6 examines ritualistic practices of music exchange on social media and their relationship with emerging moral economies of music circulation as foundational elements of online sociality and citizenship. I conclude by arguing that, in circulating music online through their social media and streaming profiles, users develop new forms of (im)material culture-making. Online musicking enables new ways of being in the world, turning the intangible, time-bound aural and visual experience of online music into something that has a materialised impact in the social lives of users. Through the circulation of music online users form, dissolve and inhabit temporary music-based alliances and expand their social worlds.

Acknowledgements

This thesis is the result of a collective effort, and my sincerest thanks go to all that have contributed in making this research project possible.

Since the very beginning when I first started thinking about this PhD research during my Masters' degree, I was encouraged and supported by Keith Howard and Somnath Batabyal to pursue a career researching music and the internet. I am fortunate to still have their guidance and mentorship.

Sincerest thanks go to my PhD supervisor Hillegonda Rietveld for her guidance throughout these three years, as well as to Phil Hammond and Lizzie Jackson for their feedback. Many thanks are also owed to academic colleagues Shzr Ee Tan, Luis-Manuel Garcia, Simon Weaver, Tiziano Bonini, Ioannis Tsioulakis, Matt Hills and Chris Charles for their help during the writing process.

I am indebted to those who participated in this study, whose insights form the core of this thesis. Conversations with Anabel and Cynthia, Daniel, Diana, Elisa, Jasmin, Fernando and Teresa, Javier, Jose, Rose, Sandra, Sue and Veronica made this thesis possible. Their patience and openness were crucial to this project, and I feel privileged to have been able to enter their public and private lives online and offline. I also appreciate the contributions of all of those who allowed me to observe them on social media such as Ramon and Luisa, and of those who I interviewed but I did not include in the final manuscript. Special thanks go to musicians, promoters and other people in the music scene that I cannot name but who contributed to help me understand what being a Spanish migrant in London means. I also want to acknowledge all those who contributed greatly to the success of the survey by circulating it within their networks, such as Maddalena Di Rosa, David Carril Castiñeira and Gonzalo Campos, and to all who responded.

Before and during the PhD I have been surrounded and helped by many excellent friends. Scholarly and moral support came from my LSBU PhD colleagues Ioanna Zouli, Gaia Tedone, Zeta Kolokytopoulou, Nicolas Maleve, Lozana Mehandzhyska, Nicola Baird and Carolyn Defrin. Special thanks go to my friends Deirdre Morgan and Robert Barnes for their PhD survival guidance over long phone calls and chat conversations, and other academic colleagues Rafael Caro Repetto, Alex Cannon, Carlos Yoder, Katia Chornik and Daniel Gouly, who inspired me with their intellect and passion for music. The seeds for this project began

germinating over email conversations with Agustin Frizzera, who I thank for his enthusiastic support of the project. I also thank Anna De Mutiis, who always reminded me that there is life outside of the PhD.

I am forever indebted to my parents, who taught me the value of the education that they could not have and kept me in school until I could fund myself.

I also thank Stefano Scarano, who was there before the start of this PhD and is still there nearly four years after, giving me unconditional moral support (especially when editing images drove me to despair) and making delicious dinners every evening.

Finally, I acknowledge the generous support of the School of Arts and Creative Industries Doctoral Scholarship, which made this research project possible. I also thank the British Forum for Ethnomusicology and the International Association for the Study of Popular Music for funding that has enabled me to present my research in conferences in the UK and internationally.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Abstract	iii
Acknowledgements	iv
Table of contents	vi
List of figures	x
0. Introduction	1
0.1 Research Topic and Rationale	1
0.1.1 Research Topic	1
0.1.2 Conceptual Framework	2
0.1.3 Rationale	8
0.1.4 Thesis Outline	10
0.2 Literature Review	13
0.3 Research Design and Methodology	30
0.3.1 Fieldwork Stages and Data Collection	31
0.3.2 Population	36
0.3.2a Legal Context	37
0.3.2b Demographic Context	37
0.3.2c Research Sample	39
0.3.3 Survey Results	43
0.3.4 Ethics and Reflexivity	45
Chapter 1 – Performing Identity	48
1.1 Introduction	48
1.2 National and Regional Identity	51
1.2.1 Context	51
1.2.2 Identities and Political Affect	55
1.2.3 Social Media Musicking and Identity	59
1.2.4 Beyond Cultural Identity	66
1.3 Gender and Sexuality	68
1.3.1 LGBTQ and non-Normative Performativity	68
1.3.2 Heteronormative Performativity	71
1.3.3 Gender Performance as Culture Production	73
1.4 Case Study: Reggaetón and Identity Performance	73
1.4.1 Reggaetón and Social Media Musicking	81
1.5 Conclusion	85

Chapter 2 – Relationships and Social capital	87
2.1 Introduction	87
2.1.1 Context	91
2.2 Genre, Identity and Authenticity	94
2.2.1 Identity, Authenticity and Genre Performance	94
2.2.2 Genre Canon and Authenticity	95
2.2.3 Playlists in Belonging and Canon Performance	98
2.2.4 Privacy and Authentic Identities	100
2.3 Genre, Social Capital and Distinction	102
2.3.1 Distinction and Group Boundaries	103
2.4 Relationships, Genre and Cultural Nodes	108
2.4.1 The informal DJ	108
2.4.2 The Informal Archivist: Hashtags as Index Cards	111
2.4.3 The Musical Family Guardian	113
2.4.4 Musicking Nodes and Relationships	114
2.4.5 Locality, Migration and Polymedia Privacy	116
2.5 Towards a Post-Bordieuan Perspective on Social Media Musicking	117
2.6 Conclusion	120
Chapter 3 – Politics and Comedy	122
3.1 Introduction	122
3.1.1 Media, Comedy and Music Practices	123
3.1.2 Legal Context	125
3.1.3 Music, Politics, and Comedy Assemblages	129
3.2 Case Studies	133
3.2.1 Musical Satire and the Brexit Referendum	134
3.2.2 Musical Satire and the Catalanian Referendum	140
3.3 Discussion	145
3.3.1 Engagement and Musical Politics in Context	145
3.3.2 Coping Strategies and Online Citizenship	149
3.4 Conclusion	153

Chapter 4 – Post-Social Media Music Fandom	156
4.1 Introduction	156
4.1.1 Context	156
4.2 Fandom and Performativity	158
4.3 Fan Agency and Online Communities	160
4.4 Fan Reflexivity and Solidary Fandom	163
4.5 Algorithmic Fandom	166
4.6 Temporary Fandom	170
4.7 The <i>Unlistened</i> Playlists	175
4.8 Post-Object Music Fandoms	176
4.9 Conclusion	180
Chapter 5 – Imagined Audiences and Imagined Listening	182
5.1 Introduction	182
5.2 Social Media Audiences	183
5.3 Imagined Audiences	185
5.4 Mediatized Liveness	188
5.5 Ubiquitous Music and Imagined Listening	191
5.6 Excessive Ubiquity and Silent Music Commodities	195
5.7 Reflexive Abundance: Music as Visual Object	197
5.8 Conclusion	203
Chapter 6 – Musicking Rituals and the Moral Economies of Music Circulation	205
6.1 Introduction	205
6.1.2 Music, Social Media and Rituals	207
6.2 Music and Media Rituals on Social Media	208
6.2.1 Visual Context	208
6.2.2 Music as Meme	212
6.2.3 Mourning Rituals	218
6.2.4 Music Games and Ritual	222
6.2.5 Online – Offline Hybrid Music Rituals	226
6.3 Meta-Rituals in Social Media Musicking	230
6.4 The Moral Economies of Music Circulation	233
6.4.1 Critical Perspectives on Moral Economies and Ritualised Algoracracies	236
6.5 Conclusion	239

7. Conclusion	241
7.1 Future research	247
References	251
Bibliography	251
Videography	287
List of interviews	288
Appendix	289
I. Survey Results	289
II. List of Participants	297
III. Ethics Form	299

List of Figures

Fig. 0.1 Different iterations of the field	33
Fig. 0.2 The researcher participating in Spanish meet-ups	34
Fig. 1.1 Promotional flyers for Spanish-themed music events in London	58
Fig. 1.2 Jasmin's Facebook Profile	60
Fig. 1.3 Jasmin's livestream caption	61
Fig. 1.4 Galician and Catalan independentist flags superposed on rock iconography	62
Fig. 1.5 Sue's post of <i>Siniestro Total's</i> song <i>Miña Terra Galega</i>	64
Fig. 1.6 Lady Olé event promotion on Facebook	69
Fig. 1.7 LGBTQ-related music media shared on Instagram and Facebook	70
Fig. 1.8 Examples of Diana's posts referring to LGBTQ identity and music	71
Fig. 1.9 Sandra's tweet of a Red Hot Chili Peppers video	72
Fig. 1.10 Spanish party flyers promoting reggaetón	77
Fig. 1.11 Veronica's message on Telegram and José's comment on Facebook	81
Fig. 1.12 Facebook comment on a Spaniards in London group	82
Fig. 1.13 A post about reggaetón in a Facebook group	82
Fig. 1.14 Jasmin's posts on reggaetón	83
Fig. 1.15 Example from 'Maluma Feminista' meme page	84
Fig. 2.1 Jasmin's post on Facebook	96
Fig. 2.2. An Instagram post shared by Daniel	96
Fig. 2.3 Teresa's tweet and Daniel's Facebook post	97
Fig. 2.4 Sandra's public playlists	99
Fig. 2.5 Daniel's Twitter threads with mosh pit rules	104
Fig. 2.6 Teresa's tweets about classical music concerts	104
Fig. 2.7 One of Anabel's posts with an album recommendation	106

Fig. 2.8 Examples from Cynthia’s Facebook timeline	109
Fig. 2.9 A selection of Sandra’s posts on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter	111
Fig. 2.10 Sue’s evening posts	113
3.1 Fig. 3.1. Teresa’s tweet	127
Fig. 3.2 Conversation between Jasmin and her friend	127
Fig. 3.3 A conversation about bullfighting on a Facebook group	128
Fig. 3.4 Luisa’s post on Facebook	129
Fig. 3.5 News piece that appeared on the Daily Express and Facebook post by Juan	138
Fig. 3.6 A conversation about Brexit between Teresa and Veronica on Twitter	139
Fig. 3.7 A Facebook post on a group promoting hate speech	141
Fig. 3.8 A post on the Facebook group ‘Catalans in London’	142
Fig. 3.9 Diana’s post on Facebook	143
Fig. 3.10. A post on the group Spaniards in London with a song by <i>La Playa</i> troupe	144
Fig. 4.1 An Instagram post by Elisa and a Facebook check-in post by Daniel	159
Fig. 4.2 Sue’s Facebook post	160
Fig. 4.3 Daniel’s video message on Telegram	161
Fig. 4.4 Sue’s comment on a Facebook live streaming	162
Fig. 4.5 The author participating in a prize draw on Facebook	163
Fig. 4.6 A selection of Jasmin’s posts on Facebook	171
Fig. 4.7 Daniel’s Spotify playlists for musicals and a festival setlist	172
Fig. 4.8a A Spotify playlist shared between Sandra and her sisters	172
Fig. 4.8b A Spotify collaborative playlist of members of the Telegram group	173
Fig 5.1 Musicking practices on social media in an imagined audience spectrum	185
Fig. 5.2 Veronica’s message to Sandra on Telegram	193
Fig. 5.3 A vinyl display in a framing shop in North London	199

Fig. 5.4 Elisa's post with a music-related meme	202
Fig. 6.1 A meme about online normativity liked by Daniel on Twitter	209
Fig. 6.2 A reflexive meta-meme by Twitter user @GalicianMemes	210
Fig. 6.3 A morning salutation shared in a Facebook group of Spanish women	210
Fig. 6.4 A 2009 cartoon shared by Elisa as a 'Facebook memory'	211
Fig. 6.5 A Brexit-themed meme	211
Fig. 6.6 Elisa's post on Facebook sharing the song "Civil War" by Guns N' Roses	214
Fig. 6.7 Diana's post and Sue's post on Facebook	214
Fig 6.8 A meme circulated on Twitter and a meme shared on Facebook	216
Fig. 6.9 A meme shared by Daniel and a meme shared by Jose on Facebook	216
Fig. 6.10 A post by Sandra and a thread by Daniel	219
Fig. 6.11 Sue's post on Facebook	220
Fig. 6.12 Sue's Facebook post commemorating her grandmother's birthday	221
Fig. 6.13 A version of the 'Not You' meme circulated on Instagram	221
Fig. 6.14 A game circulated on Facebook and Twitter with a 30-day song challenge	224
Fig. 6.15 A Facebook music game caption	224
Fig. 6.16 A selection of music games in which Sue and Jose participated	225
Fig. 6.17 Jose's response on Facebook to a game proposed by Absolute Radio	225
Fig. 6.18 A post on a Facebook group of Catalans in London	228
Fig. 6.19 Jasmin's Facebook post	228
Fig. 6.20 Facebook captions	229
Fig. 6.21 Galician demonstration ' <i>Lumes Nunca Mais</i> ' ("Wildfires never again")	229

0. Introduction

0.1 Research Topic and Rationale

0.1.1 Research Topic

The present thesis looks at the online musical activities of a group of Spaniards in London, understanding their social media and streaming activities as “musicking” (Small 1998). Looking at individual and group practices, I show how dynamics of identity (Chapter 1), relationships (Chapter 2), politics (Chapter 3), fandom (Chapter 4), audience (Chapter 5) and ritual (Chapter 6) contribute to the maintenance and reproduction of online and offline sociality. I also demonstrate how the online musicking practices of Spaniards in London give rise to emerging moral economies and values of citizenship through the circulation of music media. Whereas previous literature has focused on music-makers and the emergence of internet-centric genres (see Literature Review), I approach online musicking from the audience perspective, investigating the dynamics of music circulation between users and fans. Similarly, while previous research has considered audience participation only when it involves media creation such as songs or video, I highlight the culture-making practices involved in reposting and sharing pre-existing music media that is accessed through streaming. This research project addresses the identified gap in the knowledge by investigating musicking activities on social media and their relationship with the wider presence of music in the everyday sociality of Spaniards in London. The objective is to understand how people search for sociality and community through musicking on social media and ultimately why they post and circulate music.

The research goals can be summarised as follows: First, to conduct a study of music activities on social media among the Spanish migrant population in London that addresses how and why music circulates within these communities. Second, to consider the role of online music circulation in the articulation of politics, from the microsocial levels of personal identity through to the macrosocial dimensions of social participation and citizenship. Third, to investigate how users and fans build their own knowledge of online sociality through their daily practices and self-reflection. Fourth, to examine the emerging cultures of online music circulation. And finally, to mobilize online and offline ethnographic methods in combination with theoretical approaches from the fields of Social Media Anthropology, Ethnomusicology, and Media Studies in order to contribute new insights to current discussions in these disciplines. Ultimately, the objective of this research is to understand the role of online music practices, particularly on social media, in the production and maintenance of social life.

The research addresses the following questions: Why do people circulate and exchange online music media? Why is music such a ubiquitous element in social media and specifically in discourses of identity politics? What are the roles of online music exchange in comparison with previous offline practices? What are the motivations of social media users that do not receive direct benefits from the music and entertainment industries for their free promotional labour? How is the circulation of music part of wider dynamics of online citizenship and sociality? What are the moral economies of online music cultures of circulation? To fully explain these research goals and questions, the specific terminology used here needs to be contextualised and defined.

0.1.2 Conceptual Framework

The definition of “social media” as used in this research comes from danah boyd and Nicole Ellison’s (2007) definition of social network sites:

Web-based services that allow individuals to (1) construct a public or semi-public profile within a bounded system, (2) articulate a list of other users with whom they share a connection, and (3) view and traverse their list of connections and those made by others within the system. (2007: 211)

However, rather than limiting social media to these pre-defined criteria, the research for this thesis gravitates around the concept of social media “as a heuristic device” (Miller et al. 2016: 9) without firm boundaries, because the objects of the research are not the actual platforms. Attention is given to websites and software applications that participants have identified as social media or that they deemed relevant to the discussion of the topics raised by the researcher. If the aim of ethnomusicology is to study “music as culture” and “music in culture” (Merriam 1964), this research studies music circulation as a kind of social media culture, but also studies music media embedded in wider offline cultural systems. Although media have always been social and played social functions and roles well before the rise of the internet, this ethnomusicological approach means understanding social media and its online music circulation as a form of culture, which is in turn differently understood in diverse cultural settings, as well as studying music media in a cultural context that is inherently social. Similarly, following the concept of “polymedia” (Madianou and Miller 2012), if the character and uses of platforms can only be understood in relation to other platforms, an absolute definition of social media is neither required nor wanted. Rather, the research is based on a principle of porosity between, on the one hand, social media platforms with music

capabilities such as Facebook, Twitter, or Instagram, and on the other hand, the streaming platforms built for media and music to which social media capabilities have been added, such as YouTube and Spotify. This blurry distinction is nonetheless crucial because it considerably influences people's understandings of music circulation. The privileging of the social aspects in users' conceptualisations of the former group of platforms, and their affordances greatly influences the direction of music circulation in this system of exchange. Musical objects are taken from the streaming archive and shared with other users via the platforms that represent public social life for them. Although the opposite direction of music circulation was initially encouraged by streaming platforms by providing an online repository for personal music archives and compilations, this is no longer promoted, as will be explained in the discussion chapters. While the initial objectives of streaming platforms may have been storing users' media to facilitate its sharing with others, the current model prioritises the archiving of commercial content so that it can be broadcasted and monetised through user-led activities. It is telling that there is no equivalent to YouTube's comment section on Spotify, so social activity around music cannot materialise within the latter platform, but rather is forced to travel outside of it (Johansson 2018). In the case of YouTube, the comment sections are the interface remnants of early internet practices, which revolved around discussions with strangers on common interests and taste. By contrast, social media platforms are based on discussing personal interests with people already known on some level or another. The inexistence of a social media feed of sorts within Spotify to talk about common music interests, or a YouTube add-on that filters to only show comments by pre-existing contacts, proves that the direction of music circulation and the hierarchy of platforms is clearly established from a social and a commercial point of view. It also reveals that while the definition of social media may be difficult to grasp, or even unwanted, the platforms have porosity, but not as far as being fully integrated with each other. As will be explained in the following sections of this chapter, this political economy consequently determines which platforms are popular and which is the privileged direction of music circulation. This porous but unequal status between platforms also explains why the research is not focused on platforms and their affordances, but rather on the practices of music circulation and their cultural implications. In addition, a focus on practices means localising the research on specific subjects and their local cultural context, rather than providing wide descriptions of political economies or forcing a Marxist reading of platform capitalism (Lovink 2011). Although conflict and power are also addressed in this research, musical activities online are studied as sites for the clash of principles, civic negotiation of norms, and

development of digital literacies. To convey this non-essentialist idea of social media, in this thesis I often refer to the concept of mediascape by Arjun Appadurai (1990) understood as “the distribution of the electronic capabilities to produce and disseminate information (...) that provide (...) large and complex repertoires of images, narratives and ethnoscaapes to viewers throughout the world (...)” (1990: 9), in this case including audio-visual objects such as music video. However, I also use the concept as it is understood in Media Studies as “as a series of media platforms within the network of networks (the Internet)” (Jackson 2016) when I refer to the “computer metamedium” (Manovich 2013) formed by the ensemble of online platforms studied here.

Moreover, a clear definition of social media is not necessary because, ultimately, this project’s object of study is the circulation of music as a form of everyday material culture. I have chosen to use ‘music content’ as a concept to narrate the findings of this research in the discussion chapters, because it retains a characterisation of music as something materially tangible, storable, and exchangeable. However, this approach to music as material culture raises a secondary question. On the one hand, the music media that form the basis of this research are indeed storable and exchangeable, and therefore retain some sort of tangible materiality as files (Horst and Miller 2012). This is particularly true given that online objects need to be stored on mass data centres with considerable physical impacts on the environment. On the other hand, the circulation of digital music through internet technologies is precisely based on its immateriality, which allows digitalisation to replace physical exchange. Although cultural activities around music such as listening have always been immaterial and imagined to an extent, this project tries to reconcile these two aspects by approaching music as material culture within an immaterial system of exchange. If ethnomusicologists aim to understand music in/as culture, this duality is an inherent aspect of the object of study – rather than a novelty of digital communication – because the character of all cultural processes is ultimately immaterial, even if based around material objects in some level. In that sense, this research is not focused on musical objects as such (for instance analysing music video), but on the relationships and other immaterial aspects of culture that develop around the circulation of digital music objects.

It would be equally ineffective to focus the research on the concept of “sharing”. Critical theorists (Fuchs 2014; Van Dijck 2013a; Meikle 2016) have pointed out that the ubiquity of the concept of sharing applied to social media obscures the corporate drive for the commodification of data and the loss of privacy by users. Even when the sharing of information is considered by users as an evolving social norm related to the promotion of a

self-image, the role of social media corporations as promoters of personal data disclosure cannot be ignored (Meikle 2016). The corporate use of sharing (with third parties) has been hidden from official statements, while the vernacular sense of the word (with friends and family) is overused by “the sharing industry” (Meikle 2016: 27, citing Van Dijck 2013a and Fuchs 2014) and naturalised as sharing with the world at large. However, sharing cultural objects with others, particularly music, is a fundamental meaning-making activity, related to the exchange of gifts (Meikle 2016; Giesler 2006), the maintenance of relationships, and ritual communication. Therefore, rather than focusing on sharing as such, this research regards the “cultures of circulation” (Lee and LiPuma 2002) of online music. Optimistic accounts such as that of Jenkins, Ford and Green (2013) place emphasis on the value and meaning that users assign to their activities and stress that practices of sharing existed well before the advent of the internet and social media. Airi Lampinen (2015) proposes to go beyond this dichotomy of celebrating and lamenting what people share online. She points out that referring to all social media traffic as sharing is political and calls for a focus on activity instead. Jenny Kennedy (2016) reaches a similar conclusion in her research, providing a framework for the notion of sharing that reflects its multiple character: as an economy driven by social capital (Bourdieu 1984); as a mode of scaled distribution; and as a site for social intensification. She also calls for a focus on practice and activity to develop understandings of “how sharing is framed theoretically, in relation to gift-giving, exchange, and reciprocity, and in terms of how sharing is framed as economic, distributive, and social practice” (2016: 462). Indeed, thinking of practices of music circulation rather than ‘sharing’ as a reified concept helps to get away of the commercial reading of the term and to think with an anthropological perspective about these activities, as Elisabetta Costa (2017) suggests. Moreover, the concept of sharing is slippery because it is intrinsically related to users’ understandings of privacy. As comparative studies have demonstrated (Miller, Costa, Haynes, McDonald, Nicolescu, Sinanan, Spyer, Venkatraman, and Wang 2016; Costa 2016, 2017; Wang 2016; Venkatraman 2017; Johansson, Werner, Åker and Goldenzwaig 2018), Western understandings of privacy do not apply in all cultural contexts. Different understandings of the private and the public can also exist within the same cultural context. As will be explained in the discussion chapters, different understandings of the public can be used and imagined at different times by the same person as well, depending on their social media activity. Therefore, thinking in terms of sharing and the dichotomy of private versus public communication does not always help in the study of social media and music. In addition, as Sasha Scott (2016) has pointed out, users stand at the very end of the chain in

the “choice network” involved in the circulation of media and the construction of meaning online, so comparing industry-driven discourses of sharing with audience practices of social exchange creates a biased representation of power dynamics.

Overall, what these complex definitions suggest is the relevance of practices and culture over platforms and affordances, as well as the impossible univocal understanding of concepts such as sharing or privacy, and even social media. To focus on the practices of online music circulation it is crucial to think in terms of musicking, as defined by Christopher Small (1998): “...to take part, in any capacity, in a musical performance, whether by performing, by listening, by rehearsing or practicing, by providing material for performance (what is called composing) or by dancing.” (1998: 9). The reason for such a wide understanding of the term is the relevance given to the capacity and power of music to create and maintain social bonds and relationships:

The act of musicking establishes in the place where it is happening a set of relationships, and it is in those relationships that the meaning of the act lies. They are to be found not only between those organized sounds which are conventionally thought of as being the stuff of musical meaning but also between the people who are taking part, in whatever capacity, in the performance; and they model, or stand as metaphor for, ideal relationships as the participants in the performance imagine them to be: relationships between person and person, between individual and society, between humanity and the natural world and even perhaps the supernatural world. (1998: 13)

Small points out that instead of taking a semantical approach and asking what the meaning of music is, or a sociological perspective which prioritises the function of music in human life (which tends to reify the musical piece) understanding music as, and in, culture requires asking how music is used as a tool and strategy to articulate sociality: “the concept of musicking leads us to ask what the dynamics are for each social interaction articulated around or through music” (1998: 10). Small goes further and explains that a musical work is not even required for musicking to take place, as cultural practices can develop without specific reference to an object as a site of participation. This is a crucial point because, as it will be shown in Chapters 5 and 6, actual listening is not necessary for musicking practices to take place online. David Hesmondhalgh (2013) criticises Small for blurring performance with participation, failing to incorporate the difference between performers and audiences into his analysis. He also criticises Small’s valuing of music as potentially able to rebuild a lost sociality (2013: 89) and questions whether musicians and listeners have a shared concern for establishing ideal sets of relationships and norms (2013: 90). However, this duality of

musicking practices as performative and participative, and this understanding of musical practices as tools for the common good, may fit a study of music circulation on social media, as it will be developed in the discussion chapters. On the one hand, from the prosumer/produser perspective of Jenkins et al. (2013, in turn based on Bruns 2008 and Toffler 1980) the line between performer, user, and audience is not as clear on social media (see Chapter 5). On the other hand, a space of emerging cultural activity and norms such as social media fosters the creation and practice of an ideal normativity (see chapters 3 and 6). Therefore, although Small does not conceptualise musicking for recorded music media practices and downplays the role of imagined forms of community (Hesmondhalgh 2013: 91), the concept is still useful to approach music and social media because it focuses on practices from a wide perspective that includes the activities that develop around music performance.

Despite these counterarguments, Hesmondhalgh's contribution is useful for the conceptual underpinning of this research. His stress on the positive sociality that music articulates, from the micro-events such as talking with friends about music, to his macro notion of collective flourishing, fits well with the case studies of this thesis. He identifies music as a meeting point for intimate and social realms (2013: 2). However, he also questions the intrinsically liberating character generally given to both music and digital technologies (2013: 132) and explains how music can reinforce defensive forms of identification, such as the duality of community building and exclusion developed in Chapter 1 of this thesis, as well as provide a platform for collective deliberation (2013: 85). A similar perspective on music as culture-making element that fits this research is that of Simon Frith (1996), who highlights that the aesthetic experience of music "gives us a way of being in the world, a way of making sense of it" (1996: 272). For him, music gives people a particularly intense "subjective sense of being social" that "both articulates and offers the immediate experience of collective identity" (1996: 273). Frith's contribution is particularly relevant for his theorisation of ritual on and through music activities (Chapter 6), which Small (1987) has also analysed.

In short, the research for this thesis stands on two theoretical principles. First, users inhabit social media as living spaces where culture, meaning, and belonging can be articulated through the development of norms, relationships, and reciprocity. This approach to social media as a living space is incompatible with narrow definitions of platforms based on affordances. Consequently, this research focuses on the online musicking practices that play a role in dynamics of sociality, particularly music circulation. Second, music is approached as

a culture-making material object within an immaterial system of exchange formed by wider online cultures of circulation.

0.1.3 Rationale

The initial idea for this research project first came to me during the spring of 2013 in the last months of my Ethnomusicology masters' degree at the School of Oriental and African Studies in the University of London. However, unlike many other doctoral research projects, this was not derived from my Masters' dissertation. Within the context of Dr. Somnath Batabyal's course *Emerging Digital Cultures*, I wrote a short essay on memetic music videos as forms of online communication. While I was writing this piece of coursework I realised that the underlying question that remained unanswered in the existing scholarship was why such media forms are circulated. Communication and sociality seemed to partially explain these phenomena, but I found there were insufficient research publications in specific areas in the study of social media and music, such as identity or ritual. I felt at the time that scholarship on the internal micropolitics of social media and streaming platforms and their uses was lacking, particularly with regards to the everyday role music. Some of the sources that I consulted during my Masters seemed to take for granted certain social dynamics on social media as mirroring offline social life, but there was a significant absence of publications on the dynamics of music and online sociality.

The definitive factor in my decision to undertake a PhD and prepare a proposal came from my growing disappointment with the Spanish music press in 2014. Neo-luddite perspectives on social media technologies had become commonplace in the general press and this quickly translated into music publications, where anti-streaming articles were increasingly popular and social media was often described as superficial sociality for uneducated people. Together with Agustín Frizzera, director of *Democracia en Red* ("Networked Democracy") in Argentina and collaborator of Media Lab Prado in Madrid, we decided to respond to one specific article in which a musician described social media as an antisocial dystopia equal to a Proustian bourgeois salon, where stupid comments are applauded and reproduced ad infinitum. In our response, we argued that social media must be approached as an extension of offline sociality, equally relevant as other social spheres, rather than as a perversion of it (Frizzera and Campos 2014). More importantly, in the online conversations that took place in the preparation for the article response, I learned further about Frizzera's perspective for an online technology of the Commons, based on the principle of "transparency for

corporations and government, privacy for citizens” (Frizzera, private communication April 2014). This experience led me to think that for any democratic endeavour based on online social spheres to succeed, a better understanding of the social dynamics within “2.0 technologies” (DiNucci 1999) was required, particularly from a Spanish perspective.

This episode, together with my preliminary research during my Masters’ degree, formed the basis of my initial set of research questions. Why is music circulated on social media? What areas of social life are involved in these practices? How does music play a role in articulating politics online? Therefore, from its inception, this research aims to build a theory of popular music and social media that considers online music activities as part of the wider dynamics of social life, without pathologizing the practices and their users. When I wrote the proposal that eventually became my PhD research outlined in this thesis, I hoped to counterbalance the narrative of social media anxiety and musical neo-luddism, but I also wanted to improve the academic understanding of musical activities on social media as an emerging social realm.

Stepping away from such behaviourist and dystopic understandings of online activities that appeared in the music press required the avoidance of questions such as how social media influence music practices, focusing instead on what people actually make of available online resources. To achieve this objective, this research focuses on human agency in online activities, although the influence of platform and other machine systems is acknowledged. Using a human-centred approach, I also distance the project from the areas of Big Data research and other quantitative approaches that would focus on the recurrence of certain online practices. Similarly, while the focus of this research is online social interaction, the use of ethnography brings richer insights than semiotic content analysis of online comment sections. In addition, from the initial proposal and research aims that were oriented towards studying the role of music on online identity narratives, the ethnography has oriented the project towards a sociality-centred investigation. Likewise, although a study of online music activities can offer a wide choice of case studies to focus on for this project, I chose the Spanish community in London for logistical reasons, because it was closer to me physically, but also culturally as a Spanish migrant, providing relatively easier access than other communities. Though this choice limited the reach and comparative capacity of the project, it gave the advantage of providing a focused, yet rich, in-depth case study that was complex enough to include a discussion about multiple identities and diverse cultural habits. Moreover, while the research plan always anticipated an engagement with politics as an intrinsic element of personal and collective identity, the specific context of institutional

politics of Spain and the UK in 2016-2018 gave the research a greater macropolitical dimension than originally intended.

Although the overall approach and methodology of this research project is ethnographic, its theoretical framework sits at the intersection of several disciplines and areas of study, investigating the circulation of music on social media from an ethnomusicological perspective with a focus on audiences and fans online across different platforms, which previous scholarship has not approached, as the literature review will show. The complexity of online music practices requires an interdisciplinary approach across media studies and ethnomusicology, while previous studies offer only partial accounts of this issue or do not specifically address music. However, this project cannot include all publications that have emerged from computer, internet and communication studies. The relative novelty of social media has also made it the target for a wealth of journalistic accounts which, for instance, warn of the possible negative impacts engagement with social media could have on its users. The research here is based on academic contributions from Ethnomusicology, Social Media Studies, Anthropology and to a lesser extent, Sociology. The objective is to shed light on the uses of music on social media in the production of sociality, providing an ethnomusicological perspective on the social media musicking activities of audiences and fans.

0.1.4 Thesis Outline

This thesis is organised thematically in six chapters. Before discussing the different themes, two introductory sections contextualise the research in order to familiarise the reader with the field, and to delineate where its contribution to knowledge can be located. First, the study is placed in the existing literature and an explanation of its theoretical framework is provided. Second, the research design and methodology are outlined in detail to illustrate the specific combination of anthropological and media approaches used to conduct the study.

Chapter 1 deals with social media as a performative space where identities can be articulated, following the existing scholarship on social media as technologies of the self (Bakardjieva and Gaden 2012) and applying Judith Butler's (1999) concept of "embodiment". It addresses online musicking practices from two perspectives, national identities of migrants and gender identity, whilst addressing affective aspects of identity articulation. It also includes a discussion of how online music practices can be approached as multicultural, particularly in the Spanish context, and a case study on reggaetón to illustrate the intersectionality of identity performance. It concludes by arguing in favour of discussions of

identity with a broader understanding of social media practices as a way of being in the world that is tied to relationships with others.

Chapter 2 expands on the ideas outlined in Chapter 1, addressing musicking practices on social media as articulations and ways of maintaining relationships with other individuals and groups such as friends and family. It applies Bourdieu's (1984) concept of "social capital" to investigate how sacralised music items and informal musicking practices are crucial elements in online sociality. It concludes by highlighting the need to go beyond subcultural approaches in studies of migration, because the accumulation of symbolic capital is of secondary importance in comparison with relationship maintenance.

Chapter 3 addresses the macropolitical dimension specific to this case study, investigating how the political context of Spain and the UK affected the social media practices of participants. Musicking activities oriented to the articulation of political opinions through comedy became considerably relevant during the fieldwork and illustrated the point argued in Chapter 1, whereby musicking practices on social media are also found to be citizenship practices, particularly in a context of institutional repression. Musical citizenship is actively mobilised for an imagined common democratic good, allowing users to circumvent state control and provide relief, and form temporary alliances in times of political change.

Chapter 4 begins with an acknowledgement of fandom practices as identity practices in reference to the analysis in Chapter 1, but takes this further with an investigation of music fandom online. The specific context of social media and streaming platforms which fosters algorithmic, temporary, and silent kinds of engagement with music, contributes to the appearance of a post-object music fandom where sociality is the central element. This kind of fandom that emerges from social media musicking practices is based on the users' acknowledgement of the conditions of the platforms that they use and their own reflexive practices to address them in collaborative or disruptive ways.

Chapter 5 continues the argument in Chapter 4 by addressing the kinds of audience dynamics that are involved in online musicking practices. Besides understanding social media activities as communication between individuals and groups, this chapter addresses the multidirectional character of audiences online and the specific characteristics of social media communication. Users post and circulate music with imagined audiences in mind because they are conscious of the mediatised character of platforms and the ubiquity of music media. This in turn shapes imagined listening as an emerging cultural norm that governs musicking practices on social media. In addition, the understanding by users of such tacit norms

contributes to the circulation and exchange of music media as visual objects, which act as symbolic objects of sound and meaning.

Chapter 6 continues the arguments presented in the previous chapters by addressing the ritualistic aspects of music circulation on social media, particularly focusing on visual content and music iconography. After introducing the wider context of online media rituals on social media, it enters this area from four perspectives: music as meme; music mourning rituals; online music games as rituals; and online music rituals as extension of offline practices. Such music rituals contribute to the creation and maintenance of specific moral economies of music circulation that govern the practices of users and refer to ideas of common good and expansion of social worlds. In addition, the ritualization of music exchange is positioned within a wider context of ritualised practices in algocracies such as the social media and the IT industries.

The following two sections contextualise the field of this research identifying its contribution to knowledge and outlining the methodology and research design of the project.

0.2 Literature Review

As pointed out in the conceptual framework and rationale, to answer the research questions outlined above requires an interdisciplinary approach. This literature review includes scholarship from Social Media Anthropology, Media Studies and Ethnomusicology, addressing the main thematic areas where this research stands and contributes: identity and the self; interpersonal relationships; critical theory of social media; audiences, prosumers and fandom; subjectivity and affect; music and mediation; and finally, online music ethnography.

Social Media, Identity and the Self

The first thematic area that this thesis investigates is how identity and the self are articulated through social media musicking. However, in order to avoid the pathologizing perspective mentioned above, this literature review steers away from Psychology and Sociology scholarship focused on the negative effects of social media on the formation of the self, such as individualisation and loss of an essential element of our so-called authentic humanity, such as attention or communication (Joinson 2003). Internet research pioneer Sherry Turkle (1984; 1995; 2011; 2015) focuses in her early work on whether internet activities could change the way people think about the self, particularly referring to young people. Her conceptualisation of computers as mirror machines through which individuals can question, and experiment with, their own ideas of themselves is indeed useful for this research. However, her starting point was a negative analysis of contemporary society, torn between the anxieties of connecting with others and a fear of intimacy (1984: 280). Her later research is more optimistic, conceptualising internet spaces as enablers for performing different personae (1995: 260). She considers this personality flexibility as a defining feature of postmodern society and provides users' testimonies to confirm their ease with this idea of "virtual personae as objects-to-think-with" (1995: 260), which this thesis further develops in Chapter 1. A similar approach is given to 'virtual communities' as cultural spaces for learning. Her more recent scholarship (Turkle 2011; 2015) recovers her initial analyses of contemporary society and deals with negative aspects such as being connected while feeling in solitude and micro-managing an edited self in online interactions. She also calls for a change of attitude regarding communicative shallowness, lack of attention, and dependency on devices in modern life. Therefore, Turkle's work provides a critical approach to online

identity that is useful, but overall too focused on negative and psychological aspects of online interaction.

Many of the contributions in this area rely on an understanding of the self as a theatrical presentation in the style outlined in the seminal book by Erving Goffman (1956). His analogy of a theatre of human interaction through the representation of public and private aspects of the self to others continues to be an important base for the analysis of symbolic and performative practices of individuals in social life. Other authors also focus on how the mediation of different platforms and their affordances can shape the self-presentations of individuals (Van Dijck 2013b). However, while platforms and their affordances remain essential to the analysis of social media, caution should be used when claiming that platforms' properties are the causes of social dynamics (Miller et al. 2016: 6).

Rather than a focus on the effects of mediation on the self, this research looks at the mediation of a staged self and the articulation of self-presentations on social media as intrinsically human practices. Maria Bakardjieva and Georgia Gaden (2012) use the Foucauldian notion of technologies of the self, applying it to Web 2.0 technologies and the need of work "of self on self" (2012: 157). Their contribution resonates with more optimistic takes on identity articulation and is useful for the framework used in this project. However, Bakardjieva and Gaden still focus on individuals and their analysis privileges blogs as the technology that represents the dynamics of participatory culture, therefore still not addressing the role of recent social media platforms. Instead, in Zizi Papacharissi's (2011) edited volume the contributors conceptualise the self and personal identity as an element that traverses different private and public planes of interaction, or networks. They approach social networking sites as technologies that provide a stage for this self-presentation and identity negotiation. For Papacharissi, public displays of friendship are used to authenticate identity and introduce the self into a reflexive mode of interaction. Cultural references are among the tools that enable this self-presentation towards a particular network of contacts. Therefore, a networked self is what emerges from the sociality interacted and enabled by platforms.

More specific to music and identity is the work of Airi Lampinen and Suvi Uski (2016), who have researched self-presentation through Facebook and Last.fm, pioneering an approach that focuses on the intersection between social media and music platforms. They provide useful insights into the development of norms and the different character given to manual and automatic sharing, concluding that authenticity is more difficult to convey on social media than in real life, even if it still is the main goal of profile work. Blake Durham (2018)

uses a similar approach focused on streaming profiles, understanding them as “virtual cabinets of the self” (2018: 233). While such contributions are indeed relevant to this project, the investigation of social media musicking necessarily also needs to incorporate scholarship on the dynamics of online relationships.

Online Personal Relationships

To understand why people post and circulate music on social media and, therefore, how music and social media tools are used to articulate sociality and personal relationships, it is crucial to refer to one crucial concept and two seminal works in this area. The concept of ‘context collapse’ refers to social media sites’ flattening effect of multiple audiences into one (Marwick and boyd 2010) and the subsequent tension generated by the need to manage self-presentations to diverse social groups at the same time. The navigation of context collapse results in users’ creation of varied strategies, such as creating multiple accounts or only posting “lowest-common denominator” content (ibid: 122) that family, friends, co-workers and acquaintances will not find offensive. Context collapse is also one of the drivers of practices of ‘imagined audiences’, as it will be explained further below.

Nancy Baym (2010) provides a pioneering in-depth analysis of personal relationships, dealing with the internet and digital media in general. She points out that most relational communication is implicit in digital media, where the messages exchanged act both as “tools to build connections and mirrors through which we see them” (2010: 125). She also highlights that technologies are given symbolic meanings through their use as communication tools and that social presence is not a feature of the technological medium, but a mode of user perception, as the case studies in this thesis confirm. Chapter 2 also expands the research of Baym and Ledbetter (2009) discussing whether affinity of musical taste fosters the creation of personal ties, also concluding that although weak ties are established through music taste, these rarely develop into strong ties.

Deborah Chambers (2013) also develops a theory of mediated intimacy, more specific to social media platforms and the recent technoscape than Baym’s. She argues against negative academic readings of friendship and personal relations online, considering the rise of an “elective intimacy” (2013: 163) as a means of expression and affective fulfilment. For her, fluid friendships are markers of equality and reciprocity that aspire to make relationships more meaningful and stand as sites of a renewed engagement with others. She points out that this involves a ritualization of friendship, as well as a public staging of identity articulated

around “networked publics” (boyd 2011), which certainly resonates with the findings in this thesis. These networked micro-social worlds are organised through media technologies and around texts, emotional exchanges and the sharing of cultural artefacts (2013: 166). From this perspective the development of social capital is seen as a somewhat positive feature of social media, allowing the extension and strengthening of weak or broken ties, rather than as a source of class struggle or distinction in the Bourdieuan sense (Bourdieu 1984), as Chapter 2 confirms. She also highlights that producing and circulating content is an essential tool for managing online identity, lifestyle and personal connections. From a Foucauldian point of view, she argues, social media are sites for the self-regulation of subjectivity in a sort of “entrepreneurial individualism” (2013: 169). She concludes by questioning whether mediated intimacies on social media are being moulded to fit commercial agendas, in particular if commercial endorsement and promotion has fuelled the rise of self-endorsement and self-presentation through consumption. This idea is debatable, since identity through consumption is a phenomenon that existed well before the existence of the internet, but Chapter 4 provides some insights into promotion-oriented social media fandom and other critical studies literature is further discussed within the next section. In similar terms, research in Italy (Farci, Rossi, Boccia Artieri and Giglietto 2016) explores the strategies of Facebook users to manage their intimacy and friendships, concluding that the strategies deployed by users are the result of a collaborative creation of symbolic space that acts as a social resource, where relationships can be enhanced and maintained.

Critical Theory and Online Culture

Critical perspectives on social media are abundant, ranging from some of the approaches to self-identity outlined above, to critical theories of social media as political systems. An example of the former is the work Karl Spracklen (2015) wherein ‘the Net’ is found to be a positive space to construct and maintain identity and belonging, but fails to be a truly communicative space because of its “instrumental nature” (2015: 112). In the latter group is the extensive analysis of social media by Christian Fuchs (2014). He sees social media as commercial exploitation and commodification of communication and sociality, questioning whether real debate can emerge within the platforms’ constraints. He also criticises the concepts of prosumer, participatory culture and sharing practices, defining them as “digital sublime” based on Marxist theory (2014: 255). A previous milestone contribution to critical theory from Geert Lovink (2011) also argues against the negative effects of the internet on communicational practices and human cognition. He argues that online identity tends to

monetise affect and self-disclosure, and posits a distinction between “mundane” commenting (2011: 51) and intelligent discussion on social media activity. In addition, Lovink generally compares the current uses of social media with wider emancipating purposes such as providing a new music video aesthetic or promoting difference, focusing on creating a standard for what the internet could be, rather than analysing what it actually is. A similar argument is present in the book *In the Facebook Aquarium* by the collective Ippolita (2015), which carefully dissects the threats of personal data commodification and the monetisation of identity performance. Thinking of social media as political system is the research of Evgeny Morozov (2011), for whom internet technologies are extensions of state control and surveillance that facilitate political repression, as perspective developed in Chapter 3 of this thesis. Although these authors overcome the technological determinism of previous studies by proposing alternatives to the current social media technoscape, they still hold responsible the political economy of platforms for individualism and identity performance, not giving much credit to human agency. They also maintain a quite negative perspective on the culture-making possibilities of online interaction whereby any valuable social activity is subject to the creation of new online platforms in the future.

A similar systemic perspective is put forward by José Van Dijck (2013a), who argues that sociality is no longer networked and user-based but platform-based. For her, online culture is not based on participation anymore, but owner-centred connectivity made for coding and selling human interaction through technology. She points out that online sociality is co-produced by humans and machines but does not consider the participation of users modifying and repurposing content. Overall, her perspective seems to be technologically deterministic, positioning platforms and media as the responsible agents for the changes in sociality, and thereby understanding the ubiquity of sharing for social acceptance and self-promotion as the main goals of online social interaction. She seems to assume that sociality was informal and unmediated before social media and continues a tradition of thought that approaches media technologies from the tension between political empowerment and corporate co-option. In the same line is the research of Steven Colburn (2015), who analysed filming and uploading live music concerts to YouTube as a form of developing cultural capital in Bordieuan terms, thereby interpreting online sociality as instrumentalised.

Specifically looking at online music, recent platform-centric perspectives from Alessandro Gandini and Tiziano Bonini (Gandini 2016; Bonini 2017; Gandini and Bonini forthcoming; Airoldi, Beraldo and Gandini 2016) use critical theory to research online music consumption practices, with a focus on the algocratic systems of YouTube and Spotify and the power

dynamics between users and platforms. However, their research does not consider how music circulates between platforms and how patterns of consumption give rise to cultural understandings of music as this thesis does.

What links these studies of the internet and social media is the focus on the entities of the network, the platform, or the self as the centre of their paradigms, through a macrosocial approach difficult to apply in localised contexts. This thesis, however, reaches beyond researching the effects of digital technologies on the self, approaching these as additional cultural mediators of relationships and spaces of sociality, rather than as the sole mediators in an otherwise neutral cultural environment. Similarly, although the impact of a network of political economies on the users is considered, the focus here is on technological mediations and cultural artefacts as tools to create sociality and culture.

Audiences, Prosumers and Fandom

To study how users articulate their activities on social media, it is necessary to refer to the notion of audience. The research participants, as social media users, are active agents and producers that perform for an audience of friends, family, and acquaintances. But also, users and music fans are, in turn, members of the audience in traditional terms within the wider mediascape of music and audio-visual media.

Several authors approach social media audiences as imagined audiences, which resonates with the concept of “imagined communities” developed by Benedict Anderson (1983), whereby belonging to a group such as a nation is a cultural process of collective imagination. Chambers (2013) establishes that on social media relationship work is made towards three types of audiences: generalised others, imagined audiences (based on boyd 2006 and Marwick and boyd 2010) and specific significant others (2013: 168). Papacharissi (2011) also distinguishes between different types of audiences, highlighting that performances of the self for sociality are polysemous and depend on the audience. Eden Litt and Eszter Hargittai (2016; Litt 2012) also highlight the imaginary character of social media audiences, researching the ways in which users adapt their conceptualisation of the audience in social networking sites for each given post. For them, the imagined audience is a “mental conceptualization of the people with whom we are communicating” (2016: 1). These contributions demonstrate that agency and reflexivity constitute the basis of online communication in social media, in contrast to approaches that emphasize the platforms and their affordances as the dominant drivers for social media interaction. They also illustrate

that a given community of online musical activities is not a stable entity and will change as users make sense of their sociality and belonging.

The conceptualisation of the user as active performer and producer is an important element in this thesis, which follows the work that several authors have developed. Henry Jenkins has analysed participatory culture in his early work (Jenkins 1992; 2006a) focusing on the specific type of audience that are fans and active bloggers as the vanguard of users of new media. He highlights how interactive audiences create new texts and value through their online activities. In his book co-authored with Samuel Ford and Joshua Green (2013), they distinguish audiences (measured aggregates of individuals) and publics (collectivities greater than the sum of the parts that actively direct attention to messages they value), understanding that while fans are audiences, fandoms are publics (2013: 166). This distinction stresses that active engagement is what creates relationships between users, and therefore overcoming traditional ideas of audience. The users' acts of curation or circulation are what intensifies their involvement in a particular community (2013: 170). Jenkins et al. use the concepts of "spreadable media" and "produsage" (Bruns 2008) to articulate their approach to the online activities of users, postulating that circulation is what transforms a text from being a commodity to becoming a cultural resource. They argue that communication rather than self-promotion or broadcasting is the element that constitutes the online community. Although they admit that only a small percentage of users are active creators of content, they criticise participation models that establish a hierarchy of users where the producers are at the top of the scale in comparison to viewers. For them, any user plays a multiplicity of roles in different contexts, so such hierarchy is not useful. In a similar vein as Jenkins is the analysis of Patryk Galuszka (2015), who argues that the 'new economy of fandom' holds a contradictory duality between the gift economy and the market economy, so fans/consumers, producers, and freeloaders are interrelated parts of the same social system, as Chapters 4 and 5 of this thesis confirm.

Also useful for this framework are fan studies that investigate audience participation in relation to media texts. Mark Duffett (2013) highlights the importance of community over object in online and offline fan cultures and how parasocial fan interactions are exposed on digital media, as the final three chapters of this thesis show. He points out that online practices have changed fandom "from a network of local cultures or periodic rituals into a non-stop process of social effervescence" (2013: 239). He conceptualises fandom as a performance of "audiencehood" (2013: 241) within an imagined community with the objective of creating and maintaining social ties. Still within fandom studies, Paul Booth

(2010) proposes a ludic perspective on digital fan activities and an approach to digital media as cultural process. However, his research focuses more on how fans actively engage in media texts and participate in the creation of meanings for the text and identity as roleplay, rather than the creation of meanings for the users' own social lives. He also distinguishes between fan and fandoms in similar terms as Jenkins (2013) and attributes to the latter the authorship of media texts. In addition, he explains that social media activities between users can also be considered gift-giving processes, because they exchange valuable resources such as time and attention (2010: 146), an idea that this thesis develops in relation to social media musicking, particularly in Chapter 5.

In Media Studies Andy Ruddock (2007) analyses the engagement of audiences and fans as political subjects, arguing for the importance of apparently meaningless media as charged with social significance, and highlighting in particular that the definitions of the meaningful are often culturally biased. Regarding audience relationships with celebrities, he points out that the central question remains how mediation contributes to build a sense of the social (2007: 122), a question that is investigated in throughout this thesis. In a similar vein is the work of Kelli Burns (2009) on the interrelationship and mutual feed between social media and popular culture, where the role of music artists and creators is central to fandom around particular media content or an artist. An additional similar approach is that of Melissa Click, Hyunji Lee and Holly Holladay (2013), who point out that social media amplifies fan identification with celebrities.

These contributions are useful to the framework of this thesis because they question traditional understandings of the audience, the consumers, and the users. However, they generally provide broad theories and analyses of phenomena, where the microsocial aspects are secondary. Recent research projects (Jeffery 2016; Harper 2016) address this gap in knowledge by looking at the microsocial sphere of fan creation of paratexts as intertextual discourses that exist alongside (and are central to the interpretation and meaning-making of) the main media texts, creating alternative narratives as sites of production of meaning, identity, and discourse. However, they focus on semiotics and textual analysis as methods of research, rather than engaging in ethnographic research as this project.

Music and Subjectivity: Affect and Everyday Life

Focused on the individual, Tia DeNora (1999; 2000; 2006) approaches music and self-identity from a Sociology of Music perspective. For her, music as a technology of the self is an active

component in the construction of subjectivity. She suggests that instead of looking at how music underwrites structures of feeling or aesthetic agency, research should look at how individuals actively mobilize culture, because music is used and works as an ordering material and a “medium for making” in social life, able to impart “shape and texture to being, feeling and doing” (2000: 152). She approaches digital technologies and the semiotic abilities of music as tools to work on self-identity construction and articulation. Her ethnographic investigation looks at diverse social settings to document the strategies through which music is mobilized as a resource for producing the scenes and routines of daily social life. She also regards music activities as oriented towards an imagined community or ideal scenario, taking music as an aesthetic material and using semiotics and music analysis to understand the relationship between specific music pieces and the production of culture. Likewise, she focuses on music’s role in the construction of the self and in the construction of “social scenes”, which is a more static approach than this thesis attempts when addressing sociality and culture-making.

Regarding the integrated character of affect and music activities in everyday life, a crucial contribution comes from Anahid Kassabian (2013), who coins the terms of “ubiquitous musics” and “ubiquitous listening” (2013: 10) particularly referring to public environments. She focuses on how ubiquitous musics can generate affects and processes to construct identity through “distributed subjectivity” (2013: 32). Furthermore, since ubiquitous computing allows omnipresent music streaming, she argues that commodified digital music allows for the territorialisation of physical spaces (2013:70). Moreover, she posits that when music is streamed in a public environment, actual communication is replaced with “the assumption of the listener’s response” (in reference to Sterne 1997). This resonates with the concept of an imagined audience outlined above and provides useful conceptual tools to analyse online musicking, which is further elaborated in Chapter 5.

A similar framework to the one used in this thesis is that of Raphael Nowak (2016), who considers ubiquitous musics, affect and everyday life influenced by the concept of musicking (Small 1998). His research on music consumption highlights that everyday contexts, musicking activities and technological materialities mediate both the ways in which users interact with music (2016: 48), and the creation of meanings and sociality in individuals’ life narratives. His participants highlight the link between sociality and the sharing of musical content as a culture-making activity that goes beyond the display of taste. However, Nowak does not seem to include these practices as social activities. Instead, he focuses on the concepts of role and narrative, rather than meaning and identity. His concept of “role-

normative modes of listening” (2016: 79) as the different ways of listening to music according to the task or context, reworked from Ola Stockfelt’s perspective on “adequate modes of listening” (Stockfelt 2004), moves the understanding of music taste away from a Bourdieuan (display) to a Deleuzian (assemblage) perspective. However, here it is worth pointing out that Small’s concept of musicking is descriptive, not prescriptive (1998: 9), aiming to include all activities related to music, whether active or passive, without the implicit value judgement of terms such as normative and adequate. Nowak’s conceptualisation of musicking also incorporates the perspective of David Hesmondhalgh (2013) for whom the value of music resides in its power to create and maintain social bonds. Hesmondhalgh’s enquiry into the social value of music conceptualises its influence on affect and emotion as capable of enriching human life and allowing communities to flourish. He rightly points out that omnivorousness in music has taken a more prominent role in our musical lives than distinction, in favour of wider cultural values such as moral engagement (2013: 52) and sociable publics for the common good (2013: 85) as forms of politics (2013: 144), as this thesis confirms.

These perspectives on music and everyday life stress that the activities that people develop online and offline further reinforce the omnipresence of music in their lives. They also conceptualise the consumption and reception of music as activities intertwined with the ensemble of social and personal activities of individuals and their subjectivities. However, with the exception of Hesmondhalgh, they retain a somewhat behaviourist framework in their approach to music as psychological utility. Moreover, Kassabian does not investigate the online musical activities that contribute to her framework of ubiquitous musics. Nowak acknowledges that the increasing fragmentation of music consumption is linked to the rise of digital technologies and dedicates considerable attention to the online peer-to-peer activities of his participants, providing also case studies; but he does not research the uses of social media platforms or any specific social media-based activities as this thesis does.

Users and Platforms

To investigate in detail the interaction of users with online platforms, Cecilia Suhr (2012) provides an analysis of specific music-oriented sites such as MySpace and YouTube, conceptualising them as “fields of cultural production” (2012:3) and intermediaries between musicians, industry and consumers. However, the focus of Suhr’s research were the activities that musicians undertake to broadcast their own compositions, and the processes of

contestation and consecration that follow. She seems to conceptualise the digital consumer as an homogeneous group and to establish a clear distinction between musicians/professionals and consumers/amateurs. In a similar vein, Ole Mjøs (2012) provides a comprehensive exploration of the global social media landscape with a special interest in the relationship between platforms and electronic music practitioners. His research focuses on the development of MySpace, YouTube and Facebook and how these have come to be intertwined with the music industry. However, he maintains the traditional distinction between music producers and consumers without investigating the agency of the latter in consumption. In contrast with this musician-centric studies, and closer to this thesis, is the comparative study led by Sophia Johansson, which researches the practices of two user groups for Spotify in Stockholm and VK in Moscow, focusing on streaming as crucial element of everyday life and musical practices (Johansson et al. 2018). Their perspective on ubiquity and music as a common good is further confirmed in the discussion of audiences in Chapter 5 of this thesis, and their conceptualisation of fandom as both a commercial and creative social space certainly resonates with the findings outlined in Chapter 4.

Here the pioneering study by Jean Burgess and Joshua Green (2009) needs to be highlighted as precedent. They discuss different modes of engagement and participation, content creation, remix and annotation within YouTube as a space of cultural citizenship (2009: 81) and participatory culture (2009: 14), as Chapter 3 highlights in relation to political music content. They stress the importance of including the different uses of content in social media settings and the range of communicative purposes that users articulate (2009: 58), understanding digital literacies as practices (2009: 71). They pioneered the analysis of “mundane, tasteless, talentless” media as remarkable objects in cultural terms (2009: 25) and the focus on online expressions of audiencehood as ordinary forms of cultural production (2009: 47). However, this study is limited to only one platform. There has also been a wealth of studies in recent years on remixing media (Manovich 2015), yet few address music as forms of participation as Navas, Gallagher and Burrough 2015 show, even if remixing practices originated in DJ culture (Attias, Gavanas and Rietveld 2013). An exception to this is the recent research of Keith Negus (2016). He points out how the circulation of sampled or imitated music material pushes artists to negotiate the meaning of ‘original’ works changing the value and character of music from being a premium commodity to a free utility, effectively comparing access to digital music with radio.

Also worthy of mention is Jenkins’ concept of “convergent media” (2006b). For him, convergent platforms allow users to combine different types of media to articulate new

texts. Therefore, the combination of music, images, video, and texts produce meanings and culture within internet platforms through the agency of users. In addition, he conceptualises convergence as the model to explain the wider political economy of the internet and social media. Although his approaches to internet culture have been criticised for being too celebratory at the expense of critical analysis (see for instance Van Dijck 2013a: 128), his approach towards media is useful for the framework of this research because it emphasizes the transmedia character of the creation of meaning and culture, which is a crucial in the case studies of Chapter 6 in relation to music-based visual media. Jenkins' contribution was also the theoretical base for the edited volume by Jennifer Holt and Kevin Sanson (2014). They foresee social network sites as evolving gradually into delivery platforms and highlight an approach to digital media circulation with a combination of political economics and research into user engagement and consumption practices. However, their volume focuses on video-based content such as film and television, without addressing musical content specifically.

Lev Manovich (2015) also points out that the study of new media should not focus only on the affordances of software, but also look at how users circulate, edit and experience media as components of communicational practices. Manovich stresses that the concept of remix comes from music media in particular and that after decades of music remixes, artists conceive their work as something that will certainly be remixed. He also considers media objects as no longer having a final destination, because messages continue to move across people, sites and devices. His contrast of remixing activities with collecting habits as opposing approaches to media certainly resonates with the research findings that are developed in the discussion chapters. In addition, both Jenkins and Manovich, consider these dynamic uses of media within wider cultural activities in society and acknowledge the historical construction of user-generated texts, putting current online practices into perspective. Mark Deuze adopts a similar anthropologically-oriented perspective, considering how people "live *in* media rather than *with* media" (Deuze 2012: 143, original emphasis).

More recently, Graham Meikle (2016) has combined a critical approach to platforms with an analysis of the uses and cultural implications of social media. He posits that sharing can be understood as part of the political economy of platforms that profit from the circulation of information. However, he also acknowledges that there is a reciprocal dimension to sharing and exchanging media online, just as gifts are the basis of social interactions since time immemorial. He concludes that media and information literacies are essential to developing critical uses of technologies that can also expand sociality for users. Another approach that

focuses on digital literacies is that of Rodney Jones & Christoph Hafner (2012). Their framework includes an anthropological understanding of mediation that includes all cultural tools. They quote Daniel Miller and Don Slater (2000: 14) to point out that rather than looking to understand how people use the internet as a single entity, researchers should look at how people assemble various technical possibilities to make an internet of their own, as this thesis attempts. In their analysis digital literacies are those that facilitate practices of doing, meaning, relating, thinking, and being, for users, therefore conceptualising them as social processes.

Although these approaches provide valuable insights for a range of uses and internet platforms, they once again provide macro perspectives and confirm the need to analyse these activities from a case study-based investigation that goes beyond broad cultural patterns. This research focuses on a particular group of users (although not music experts or part of a subculture) and their motivations for culture-making online, providing richer data about wider understandings sociality and music than studies of subculture.

Music Media and Mediation

This thesis is also conceived as a digital-era expansion of studies of music video (Goodwin 1992; Vernallis 2004), understanding that the semiotic capacities of music video reside in the combination of visual and sonic aspects, within a given cultural context. In recent years, there has been a renewed interest in music video from an industrial (Edmond 2014) and academic point of view (Keazor and Wübbena 2010; Richardson, Gorbman and Vernallis 2010; Vernallis 2013; Shaviro 2017; Koorsgard 2017; Arnold, Cookney, Fairclough and Goddard 2017; Kaiser and Spanu 2018), arising from the format making its way onto digital platforms and becoming multiple kinds of new media. However, the research for this thesis departs slightly from these perspectives because it does not focus on a semiotic or aesthetic analysis of the content of music videos as such. Rather, it looks at the circulation of music videos as online media objects that mediate sociality and, to an extent, the impact of image and technology on music as Frith (2002) and Henry Keazor (2018) do, but focused on the social media realm. Similarly, this thesis investigates new 'mundane' forms of experiencing music video without sound that are related to the musicless and memetic videos that Cande Sánchez-Olmos and Eduardo Viñuela (2017) analyse on YouTube, but with the addition of ethnographic engagement and a multi-platform perspective.

This research takes a comparable perspective regarding streaming services, investigating how music is circulated and shared as a social object, rather than investigating the commercial aspects of the platforms such as datafication of listening practices or curation strategies (Prey 2016; Gandini and Bonini forthcoming). It follows studies of the practices and motivations of listeners, understanding streaming practices as ways of being in the world and making sense of it, that users see as social mediations (Hagen 2016b). They highlight streaming services as taken-for-granted technologies of everyday experience (Hagen 2015, 2016a; Johansson et al. 2018), where static uses of streaming such as creating playlists promote a sense of ownership, thus de-commodifying online music gifting through affective investment (Johansson et al. 2018; Fenby-Hulse 2016; Hagen 2015).

Ultimately, this approach to online music media conceptualises it as a form of mediation as earlier ethnomusicology does for electronic-based devices (Keil 1994). However, instead of considering digital media as simply vehicles of transmission, online music is “an additional part of a wider web of social mediations, interactions between humans and music that has always existed” (Wood 2008). Indeed, online music and other media texts can be used to communicate between musicians and audiences (Tsioulakis 2016; Baym 2018), building relationships between them and contributing to sociality in multiple domains such as politics and identity. But as Georgina Born (2011) theorises, online music objects work within overlapping and mutually-mediating planes of mediation, which assemble the interactions between music, online media, musicians and audiences, for instance in specific contexts such as streaming curation (Durham 2018) and the case study developed in Chapter 3 on music, comedy and politics.

Ethnographies of Digital and Social Media

This research takes a sociocultural approach, studying an online and offline community of users linked by their music activities and their ethnicity as in traditional ethnography. A pioneering online ethnography of a music community from an Ethnomusicological perspective is that of Rene Lysloff (2003). He focuses on the activities of file exchange and modification that constitute the basis for the creation of an “imaginary community” of users and creators (2003:40). However, although his research represents a foundational piece in the subfield of digital ethnomusicology, his Baudrillardian perspective emphasizes the aspects of simulation present in online activities and reinforces the distinction between real and virtual life present in early studies of the Internet. There have since been contemporary

takes on online scenes and internet-mediated music making such as the study by Georgina Born and Christopher Haworth (2018). However, this ethnography is oriented to the creation of a theory of genre-making and mutual endorsement online through Social Network Analysis, supported by the conceptual framework of Born (2011) on assemblage. A similar analysis of value and social network analysis in combination with online ethnography and interviews appears in the study by Daniel Allington, Byron Dueck and Anna Jordanous (2015). Other ethnographies of online music-making equally devote attention to online scenes (see Polymeropoulou 2018 on the chipscene; Gouly 2016 on hip-hop making on Soundcloud; Sandulescu 2016 on the construction of cultural references through online music-making) or music transmission through digital tools (see Keegan-Phipps 2016 on English folk). Traditional ethnographies have also included the online manifestations of the scenes (see Charles 2019 on psytrance; Morgan 2017 on jew's harp revival), since it is unlikely that any contemporary music scene can develop entirely without online interaction. However, the common thread of these projects is the focus on one particular set of musicians and practitioners. A similar focus is the ethnographic study of Baym (2018), who analyses the maintenance of musician-audience relationships through digital technologies such as social media, comparing in particular the old and new forms in which musicians create intimacy with fans.

Another early valuable contribution on the character of peer-to-peer platforms is that of Markus Giesler (2006). He analyses polyadic giving and receiving of digitized information in file-sharing communities, which are by definition exchanged between multiple anonymous agents. For him 'cybernetic gift giving' is a kind of rhizomatic consumption practice that puts social relationships and the articulation of meaning to work through digital technologies. Alon Diamont-Cohen and Oren Golan (2016) reach a similar conclusion regarding file-sharing and the building of a community of solidarity. Blake Durham and Georgina Born (forthcoming) have also recently researched dynamics of exchange of digital music in streaming and elite P2P platforms, concluding that in these economies of exchange, the dynamics of free labour, governance, and normativity, contribute to engender "the sense of higher social purpose animated by the pursuit of music as a common ideal and an ideal commons" (forthcoming: 27). Several other ethnographies also research the complex intersection between digital music consumption (Durham 2013; Boudreault-Fournier 2016) and urban experiences of music (Stirling 2013; Boudreault-Fournier 2013) associated with national and local identity.

In Anthropology, studies of sociality in virtual environments have pioneered the study of community, intimacy and relationships online (Boellstorff 2008), including aspects such as the political economy of platforms and gaming practices in social life. A recent contribution in this discipline that focuses on content and sociality rather than platforms is that of Miller et al. (2016) in their comparative ethnographic study of social media uses around the world (Costa 2016; Haynes 2016; Macdonald 2016; Miller 2016; Nicolescu 2016; Wang 2016; Miller and Sinanan 2017; Sinanan 2017; Spyer 2017; Venkatraman 2017). They show how content and activities migrate between platforms and populations and get readapted, having different uses and cultural meanings in different social groups (2016: 15). They also utilise the concept of polymedia previously coined by Mirca Madianou and Miller (2012), whereby a platform can only be understood in relation to other social media platforms (2016: 4). Their focus on relationships reveals that participants regard social media as a place where they socialise, a scalable living space between the private and the public, rather than a simple means of communication (2016: 7). They also highlight the increasing impact of visual culture on human communication and on the development of norms, morality and sociality (Miller and Sinanan 2017), which resonates with the case studies in this thesis. However, what was missing from their study was a focus on the specific contribution of musical content.

Research by Sara Marino (2015) on the Italian diaspora in London through online ethnography also investigates how new media can be spaces of digital togetherness, shaping migrants' experiences of community and belonging. However, this research is based on pre-established online groups and pages and does not involve ethnographic engagement with participants face-to-face, nor does it provide a specific focus on music activities online. Previous research (Bonini 2011; Madianou and Miller 2012) also addresses the use of new media by migrants in Milan and London in an ethnographic format, but equally without specifically addressing music. Instead, Carolyn Landau (2011) studies migration and online music practices, focusing on the construction of identity and community through digital technologies, however from the perspective of a single individual.

Another ethnography of digital media is that of Sonia Livingstone and Julian Sefton-Green (2016), which is focused on the learning strategies of teenagers. In this book, they dedicate a chapter to analyse the identities of children that are specific to their music learning. They posit that besides the links between music with subcultural capital, the articulation of meaning and belonging were important benefits of their musical activities, particularly for ethnic minorities. A similar study is the ethnography by Luci Pangrazio (2016) about development of rules and understandings among teenagers using digital media platforms.

However, in these case studies the online and digital media used for music purposes represented only a small portion of the study.

Ethnomusicologist Jonathan Stock (2016) also researches the articulation of meaning through the circulation, remix and repurposing of popular music videos in China. Following the genealogy of a specific music video and its subsequent memes, he approaches how romance, gender and humour is articulated online in the Chinese mediascape. However, his research seems to give more relevance to the song circulated than to the role of online music objects as culture-making element. A similar analysis is that of Keith Howard (2015) in his study of Gangnam Style, which follows the genealogy of video covers and their relationship with the national identities articulated. However, his analysis also focuses on the song content and its identity semiotics rather than the practices of recirculating and remixing music.

From this literature review it arises that the culture-making role of music on social media has not yet been fully investigated, particularly with a wider perspective on the musicking activities of audiences. Online ethnographies have tended to focus on musicians, producers or highly committed fans, which only represent an extreme set of social media users and activities. Media studies have generally focused on online platforms and their performance in the social media technoscape, also paying special attention to creators and producers. When the sociology of music has looked more carefully at the integration of music with personal and social lives, it has failed to consider the ensemble of online and offline activities. Similarly, when anthropologists have investigated the culture-making role of social media activities, they have not specifically analysed the role of musical activities. This research addresses this gap in the knowledge by bridging ethnomusicological theory with social media studies and by focusing on audiences and users.

Although an interdisciplinary perspective is maintained throughout the thesis, this research sits in Digital Ethnomusicology and Social Media Anthropology and is designed as an online-offline ethnography. The next section outlines the methodology and research design used for this study.

0.3. Research Design and Methodology

The interdisciplinary approach of the research project necessitates a mixed methodology, combining methods from Digital Anthropology (Hjorth et al. 2016; boyd 2015; Horst and Miller 2012; Boellstorff et al. 2012; Coleman 2010) and Internet Ethnography (Hine 2015; 2005) (Kozinets 2010), which are also shared by the Sociology of Music and Media Studies. In practical terms this means that after completing the literature review I conducted a survey, followed by participant observation, ethnographic engagement and semi-structured interviews. This mixed-methods approach allowed me to support the theoretical enquiry with both quantitative (survey-based) and qualitative data insights, not only creating a map of users and platforms, but also investigating in depth online phenomena around music circulation and participants' reasons for undertaking such musicking activities. Traditional ethnographic involvement with users face-to-face was a crucial element of the research design, because it helped me to understand musical activities on social media in the wider context of music and sociality offline.

The emphasis in the research design on ethnographic engagement also allowed the fieldwork to be flexible and to adapt to the context. Because this project explored a mediascape in constant change and innovation, this methodology proved to be well-suited. Instead of pre-selecting platforms and music scenes as artificially isolated areas of activity, I used the data collected from the surveys and the fieldwork engagement to focus the later stages of fieldwork on those areas that users mentioned as relevant or that gained popularity. Although the research design initially aimed to study music streaming platforms and social media sites on the same terms, the direction of music circulation outlined in the conceptual framework revealed a necessary change of perspective during the initial stages of the fieldwork. The research was consequently steered towards social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter and Instagram as social spaces, and understanding their privileged relationship with streaming platforms such as YouTube and Spotify as music sources. Similarly, the literature available on the topic grew throughout the three-year duration of the research, so new insights were incorporated gradually to the theoretical framework through a permanent review of literature and market trends. Regarding analysis, as is usually the case with ethnography, data from fieldwork was analysed mainly through intellectual engagement and working with ideas, rather than manipulation through software packages or a pre-established analytic scheme (Boellstorff et al. 2012: 159), which suited investigating such a dynamic and current topic. However, this project ultimately seeks to produce a

consistent body of theory to provide general insights into music activities on social media beyond the particular time when it was conducted.

The duration of each stage of the project was limited by the overall timeframe of the LSBU ACI scholarship. The first year (2016) was used to carry out the literature review and plan the fieldwork and data collection. During that time, I started some exploratory observation on social media use and finalised the research design. The second year was dedicated to conducting the mapping survey in the first months, and later to establishing contact with participants. During this year I deepened the field research and data collection with further ethnographic involvement, including interviewing participants between the last months of the second year and the beginning of the third year. When this stage was concluded, the majority of the third year was devoted to writing the thesis.

0.3.1 Fieldwork stages and data collection

General Observation of Social Media

The first stage of the research involved the creation of transparent profiles that clearly stated my purpose as a researcher and my university status in the main social media platforms and to observe general trends and behaviour of the community of study in relevant public groups, forums and comments. During this initial phase I mainly looked at medium and large groups of between 100 and 50,000 people on Facebook and studied larger networks of people on Twitter, such as Spanish *tuitstars* that had a connection with migration or living in the UK, with the objective of observing macrosocial trends in online sociality. This first phase dealt with publicly available content on social media, therefore it did not require disclosure nor consent. This initial observation allowed me to provisionally select possible topics for study and improve my social media skills. In addition, I maintained this survey of large groups during the subsequent phases, also using them to recruit participants and collect additional data.

Consent and Recruitment

The second stage was dedicated to disseminating the purpose of the research among the Spanish community in London and gaining their trust to recruit suitable participants. This was carried out through posters and messages on public spaces online and offline as well as face-to-face. Once a potential participant showed interest, they were briefed on the content

and purpose of the research, verbally or by email. This consisted of a general overview of the research without any reference to specific topics, to avoid excessively disrupting the field. When the participant had informally agreed to take part in the research, they were asked to fill in the survey. Sometimes, participants found out about the survey directly on the online groups where I had posted it or through others before I could talk to them, so their first point of contact with the research was the survey itself. But the survey also included a brief paragraph explaining the purpose of the research and specifying consent. This stage of the research recruited 130 participants who completed the mapping survey, of which 125 were valid data sets. The motivation for this broad preliminary phase was to identify demographics and platforms prior to participant observation, so uneven representation and design of the next phases could be corrected early. Survey results and the research sample are discussed in Section 0.3.2.

Participant Observation and Fieldwork Engagement

After recruiting participants, I asked them if they wanted to participate in the next phase of the research and connect with me on social media. Of the total number of survey respondents, less than half accepted, making the total number of observation participants just over fifty, which I tried to follow on as many platforms as possible. Within this group, a few participants were largely inactive, or rarely used social media for musical activities, providing little material to observe. Thus, I focused participant observation and data collection on the most active platforms and participants. Throughout participant observation I maintained an active presence on these platforms and engaged in conversations with participants. As Miller et al. (2016: 35) point out about social media ethnography, my presence amid hundreds of contacts did not seem to impact participants' behaviour, while I expected that passivity would have raised suspicion highlighting my presence as researcher. If anything, participants seemed to forget quite quickly that I was observing them, a detail that came up later during interviews. This was further complemented with two other ethnographic fields. On the one hand, I started participant observation in small groups of ten to fifty people that use instant messaging platforms such as WhatsApp and Telegram. In some cases, some of the recruited participants were part of these groups. In other cases, I was invited to the group by one of the members, but this specific person chose not to participate in the study. In addition, other additional groups that I joined were publicised in social media platforms and were free to join but had no relation to any of my participants. More importantly, these groups allowed me to delve into the microsocial aspects of online

sociality rather focusing on large group dynamics or on one specific person. On the other hand, I also undertook traditional ethnographic engagement with participants offline: getting to know and socializing, attending music-related and other social events (2016: 28- 36).



Fig. 0.1 Different iterations of the field



Fig. 0.2 The researcher participating in Spanish meet-ups

Throughout this process, I took special care in maintaining the participants' trust and building a transparent research relationship with them by explaining clearly the purpose of the research. Online data was collected via screenshots from social media and field notes in the field journal, which were archived in a discrete and safe place, inaccessible to the public. The field journal was used to record personal insights from direct observations, providing secondary information and patterns that were sometimes not explicitly verbalised by participants, or to record informal conversations. In total, there were thirteen months of ethnographic engagement and participant observation before entering the third stage, but observation continued during the third stage as well.

Within the overall theme of the research, I changed my ethnographic priorities depending on the context, following the research paths that seemed most promising. My methodological choices were similarly reflexive, and I adapted to different forms of

participant observation depending on the location and context. On many occasions my engagement consisted of attending a concert or party and actively participating in it dancing and singing along. But at least half of this participant observation was online, interacting and contributing to activities on social media. A combination of these two practices of music fandom and sociality-oriented user engagement formed the basis of the data collection in this stage.

Interviews and Analysis

Following the methodology of digital ethnography mentioned above, I selected 14 people for interviews from the overall group of participants, after careful analysis of their online activity and the results of ethnographic engagement offline. Participants were selected on the basis of illustrating a case study of the overall group, to investigate the initial research questions and the topics that had arisen during the fieldwork. I prepared an initial set of questions that were submitted to the School Ethics Panel of the School of Arts and Creative Industries, but I took a flexible approach and adapted the questions for each respondent to be able to follow the different research leads. I consciously used screen captures from participants' online activity during interviews for two purposes: on the one hand, they were aide-memoires that helped them remember what they had posted in the past and reflect upon them; on the other hand, they were a reminder to participants that they were being observed and provided a second chance to rethink their engagement with the study. Although the final number of interviews was lower than I initially planned, the sample was close to being exhausted because respondents provided similar insights as those previously interviewed. This lower number of interviews also allowed for longer and deeper conversations that adapted better to participants responses, with the interviews lasting from 1h30mins for a single individual to a total of more than 3 hours when adding second interviews, which I did particularly with women to discuss in depth topics related to music and feminism. While most of these interviews were conducted in places chosen by participants, including their homes and public areas such as coffee shops, they were complemented by informal conversations in other locations. Sometimes participants' responses continued our previous dialogues. Once participants had been interviewed the content of the interviews was analysed, but not transcribed in full due to time constraints. The translated quotes from interviews provided in the thesis chapters are all my own translations.

As often occurs in ethnography, the analysis of the data was constant throughout all phases of the fieldwork. Since the beginning of participant observation, I started to thematise and look for the overarching meanings, histories, recurring patterns and links, that could later be grouped into wider topics or sections. However, two crucial milestones in the analysis occurred before selecting the case studies for interviews, and at the end of the fieldwork period when the table of contents for the thesis was drafted. Following this, the findings were written up both for the thesis and as separate conference papers, which involved an additional phase of analysis. Although this writing up phase did not include dissemination of the findings in publications, conferences provided a first good outlet for the research and an additional opportunity to receive feedback from peers and analyse the findings from different thematic perspectives.

Deciding how to organise the thesis and the discussion of the findings posed theoretical and ethical challenges. Considering the main aim of this study to understand why music is circulated on social media, the first option was to provide answers to this question thematically. Although I have indeed decided to organise the content by theme, I am aware that by doing so I am contributing to reproduce the disciplinary boundaries in academia, whereby areas such as fandom, politics, and ritual are separated into apparently distinct areas of research. However, my case studies were often interdisciplinary also in this sense, providing material for varied elements of the analysis. As will be outlined in the discussion chapters, the case studies were at once linked to identity, politics, fandom, ritual, relationships and communication. In organising the thesis thematically, I hope to provide focal points for the discussion of practices and provide the analysis with a clearer narrative, rather than making a case for the compartmentation of the discipline.

0.3.2 Population

Before discussing the last stages of the research and the dynamics of reflexivity and reciprocity, it is necessary to highlight some particularities of the population of study and contextualise specific socio-historical characteristics of Spanish migrants in London. This section describes the legal framework of online activities in Spain and how the research design influenced the reach of the fieldwork and consequently the results. However, it also reflects on some findings that arose from the mapping survey and in turn influenced the research design before the fieldwork stage. The results and the participant sample used for

fieldwork and interviews are both a cause and effect of the research design and this specific institutional background.

0.3.2a Legal Context

Spain has historically had restrictive legislation regarding freedom of speech, and political expression has been suppressed throughout most of the 20th century. At the advent of the internet in the late 1990s, Spain had never really had a consistent period of democratic legality as such, and this continues to be the case at the time of writing. Even after the end of the last dictatorship, laws have not only remained largely repressive, but have also suffered a considerable decline in protecting freedom of speech and political expression in the 2000s, usually under the guise of counter-terrorism measures. Starting with the *Decreto-Ley sobre seguridad ciudadana 2/79* (Law on Citizen Security), which already allowed the Government to directly intervene in newspapers and other spaces of political expression, anti-terrorist laws have mirrored this post-dictatorial approach by treating criticism of the State as a felony (Organic Laws 1/92 and 10/95 for instance). The legal framework openly goes against international understandings of freedom of speech and accountability of security forces, including criminalising those who may question state or governmental interventions, particularly in times of conflict (for instance in Organic Law 4/2015). As will be further explained in Chapter 3 to contextualise political music content online, the abnormal Spanish legal corpus greatly influences online activities as well as music creation, particularly in relation to regionalism and political discourses of independence. Therefore, all online activities of Spaniards that are the subject of this research developed within this restrictive legal context, shaping the practices of the population of study as potentially conflictive from the start in an institutional sense.

0.3.2b Demographic Context

The current figures of the Spanish migrant population in London are difficult to determine. The official Spanish census from December 2016 (Instituto Nacional de Estadística 2016) established that there are 75,400 registered voters in the London consulate area. However, many of those might not be residents in London, as it refers to all England and Wales residents over 18 years old. Neither does it reflect those residents that do not register. Considering the official UK 2011 census calculations (ONS 2013), Spanish citizens in Greater London were under 36,000 including all age groups. However, estimates suggest that after that date the figure could have increased by 30-40% due to ongoing economic instability in

Spain (Gonzalez-Ferrer 2013). The Spanish government estimated in early 2017 that around 100,000 Spaniards could be currently living in the UK unregistered (Guimon 2017). Statistical analyses combining data from the UK and Spain prove that in 2013, Spain was the second largest source of migrants to the UK (Gonzalez-Ferrer 2013: 7), becoming the 8th largest migrant group in the UK in 2017 (Guimon 2017). The legal status of EU citizens in the UK is currently granted by the EU's Freedom of Movement policy, which makes the Spanish community in London inherently volatile and difficult to measure, as individuals can freely enter and leave the country without being registered by either authority (2013: 4). Many Spanish citizens are only residents in London for short periods of time each year, returning every few months to Spain after periods of work or study. However, it still means that this floating population actually live their lives as transnational migrants (2013: 9). Similarly, data shows that most of Spanish migrants to the UK remain in the country under five years before returning definitely to Spain (2013: 16). However, this figure has to be taken with caution, since the data for arrivals is not reliable, as explained above.

The educational levels of Spanish migrants arriving into the United Kingdom are also uncertain. Statistical analyses over the years have demonstrated that emigration is more common in sectors of the population with higher educational levels, for any country. In the case of Spaniards, a larger percentage of women have higher education degrees (44% against 34% in 2011) and most emigrants (50%) belong to the group of 25-34 years old (Gonzalez-Ferrer 2013: 11-12). Therefore, it would be safe to assume that most of the Spaniards arriving in the UK since 2011 are women with higher education degrees within that age group. However, this is difficult to confirm due to inconsistencies between the data available in Spain and the UK, which show different relative weighting of population groups aged under 24 and over 35 (2013: 12). There seems to be an increasing tendency to emigrate from Spain to the UK for males over 35 years old, which might also delay the returns (2013: 17).

Moreover, the current uncertainty regarding United Kingdom's departure from the European Union might have affected these figures. Many participants in this study declared to be considering leaving the UK if they could not fully retain their rights as European citizens after the UK's departure from the European Union. At the time of writing, it is yet to be confirmed whether Freedom of Movement will still be applicable to EU citizens after the Brexit process, and on what terms for settled citizens and newcomers, or whether Brexit will effectively occur at all. Estimates one year after the referendum claimed that the number of EU citizens was already decreasing in the UK due to this uncertainty (Marsh and Duncan 2017), an uncertainty that has also been widely covered by the press (Pichel 2017; Deleurme 2016;

Altuna 2017). Indeed, two of my participants left the UK between the end of 2017 and the beginning of 2018, and one of them was later interviewed through Skype. Consequently, the politico-economic situation in both Spain and the United Kingdom was an important factor in this research because it affected the daily lives of participants and shifted heavily the figures of citizenship and residence in ways that could not be measured.

0.3.2c Research Sample

The sample population used for this research shows this socio-political context.¹ In the initial mapping survey conducted in early 2017, over 55% of respondents were in the 25-34 age group. Likewise, a large majority of the research sample were between 18 and 44 years old. Gender-wise, over 60% of respondents were women. However, this figure could be biased because the question included also an option to answer LGBT, wrongly without allowing for double choice.² Regarding the number of years as migrant in the UK, two thirds of respondents declared to be residents for a period of less than five years, and only 8% said that they had been living in the UK for ten years or more. Similarly, over 80% were holders of an undergraduate, postgraduate or doctoral degree.

Furthermore, it should be pointed out that a number of participants recruited for the survey seemed to match the profile of the researcher to a considerable extent: female, 34 years old, 5.5 years in the UK at the time of the survey. The explanation for this might be beyond migration dynamics for two reasons. First, the snowball technique of recruitment proved to be very prolific, but was perhaps biased towards individuals with similar characteristics. Second, the workings of social media data mining when the survey was circulated through online groups might have allowed platforms to privilege similar profiles to that of the researcher when showing them content. Although other more traditional methods of recruitment were used such as posters and flyers, these proved to be decidedly unsuccessful in comparison. In addition, online surveys might be a technique more familiar to university graduates and therefore more successful in recruiting participants within this group.

In terms of regional representation, the survey sample is varied and includes 16 of the 17 autonomous regions of Spain in terms of the origin of participants. However, there is an over-representation of Galicians (21.6%), to the detriment of larger and more heavily populated regions such as Andalusia or Catalonia. Since reliable statistical data for arrivals by region is

¹ Graphs for survey results can be found in Appendix 1

² This was pointed out to me by my participant Diana, to whom I am very grateful. However, the question was not modified to avoid having two different sets of data in the final results.

not available, it is impossible to determine whether these percentages reflect the figures of Spanish migration into the UK. However, some plausible explanations could be suggested. First, Galicia has been traditionally one of the main Spanish sources of international emigration to the world at large, so the Galician population might come to London in higher numbers than people from other regions. Second, some key Spanish businesses used for social gatherings in London are either Galician bars or run by Galicians, therefore favouring a more tight-knit community where information and news (such as the existence of this survey) circulate fluidly. Third, the intervention of one particularly well-connected participant in this community circulating the survey within his social media profiles might have had a strong impact on participation results. Although other participants were highly successful recruiting more respondents by circulating the survey within their networks, it didn't create such an impact for the representation of one single region. Hence, it is likely that the explanation for this bias is more complex than just the action of key participants. Similarly, while it seems plausible that the data mining of platforms might have skewed the sample to match the profile of the researcher, it did not generate a bias by location. The survey participants were distributed fairly evenly throughout 59 London postcodes, with a 17% of respondents living outside of these, but within the London metropolitan area. This could mean that data mining did not intervene in the recruitment process so much in terms of location, or perhaps that online location data is not as precise yet to allow for such clear biases to appear in the sample.

To recapitulate, while the survey sample may seem biased, the lack of consistent statistical data does not allow for confirmation. It could reflect the migration patterns of Spaniards in the UK, or it could be the result of the research methodology or algorithmic agency, as acknowledged above. However, considering that some recent studies of music in online contexts overrepresent men (Mjøs 2012; Gouly 2016; Bonini 2017), this focus on women might be an additional contribution of this study, rather than a weakness. Yet, unsure of where these biases of the initial survey sample might have come from, I have tried to address them in subsequent phases of the research, particularly for interviews where I have included nearly 40% of males and 30% of people without higher education degrees. Although statistical representation is not the objective of ethnography, being aware of these figures helped me to conceptualise the research design with the hope of obtaining richer data.

In short, the research focuses on Spanish migrants currently living in the Greater London metropolitan area who are active users of social media and use social media for musical purposes, privileging these platforms over streaming outlets. Most fieldwork and interview

participants belong to the generations born between the 1970s and 1990s and are not musicians nor practitioners. As explained above, previous research focused on a particular type of expert user from a specific music scene or a particular platform, ignoring the wider context of musicking activities on social media. For this project I did not select a sample population with particular music practices or belonging to a given music scene and allowed users' music preferences to dictate the orientation of the research. In addition, as Nowak points out (2016: 9), the study of the generation born between the 1970s and 1990s provides useful insights because they have first dealt with pre-digital formats, have subsequently been early digital adopters, and have later integrated their lives with digital platforms. I also acknowledge that this is the generation to which I had easier access, and people in these age groups more often agreed to participate in the second phase of the project involving participant observation. Similarly, musicians or producers were not excluded from this study, but they were not the main focus of the research, which is designed to account for how audiences and fans interact with music media.

Moreover, the research included all participants that self-define as Spanish, rather than establishing a formal entry-point (birth, documentation or residency criteria) for this category. This flexible approach to the population sample evokes critical views of the concept of community often used in Humanities research (see Caglar 1997 for a critical take on the term), avoiding essentialist descriptions of human groups that ignore translocality (1997: 169). It also aims to stay away from "the trope of community that assumes an a priori, reified and spatialized existence of a group of migrants as the main object of study" (1997: 174), focusing on perspectives that understand collective identity as imagined cultural practices. Thus, in the same vein as Caglar (1997: 180) argues, this research focuses on the relationships that are formed between persons and musical objects to shed light on social media practices, rather than provide a study of migrant dynamics. These relationships between people and musical objects are the locus of production and reproduction of groups and identities, providing richer research material than studies of pre-defined communities (1997: 182). As Chapter 1 shows, this approach to the construction of identities echoes crucial contributions in popular music studies (Stokes 1994; Frith 1996) which conceptualise music as an object that allows people to place themselves in imaginative cultural narratives, therefore forming self-identity and cultural identity (1996: 124-25). Consequently, practices are the main object of study in this project, but zooming in on a specific population provides cultural contextualisation necessary to understand why and how these practices emerged and are maintained.

Therefore, an a priori definition of the Spanish community is not offered in this project. Although mapping Spaniards' offline music practices also sheds light on their way of life in London, providing a representative picture of the Spanish population based on their London musicality is not the main purpose of the research. Rather than focusing on the musical practices of the Spanish community, this investigation analyses the experience of citizenship – of migrants who self-define as Spanish – through musical practices (Stokes 1994; 2017) online. It addresses what citizenship and belonging mean for Spanish people while they are living as migrants in London and how online musical practices intervene in the construction of this musical citizenship. It also focuses on how London, as a site for multiple definitions of citizenship, is both the context and subject of Spaniards' processes of belonging creation and formation. The embodied ideas of imagined citizenship that are at work in online music practices are one of the main objects of study in this research, as is further developed in chapters 1 and 3.

In addition, the political context with regard to the debate on citizenship that arose from the Brexit referendum result contributed to this constant renegotiation of Spanish identity, which is also explored in Chapters 1 and 3. It also created a sense of urgency and morality that materialised in participants' musical activities, as outlined in chapters 3 and 6. Similarly, the specific context of Spanish institutional politics and its unhatched democratic liminality also influenced the understandings of identity that participants articulated, as it is further analysed in chapters 1, 3 and 6. Consequently, this project also contributes to understand the ideas of citizenship that are put into action through online music practices. Thus, an anti-essentialist approach to the research population was pre-established as part of the research design, but also something that arose as a necessary framework during the research.

As suggested above, however, an additional element is the role of algorithms as active agents. While this research design did not envisage algorithms as the subject or population of study, it is important to recognise that their capacity to circulate, repost and exchange music media on social media platforms have a consequential influence on online musicking practices. Within the context of Actor-Network Theory (Latour 2005), they would be conceptualised as agents in themselves. Even if this is not a study about algorithms, their impact is acknowledged and analysed in depth in Chapters 4 and 5, where they can account for the creation of a mediascape which is able to affect understandings of online human activity.

0.3.3 Survey results

Before moving on to discuss the implications of this research design on my relationship with participants, it is worth considering some further insights provided by the mapping survey. As mentioned above, the survey results are part of the findings of this research, but they in turn shaped how the fieldwork was subsequently conducted. In addition to the distribution of age, gender and region of origin explained above, the survey helped to shape the participant observation by showing the most relevant platforms and provided an overview of the most relevant timings, relationships and uses.³

In 2017, the most popular streaming platforms are by far YouTube (90.4%) and Spotify (64.8%), while the incontestable leaders of social media are Facebook (95.2%) and WhatsApp (93.6%). In terms of music discovery and sharing music, Facebook overtook Spotify as the most relevant platform. These social media top performers were followed by Instagram (60.8%) and surprisingly, LinkedIn (54.4%) and lastly, Twitter (42.4%). However, this data was not crosscut with age, gender or type of content. Indeed, LinkedIn proved to be of low value to the study of music circulation, even among musicians. The low relevance of Snapchat (11.2%) seemed to match the unusual age distribution, where under 25s were significantly underrepresented. This ranking of social media platforms and the direction of music circulation outlined above explains why most of the screen captures included in this study come from Facebook, Instagram and Twitter, however including YouTube or Spotify links.

Furthermore, nearly a third of respondents claimed to post only sporadically on social media, while only 23% claimed to post a few times per week, and even less (16.8%) several times per day. At first, I considered the possibility that people would not admit how much time they spend on social media for fear of being labelled as time wasters, or even that they would not be aware of their own practices. However, I could later see during participant observation that indeed the people that post regularly are a small percentage of the total observed. In that sense, even if this research was not designed to study an extreme and esoteric group of fans or a particular music genre, understanding contemporary audiences as “cultural omnivores” (Peterson 1992), the analysis of music posts has to be considered as a deep engagement with a very specific portion of the music audience: the people that actually post on social media, rather than just look at the contributions from others. Social media seem to be busier outside of working hours, either in the evening after dinner time (47.2%) and first thing in the morning (44%), followed closely by the afterwork/dinner slot

³ Graphs for this section are included in Appendix 1

(43.2%) and lunchtime (37.6%), although respondents might have been wary of admitting their use of social media at work. This also explained why my most prolific data collection happened to be often late in the evening. People also pointed to other friends being the regular posters (92.8%), rather than family members (45.6%), which might indicate the low relevance of context collapse and its effects on privacy strategies for different social media audiences that the discussion chapters in the thesis explain. Almost 90% of respondents said that they do not worry about showing their music taste on social media. However, I failed to ask in the survey what the most important group of contacts on social media was for each person. Yet, very few respondents recognised social media as a place where nobody posts (6.4%). Friends were also said to be the main interlocutors for discussing music online and offline (82.4%), but surprisingly family seemed to have more relevance than partners. More importantly, music does not seem to be often discussed with strangers or unknown individuals (14.4%), confirming once again the paradigm change of 2.0 platforms in comparison with earlier uses of the internet to meet new people.

In terms of content, the majority of respondents indicated posting what they perceive as official content from artists (60.8%), while less than a third referred to user-generated content. This question had options for 'Official', 'User-generated' and 'My Own', where I understood user-generated content as that created by non-commercial users. However, this is difficult to define as individual users may post with a commercial intent. Similarly, what respondents may perceive as official content may be a user-generated reposting. In addition, nearly a third said to never post music content, which would also explain why only less than half agreed to be included in the participant observation phase after the survey. Social media also seemed to be overwhelmingly perceived as a place for discovering music (68%).

These insights from the mapping survey influenced how the data was collected, from what platforms and at what time of the day. In some cases, they also hinted at some practices which were later confirmed through the ethnographic engagement, as demonstrated in the following chapters. They also helped to explain the population distribution and the main characteristics of the data collected. Together with the analysis of the population outlined above, I hope that they provide sufficient context for the rest of the study and contribute to the understanding of the findings and practices described in the core of this thesis.

0.3.4 Ethics and Reflexivity

Throughout the research process, constant analysis and reflection took place regarding data collection and ethical responsibilities towards my participants. At all stages I have applied what has been called in Anthropology “second wave reflexivity”, which is visible in three areas: “reflexivity in the materialisation of the object and space of study; reflexivity in defining and managing collaborative relationships inside fieldwork; and reflexivity in the politics of reception of the products of ethnographic research” (Marcus 1994, 18). In practical terms this meant not only reflecting on the framework of the research outlined above and its approach to the group of study, but also an active and transparent online presence to ethically access and gain trust and permission from social media users, offering anonymity at all stages of data collection. Pseudonyms were always used, and sensitive information was not used in written outputs. In social media research, data collected is easily searchable, so I have only included information that was crucial to describe the findings. In addition, reflexivity and reciprocity in the management of the fieldwork was always present, because the use of ethnographic engagement and interviews implied that there was a constant reflexive process with participants, particularly during interviews and in conversations about the purpose of the research. This is a process that continues beyond the fieldwork phase, as is the case at the time of writing. Participants bring up in informal conversations the topics previously discussed and continue reflecting on these topics, not only extending the fieldwork but also actively engaging with the research aims and learning something in the process, rather than being passive data sources. Once this thesis is completed, the researcher will also offer to debrief or provide copies of the results and written outputs to participants if requested. The research findings may also contribute to the participants’ understanding and knowledge of social media and its use, and thereby directly benefit them. Concurrently, participants will also be contacted to ensure they consent their data and opinions to be disseminated for papers and publications. However, technological reflexivity should be considered here regarding data management. Research that relies on social media platforms to a greater or lesser extent also depends on a data corpus that does not belong to the researcher, the founding body or institution, or the participant, within an unstable legal framework. By starting any kind of online ethnography, both researcher and participants are implicitly agreeing with the regulations of platforms and contributing to the traffic and monetisation of those companies.

The research design of online and urban “ethnomusicology at home” (Nettl 2005; Cooley and Barz 2008) implies that the research continuum cannot be clearly separated between home

and the field. Contact with participants continues after the data collection and social events and physical spaces are still very much shared. Moreover, data collection on urban and online environments means that a considerable amount of unwanted data is received by the researcher – sometimes unrelated to the specifics of research design – to the extent that it forms an overwhelming ‘data-saturated’ field (Knox and Dafus 2018). Thus, the difference between home and the field is more a psychological exercise than a spatial or temporal boundary. Similarly, the process of data collection online and in quotidian urban spaces also creates ‘messy’ data; a bombardment of unsorted online data reached me every day, which was in many cases impossible to assimilate in an orderly way for the purposes of the research. This kind of data undesirably gives rise to a messy methodology of collection and classification, and potentially creates an amalgam of messy research results. In hindsight, I think that the amount of online data and the sensation of being overwhelmed by it was the reason why I neglected more traditional methods such as the fieldwork journal. However, I made a conscious effort of organising and categorising the messy online data into well-structured discussions about the findings in the following chapters.

Moreover, the online and the urban are seemingly endless fields of data because I inhabit them. I was aware from the initial stages of the research design of being both an insider and outsider to the group of study, but this went beyond my status as a Spanish migrant in the UK. Not only am I part of the most represented group in my research sample, as explained above, but I am also a practitioner of the specific music practice of circulating online music media analysed in this research. If anything, at the start of the research I was more of an insider because of my online music practices, rather than for my migrant status, because since I moved to the UK I had consciously avoided interaction with other Spaniards, mostly trying to avoid discussions about politics. Being among them was the ‘field’ from my point of view, in which I felt like an outsider that happened to be fluently trained in their culture. After all, I belong to a traditional Spanish group of others (the Andalusians) so my self-identification as an outsider did not appear at the start of the research, instead coming from lifelong personal experience. However, my insider status as someone who regularly uses social media for music circulation was not comparable to traditional ethnographies of music making because there was no distinct area of human activity in which I could step in and out as required. Being online as ‘research’ and being online as ‘social living’ was again more of a psychological exercise than a spatial or temporal boundary, and not always successful. Making these boundaries clearer would have required a sort of theatricalization of my music practices, which could also be seen as a disruption or distortion of the field. My initial efforts

to safeguard my personal life from the bleed of fieldwork by establishing data collection routines within specific times and locations were quickly abandoned. The struggle to ignore the cell phone notifications and engage with participants in real time can be seen as both a positive aspect leading to a rich research outcome, and a negative aspect of the invasive wholeness of online fieldwork. By contrast, the ethical obligations and the timeframe of the PhD programme and the requirement to complete the research within a short period of time also forced me to be more of an outsider than I would have wanted. First, it required separate social media accounts to observe the participants, to avoid the bleed of private information between my personal life and my research project and its potential dangers to the anonymity of my participants. Second, the short timeframe for completion required a focus on the writing-up in the last stages and consequently, an abandonment of the online field. In this sense, the structure of the PhD programme itself assumes a lack of reciprocity with participants as the researcher moves towards completion, which in online and urban ethnography, creates an equally artificial, yet necessary, boundary for the researcher.

Therefore, the ability to put on insider and outsider hats at different stages of the research was crucial for this specific research design focused on online and urban ethnography, and the contributions and pitfalls of the project are intrinsically related to this psychological work. In addition, being aware of my own authorial voice as a researcher in the creation of “partial truths” (Clifford 1986), and of this dual status of outsider and insider, I tried to privilege participants’ points of view. With the objective of maintaining reflexivity, transparency, and reciprocity as core values of my research, I tried to use polyvocality as much as possible in my writing, weaving the multiple voices of my participants into the analysis of the findings, with the goal of returning some knowledge to them. This privileging of polyvocality may have situated the narrative within the contradictions of the “prison of diplomacy” (Morgan 2017), wanting to champion my participants’ voices without competing with them for the fieldwork narrative. Indeed, I thought of ethnographic fieldwork almost as an end in itself (Miller 2017), where the creation of new theory was secondary, understanding that the insights from participants could give rise to new knowledge, and approaching the thesis as a written form of “the holistic contextualisation that is ethnography” (ibid). In that sense, I hope that the completion of this project will be the beginning of a deeper conversation between participants, their social media practices, the academic world and myself, in contrast to the dismissal of social media users that I encountered in the press before I started this project.

Chapter 1 – Performing Identity

1.1 Introduction

To respond to the research question of why people post music on social media, this chapter proposes to bridge the research fields outlined in the literature review with an ethnomusicology of online identity, analysing how musicking practices on social media contribute to the performance, articulation, and embodiment of identity. This chapter focuses on two aspects of identity: national and regional identities, and gender identities. It also investigates how music circulation on social media provides the means to set and maintain boundaries of otherness. The case studies below illustrate the role of music in the performance of online identities, while also shedding light on the kinds of identity being articulated among Spanish migrants in London. I conclude with a focused case study of reggaetón, discussing how Spaniards' attitudes towards the genre and its circulation on social media illustrate the intersection of the theoretical frameworks developed in this chapter.

As outlined in the thesis introduction, the performance and articulation of identity has been an object of scholarly research since early studies of the internet (Turkle 1984; 1995). The use of internet platforms and social media as tools to perform and embody identity has been both widely accepted and criticised (see boyd 2006 and Horst 2012 and Miller 2011 for anthropological perspectives; and Lovink 2011 and Spracklen 2013 for critical approaches). Similarly, the relationship between identity and music in popular music has been analysed in offline contexts (Stokes 1994; Frith 1996a, 1996b; Negus 1996). Music sociologists have looked at the construction of self-identity through music's semiotic and affective power (DeNora 2000, 2006; Kassabian 2013). However, an area that remains under-researched is the role of music in these identity dynamics on online platforms. How are identities musically reimagined and performed on social media?

Caglar's (1997) position on material culture and identity frames my argument that the relationships between people and their self-defined identities on one hand, and online music objects as (im)material culture on the other, are the locus of culture-making processes such as the articulation of identities and the reproduction of social groups. This approach to the construction of identities resonates with crucial contributions in popular music studies (Stokes 1994; Frith 1996a), which conceptualise music as an object that enables people to articulate their sense of self and cultural belonging by placing themselves in imaginative

cultural narratives (see for example Frith 1996a: 124-25). It also evokes anti-essentialist approaches to popular music (Negus 1996), which claim that there is no such thing as a fixed identity of a social group that is expressed in music. Rather, cultural identities are created and articulated through communicational and social practices, in a “discontinuous process in which cultural traditions are continually remade and new ‘hybrid’ identities are created” (1996: 107). Moreover, music is not simply a tool for identification and community formation that ‘reflects’ the specific context where it emerges, but part of social and political practices that establish cultural correspondence (1996: 122). Music practices, whether as consumer, fan or musician, help to build the individuals’ sense of belonging to a community and a city. Identity, place, ethnicity, and gender are articulated through these processes of musical citizenship (Stokes 1994; 2017). In addition, this research is also informed by studies that look at how musicians build and promote self-identity as part of their online branding practices (Suhr 2012) and critical approaches to social media as places that promote the commodification of the self (Fuchs 2014; Spracklen 2013). Therefore, reiterating the arguments made in the thesis introduction about the population of this case study, this chapter illustrates an anti-essentialist approach that focuses on the practices and processes of identity articulation.

To understand these practices, it is useful to refer to the Foucauldian concepts of “embodiment” and “technologies of the self” (Foucault 1988), which this research incorporates using two more recent interpretations by Judith Butler (1999 [1990]) and Maria Bakardjieva and Georgia Gaden (2012). To speak about gender, performativity and embodiment, the work of Butler (1999) is crucial. She refers to Foucauldian theory to explain that the body is a surface and scene of cultural inscriptions, and that cultural values emerge as a result of an inscription on the body, stressing that there is neither natural nor essential basis for gender identity. In this sense, she conceptualises gender embodiment as a generator of culture. Butler also conceives identification as an enacted fantasy or incorporation on the body, through play, gestures and acts. Therefore, in her view, identities are performative “fabrications manufactured through corporeal signs and other discursive means” (1999: 185) and gender is performative because it is a “dramatic and contingent construction of meaning” (1999: 190).

From an anthropological point of view, this perspective on gender can also be applied to other aspects of identity. Gender and national identities are socially and culturally constructed differences between people that influence and are also shaped by, a wide range of cultural factors and technologies, including social media (Miller et al. 2016: 114), and that

are physically embodied and incorporated through discursive practices. This perspective is also useful for this research because social media profiles can act as digitised bodies, where identities are visually materialised and thus publicly embodied in front of others. However, while early internet scholars (Turkle 1995; Haraway 1991) highlighted the empowering role of media tools to perform identity and transform the way it is understood, particularly in the case of gender, in the current social media landscape, most platforms do not allow for a performance of identity that is detached from real-world bodies offline to the same extent. Thus, offline identities have become increasingly relevant in determining online identities (2016: 114), especially because of the rise in visual and photographic communication.¹ Yet, these technological conditions do not invalidate the point made above, whereby social media technologies provide tools to articulate, rehearse and experience identities. The work of Bakardjieva and Gaden (2012) offers another interpretation of Foucauldian theory that directly addresses the performative character of social media as a tool to articulate identities. Social media platforms can be understood as technologies of the self that allow users to work on their identity articulations. They can also be the locus of production of relationships, because it is in the performative practices of identity that relationships are established and reproduced.

In addition, any interpretation of social media performativity – and therefore activity flows – should consider two modes. First, there is performativity resulting from platforms' affordances and design. Some platforms such as Facebook, and to a lesser extent Instagram, Spotify, Twitter, and YouTube, push users to complete their personal information on their profiles, including name, basic identity data, a short biography and an image or avatar. To this kind of performativity belong the articulations and performances that result from the platforms' encouragement to craft an identity that can be reducible to the pre-set list of features and media objects (Meikle 2016: 33). Performative affordances also include algorithmic mediation and their use of notifications and automation to entice users to engage with the platform, re-circulate their activity, or provide further personal information. Second, performativity can also occur through the agency of users when a media object or a text is voluntarily circulated for reasons external to algorithmically-induced practices. In these cases, a mediated object (such as music, video or image) is embodied in an online

¹ This is particularly true for the online experiences of trans people. While trans people often use social media to disseminate images of their desired/new personas before and during transition, their practices also clash with social media platforms policies such as the use of 'real names'. However, it would require an entire chapter to properly account for these dynamics, which are beyond the scope of this thesis.

personal profile, becoming an additional element in this articulation of identity. However, the two modes are not separate nor mutually exclusive, but in dynamic tension: affordances compel and constrain while user agency reacts creatively against and within them. Most of what I observed on social media sits between both modes and it is within the interaction of these two kinds of performativity that identity is articulated.

1.2 National and Regional Identity

This section explores the dynamics of cultural identity performance on social media, focusing on music media objects as performative elements that enable people to establish relationships and articulate belonging to local, regional, national and international imagined communities. It attends to the role of music in these articulations, providing examples of online music media as soundtrack, place creator, iconographic source or vehicle of varied affects. These examples also illustrate various modes of engagement with wider ethnomusicological scholarship on identity.

1.2.1 Context

In this first case study of cultural identity, the anti-essentialist approach to identity outlined above and in the thesis introduction was both a theoretical and ideological choice for the research design, as well as a necessary tool for analysis. This is not only due to a lack of static links between identity and specific genres of music (Negus 1996: 100) but also because, in the case of Spain, the question of national and regional identity generates extremely complex data that cannot be reduced to mutually-exclusive, fixed identities. In addition, the political events of 2017 in Spain and the UK touched directly upon questions of identity, making the fieldwork richer but also significantly more difficult to unpack. As detailed in the methodology section, this study was conducted with London residents who describe themselves as Spanish, rather than relying on ethnic identity or citizenship as sampling criteria. However, this did not simplify the intricate web of identities present during the fieldwork. On one hand, the socio-political context in the UK made these definitions of identity even more difficult to pinpoint and describe, as the case studies below will show. The Brexit referendum and subsequent negotiations were based on opposing and overlapping ideas and visions of citizenship and identity for London and the UK, playing a crucial role in participants' attitudes to identity. On the other, the political climate in Spain,

where different ideas of Spanishness were in conflict (notably regarding the Catalanian Independence referendum involving nationalism, regionalism, federalism and different understandings of locality), also influenced participants' self-definitions. In addition, the repressive legal context for online and offline musical activities in Spain also played an important role. Although this political context will be further examined in Chapter 3, it nonetheless informs the case studies in this chapter. However, this chapter foregoes extensive inquiry into public policy, focusing instead on music practices and their relationship with users' understandings of identity. But certainly, these online articulations relate to migrants' lives in the UK and current events back home.

To understand the anti-essentialist background of Spaniards' definitions of national, regional and local identity, it is necessary to outline the current politico-cultural map. There are currently five co-official languages in Spain: Spanish (Castilian), Galician, Basque, Catalan and Aranese (Occitan). There are also several recognised but non-official minority languages such as Asturian, Leonese and Aragonese. In the African enclaves of Ceuta and Melilla, Darija (Maghrebi Arabic) and to a lesser extent Tamazight (Riffian) are also spoken. The areas with lower figures of native Spanish speakers are located in regions where one or more of these second languages are spoken. Galicia seems to have the lowest percentage of native Spanish speakers, followed by Catalonia and the Valencian community. Basque Country appears to have significantly higher rates of native speakers of Spanish (Instituto Nacional de Estadística 2016b).² Although it is beyond the scope of this research to outline here the cultural landscape of all Spanish-speaking areas of the world, the complex cultural and ethnic realities of Latin America and its links to Spanish culture and population should also be taken into consideration. Although these language distributions do not necessarily represent the prevalence of different cultural values and customs, they hint at the multiple and overlapping cultural realities of Spain that are sometimes erased by essentialising notions of Spanishness. The treacherous political and administrative landscape of Spain has been a historical source of conflict, the last iteration of which being the Catalanian Independence referendum (see Chapter 3).

² The actual figures of language distribution are difficult to determine. Statistics from the central government are hidden under the category of *Actividades de Aprendizaje* ("Learning Activities"), rather than appear in the general census as qualitative descriptors of the population. They also draw a completely different picture from the ones made by regional governments. The political use of language in Spain for nationalist politics consequently makes this data also unreliable, just as the migration figures outlined in the main introduction.

As Pnina Werbner (2002) has pointed out with regard to migrant Pakistanis, Spaniards also belong to a hybrid diaspora, even to several different diasporas – understood as spaces of non-belonging and displacement with the potential of collective political consciousness – each with its own aesthetics and ethics as well as ideas about democracy, citizenship, morality and identity, which are performed and imagined through culture-making. The concept of “imagined communities” (Anderson 1991) is even more relevant in the case of this hybrid diaspora because Spaniards’ experiences of identity may have been already transnational and multicultural at home, requiring them to constantly re-imagine their overlapping belonging and renegotiate their identity between several historically-formed cultural conflicts. Their self-defined identities might also refer to regional or local communities of belonging rather than to an overarching Spanish imaginary. However, this diversity might not be legible to others in their host nations such as the UK, forcing Spaniards to “administer their ethnicity” (Ramnarine 2007b: 5) in order to be understood or located in the host country’s conceptualisation of otherness. Members of the UK’s heterogeneous Spanish diaspora must articulate several levels of identity between the plurinational homeland³ and their internal cultural conflicts on one hand, and the conflicting conceptions of cultural identity and otherness of the UK on the other. In the current political context, this means having to situate themselves as Spanish and European citizens in the UK in the context of Brexit, but also having to define themselves regionally against other Spaniards in relation to independence movements and other political domestic affairs in Spain. This complex identity work is even more visible when it is confronted with a totalizing institutional discourse promoting a one-identity-fits-all nationalist definition of Spanishness. Since its early days as a colonialist empire and later as a permanently-questioned nation state, Spain has failed to engage dialogically with the social demands of its internal cultural diversity, treating the management thereof as a threat to national integrity (Mar-Molinero and Smith 1996). Therefore, Spaniards inhabit an identity that is always in crisis, finding themselves in chronic need to engage with cultural objects to problematise and work on self-

³ The definition of Spain as ‘plurinational’ (*plurinacional*) has been a source of debate since the early 1800s and was again discussed during the writing of the current Constitution in 1977. The text recognises the existence of nations in the cultural sense, rather than political, stating in Article 2 that “*reconoce y garantiza el derecho a la autonomía de las nacionalidades*” (“recognises and grants right to autonomy to the (sic) nationalities”). However, it also defines the Spanish nation as indivisible and avoids the term plurinational so as not to convey the idea of the Spanish State as a pact between pre-existing political entities with rights to independence. Pedro Sánchez, President of the government at the time of writing, proposed a reform of this article with an addition of the concept of plurinational within the campaign for its party’s primaries in 2017. However, so far this has not been formally proposed in parliament within his mandate.

definitions. In this sense, self-othering oneself as authentic is an ongoing cultural practice of Spanish identities.

It could also be argued that Spaniards' articulations of identity are multicultural. The combination of cosmopolitan, European, national, regional and translocal understandings of identity may indicate that such an approach – and its reference to hybrid and hyphenated identities – is well suited to the Spanish migrant community in the UK. However, as some authors point out (Grossberg 1996; Bayley and Nooshin 2017), multiculturalism discourse relies upon a narrative of essentialised cultures that mix or overlap, therefore reproducing reified ideas of identity that are untenable in light of the anti-essentialist argument made above. Besides, if Spanishness is already a multi-cultural or plurinational concept, highlighting a supposed multicultural aspect in the lives of migrants does not contribute substantially to the analysis. Thus, the use of 'multicultural' in this chapter does not presume fixed, pre-existing cultures. Bayley and Nooshin are equally critical of similar concepts such as intercultural or transcultural for the same reasons. They propose that perhaps a notion of "culturing" as process is necessary in the same terms as musicking, and that a focus on practices rather than culture should be privileged, as is developed in the following sections. This means that both the multiculturalism and the multimusicality (Blacking cited in Ramnarine 2007b) of people should be taken as the norm of cultural identity, rather than the exception, and that a focus on the practices that construct those articulations of identity is the most suitable approach. If citizenship is "a story that we tell ourselves and others" (Stokes 2017), identities are cause and consequence of this storytelling process. Rather than relying on clear definitions of national or regional identity, for the purposes of this chapter it is crucial to recognise that the complex web of local, regional and national understandings of identity in Spain is closely related to institutional policies on music and its politics (see Machin-Autenrieth 2017 for the Andalusian case). Likewise, the popularity and distribution of certain musics is directly linked to the understandings of identity prevalent in particular regional or local communities, which consequently plays a role in Spanish migrants' musicking practices. In addition, online music practices of identity develop in the context of migrant cultural activities in physical spaces. Migrants use their material culture to articulate feelings of displacement (Parrott 2012) and music can provide the means to occupy a public space in sonic or iconographic ways (see Hornabrook 2017 on Tamil diaspora in London; see Plasquy 2012 on Spaniards in Belgium). This helps migrants to create spaces where an affective musical citizenship can be physically enacted to counteract the alienating effects of

economic and language barriers and maintain a feeling of being at home (see Garcia 2015 on the musical activities of migrants in Berlin).

1.2.2 Identities and Political Affect

Considering the context of a plurinational homeland and participants' migrant status at the time of Brexit explained above, it was not surprising that a good number of them had multi-faceted self-definitions of identity. Most research participants seemed to experience identity and belonging as a plural way of thinking about the self and the Other. During fieldwork and interviews, participants expressed their cultural identities in flexible terms, revealing their ability and will to negotiate the meanings of these identities according to the political and social context, rather than displaying strong affiliations for a univocal idea of the homeland. For instance, participant Diana (personal conversation 2017) defined herself as Galician, although she admitted that in London she presented herself as Spanish so people could understand her origin. She also claimed to see Spain as plurinational, although she rather felt close to Portugal and the Portuguese people.⁴ Sue (personal conversation 2017) also pointed out that although she defines herself as Galician, she feels culturally connected to other Celtic nations such as Ireland and Scotland, rather than to Spain. During an interview later, she specified:

“I am not an independentist but... I don't like the [kind of] Spanish patriotism that's going on [at the moment]. So... I feel more Galician than Spanish. That doesn't mean that... Galicia is in Spain and I have no problem with that. (...) I would be proud if Spain was a republic, and the situation in Spain was different politically and economically (...). I don't feel represented (...) But that doesn't mean that I don't feel Spanish.”
Sue, 29 September 2017

Other participants gave equally complex statements, in which local and regional self-identities coexisted with international and cosmopolitan affiliations:

“Am I Spanish? Yes. Am I Valencian? Yes. Is that the only thing I am? Definitely no. I suppose that also helps you to adapt to other places [as a migrant].” Teresa, 6 October 2017

⁴ Galician is part of the Galician-Portuguese family of languages (some linguists even understanding Galician and Portuguese as dialects of the same language), separate from other Ibero-Romance languages such as Castillian. Galician culture and music are Celtic-influenced to a large extent.

“We would like to say that we are citizens of the world, but really... (...) I grew up in Ourense [in the Galicia region] and I lived 15 years in Valencia and I can't deny that. Yes, I feel Spanish, but not in the sense of belonging to a nation, in a political sense; rather in a cultural sense. (...) And now I am little by little starting to feel like a Londoner. Not because of being born [in London], but because of sharing the culture of this city with the people that live here.” Fernando, 6 October 2017

“If they ask me [in London] I say that I am Spanish. But really it is simply to avoid confusion. Although probably what everybody knows [from Spain] is Madrid. (...) I am not much of a nationalist, but what I am not for sure is... (...) I don't feel Madrid as 'Oh! Madrid!'. It's more like 'well, I am from Madrid like I could have been from anywhere else.' (...) And I think that happens a lot to Madrilenians. Because in Madrid everybody is from somewhere else originally. (...) So, I like Madrid, but it's not an identity feeling. I don't have a Madrilenian identity.” Anabel, 7 November 2017

These statements show that the multicultural character of Spain heavily influences the self-definitions of participants, who tend to present anti-essentialist readings of national identity even when they come from areas of the country that do not have specific regionalist narratives. These discourses evoke ideas of a plurinational Spain and imply preferences for flexible readings of identity, with an emphasis on regional and local affiliations. However, rather than making a case for the relevance of regionalism over other perspectives, these statements demonstrate how Spanish national identity and imagined nations remain important considerations in studies of identity, albeit playing a perhaps subtler role as a “vanishing mediator” (Biddle and Knights 2007: 11) or a form of “disidentification” (Muñoz 1999): a kind of underlying subtext of these statements which acts by performative transformation, omission or avoidance but is nonetheless an active agent in these articulations. This negative aura comes to the fore even in participants' statements that present themselves as Spanish, as in the case of Anabel above. This is even more evident in the following interview excerpts:

“I feel very Spanish. But without any connotation. I am happy and proud to be Spanish. When I go there I enjoy being there, even if there are a lot of things that I don't like, just like there are things that I don't like about England, (...). But on the other hand, there are also very good things in Spain and I value them. So, it's not 'I hate Spain and I feel Valencian'. No. I am Spanish first of all, and then, Valencian.” Cynthia, 17 January 2018

“You see? For this [Brexit] I identify myself as Spanish (laughs) (...) because as a Colombian my prospects would be much worse (laughs)... I pick the lesser of two bad situations (laughs)...” Sandra, 26 November 2017

In some of these statements the idea of a Spanish national identity is somehow in the background as a negative element against which participants construct their self-identities. In the specific case of Sandra, the dark humour present in her statement derives from her life story of being a migrant from an early age, and thus managing levels of discrimination, rather than different identities. Yet for most participants these negative identifications refer to the recent history of the country and its repressive nationalism present in these imaginations of community (which is further explored in Chapter 3 regarding freedom of speech). The following episode that a participant shared with me illustrates this issue well. On one occasion, she attended the Galicia Day celebrations at the Galician Centre in Willesden. While she was there taking part in the events, one of the organisers asked her to avoid speaking in Galician and to give preference to Spanish, to help British and other guests understand the conversations. She found this contradictory with the spirit of the celebration and reminiscent of pre-democratic policies in Spain, feeling displaced in a space that was supposed to provide refuge for the Galician community. She contested this instruction without success, making her feel alienated from the organisation and the community. Other participants expressed similar concerns about the management of the Galician Centre.⁵ This account not only illustrates repressive nationalism as a mediator in Spaniards' self-identities but also exemplifies how, in the case of Spanish migrants in the UK, it is difficult to sustain the traditional narrative of the nostalgic migrant that seeks to recreate the cultural activities of the homeland. Even for participants that might have sought out this re-enactment of traditional settings of music performance unrelated to online activities, such as national-day celebrations, the dynamics are complex and not free of conflict. In these contexts, the recreation of home-like spaces can reproduce a space of repression, a phenomenon further examined in Chapter 3. This socio-political landscape has a crucial influence on interviewees' understandings of identity, both at home and in diasporic communities.

In addition to this cultural and political context, some research participants experience ambivalent feelings towards the notion of 'home', rather than nostalgia for Spain as a safe space. In many cases, they have been economically or politically ejected from their places of origin and therefore experience their migration as a hybrid identity between European citizen, economic migrant and political exile. Furthermore, the public communal rituals which enact the presence of the different Spanish diasporas in London are more often used

⁵ I am not identifying the participant here because even with the use of a pseudonym she would be at risk of being recognised and thus further ostracised in her community. The Galician Centre is at the time of writing accused of mismanagement of public funds, to which they have responded by filing a lawsuit against one of the whistleblowers.

for the benefit of the Spanish tourism and London entertainment industries, rather than providing a platform to present the heterogeneous character of the Spanish diaspora or promoting a workable understanding of multiculturalism (Fig. 1.1). This was at times perceived by research participants as counter-productive to their integration in the UK, as the earlier account illustrated.



Fig. 1.1 Promotional flyers for Spanish-themed music events in London referencing flamenco and bullfighting

The combination of these three factors explained above (the multicultural character of Spain; the repressive and centralist policies of the Spanish government and their manifestation at public events in London and home affairs in Spain; as well as the context of Brexit in the UK) fosters a flexible and changing understanding of identity in Spanish migrants that involves

reclaiming specific local and regional identities at a transnational level, while at the same time articulating positions of national, European and international cosmopolitanism. They also demonstrate the intricate relationship of self-identities with political events and the affects that they generate. However, Spaniards might not always perceive this identity-juggling as conflicting or stressful. Rather, they use all the resources available to them to craft coherent self-presentations.

1.2.3 Social Media Musicking and Identity

The cultural and political context outlined above as well as the subsequent identity articulations of participants are relevant to this chapter analyses because they are crucially linked to their social media activities and online music circulation. Not only may displays of identity online be a form of escapism and freedom from reductive understandings of cultural belonging, but also a manifestation of how Spaniards are collectively in permanent need to articulate and work on their self-identities. In this context, music practices, whether as consumer, fan, or musician, help to build the individuals' sense of belonging to an imagined community. As Su Zheng (2010: 7) points out, music is "an essential marker in defining what does and does not constitute a nation". If identities are "points of temporary attachment to subject positions which discursive practices construct" (Hall 1996: 6) in a performative and fluid sense (Butler 1999; Negus 1996), musicking on social media allows Spanish migrants to place themselves in cultural narratives and articulate self-definitions of identity as temporary attachments. In other words, it is through online musicking that these identities come to be articulated and performed through discourse. Understanding diaspora as a practice in which multiple subjectivities are rehearsed and experienced (Ramnarine 2007a) I argue that these rehearsals find particularly useful resources in the online articulation of citizenships and identities, especially in the crafting of social media profiles and the use of music media objects. These profiles are performative and embodied diaries of users, who select and curate information, media, and relationships, to perform symbolic interaction in Goffmanian terms. Social media platforms help to materialise and perform what in the past had been embodied through offline interaction and pre-digital forms of media, where personal profiles have the role of articulating identities to understand oneself and to present to others.

During fieldwork, I observed how these dynamics played out in Spanish migrants' profiles. It was telling that, when I asked participant José about his self-definition of identity (Jose 2017), he pointed me towards something he wrote on his Facebook profile a year before:

“You don’t belong to the place you were born at, nor to the place where you die, but to the place where you struggle. Migrating is a life choice, where each one of us can decide what is the place he was born for. I was born to fly and the whole world is my home.”

Social media is used by Spaniards to bring together their varied facets of identity mentioned above, even if sometimes it is done in ways that are not apparent to observers, as was also highlighted by Razvan Nicolescu (2016). For instance, participant Jasmin used Facebook to articulate different elements of her identity, using demonyms instead of surnames. She also included an additional demonym as an alias and included Málaga as her birthplace (Fig. 1.2), although she is from Barcelona. When I asked her about this self-presentation, she said:

“Because of my parents, because I am of Andalusian origin, my parents are Cordovan and I am Catalan (...) I don’t know, I suppose that because I was born in Catalonia, I would be more Catalan than Cordovan, from which I only have my roots and customs, but I don’t know. (...) Also, because I studied in Málaga and I fell in love with the city so... look, I want all my identity and all that makes the person that I am, to be reflected on my profile (...) the only thing that I have missed to add is Miss Londoner.”
Jasmin, 5 October 2017

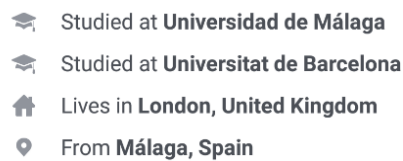


Fig. 1.2 Jasmin’s Facebook Profile

In this example, Jasmin is using the platform’s affordances for creativity with biographical detail to put together different aspects of her identity that correspond to varied local, regional, national and international affiliations. This self-presentation constitutes a performative articulation that is both a product of the platform’s affordances and her agency to share with others this presentation of her identity. Moreover, it is easy to see how the Spanish and British cultural context discussed above has influenced her self-definition, in which she makes a final gesture towards London cosmopolitanism to free herself from the uncertain Spanish imaginary of identity. These complex ways of understanding overlapping identities are visible in the attitudes of research participants towards music and music events, within their offline music lives as migrants living in London and as social media users. They can also be seen in their use of platforms’ affordances with regards to music media. In these online contexts, music can be used to performatively evoke a sense of place or to articulate affects for the homeland or the host locale. It can also take a visual role where

iconographic elements of music media help users collage their identity performances into images that can be easily circulated. For instance, in Jasmin’s example above, her interview statement seemed to explain not only her choice of self-presentation on the platform-led description, but also her music media activity. In May 2017, before this particular interview was conducted, I noticed that she broadcasted a livestream on Facebook, while attending the Andalusian-themed *Feria de Londres*. (see Fig. 1.1). This was a public event that took place in Potters Fields, next to London landmarks such as Tower Bridge and City Hall. Jasmin’s video stream included the caption “*Yo soy del sur. Soy andalú* (dancer icon)” (“I am from the south. I am Andalusian [dialectal form]”) (Fig. 1.3). In the video, she can be seen with friends listening and dancing to flamenco and enjoying the representation of the *Feria* celebration, while flamenco music can be heard in the background. A few days later, she followed up this video by posting on her profile a YouTube link recommending a flamenco song, with a text saying that she missed the *Feria* and Tower Bridge.



Fig. 1.3 Jasmin’s livestream caption

A few relevant points can be drawn out from this instance of musicking. First, in the live stream video, music serves as the soundtrack that helps create a sense of place for the event, rather than the main object of the video. Second, music is also the element that makes it possible to articulate and perform Andalusian identity in such an iconic London location, while the rest of the event’s staging can barely be seen. Consequently, the sonic power of music to create place in a given space (Kassabian 2013) is transferred to the online profile, becoming embodied in Jasmin’s Facebook profile. Third, the follow-up music video after the event provides a shortcut to the memory of the experience, thus providing a reminder of the performance and reiterating the articulation of identity. Lastly, emotions and affect are involved in these practices, particularly in two ways. On the one hand, this overlap of identities is lived as something positive, rather than as a conflict. On the other, the lack of opportunities to relive the performance evokes nostalgia. In addition, nostalgia does not directly refer to a birth-given homeland, but to an imagined community of belonging. It should also be noticed that, overall, this kind of musical practice seemed to privilege the sonic rather than the visual affordances of livestreaming video.

A contrasting example of identity musicking, which does privilege the visual over the sonic content, is the online circulation of musical iconography. Spaniards often use images, rather than music or music performances, to articulate multi-faceted understandings of self-identity on social media, as in the following examples from Luisa and Rose (Fig. 1.4). Here, identity is performed by associating British bands and their iconography with Galician and Catalan regional identities.



Fig. 1.4 Galician (left) and Catalan independentist (right) flags superposed on Rolling Stones and Iron Maiden iconography

These examples illustrate some further points. In these cases, iconography replaces or invokes the music to provide a vehicle for identity articulation and performance. The sonic element is present by omission or as an imagined feature. Images can be more easily manipulated and circulated than other media texts such as audio or video files and thus allow for this kind of rebranding of affiliations more than songs. Also, diverse national symbols and iconography from the host and the home country are put together, creating a sense of international or transnational affiliation, rather than creating a specific sense of place. Moreover, these postings suggest that there is a political and ideological appropriation of foreign musics that have come to be representative of the host country, to promote a national political cause in the home country. Affect is a subtler element here, because there seems to be an expressed longing for the homeland (a regional one in this case), although this is not explicitly performed, as was the case in Jasmin's example. Nonetheless, the prevalence of regional identities in all these cases confirms the point made in the previous section whereby any sense of Spanishness is rather avoided or implicated through subtext. Also notable are the allusions to subcultural identity, which will be addressed further below in the next chapter. When I asked Rose about this use of Iron Maiden iconography as cover image, she explained it in these terms:

Rose: Somebody posted it. This is the Trooper, and usually it is an English (sic) flag. Somebody changed it for a Catalan flag. And so, it is like a symbol of independence and of heavy [metal]. (...) Somebody shared it a 11 September [Catalonia Day] years ago, and I always share it for Catalonia Day. This image, and the independence flag [as profile picture]. (...) I love it, because I love Iron Maiden, and because I love that it has an independentist flag.

Raquel: They are like your...

Rose: My cornerstones.

Rose, 25 October 2017

Therefore, Rose's articulation of identity is made through a visual representation of her music preferences combined with a symbol of national identity, as a sort of collage of her identity cornerstones.

At this stage, it is worth further identifying elements of nostalgia and affect in these musicking practices. As Baily and Collyer (2006) point out regarding the study of migrant music practices, the trope of the emigrant as someone that misses the homeland and tries to recreate it in the host country via music performance provides a limited, static analysis. Although Baily and Collyer do not explicitly refer to online activities, their critical view of nostalgic music practices fits well this case study. First, music and music iconography circulate online without necessarily being linked to the movement of populations, and it is not brought into the host country by migrants (Nooshin 2011). Second, recreating or looking for traditional contexts of music performance similar to those back home does not accurately describe the reported experiences of Spaniards in the UK, as illustrated above in the example from the Galician Centre. Although there are successful regular music events in London focused on Spanish music, Spaniards have intra- and inter- national understandings of culture and identity specific to Spain's cultural landscape. Therefore, the use of music to invoke nostalgia for the homeland within the Spanish migrant community involves complex identity work through overlapping imagined affiliations. The examples of Sue, Jasmin, and Rose considered above are not just expressions of nostalgic affect for a clearly defined national homeland.

Rather than dismiss the argument altogether, however, these examples also show that nostalgia for an imagined homeland and music are somewhat related. Instead of wanting to find the Spanish community in a broad sense re-enacted in London, participants felt attached to local or regional nostalgias with ambivalent feelings. Experiences of alternative modes of

national nostalgia, rather than just attachment to certain sounds (Frith 1996a: 124), seemed to be the core affects. As was the case with self-definitions of identity, the cultural realities and the regionalist politics of Spain create particular ways to live out these attachments and affects for each community, which can range from nostalgic idealisation to fear of repression, even referring simultaneously to various affects. It is through this flexible and ambivalent regional nostalgia that the musicking habits of Spanish migrants articulate an experience of displacement in London, comparable to observations made by Fiona Parrott (2012) and Marino (2015) in reference to other migrant communities in London. Therefore, these case studies suggest that nostalgia and affect can also be articulated through regionally-specific discourses and practices, which illustrate the different modes of experiencing displacement. Music habits, online and offline, are influenced by these alternative modes of experiencing migration – in contrast to the assumed Spanish mode of affect that events such as the *Feria* try to evoke. In the case of Galicians, this regional understanding of migrant displacement is expressed through the concept of *morriña*,⁶ which refers to the nostalgia and the emotional suffering of those who live away from the homeland. This was often the topic of Facebook posts by Sue, where music was a crucial element to evoke *morriña* (Fig. 1.5). When I asked her about this post during an interview (Sue 29 September 2017), she pointed me to the comment section where she confirmed to a friend that on that day she felt particularly homesick.



Fig. 1.5 Sue's post of *Siniestro Total's* song "*Miña Terra Galega*" ("My Galician Homeland"). This song is a cover of "Sweet Home Alabama" by Lynyrd Skynyrd.

However, when I asked her if posting music was a way to relieve her from these feelings, she specified:

⁶ I have chosen to use the original word here because the translation does not exactly convey its full meaning, which sits between the English concepts of homesickness and sad nostalgia and the Portuguese idea of *saudade*, but with an added element of heartbreaking (but expected) suffering.

Yes, sometimes I would feel *morriña* and listen to a Galician song or two (...) but no, (...) if I am nostalgic and I start listening to bagpipes I would start crying, thinking that I have to get out of here. No, maybe if one day I have *morriña*, maybe I will listen to a pipe [song] but in general it doesn't cheer me up to listen to songs from my hometown ... no, it depresses me more. I look for the opposite, something that would make me forget and really cheer me up. Sue, 29 September 2017

This ambivalent attitude towards *morriña* and its concept of identity affect was later confirmed in January 2018, when she attended a concert by Galician folk band *Luar Na Lubre* in London and posted a video of the show. She commented on the post that she had “cried because of *saudade* and *morriña*, but it was worth it” (my emphasis). Overall, Sue's examples illustrate that identity is lived and performed online through a culturally-specific concept, which frames the ambivalence of nostalgia and suffering displacement as a conscious affect. They also demonstrate how physical practices of identity embodiment, such as attending a concert and feeling emotional – ‘distributed subjectivity’ in Kassabian's (2013) terms –, have their online counterparts in social media musicking.

In the case of Catalans, this notion of identity and affect in displacement is oriented towards the concept of *fer país* (“to make country”), which implies an active process of coming together of the migrant community. However, this concept is not specific to migrant Catalans, because it refers to a wider idea of building society and community that is intrinsically related to the construction of Catalonia as a political entity within Spain. Rose referred to it when I asked about her music habits:

“I don't listen to Catalan nor Spanish music (...). But if a Catalan band comes here yes, I would go. Because it is like *making country* a little bit. If [Catalan rock band] Lax'N'Busto comes here I would go for sure, but... I never listen to Catalan music.” Rose, 25 October 2017

This statement provides further evidence of the specific kinds of identity performance that regional concepts of affect imply in the Spanish cultural landscape. While *fer país* is employed here to describe a practice and activity rather than an emotional definition of identity, thereby implying musicking activities that actively promote the goal of community building, it also fosters a way of feeling about identity and belonging as something that requires construction. However, in this statement from Rose, embodiment seems to happen through physically participating in musicking activities (Svašek 2012), rather than incorporating these practices into an online profile. Nonetheless, instead of considering these two forms of embodiment as separate domains of cultural performance, both should be considered together as two sides of the same coin. An embodiment of *fer país* by attending a concert

may be relevant to the online performance of identity of Rose precisely because it takes place as an addition, while her other identity embodiments online and offline are oriented towards Anglo-centric rock music. It is in the combination of both embodiments that a coherent sense of self-identity is being performed. While Sue used music media as a semiotic shortcut to the cornerstones of her identity in the example above (rock music and Galician), Rose's most similar use of a music media item as identity-articulation, the Iron Maiden image with the Catalan flag, lacked an explicit sonic element. In that sense, different forms of identity embodiment have to be understood as complementary, not opposing elements. Participants use the resources available to them to build and perform coherent self-identities, but these may not be ideal nor evident to outside observers (Nicolescu 2016). However, it is in the interplay between online and offline identity articulations that users fully articulate their self-presentations.

1.2.4 Beyond Cultural Identity

To summarise, the previous examples illustrate how performativity and embodiment through social media musicking practices, in the sense outlined by Butler, contribute to the articulation of the multiple diasporic identities of Spaniards in London, as well as to the reclaiming of their regional and cosmopolitan affiliations as transnational migrants. The case studies show that social media can indeed be used as technologies of the self, as far as identity is understood in a non-essentialised way, as something socially constructed and performed for others, closer to an idea of 'culturing'. Online music practices are also central to Spanish diasporic experiences in London, "linking the homeland with the here-land" (Slobin, 1994: 243). These identity performances set and maintain not only self-definitions, but also boundaries of otherness, such as the limits of Spanishness.

However, as the examples of Jasmin, Sue, and Rose have shown, these online embodied performances also involve other musicking practices. Music embodied on a social media profile also evokes a sense of place, sonically or visually, providing ways to occupy online spaces in the same way that migrants use sound and iconography in physical locations (Plasquy 2012). These occupations of public space provide paths to a sort of performance of imagined cybercitizenship that can be used for the personal and collective storytelling of Spanish migrants, in the same mode as occurs outside online practices (Stokes 2017). If identification with certain musics provides people with the means "to transform themselves into particular kinds of urbanites" (Stokes 1994: 4), the kind of citizenship that Spanish

migrants perform is multiple and flexible due to pre-existing differences and conflicts in Spain. Moreover, it allows them to contest ascribed citizenships, helping to build peripheral and even insurgent kinds of regional or local belonging, as these case studies have shown. Particularly striking is how anything can be the 'sound of home', not always referring to local folk music. Likewise, the homeland can be anything, for example a nation not recognised as such or a plurinational nation in conflict. In this sense, the examples above demonstrate that online musicking practices do not lead to an atomization or dissolution of citizens towards an anonymised globality, but rather to the development of new ways for Spaniards to articulate citizenship, as it will be further analysed in Chapter 3 in relation to politics.

Furthermore, these musicking practices provide tools for to perform affective musical citizenship in similar ways as it is enacted in physical spaces, because music media objects are part of the (im)material culture that people use to articulate feelings as migrants. The case studies also demonstrate that these affects cannot be simply classified as nationalistic nostalgia, insurgent regionalism or idealised localism. They appear ambivalently, as positive and negative feelings that are interlinked to each other and strongly influenced by regional concepts of affects and attitudes towards displacement. However, these insights regarding affect should be taken with a caveat. The escalation of the Catalanian conflict just before I conducted the interviews had a polarising effect on Spaniards' attitudes towards identity, although this did not seem to influence the participants' self-presentations either online or face-to-face in comparison with their self-presentations beforehand. This could be a reflection of this specific sample of interviewees, who even as independentists were politically moderate and not in favour of armed interventions nor prone to identitarian extremes. They expressed despair and shock, rather than anger, at the news. Nonetheless, this further confirms that a focus on the practices to craft coherent self-presentations, rather than identity and culture as pre-defined entities, provides more nuanced and dynamic results in a context of multiple overlapping identities such as Spanish migrant communities. The examples above show that it is necessary to understand cultural identity as a process of culturing, as well as musical practices as processes of musicking.

This section has analysed how cultural identity is performed through music practices on social media, focusing on some of the roles that music might take in these performances. However, there is more than just cultural identity being performed through online music practices. The following sections expand this enquiry by providing further insights into gender and genre-oriented identities and how they are performed through music practices

on social media. They also investigate the overlapping areas of these two perspectives with a case study.

1.3 Gender and Sexuality

The previous section has shown that online musicking has a performative and embodied character that provides the means to articulate cultural identities and citizenships, at times multi-faceted and counter-hegemonic. However, this is not unique to national or local identities; a similar process occurs with gender identities. In the same way that Butler (1999) described gender performativity in terms of embodiment of physical, offline practices, gender identities can be culturally inscribed through online activities. Rather than social media practices becoming a counterargument to Butler's theory, they confirm that gender articulation should be considered in all its possible iterations as a continuum, encompassing the possibilities provided by social media and those outside of them. Social media can provide the means to perform and manage gender (boyd 2014; Livingstone 2008), particularly through gendered music activities linked to fandom that can range from the normative to the subversive, from the mainstream to the subcultural, from passive self-representation to LGBT activism (Wasserbauer and Dhoest 2016). Similarly, understanding social media as technologies of the self (Bakardjieva and Gaden 2012) and gender identities as socially and culturally constructed (Miller et al. 2016: 114), the same perspective of online digitised bodies as the locus of value inscription outlined in the introduction to this chapter can certainly be applied here. Users employ the resources available to them online and offline, including social media musicking, to craft coherent and embodied presentations of self-identity as forms of culture-making. This section addresses the evidence from the fieldwork research from the perspectives of non-normative and normative gender performance on social media. It concludes by arguing that, whether musicking activities on social media contribute to normative or non-normative gender performances, both should be considered as culture-making practices of online citizenship.

1.3.1 LGBTQ and non-Normative Performativity

As was the case with national identity, social media platforms have a gender-performative dimension that is the result of the affordances of the medium and the agency of users. They can decide whether to explicitly list their self-definitions of gender on their public profiles

and which specific content they show to others. These online performances of gender identity develop within the wider context of offline gender performances that are part of everyday life. In relation to Butler's theory of performativity and its reference to LGBTQ identity, evidence can be drawn from the music practices of the Spanish LGBTQ community in London, where music events play an important role as nightlife safe spaces. For instance, Spanish-inspired LGBT party promoter *Lady Olé* organises club nights and concerts in London around the figures of past and present divas and iconic performers in the Spanish music scene. Their events combine the aspects of cultural identity performance outlined above (see Fig. 1.1) with public self-identification with LGBTQ identities (Fig. 1.6). LGBTQ nightlife promoters not only base their online presence on the affordances of social media platforms such as event creation, but also in the users' embodiment of these promotional tools as part of their online gender performance.



Fig. 1.6 Lady Olé event promotion on Facebook

However, it could be argued that pretending or intending to attend (online) or actually attending (offline) an LGBTQ music event does not necessarily perform an LGBTQ identity, but rather shows an ideological affiliation or solidarity. In contrast, the performance of gender through social media musicking appears more explicitly in activities unrelated to offline music practices. Users post links to music media that includes visual or lyrical subtexts that refer to LGBTQ identities, embodying these performances on their online profiles. This may be accompanied by hashtags or other kinds of paratextual labels, providing additional information about the kind of performance that takes place (Fig. 1.7). In the same way that body positivity is an important element of LGBTQ identities offline, the online embodiment of these identities shows a commitment to these values. As Stock (2016) notes, through

interaction with LGBTQ-related media items, users perform gay identity and LGBTQ affects of brotherly love.

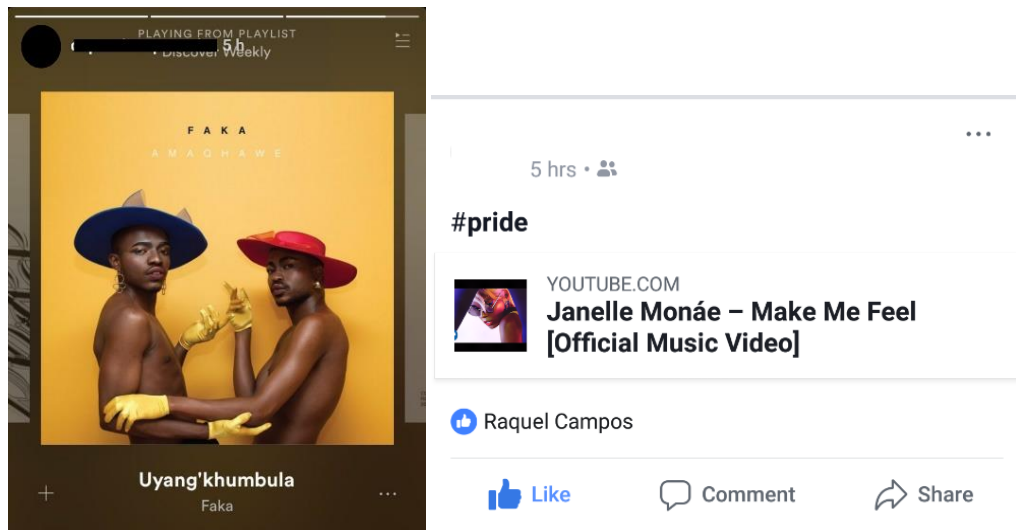


Fig. 1.7 LGBTQ-related music media shared on Instagram and Facebook by Ramon (left) and Diana (right).

This kind of gender performance can also interact complexly with other modes of culture-making such as political activism. For instance, research participant Diana was very active on social media and often posted music content related to the LGBTQ community and its struggles. Her posts included a wide range of activities, from diva worship to human rights activism (Fig 1.8). With these postings, Diana embodied different elements of her LGBT identity on her social media profile and performed a conscious, semi-public articulation of gender. In a personal conversation, she mentioned that she feels that it is important to show to others that she is part of the LGBT community and to help others with their personal struggles, minimising conflict or rejection among her non-LGBTQ contacts as a secondary matter (Diana, personal conversation 2017). In an interview at a later date, she also highlighted that activism comprises a large part of her daily social media activity (Diana 10 October 2017). Diana's examples show that, if gender embodiment is a generator of culture in Butler's conceptualisation, culture and values can be produced through posting and sharing music on a social media profile. Here cultural production refers to various spheres of sociality, because gender articulation also provides a vehicle for the articulation of intersecting politics, such as environmental or human rights activism. In the same way that cultural identity performance is a vehicle for articulating politics and citizenship, gender identity performance also contributes to the reproduction of moral values and politics.

Moreover, affect also plays a role in these forms of culture-making. While previous studies (Stock 2016) have pointed out that love and emotion outside heteronormativity can be articulated by creating new versions and recirculating a music video, in this case study I argue that the same perspective can be applied without involving any musical creativity.

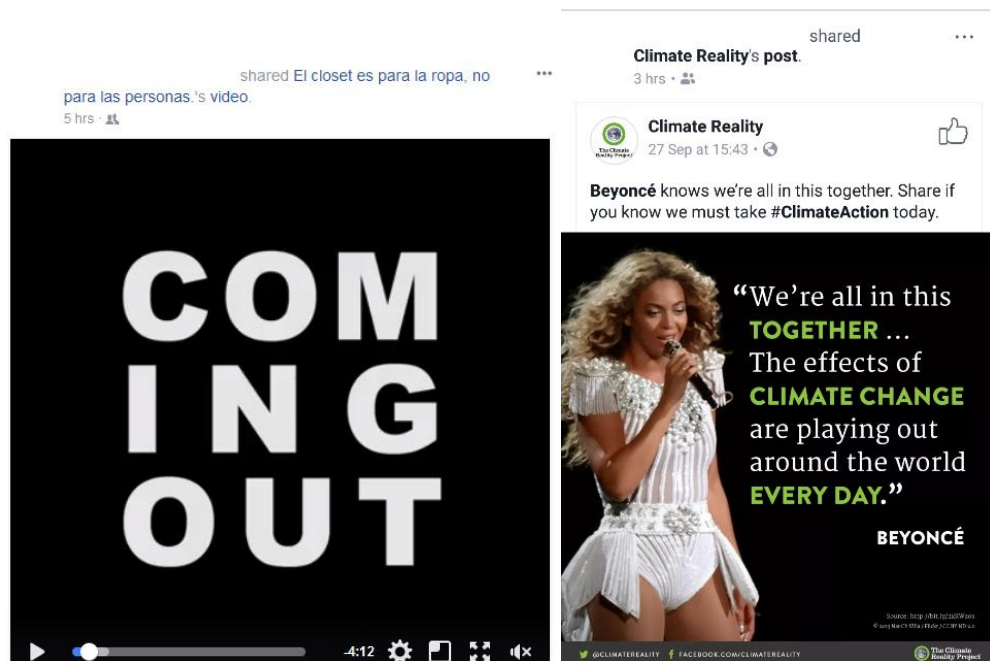


Fig. 1.8 Examples of Diana’s posts referring to LGBTQ identity and music

In the captions above (Figs. 1.7 and 1.8), the media posted by research participants perform varied non-normative affects of LGBTQ love, as well as fears and emotional experiences derived from coming out, which are embodied in the social media profile. In that sense, while social media platforms largely associate online performances of gender with physical bodies in contrast with early internet forums (Miller et al. 2016: 114), they still have the potential to empower LGBTQ users to escape from heteronormative oppression to an extent, as well as to mobilise other intersectional aspects of their collective politics.

1.3.1 Heteronormative Performativity

This analysis does not imply that gender performance through social media musicking is only to be found among LGBT users. Similar performances and articulations can be observed on the social media profiles of heterosexual users, and the reproduction and reinforcement of heterosexual normativity that has been noted in previous studies (Miller et al. 2016; Costa 2016; Nicolescu 2016) was indeed present in the case of Spaniards in London. Dominant ideas are reproduced in public-facing social media and self-crafting always has a

gendered aspect. However, it could be argued that heterosexual normativity is more difficult to observe, as it requires an explicit acknowledgement or performance to unmask processes that are sometimes taken for granted. Selfies and other media practices that have emerged with social media are intrinsically gendered (see Miller and Sinanan 2017 for a comparative discussion), even if sometimes this is omitted from research in favour of a focus on individuality and other media panics about social media such as selfishness.

Nonetheless, there are music activities on social media among Spaniards that reveal this reproduction of normativity in the public sphere in clear terms. For example, there are instances of normalised female-to-male fandom that constitute a performance of heterosexual identity. For instance, Jasmin reacted to a video of a female Dutch reviewer of Brazilian music with the comment “I should also become a Brazilian music and Brazilian men reviewer”. Research participant Sandra often posted videos of her favourite artists with direct references to the men as objects of desire (Fig. 1.9). But in these articulations, heterosexual gender identity was performed together with instances of fandom, such as textually evoking passing out from excitement.⁷

Cada vez que escucho esto
Frusciante me hace un hijo
youtu.be/1Tilgm0xY0A #eargasm

[Translate from Spanish](#)

 YouTube



Red Hot Chili Peppers - Don't Forget Me -
Live at Slane Castle

Fig. 1.9 Sandra’s tweet of a Red Hot Chili Peppers video. The caption reads “every time I listen to this Frusciante knocks me up”

Sandra seemed conscious of these gender performances and referred to her musicking activities on social media as *fangirleo* (Spanglish for “fangirling”). This performance of gender was even more explicit when considered in context. Additional elements of Sandra’s online

⁷ Fandom will be further developed in chapter 4

gender identity performance, such as having a picture of a *novela* actress as her Twitter avatar lend credence to this interpretation.⁸ Therefore, this kind of social media fandom is also a form of normative female gender performance, with the same culture-making processes as the non-normative identity performances discussed above, which reproduce a certain set of values and morality.

1.3.3 Gender Performance as Cultural Production

To summarise, musicking activities on social media contribute to identity performance by providing a vehicle to articulate gender identities. In the same way that was outlined in the previous section for national identity, gender performance may be flexible because gender self-definitions and their levels of explicitness vary across a continuum, rather than appearing as binary distinctions. In addition, music posts can also be read from different perspectives. Closer relationships are most likely to read these posts in the way they were intended, while weaker ties may not be able to fully understand what is being performed.⁹ Even images of LGBTQ events with hashtags that explicitly reference gender may have different readings depending on the context and may still not be a direct reference to self-definitions as the case studies above have shown. Moreover, these examples provide evidence as to how gender performance can also be linked with a performance of politics and citizenship in a similar way to cultural identities. However, rather than simply reading gender performance as an additional form of online activism, these musicking activities must be understood as ongoing processes of culture making where values are created or reinforced as part of performative online citizenship. The following section provides an example where the areas of cultural and gender identity performance intersect with subculture, politics and value articulation.

1.4 Case Study: Reggaetón and Identity Performance

One of the first things that appeared as crucially important for performances of identity and gender online and offline during this project's fieldwork was the relevance of reggaetón for Spaniards in London. Reggaetón appeared as a conflictive and divisive genre early in the

⁸ I did not include this image for privacy reasons. *Novela* protagonists always play the rags-to-riches, Cinderella-like character of a poor girl that falls in love with a rich man.

⁹ There is an element of subcultural capital here that will be discussed in Chapter 2.

research, and extreme opinions seemed to dominate the field. This was not surprising considering that the history of reggaetón as a genre has been surrounded by controversy since it originated in Puerto Rico in the mid-1990s from Jamaican and Panamanian dem bow, reggae and rap rhythms (Marshall 2009). Its initial links to the suburban working-class youth and underground music circuits led to accusations of posing a threat to national security and identity, and consequently to censorship (Rivera 2009). However, this only generated notoriety and made it more successful. Consequently, since the arrival of reggaetón in Spain in the mid-2000s, the rise of the genre from underground and minority audiences to its current success in the mainstream has been the subject of much criticism in Spanish conservative media (Furundarena 2017; Serrano 2017; Sen 2016). Reggaetón has been the target of a moral panic over the content of its lyrics and videos and it has been criticised for oversexualizing and diminishing women, particularly through its emblematic dance style *perreo* (“doggy style” twerking) dancing. In Spain, reggaetón has become the last iteration of a history of moral panics that accuse a certain music genre of corrupting the youth with immoral values and attitudes, by promoting inappropriate dances and behaviour, thus ultimately posing a threat to society. These intricate politics of the genre and its crucial role in Spanish contemporary culture came to the fore unexpectedly during fieldwork. Not only were reggaetón videos often circulated among participants on social media, but reggaetón appeared time and again as a reference in conversations about music habits, identity and the experiences of Spanish migrants in the UK, becoming a sort of intersectional value compass. Coincidentally, it was also during 2017 that the mainstream reggaeton hit “*Despacito*” (Fonsi 2017) became a worldwide hit (Van Buskirk 2017). This section provides a focused case study of these dynamics, building upon the previous sections on national and gender identity.

The first theme to emerge during fieldwork was the use of reggaetón to evoke understandings of national identity and to articulate identity experiences of migration to the UK. Reggaetón was often used by participants to illustrate their ideas of Spanishness and pan-Hispanic identity, at home and as migrants, and the inclusions and exclusions associated with them. Quite early in the research, Sue specifically pointed out that she could dance to anything, even *muñeira* (Galician folk) or *sardana* (Catalan folk), but the only thing she could not dance to was reggaetón (Sue, personal conversation 2017). In subsequent conversations, Sue reiterated and expanded this statement to include salsa and other Latin genres, always relegating reggaetón to the musical periphery. The first conversation with Sue made me realise that reggaetón had a more important role for Spaniards than I had expected. After

this, the centrality of the genre in defining articulations of national identity would appear several times with Sue and other interviewees. Reggaetón always appeared as a marker of musical borders, defining the limits of Spanish and pan-Hispanic identities, and consequently establishing the insiders and the outsiders of a sort of musical system of kinship. Some of them also referred to the relationship between reggaetón and ‘national’ genres, as for instance Jasmin, who evoked hybridisation to articulate these identity boundaries:

“[Flamenco-reggaetón] is very common in Spain (...) now we produce reggaetón in Spain, and we even fusion it with flamenco (...). In the Spanish parties that are being organized in London, they [the Djs] play reggaetón, instead of pop or flamenco or something Spanish (...). The Spanish parties have taken reggaetón as musical symbol.” Jasmin, 5 October 2017

Several other participants’ statements along these lines indicated that the existence of such fusion genres confirms two dynamics. On the one hand, participants seem to understand that reggaetón is now fully a Spanish genre. On the other, the distinction between categories of musical Spanishness remains, somehow maintaining flamenco as the Spanish musical genre par excellence that validates imported genres through their fusion. These dynamics of hybridisation were further evinced in April 2017, when two Spanish migrants living in Manchester uploaded to YouTube a cover version of “*Despacito*” (see Primo Juan 2017) with new lyrics articulating their views on Brexit, which became considerably popular.¹⁰ And yet, although they chose “*Despacito*” as a pan-Hispanic worldwide hit to comment on current politics, their cover version included the flamenco guitar, played as the element that made reggaetón Spanish. As noted in the introduction of this chapter in reference to multiculturalism (Bayley and Nooshin 2017; Caglar 1997), discourses on hybridisation still carry the assumption of pre-existing, self-contained national identities which are separate from each other. Nonetheless, this evidence demonstrates how Spanish identity can be constructed through a dialogue with reggaetón.

Moreover, Jasmin’s statement above hints that this use of reggaetón to articulate self-identity is closely related to the establishment of physical boundaries in city spaces, as many participants explained to me. I quote here at length a conversation with Fernando and Teresa, who responded to questions of musical taste with a reference to reggaetón, geographic space and feeling at home:

¹⁰ This video will be further analysed in Chapter 3 in relation to political discourse on social media

Teresa: “It hurts me particularly because since [reggaetón] is there, you can’t go dancing. I used to like dancing often, and now I don’t enjoy it because I don’t like at all everything around the genre. My hate towards it is more on a personal level because of that.”

Raquel: Because it occupies the space that other genres had before?

Fernando: “Exactly. Our city [in Spain] used to have a very eclectic music culture (...) In the 2000s that started to change, and Latin music started to come in (...) If we criticise it more is because we encounter it daily. You can’t escape it.”

(...)

Teresa: “... what happens when something you don’t like occupies all spaces, is that you become even more hostile to it. So one thing is that I dislike the lyrics and the subculture, (...). And then there is the emotional (sic) hostility, because it occupies all spaces and it has taken away from me what I liked.”

Fernando and Teresa, 6 October 2017

In this case, the arrival of reggaetón in bars and clubs is considered a foreign invasion that colonises one own’s sonic space, from which Spaniards feel alienated. These participants established clearly separated groups, delineated by their affinities to home sounds or to the sounds of the Latin-American other. However, it should be also noted that the research participants in London are not only migrants that have moved from Spain to the UK, but also Spanish nationals who have first moved from Latin America to Spain and later to the UK, or Spaniards of Latin-American descent. Several levels of migration of people and music intersect in this analysis, and reggaetón may not be considered an imported genre by some participants, but rather a home sound to look for in London, as for instance Jasmin in did taking reggaetón as sign of Andalusian identity. Moreover, in the context of Brexit, Spanish nationals have seen their relative European migrant privileges significantly reduced or disappear altogether, becoming part of the wider migrant Other for Brits – increasingly experiencing treatment comparable to the UK’s other migrants and minorities (The Guardian 2017). Consequently, for Spanish migrants in London, reggaetón is also a tool to reclaim a space of otherness in the city’s nightlife in the same manner as other affective rituals of migrants (Plasquy 2012). The genre serves to mark a physical boundary and process of self-othering between Brits and pan-Hispanic migrants in urban spaces, promoting a linguistically-bounded scene through the affective rituals of Spanish-speakers in particular

areas of the city. The timing of these events is also important, because they subvert the traditional British habits of midnight-bounded pub goers and allow Spaniards and Latinos to occupy the city spaces during night time.¹¹



Fig. 1.10 Spanish party flyers promoting reggaetón parties on Facebook and Instagram.

As one promoter explained, Spanish parties in London use reggaetón as a selling point because it evokes an idea of Spanishness to a young demographic of heterosexual, lower-income, less integrated migrants (Promoter, personal communication 2017). This rings true in my observations of the evolution of Spanish events during fieldwork. Spanish events such as Mega Spanish Party that were originally oriented towards concerts and DJ sessions of Spanish hits, eventually came to the conclusion that reggaetón was indeed an element of Spanish identity in London after they run an informal survey on Facebook, and thus provided separate spaces for the genre (see Fig. 1.10 bottom). In addition, because there were other

¹¹ While British pubs' peak times are 5pm to closure at 11pm or midnight, Spanish reggaeton parties run from 8 or 9pm until 5 or 6am, with a peak around midnight-1am. Until 2018, Mega Spanish Party sold a package ticket including a concert starting at 7pm with option to stay in the club until 6am.

events oriented towards Spanish music nostalgia such as Lady Olé, these events also segregated Spaniards by gender identity. In that sense, the reggaetón events themselves were affective physical performances of cultural and gender identity.

However, it would also be naïve to reduce reggaetón's significance for Spanish identity to a question of hybridisation or nightclub politics between two socially distinct groups, particularly considering the complex history of migration and colonialism between Spain and Latin America. For centuries, transatlantic movements of people, goods and cultural artefacts have circulated between Spain and Latin America and music is by no means an exception. A paradigmatic example of this effect of colonial history on music is the existence of an entire family of flamenco forms, the *cantes de ida y vuelta* ("roundtrip songs"), constructed within these migratory routes over the centuries, incorporating musical styles from both shores. More importantly, this history of transatlantic exchange includes the slave trade and its forced movement of black people, as well as the enslavement and extermination of American indigenous people. The success of twerking itself can also be a form of white appropriation of black culture as argued by Gaunt (2016). In addition, as mentioned earlier, some participants in this study had important identity links with Latin America. In this context, it was disappointing to witness how reggaetón as a genre served as a marker of racial boundaries between the Spanish and the Latin-American Other, largely ignoring the history of hybridisation of Spanish culture. A few participants justified their rejection of reggaetón precisely because they wanted to avoid bars and clubs that were frequented by Latinos. They considered the genre to be of low-quality, and produced to be consumed by Latin-Americans. Pejorative racial terms were not uncommon when describing these distinctions. It could be argued that some visual aspects of the genre, linked originally to a marginalised youth, reproduce this ghettoization and conflict between racialised, lower-class individuals and white higher-class creoles in Puerto Rico, particularly in the older underground productions. However, participants did not seem aware of reggaetón's association with the black Caribbean population, nor with the original iconography of reggaetón as a black genre opposing whitewashed images of Latin-America as a mainly creole region (Marshall 2009). Rather, they rejected the genre as an all-encompassing symbol of the lower classes of Latin-America. This naturalisation of reggaetón as a symbol of the lower-class was equally evoked by participants with Latino ancestry who did not like reggaetón. Despite its mainstream success, this association of the genre with low culture and uneducated taste prevailed. On the other hand, some participants attended reggaetón events precisely because they represented a connection with Latin-America, or as explained

above, a connection with Spain. Consequently, Spaniards' relationships with reggaetón defined identities across multiple dimensions, including cultural, racial and class belonging.

But the relationship of reggaetón with self-definitions of Spaniards is even more complex in terms of gender dynamics. The reputation of the genre as hypersexualising and sexist and its history of censorship have led to its characterisation as a moral and musical invasion (Serrano 2017; Sen 2016). Indeed, reggaetón was originally associated with the hypermasculine scene of underground rap in Puerto Rico in the mid-nineties (Nieves Moreno 2009) and to this day, men still dominate the reggaetón scene in Spain and Latin America. Many music videos show masculine fantasies of consumption and the objectification of women inherited from rap. In some instances, male performers have been criticised for their sexist lyrics and portraying women as submissive or oversexualised in videos. Yet, a significant portion of reggaetón acts perform reggaetón-bachata tracks, with romantic rather than sexual themes. However, this is not representative of the overall politics of the genre, which derive from the expansion of Jamaican *dem bow* and its theatrical humorous sexuality to a Latino romantic sexualised performance. In addition, most criticism has focused on women and their role as enablers of sexism, either as objects of the lyrics, performers or consumers, although critical analysis is rarely directed to the same extent to their male counterparts. For instance, while male artists have been criticised or unfunded in some areas of Spain (eldiario.es 2017), the only artist ever to be censored on public television was a woman (El Pais 2017).

Some female performers have responded by highlighting how the same lyrical or visual content does not necessarily receive similar treatment when it is performed by men or women (Fernandez 2017; Cadena Ser/OhMyLol 2017), but this has not stopped the media panic. Similarly, journalists have largely ignored female acts when they sing feminist lyrics and present women in positions of dominance. For many women, reggaetón can also be understood as a source of empowerment against conservative scrutiny of their lives, in which music and dancing habits are just one of the areas of social control. Since the appearance of the genre, a few female figures such as Ivy Queen have used reggaetón to promote feminist discourse and subvert the narratives of submissive women in Latin America (Vazquez 2009; Jimenez 2009). In the context of Spanish conservative ideology, many female reggaetón fans have referred to the tradition of *perreo* dancing as a form of empowerment and celebration of the body for women, where the dance embodiment acts as a feminist tool of resistance (Rojas Mora 2017). It is common to find *perreo* workshops in feminist spaces across Spain and Latin America. In recent years, the LGBT community has also gained representation as

part of the reggaetón scene, subverting the heterosexual binary between dominant male performer versus dominated female dancer (Jessel 2017). Therefore, even if reggaetón is still dominated by heterosexual men – like many other musical genres – condemning reggaetón as inherently sexist further reveals the double standards of the industry and the media in favour of representing men’s points of view and uncritically reporting other, whiter popular music genres, rather than accurately describing the current situation of the reggaetón scene. As Raquel Rivera (2009) notes in her study, the reggaetón scene reflects the opposing political dynamics of Latin America, particularly regarding gender. Progressive feminist groups in Spain (Fernandez 2017) have also pointed out that criticism of reggaetón based on its sexist content are actually covert racist discourses that try to justify Spanish supremacism against Latin-American minorities and to impose a liberal perspective on feminism.

Reflecting these intricate gender politics, reggaetón appeared during fieldwork to be a polarising element. It was striking how participants expressed diametrically opposed approaches to reggaetón, while apparently defending similar feminist positions. In some cases, reggaetón is considered to render a poor service to feminists and to undermine women’s advances in Spanish society against, for instance, objectification. In others, it is embraced as sexually liberating and as a challenge to Spanish understandings of liberal feminism. But both arguments in favour of and against reggaetón are upheld as feminist. For instance, these statements by Jasmin and Anabel reflect this contradiction:

“I think that the lyrics are risqué. But what is wrong with that? Sexuality is something natural and we have the tendency to treat it like a taboo. The song is very explicit (...) If it isn’t sexist or misogynistic, what’s the problem?” Jasmin, 12 October 2017

“I think (perreo) it’s not normalised. I don’t see it as normalised. I don’t know in what circles, maybe not mine, you know? (...) I haven’t normalised it. And in fact, I think that those little advancements, that sort of apparent liberation, I don’t see it as real liberation.” Anabel, 21 November 2017

Therefore, in the same way as happened with cultural or racial identity, Spaniards’ attitudes towards reggaetón came to illustrate contrasting ways of being a feminist and thinking about gender. In conclusion, reggaetón is not only the battleground for discussions about different understandings of feminism or cultural identity, but the vernacular that people use to define their positions in wider collective arguments. Reggaetón is the language and the object of intersectional self-definitions of identity.

1.4.1 Reggaetón and Social Media Musicking

The cultural politics of reggaetón as a music genre are relevant because they strongly influence the online musicking activities of Spaniards in London. Reggaetón works as a “digital boundary object” (Nowak and Whelan 2016: 114) to perform and articulate gender perspectives and national identities on social media: “objects that permit conversations across social borders, without consensus as to the definitive features of the topic or object of conversation (...) (d)ifferent parties utilise digital music as a means of articulating their own perspectives, particularly ethics (...)”. In the same manner elaborated in this chapter, musicking about reggaetón on social media allows for the performance of identities by becoming embodied in the social media profile and subsequently generating discourses and values around it.

As discussed in the previous section, reggaetón can be seen as a negative cultural invasion in Spain and therefore something that needs to be avoided in London as a migrant. There were countless examples of reggaetón musicking as a negative articulation of identity and the experience of migration. Research participant Veronica said in a group conversation on Telegram: “They just played ‘despacito’ in Radio4. And now they are talking about reggeton (sic). Kill me. Time to leave the country” (Fig. 1.11 left). Similar ideas were often expressed by José (Fig. 1.11 right), who responded to a critical news article on the commercial success of the genre that circulated on Facebook with the caption “It’s not a local problem, it’s a global crisis”, with the answer “It gives you an idea of how screwed things are.”



Fig. 1.11 Veronica’s message on Telegram (left) and José’s comment on Facebook (right)

Many similar posts circulated on social media, particularly in groups, where long conversations about the quality and values of the genre took place. A recurrent theme of these conversations was identity, and whether reggaetón was a Spanish genre, or whether reggaetón was low culture (Fig. 1.12).



Fig. 1.12 Facebook comment on a Spaniards in London group stating “Reggaeton is not Spanish music” to which another user responds, “nor music”.

In the example below (Fig. 1.13) a Spaniard sums up this climate – in rather rude terms – by asking on the Facebook group *Españoles en Londres – El Original* if “Is there any Spanish party where they don’t play cancerous shit (sic), well, I mean Reketon (sic)? [...] I believe there is more educational music in the eighties and nineties than in the last four years!”. This post was answered by another Spaniard with the clarification that “you are more likely to find the music that you are looking for in a British party”. This answer reveals two further points. First, the understanding of British music by some Spaniards as a space of whiteness, where reggae, dancehall, and other neighbouring genres to reggaetón are not recognised as British. Second, an identification of some Spaniards with such whitewashed Britishness to mark a distance from other racialised music coming from Spain’s former colonies.



Fig. 1.13 A post about reggaetón in a Facebook group

This last example is particularly telling, in that it confirms that while most of the Spanish-themed events in London play reggaetón due to its popularity, it continues to polarise opinions offline and online. The politics of reggaetón generate oppositional definitions of identity on social media and reduce its circulation to users that positively value the genre. Therefore, it was much more uncommon to find positive musicking around reggaetón. The most vocal among the participants was Jasmin. She often shared reggaetón songs on her Facebook profile, sometimes commenting on the controversial relationship between reggaetón and feminism. On one occasion, she shared a blog post titled ‘If I can’t twerk, it’s not my revolution’ (Fernandez 2013) with the caption “Being a feminist is not opposed to twerking. We take it as far as the girl decides. Twerking does not mean ‘today we have sex for sure’ and it does not give you the right to assume it nor to get angry when we ‘say see you later, I am going home alone’. I twerk all [music] how and when I want.” (Fig. 1.14)



Fig. 1.14 Jasmin’s posts on reggaetón

As noted earlier, positive attitudes towards reggaetón do exist within the wider framework of feminist politics. Not only have reggaetón and twerking come to represent a form of bodily liberation through dance, but on social media feminist groups often subvert reggaetón lyrics and visual content to create alternative discourses online (Fig. 1.15). Jasmin often shared memes from these pages where the original lyrics had been modified to provide a feminist reading, saying that she had understood songs in that manner.

In summary, social media musicking among Spanish migrants in London furnishes them with tools to perform cultural and gender identity through the embodiment of music media and their concomitant politics on their social media profiles. In this context, discourses around reggaetón have arisen as an important locus for the articulation of these identities.



Fig. 1.15 Example from ‘Maluma Feminista’ meme page shared by Jasmin on Facebook talking about deconstructing patriarchal relationships

While the examples in this section show two extreme positions, they confirm a claim made earlier, that reggaetón is not only the space where identities are discussed and articulated, but also the language used to perform and embody those identities online. In other words, reggaetón is not only the context, but also the content of Spaniards’ performances of identity, even if this may happen as a form of “disidentification” (Muñoz 1999). Therefore, reggaetón on the social media of Spaniards in London plays the role of an intersectional grammar of cultural and gender identity. It could be argued, however, that music itself does not play a crucial role here, since what circulates are the values associated with it, rather than its sonic features. Perhaps in this case, where negative values are generally associated with a genre, sound takes a secondary role in online musicking. Yet, understanding musicking in its widest sense, social media activities are still taking place around music.

This case study provides two wider perspectives for further analysis. First, any online performance of identity can be intersectional, combining not only cultural and gender identity, but also other ideas about class and race. For specific pieces of music media and musicking activities, as is the case with reggaetón, several elements of identity are being performed and articulated at once. Second, intersectional “digital boundary objects” (Nowak and Whelan 2016), such as reggaetón music media, can condense several layers of ethnic and class distinction, delineating different groups understood as Others. Overall, the politics of reggaetón provide Spaniards in London with a shortcut to position themselves in specific nodes of this complex web of identities. Thus, rather than considering reggaetón as

a container and transmitter of discourses that range from the heteronormative and sexist to the feminist and decolonial, the genre should be approached as a way of being Spanish, for both its fans and its critics. Reggaetón's character as digital boundary object not only allows Spaniards to place themselves in a complex web of intersectional identities, but also creates a political space that can be inhabited by differing understandings of musical citizenship, as well as fostering participation in the public sphere around political discussions of feminist and decolonial approaches to Spanish society. In this sense, Negus' (1996) anti-essentialist approach, whereby music should not be regarded as representative of any specific group of people, reveals its analytic value through this case study. Instead of analysing social media musicking from a semiotic approach in which the meaning and the significance of music media is taken at face value, a relational perspective that includes politics and moral values must be adopted. In addition to those examined throughout this chapter, one additional aspect of performativity emerges from this case study: that of genre and subculture which will be explored in the next chapter.

1.5 Conclusion

In this chapter I have attempted to build an ethnomusicology of online identity, understanding music media as an object that allows Spaniards in London to perform identity and belonging on social media. Performativity has an automated character that arises from platforms' affordances, which in turn interacts with users' agency and voluntary performativity as part of their offline and online use of the technologies of the self available to them. Social media also has an embodied character which allows these performances of identity to be digitally inscribed in users' profiles. Music media objects and their online circulation create arenas that allow people to enact aesthetic and cultural relationships in performative ways, even if this sometimes involves privileging the visual and the imagined. In the first section, performances of international, national, regional and local identity of Spaniards were considered, showing how social media musicking provides useful tools to administer ethnicity and undertake processes of 'culturings'. Spaniards in London can place themselves in cultural narratives of belonging via social media musicking, particularly in complex political times. For this articulation of identity, audio and visual materials that represent different affiliations are used, generating positive and negative affects towards cultural groups and the migrant experience. These articulations of identity and affects show that Spanish migrants in London perform a web of interconnected and overlapping

belongings, rather than occupying a position in a binary of otherness. The second section further analysed social media musicking through embodiment, looking at the performance of gender identity. Affects and emotions are raised through this articulation of gender online, which can result in both a questioning of heteronormativity and in its reinforcement. It also provides further evidence of how the identity musicking can be an intrinsically political act, even without explicit references to institutional sites of power. To further explore the intersections of these two kinds of identity performance a focused case study of reggaetón was provided. This case study brings to the analysis the boundary-making character of digital music objects and their politics when they are part of identity performances of Spaniards online in general, and in their London context. It also highlights how identity is not simply self-constructed, but constrained by structural factors such as politics, adding race and class to the intersectional approach to identity. However, this case study on reggaetón reveals the influence of genre politics on identity performance and the pitfalls of purely semiotic readings of online musicking and identity. Even if this discussion focuses on practices rather than cultures and identities, its contribution is still limited.

In conclusion, in response to the research question of why people post music on social media, a first explanation has been outlined analysing identity articulation and performance. This conceptualisation has proven, however, to be limited on various fronts. The performance of identity suggests that individual definitions are linked to boundaries of otherness and self-presentations to others. Relationships and wider dynamics with communities and groups of belonging such as subcultures play a crucial role in the articulation of identities. The next chapter addresses these areas, providing a critical analysis of the suitability of performative and social distinction approaches to social media musicking.

Chapter 2 – Relationships and Social Capital

2.1 Introduction

To answer the question of why people post music on social media and following the discussion from Chapter 1, this chapter addresses how musicking on social media plays a role in the maintenance, development and reproduction of social capital and personal relationships among Spanish migrants in London. It investigates the role of cultural capital as a circulating currency on social media, providing case study evidence of the prevalence of relationship maintenance within groups over processes of distinction. It also illustrates the role of sacralised music objects on social media and their involvement in the maintenance of relationships. Lastly, the chapter discusses the limits of subcultural approaches to social media musicking, proposing alternative perspectives in the following chapters.

In the previous chapter, the analysis of the micropolitics of online identity has shown that social media performativity and embodiment through musicking activities cannot be understood separately from the wider politics of a music genre. A semiotic approach to identity that approaches musical meaning through its formal elements also misses the crucial role of sociality and relationships in the performative aspects of identity. As shown in the previous chapter, the crafted self-presentations of social media users towards others refer to cultural understandings of otherness. Therefore, relationships are an intrinsic part of these online performances of identity. These theoretical pitfalls are addressed in this chapter, incorporating a wider perspective on social media musicking as inherently social activities between people and groups, providing a firmer ground for the analysis of practices and cultural processes.

A great deal of research addressing the political aspects of different music genres has been articulated through the concept of subculture. Initially this theoretical framework focused on youth and anti-establishment politics (Hall and Jefferson 1976) and lifestyles (Hebdige 1979), assuming the coherence and stability of youth groups. Later interpretations were less heroic and took a more dynamic approach to the formation of taste groups (Thornton 1995; Thornton and Gelder 1997). Sarah Thornton understood subculture as the different musical taste groups that people use to imagine themselves and their social relationships (1995: 10) as a form of self-othering oneself as authentic. The latter approach also contrasts with its theoretical precursor because it provided a less essentialist reading of

identity, seeing subcultures as constructed through human and media activity, rather than as pre-existing defined entities. Therefore, Thornton does not consider certain genres as sidestreams nor as low culture with an underground or subversive component (1995: 8), in practice almost equating subculture to the concept of genre. This anti-essentialist approach to identity was also influenced by the work of Butler (1999 [1990]), studying the performative enactment of taste groups to create difference. Yet Butler's approach implies a subversive objective that subculturalists of the 1990s such as Thornton did not always include, focusing on the internal power relations of subcultural groups. The concept of subculture also helps to highlight the importance of the concepts of distinction and social and cultural capital (Bourdieu 1984) in the analysis of music circulation outlined in the discussion that follows. While in the original Bordieuan conceptualisation symbolic signs of distinction (such as music consumption) are the source of social stratification and accumulation of economic capital that ultimately create further class division and reproduction, for Thornton the accumulation of social and cultural capital in the form of relationships or music knowledge are the sources of internal processes of hierarchisation and distinction in the struggle to acquire social status within groups of the same class such as subcultural groups. These two modes of understanding the concept of distinction will be at the forefront in this chapter's discussion, which will show that the Bordieuan conceptualisation of distinction as class struggle (which I am sometimes referring to as 'external distinction' in the sections below) is of relatively low relevance in online musicking among Spanish migrants in UK. This is particularly true in contrast to the more prevalent forms of internal distinction between family, friends and acquaintances that participants seemed to undertake, along the lines of Thornton's use of the term. This reading of distinction echoes critical perspectives on popular music studies such as that of Frith (1996b), which point out that understanding distinction processes as a form of class struggle assumes that popular music audiences do not engage in aesthetic evaluation, reinforcing the conventional separation between high and low culture. Similarly, understanding distinction as a form of social stratification between classes in regards to social media musicking ultimately follows Bourdieu's notion of cultural and social capital as something that eventually can always be transformed into economic profits, as for instance Suhr (2012) does in her study. In contrast to this, the fieldwork insights contradict this reading of distinction, as for most of the participants their online musicking will never, or almost never, be translated into an improvement of their economic conditions as migrants in the UK. Although the concepts of social and cultural capital and their reference to the accumulation of relationships are crucial to understand musicking on social media, as the

discussion below shows, their relevance on processes of class struggle and distinction are definitely minor. In short, in the discussion that follows, the term distinction is used in two different ways to account for the dynamics encountered during fieldwork. On the one hand, to address the original Bordieuan reading that refers to class struggle and social group differentiation. On the other, to refer to Thornton's conceptualisation of internally-oriented distinction as a form of power and politics within particular social groups such as subcultures, families or friends. Therefore, the idea of distinction is used in the sense of differentiation between groups, but class struggle is not the main focus.

A similarly fieldwork-adapted use of term subculture appears in the discussion that follows. In the UK the concept of subculture was initially conceived as a tool for the sociology of post-war youth as the quintessential creators and recipients of popular music, and it has not aged well. A static definition of age and political engagement does not fit the dynamics in music, politics and genre of the past thirty years. This is particularly true in the Spanish case, which does not have a similar cohort of post-war, subculturally-oriented baby-boomers.¹ Therefore, while the term is useful to articulate the discussion, the fieldwork insights ultimately show the inadequacy of the term in the context of Spanish migrants. In contrast with other ethnographies of music online that seem to include the notion of subculture without an explicit discussion of the term (Lysloff 2003), this chapter will argue against the validity of a subcultural approach to social media musicking.

The rise of the anti-essentialist approach to subculture has also been linked to the emergence of the concept of scene (Straw 1991 [1997]; 2006), as a way to understand music collectivities as cultural spaces where musical practices create processes of differentiation. In this framework, scenes are understood as musical communities within which other scenes can arise, accounting for the internal power struggles of these collectivities. Moreover, the concept of scene also introduces the idea of dissemination, whereby the institutions and sites of a musical collectivity can be spread throughout different physical and imagined locations. A scene is also formed by the movements and musical activities of its members, as well as the microeconomic networks around them. Other readings of scene (Shank 1994) highlight its constitution through temporary affiliations and the flexible character of the divide between audience and musicians. However, this notion of scene is still focused on nightlife and urban spaces – albeit from diverging perspectives – and minimises structural

¹ Baby-boomers in Spain are the result of a short-lived post-Francoist optimism, with the most significant cohorts being born between 1978 and 1982.

issues, which does not exactly fit the online realm in a context of migration. Other attempts at mapping this concept have suggested defining these music-based relationships as tribes (Bennett 1999) with flexible musical affiliations. As Hesmondhalgh (2005) points out, these are equally flawed because they presume an intrinsic connection between youth, lifestyle, and popular music, as well as including a colonial connotation in the word itself as a synonym for a site of fluid relationships. In the theorisation of tribes there was also a celebratory emphasis on consumption as agency (1999: 607; 2005: 25).

Closer to the theoretical framework of this chapter is Hesmondhalgh's (2005) approach, which proposes the use of the concepts of genre and articulation. He defines genre as "systems of orientations, expectations and conventions" (Neale cited in Hesmondhalgh 2005: 32) that help to make judgements about music (Frith cited in 2005: 32) and organise music audiences (Negus cited in 2005: 33). To this definition Hesmondhalgh adds the framework outlined by Jason Toynbee, whereby genre helps to analyse the political relationship between the social and the musical (Toynbee cited in 2005:33), as communities of musical affiliation. Hesmondhalgh (2005: 33) also borrows the concept of articulation from Stuart Hall, understood as a link or connection between different elements in a flexible, temporal, and anti-essential form, so that "the fit between community and style is less direct" (Toynbee cited in 2005: 34) in comparison with subcultural theory. He highlights that these articulations are multiple and can reflect and construct, both passively and actively, differentiated social groups (Born cited in 2005: 35).

Similarly, partially following some perspectives of post-subcultural studies (Muggleton and Weinzerl 2003), the struggles for distinction within taste groups are not considered in this chapter as dynamics of political opposition between a youth subculture and a mainstream dominant culture, or as class struggles. They are rather investigated as the internal dynamics within a community but understood as part of wider societal "constellations of power" (2003: 13). This helps to avoid notions of "media hyperreality" (2003: 19) that remove all political activity from mediated environments as spaces where difference is flattened out.

Although the case studies below refer to the Bordieuan concepts of social and cultural capital, the evidence presented goes against an idea of subculture or scene. Instead, social capital is used to explain the social media practice of accumulating contacts or relationships, and activities oriented towards the maintenance of relationships indeed are the focus of the discussion. Using the framework of genre and articulation outlined above, I am advocating

to a certain degree for a performative theory of genre in online musicking. As the previous chapter argued that social media musicking articulates, rather than reflects, identity, this chapter continues that line of thought and understands that “music ‘reflects’ nothing; rather, music has a formative role in the construction, negotiation and transformation of sociocultural identities”, both constructing new identities and reflecting existing ones (Born cited in Hesmondhalgh 2005: 35). Furthermore, while the previous chapter introduced the question of politics as part of identity articulation, this chapter discusses the performance and articulation of the internal politics of a genre, rather than the contestation of a status quo by the youth in subcultural terms. By incorporating these frameworks in the discussion, the case studies below provide evidence of the “gradated range of relationships between music and the social, rather than being stuck in an either/or choice between passivity and activity, reflection and construction” (Born cited in Hesmondhalgh 2005: 35). In addition, this understanding of genre articulation and the focus on relationships accommodates the anthropological perspectives outlined in the main introduction, whereby social media platforms procure tools to build connections and mirrors to see them (Baym 2010). If social media are tools to manage elective intimacy (Chambers 2013) and networked publics (boyd 2011) through the exchange of cultural artefacts, this chapter attempts an ethnomusicology of online relationships enacted through the specific forms of distribution of musical cultural capital on social media.

2.1.1 Context

Before discussing the dynamics of music circulation and relationship maintenance, two premises need to be outlined. First, it is worth considering the technological context of these practices. Since the MySpace era, most social media and online music platforms have reinforced certain types of practices over others through their design and affordances. The most popular platforms foster the collection and maintenance of relationships or promote the differentiation and definition of oneself as part of their interface literacies. To various degrees, Facebook, Twitter, YouTube and Spotify all have tools that provide visible ways of displaying contact lists and relationship rating as social networking sites (SNS) (boyd 2006; boyd and Ellison 2007). However, streaming platforms, especially Spotify, are more individual-oriented in comparison with social media sites. Streaming platforms’ affordances also allow music and video to be embedded on social media profiles to facilitate identity and differentiation processes, and include their own SNS features in their interfaces. Streaming

platforms are designed to direct content towards social media, but the opposite is not the case. In that sense, the practices that are analysed in this chapter stem from the combined agency of platforms' affordances, algorithms, and human action. The focus of this research is on human practices and people's understanding of their online music activities, but the role of machine mediation is acknowledged.

Second, it is also important to approach the current social media technoscape from a historical perspective. The platforms analysed in this chapter (Facebook, Twitter, YouTube and Spotify) are the latest iteration of media and computer technologies, but the practices that take place within them are embedded in wider processes of sociality that stem from both offline and online culture (Baym 2010). In contrast with early approaches that privileged the study of online sociality analysing online-offline dynamics as a dichotomy, referring to online sociality as a separate sphere of social life, I argue that considering online-online histories of social interaction is crucial to understanding social media practices. Historically situating this research and its participants, many of whom have used internet technologies for nearly twenty years, provides new tools for analysis in the case of online musicking practices. As the case studies below will show, some participants' initial motivation to join Facebook was the maintenance of relationships and friendships with their contacts from other platforms, rather than to maintain their offline sociality or to extend it by making new friends. Maintaining music-related contacts from previous platforms, who were otherwise impossible to meet locally, seemed to be quite an important reason for participants' early adoption of Facebook and YouTube.

Simultaneously, because this research deals with Spanish migrants, displacement is an integral part of participants' experiences and their use of social media to maintain relationships with people back home is not uncommon. Online-offline transnational sociality is also an important output of online musicking, as will be developed below, although arguably these are also online-online relationships for extended periods of time. However, it was harder to find instances among Spanish migrants where online musicking contributed to maintaining local offline relationships. This could perhaps demonstrate the experience of migration itself, in which the local community might not become central for sociality until individuals gradually integrate in the host country. Migrants see their social lives reduced in the initial stages of migration, rather than expanded. Online sociality only partially compensates for this shrinking of relationships, but it is not a replacement for locality. The timeframes of language learning greatly influence the development of these dynamics of reduction-expansion with regards to local sociality.

The circumstances of participants, as transnational migrants who are less oriented to local relationships and have long histories of internet use, could also explain a third element of this social context: the irrelevance of context collapse in this population group. While Costa (2017) provides a critical view of this concept through the ethnographic insights of social media users mastering privacy settings or using pseudonyms, research participants did not seem to be particularly concerned about the dangers of informal social control, nor worried about different spheres of their life colliding on social media. I could not find participants who maintained complex privacy settings on their social media accounts to prevent others from seeing their music preferences, or to stop their families back home from following their daily activities in the UK. It seemed that only when I mentioned the potential of social media profiles in ruining future employment prospects that participants expressed concern. Rather, they focused on the danger of providing too much information to social media companies (such as a specific group of contacts named 'family') rather than on hiding information for certain groups or individuals in their contact list:

“I didn’t know you could do that [to have separate groups of people on Facebook], but I don’t like to give that information [who are friends, family and so on] to Facebook anyway. Let Facebook work on their algorithm, I am not going to make it easy for them.” Sandra, 26 November 2017

Users’ reflexive behaviour creates a paradox of privacy by oversharing: they achieve higher levels of privacy by giving the algorithms unsorted information.² While users may not conceal specific online activities to family, co-workers or others, providing data that does not follow the platforms’ systems of classification protects their privacy against its commercial use. This critical view of context collapse is useful because it puts the spotlight back on the platforms and their ethical issues, rather than the users, their locality and its social norms. However, this might not be applicable to some conservative environments such as Costa’s case study in Southeast Turkey, where mastering privacy settings can be crucial to avoid social ostracism and loss of face.

The prevalence of transnational relationships over local contacts; of historically-informed uses and relationships over emerging social dynamics; and of concerns about privacy in regards to social media companies over social control, provide the background context for the following case studies on the maintenance and reproduction of relationships and social capital.

² See Miller 2011 Ch.6 for other iterations of this paradox

2.2 Genre, Identity and Authenticity

The following sections analyse how musicking on social media contributes to the maintenance, reproduction and display of social and cultural capital, showing the pervasiveness of these uses over dynamics of class distinction. They also provide evidence concerning canon dynamics and sacralised music items (Wikström 2013) in 2.0 technologies, with examples from rock promoters, fans, and informal iterations of DJs and archivists. The section concludes with the acknowledgement of the limitations of subcultural theories for the analysis of social media musicking.

2.2.1 Identity, Authenticity and Genre Performance

As was suggested in the previous chapter, the performance of identity through online musicking is also linked to the circulation of the discourses that surround a genre. Groups appropriate spaces and modes of aural and visual representation through selective mediated symbolic interaction, and this is also the case for the social media activities of Spaniards in London. This mediated symbolic interaction allows Spaniards to establish social and musical difference through their online music practices. Music media can be embodied in a social media profile to perform belonging and articulate sociality in relation to the politics and values associated with a musical genre, although not necessarily by subscribing them. For instance, in the reggaetón case study in Chapter 1, intersectional identities were performed through the embodiment of the nation, race, and gender politics of the genre, whether as positive endorsement or negative rejection. Similarly, as subcultural theorists point out (Thornton 1995), by including the politics of a music genre in the daily performances of identity, a form of difference and self-othering as authenticity is also being articulated, which is especially true in the case of reggaetón and the varied definitions of Spanishness articulated by Spanish migrants. In that sense, collective identity can indeed be articulated through music, but without the establishment of a mirroring relationship between the semiotic content of the song and the individual. As Grossberg (1997) points out, the assumption that particular music texts function through representing meanings or cultural experiences is problematic. In the case of Diana in the previous chapter, her use of mainstream music media has a specific gendering meaning because of her personal context of being LGBTQ, but posting a song by Beyoncé would articulate a different identity in the profile of a heterosexual person. Similarly, the reggaetón case study shows that the intersectional and self-othering character of identity can make it difficult to apply single

readings to music media, and even less plausible to read a specific music genre as the cultural expression of an ethnic group or gender category. As Negus (1996) posits, identities are not fixed in any essential way but actively created through communication, social practices and articulations (1996: 100). An “expressivist” (Hesmondhalgh 2005) approach to identity that understands the existence of pre-established, fixed and essential identities that are simply expressed in music assumes that Spaniards living in London are a homogenous group where all members share common identity traits, an argument difficult to sustain considering the varied ethnic backgrounds and self-presentations outlined in Chapter 1. Instead, the mobilisation of music media and the politics of particular music genres such as reggaeton actively constructs those identities, and it is in the process of embodying music on one’s own profile that one becomes a particular kind of Spaniard. This anti-essentialist reading of identity performance, and the polysemic character of media texts explain how the online embodiment of a genre such as reggaetón can be a means to articulate and mobilise diverse understandings of cultural identity, gender, class, and race in a way that, in turn, builds those identities themselves. The next section will provide further insights into how the politics of a music genre can be performed not only to mobilise and articulate identity but also to contribute to the social reproduction of the genre itself and to the maintenance of groups. It further provides analytical tools in order to depart from “expressivist” (Hesmondhalgh 2005) approaches that understand music as a vehicle to express identity.

2.2.2 Genre, Canon and Authenticity

When a piece of music media is inserted in, or shared from, a user’s profile, the audio-visual content provides a shortcut to the politics and strategies of differentiation of a genre, becoming an additional building block in the users’ online self-identifications. However, to overcome the analytical impasse of thinking in terms of identification, it is useful to focus on the performance of canon, understood as the agreed milestones and core contributions in a genre. As Antti-Ville Kärjä (2006) points out, popular music canons can refer to mainstream or alternative genres. However, the boundaries between these types are blurred, as certain music canons can contain characteristics of both depending on the perspective of analysis. In social media musicking the canons that are reproduced and recirculated are also evidently “mediated” (Bohlman, cited in Kärjä 2006), because they are dependent on communication technologies. Yet I agree with Kärjä that their main characteristic is that they are imagined. Canons are imagined constructions of identity and belonging to a genre and a nation, as for

example in the case of reggaetón seen in the previous chapter, or in Jasmin’s example below (Fig. 2.1) where she articulates her ideas of genre, nation and authenticity. More importantly, when Spaniards circulate canonised music on social media they perform group belonging. The performance of a genre’s canon on social media profiles provides tools for identity articulation and group maintenance through re-imaginings and reproductions of the canon, rather than identifications with the genre or the song per se.



Fig. 2.1 Jasmin’s post on Facebook with the caption “You are not from the south if this woman does not give you goosebumps! There will never be a greater artist in Spain!”



Fig. 2.2. An Instagram post shared by Daniel with a version of the ‘In all levels except physical, I am...’ meme, referring to prog metal time signatures.

By reproducing a given canon, Spaniards perform belonging to a group, which implies membership rather than identity. It is in the reinforcement of the authenticity of this canon that their belonging and identity is validated, therefore showing an imagined relationship with other online users. In addition, what this performance of canon on social media adds to Kärjä's analysis is that in the re-imaginings and reproductions of a given canon the process of prescription is socially reactivated (Fig. 2.2). A mainstream canon that is incessantly circulated on social media is reinforced by the actions of users reproducing normative understandings of music (Fig. 2.3 left). If an alternative canon arises from underground scenes, its recirculation on social media can also generate a fast process of prescription and thus create an instant classic (Fig 2.3 right), which is nothing other than the "prescribed alternative canon" that Kärjä outlines. Thus, when Spaniards post and circulate mainstream and alternative music canons on social media, the result is twofold: users who actively circulate the content perform belonging and authenticity; while at the same time, the process of prescription can potentially create an effect of expanding the membership of this imagined belonging. Although in Daniel's example it is not possible to see whether this band effectively becomes prescribed as an alternative canon, the motivation to share the song with others and the indication of how it is noteworthy appears as a way to expand the band's following and shows a commitment to placing himself within a distinct group, while wanting to widen its membership, potentially undermining this differentiation. Participating in defining a genre is a way of shaping cultural experience for oneself and others, and thus of establishing relationships with others.



Fig. 2.3 Teresa's tweet (left) with the caption "I know that you all know this, but Freddie Mercury sang so well." Daniel's Facebook post (right) with the caption "There has been little noise about the latest album by Harakiri for the sky".

Moreover, this expansion of membership is, to an extent, consciously articulated by users, as will be further explained in Chapter 4. In the same way that Born and Haworth (2018) understand the crystallization of a music genre through online creative practices, I argue that genre-making develops through the musicking practices of reposting and sharing musical content, where creativity is not involved to the same extent.

With these three elements in mind – namely, the reproduction and reinforcement of normativity and canon; belonging performance; and membership expansion – the context of online musicking through playlists should be considered. So far in the discussion, identity performance has been analysed mainly in terms of music media inserted in, or shared from, a personal profile on social media. As explained in the main introduction to this thesis, most of the musicking activities of Spaniards on social media are put into practice through inserting YouTube or Spotify links to specific songs on their Facebook or Twitter profile. However, another less evident but common practice that also feeds identity, belonging and canon performance, is the curation of personal playlists on streaming platforms to share with other users.

2.2.3 Playlists in Belonging and Canon Performance

As the survey results showed, the most popular platforms for the curation of public and private playlists among Spaniards are Spotify and YouTube. These platforms allow users to create playlists and to choose between more or less complex levels of privacy for them. Once the playlist is created, it becomes part of the user's profile and therefore it is embodied as an additional building block of their online identity as "virtual cabinets of the self" (Durham 2018: 233). In this sense, all the elements of identity performance outlined in the previous chapter can be performed in this way. Self-identity can also be made further visible by sharing playlists with others via links, which in turn contributes to the integration of these curated items of identity on social media platforms such as Facebook, becoming part of the dynamics explained above. Similarly, Spaniards perform and reinforce mainstream and alternative canons through the curation and self-promotion of playlists in the same way as outlined above. In addition, sharing playlists with others contributes to the expansion of these imagined communities of belonging, as the inclusions and exclusions of canons are actively endorsed online (Fig. 2.4). Curating a playlist is also a way to temporarily articulate ownership and to arrange musical objects as sets of dynamic memory (Ernst 2012).

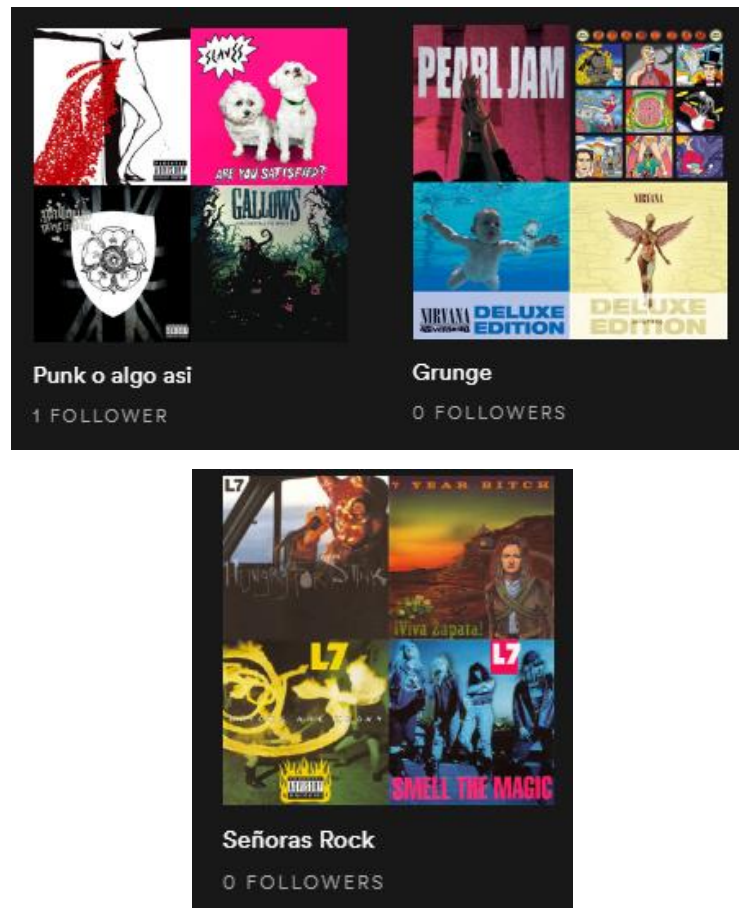


Fig. 2.4 Sandra's public playlists for 'Punk or something like that', 'Grunge' and 'Rock Ladies'

However, the static character of streaming platforms allows playlist curation to perform another role in addition to those explained above. Online musicking activities substitute the collection of sacred items for display, replacing the living-room bookshelf functions outlined by Wikström (2013). He explains that in pre-digital sociality,

... the cabinet display (...) serves as an intimate and significant marker of a person's identity. Visiting friends can browse through the collection and draw conclusions about the owner's identity based on (...) what the person has included in the assortment of 'sacred items'. (2013: 163 original emphasis).

Thus, sacred items also perform ideas of authenticity and belonging, providing a summary of cultural groups of reference and their values. However, in contrast to Wikström, I argue that the digital counterpart of the record collection, as a corpus of displayed and sacralised music items, is not to be found in social media posts, nor in the folders of downloaded music files. Music posted on social media does not have the static character of the living room bookshelf, and therefore cannot convey a snapshot of a user's identity in the same manner. Similarly, downloaded files are rarely publicly displayed, except in rare P2P platforms

(Durham and Born forthcoming). Instead, curated playlists in a streaming platform's user profile rather than the embodiment of music media on social media profiles perform this function, because social media timelines are highly dynamic, and information appears fragmented. Participants argued that platforms like Facebook and Twitter are too cluttered and fast to provide an overview of one user's tastes or identity. Even in cases when participants tried to investigate what one particular user had posted just in the last few days, the task was considered time-consuming and ineffective. Therefore, it is on streaming platforms like Spotify and YouTube where the pre-digital habit of the record collection and the bookshelf display finds its Web 2.0 counterpart, rather than on Facebook, Instagram or Twitter. Similarly, Wikström indicates that the purchasing of items has been replaced by online listening, but this is a false correspondence to an extent. Even if playlist curation and listening is a creative act of musicking, it does not exist separately from monetised listening and therefore from a mode of displayed consumption of which users are aware, especially when playlists are curated so as to imitate owning an album. This is particularly true in the case of paid subscribers, who spend money to access these sacred items and be able to display them. Even timeline-like features of streaming platforms such as Spotify cannot replace the collection of sacred items. They are equally seen by users as almost irrelevant because they only show what someone is listening to in real time or the last item listened to in an old session, and therefore do not provide much information about the identity or profile of that user. Moreover, Spotify's feature of automated sharing, whereby a post is automatically shared on Facebook with information about what the user listens to in real time, is considered impractical and inauthentic. Users understand that their tastes and those of others are better reflected in curated collections of media items such as playlists. Although individual songs shared by choice are part of these performances of belonging and taste, their capacity to provide a snapshot of the user's taste is only possible through their accumulation over time. Consequently, on the question of whether social media shows the true self (Miller 2011: 40), participants tend to believe that curated music choices show the authentic identity of oneself and others.

2.2.4 Privacy and Authentic Identities

Ideas of privacy and public performance in a Goffmanian sense are important elements of social media musicking when it comes to articulating identity and belonging. Indeed, streaming platforms allow different levels of privacy to curate which blocks of music media

remain private, allowing users to separate listening habits from public displays of musicking (for instance, with the 'private session' and 'public playlist' features on Spotify). Similar tools are available for social media profiles, which allow posts and contact lists to be customised, concealed or accessible. However, this relationship between users and platforms is not exempt from conflict. Streaming platforms like YouTube and Spotify have issues that interfere with the performance of identities and belonging as the users would like them to be. Commercial goals and interface navigability obstacles prevent or hinder users from sharing and displaying certain items of content, and participants generally claimed to find streaming platforms useful as sources, rather than social spaces:

“Once I tried to share a link from Spotify and it was like it wasn't... it was very weird. It doesn't work the same. It is a bit difficult to share. So usually I don't use it [to share]. In fact, sometimes if I am listening to a song that I like on Spotify and I want to share it, I look for it on YouTube and share it [from there].” Javier, 5 December 2017

However, all social media and streaming activity is eventually public through data mining (see Chapter 4 for algorithmic fandom). Therefore, these affordances introduce a caveat for researching musicking activities of identity and belonging: all that is observable on social media and that has been explained in the case studies above are a partial view of a user's identity. It could be argued, nonetheless, that in fieldwork research this is a condition *sine qua non*, because access to private areas of life is not always possible through ethnographic engagement, rather than a specific characteristic of online interaction. Yet, what this research uncovers is that participants are indeed aware of the processes of symbolic interaction and of the existence of a Goffmanian theatre of sociality. Participants take public and conscious music displays, rather than automatized lists of private listening habits, as the authentic representations of the self and others. This also means that the link between social media musicking and the performance of identity is influenced to a great extent by cultural understandings of privacy, where the social media displays of musicking provide enough information about someone's life to consider their identity as authentic (Miller 2011: 49).

In conclusion, approaching online musicking as a site for identity and group belonging performance is quite limiting. Although a reinforcement of canon and imagined groups of belonging may seem to be occurring, this is difficult to fully confirm. Similarly, while theories of symbolic interaction provide a framework that indeed considers both visible and invisible sides of the social theatre, public displays of identity are only partial views of the social lives of users. In addition, the limitations of platforms' affordances can provide very different readings of identity, even when looking at the same user in two different sites. The overall

picture provided by the case studies above produces a static idea of online sociality and does not account for dynamic cultural processes. Even looking at the displays of group belonging as in the case of playlists by genre, this framework does not take the analysis very far. Understanding social media musicking only as a digital counterpart to the record collection through which identity and belonging can be displayed limits the analysis to the sacred items as immobile objects of culture. For these reasons, I argue that to understand musicking on social media it is necessary to focus on relationships, sociality, and the circulation of music, rather than on identification as a mirroring relationship.

2.3 Genre, Social Capital and Distinction

The use of social media profiles to perform identity and belonging by Spaniards in London has proven to be a limited framework. In comparison with the previous chapter, the dynamics of canon and genre as reinforcement of normativity and expansion of the group of belonging have provided a wider perspective on why people post music on their social media profiles. Canon performance on social media not only shows personal belonging to a group but can also create the effect of expanding the group itself by promoting it. Playlists on streaming platforms can also play these roles, providing a condensed performance of cultural identity for Spaniards or reinforcing mainstream or alternative canons, as well as fostering the expansion of imagined communities of belonging. However, this is still an individual-focused vision of musicking activities and provides a static picture of sociality. The rest of this chapter provides a more dynamic perspective by focusing on the maintenance and development of relationships through social media musicking. In this respect the design of social media platforms in comparison with streaming sites must be considered, because while social media is primarily oriented towards the collection and maintenance of social capital, streaming and playlists do not have the same potential.

As this project does not focus on a specific music genre or scene, the data collection determined the orientation of the research. It was nevertheless common among participants to engage in musicking activities on social media oriented towards very specific genres of music. The genres included classical music, hard rock, metal, jazz, neosoul, reggae, flamenco-pop and reggaetón, besides the Anglo-American pop mainstream. Likewise, following the theoretical framework outlined in this chapter's introduction, instead of focusing on subcultural theory the case studies below highlight the importance of genre-specific social and cultural capital in the analysis of music circulation as a gateway to understand

relationship processes. They show that, although class distinction processes may partially explain musicking activities on social media, practices oriented to the maintenance of social and cultural capital within groups as in Thornton's (1995) analysis seem to be more relevant. Thus, relational activities for participating in sociality rather than class or group struggle, are the main aims of circulating cultural capital online in the form of music media.

2.3.1 Distinction and Group Boundaries

It is nonetheless necessary to start the analysis with a brief outline of case studies that indicate how these different distinction processes work. While external boundary-making, class-oriented Bordieuan distinction seems to feature as a way to explain music activities to an extent, the internal competition for cultural capital within groups in the sense that Thornton (1995) outlined provides insights more directly related to relationship maintenance and sociality in online musicking.

In the first group could be included those musicking activities directed towards people outside the genre, but who may be still part of pre-existing contacts and relationships of users. Illustrative examples were the Twitter threads by participant Daniel during the summer festival season. Daniel retweeted a thread from another user that explained the unwritten norms of good practice for a heavy metal mosh pit, to which he responded creating a norm-specific hashtag (Fig.2.5 left).³ He followed this up a couple of weeks later, explaining the mosh pit rules for "punk-rock-ska" concerts (Fig. 2.5 right). Both threads contained behavioural instructions for newcomers and emphasized the idea of the mosh pit as a communal space for enjoyment, rather than an excuse to start a fight or relieve personal frustrations through violence. When Daniel circulated these threads, several processes of distinction were put into practice. First, cultural capital is evinced, by explaining the genre's norms to others. Second, belonging to and connecting with those genres is also articulated, demonstrating insider status and reinforcing internal norms of behaviour. The norms help to police the boundaries of the music culture and legitimise it. Both threads were also underlined by discourses of fraternal care, highlighting it as a constitutive part of the genre's culture in comparison to other music genres, adding a moral and political – and to an extent, class-specific – stance to the process. Therefore, the reinforcement and reproduction of

³ The hashtag is not provided for privacy reasons.

normativity in the group articulated processes of distinction and policing external group boundaries.



Fig. 2.5 Daniel's Twitter threads with mosh pit rules

Further examples that resonate with the high culture music genres theorised by Bourdieu (1984) and thus, more specific to class boundaries are the tweets by participant Teresa about classical music events. In September, she tweeted judging the 2017 Royal Opera House's production of *Die Zauberflöte* as wonderful (Fig. 2.6 right). Earlier that month she also reported her last attendance of the year at the BBC Proms (fig. 2.6 left).



Fig. 2.6 Teresa's tweets about classical music concerts

Symbolic processes of distinction can also be interpreted from Teresa's examples in a Bordieuan sense. These tweets show belonging to high culture and its environments and an understanding of quality criteria in opera. Attending the events and publicly reporting about it online helps to mark group boundaries of class distinction between herself and others, yet without an explicit reference to class. In fact, Teresa and Fernando often mention that they have mastered how to get cheap tickets in London.

In these examples from Daniel and Teresa it is slightly unclear whether the messages are directed to people who are already part of the group or external to it. On one hand, passing judgement on quality and attendance at multiple events can only speak to those who understand those terms and events. Similarly, people attending a metal or ska concert are already within the same cultural group, and possibly social class, even if they don't know the rules. In that sense, these messages highlight cultural capital within that same social group. On the other hand, those thoughts are publicly shared on Twitter where they can potentially be seen by anyone, reinforcing a distinction from those who are not part of that music culture by explicitly providing judgements that confirm those in the know. Both readings of distinction processes, the original class-oriented, boundary-policing conceptualisation by Bourdieu (1984) and the internal power-oriented within subcultural groups outlined by Thornton (1995) seem to be present in these musicking practices.

An internal orientation of distinction processes in Thornton's sense is easier to see when the display of cultural capital directly addresses other members of that musical culture. These often involve more practical uses of maintenance and reproduction of cultural and social capital and are found in the profiles of participants who had some relationship with the music industry. For participants that work, or have worked, as performers or promoters, maintaining links with their groups of reference and cultivating their social capital is a crucial reason to undertake musicking activities on social media. In these cases, using social media to maintain social capital is interlinked with activities for self-promotion that Suhr (2012) describes. Therefore, it could be argued that the distinction processes of music industry members are twofold: oriented to their peers in the music scene, but also aiming to attract and recruit social capital in the form of contacts, fans, and followers. However, because the research sample did not focus on active musicians or industry people, during fieldwork these dynamics were predominant among those who were at the margins of the music industry, rather than fully within it, and thus rarely aimed to transform social capital into economic capital or class advantages.

Some participants dedicated considerable effort and social media activity to their professional careers, despite their relatively marginal positions. For instance, Anabel takes special care curating the musical content of her Facebook profile, but this is not based on promoting her own content. She tries to maintain a professional approach to social media and only posts what she considers of “high musical quality” from other artists (Anabel 2017a). When I interviewed her, she mentioned that since her arrival in the UK she was not actively performing as a singer and rarely took on freelance jobs reviewing live shows. Her situation of displacement had broken her connections in the industry, which she had not yet been able to recreate in London. Thus, her social media activities were oriented towards networking and maintaining her reputation as a jazz singer among promoters or musicians in Spain and the UK, and to appearing as a “music discoverer” and a judge of good taste (ibid.). In that sense, her musicking activities were oriented towards members of the music scene that she inhabited, to keep in touch with them. But she had no intention of transforming that social capital into a form of economic capital, focusing on a day job to make a living.

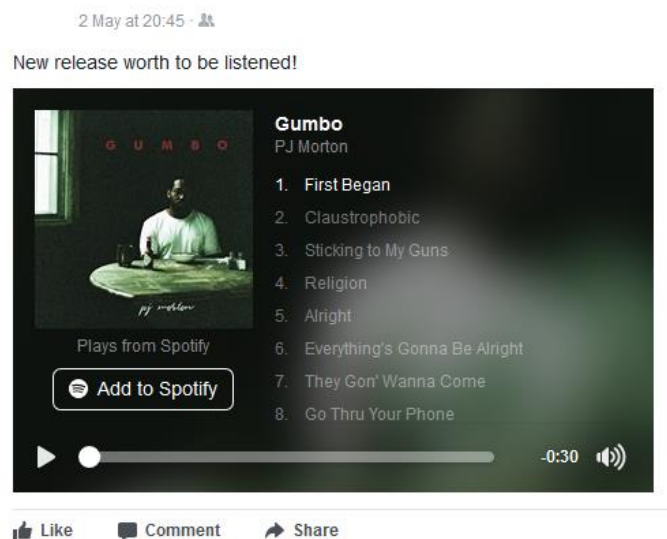


Fig. 2.7 One of Anabel’s posts with an album recommendation

Rose had a similar attitude. She used her social media profile to continue to work remotely as a hard-rock promoter in Barcelona, and to maintain contacts in the scene at home and abroad. She was conscious that her social capital was an important asset in her professional and personal life within her context of migration, and explained to me her use of social media in these terms:

“I post for people that I know, who like the same music. (...) Not for discovering them new bands, but for songs that are great tunes that people already know. (...) Yeah, so people know that you are alive and that you haven't retired from music, so to speak. (...)” Rose, 25 October 2017

Consequently, her use of social media to circulate music as cultural capital is also internally oriented towards people that belong to the same social group and music culture. Moreover, for Rose her social capital cannot clearly be separated between work and friends. In her role as hard rock promoter in Barcelona she works with her friends, and she also volunteers to promote her boyfriend's drumming equipment business. However, this does not translate into economic benefits, because the promotion business is not run for profit and the drumming gear barely covers the costs, so she makes a living through a day job. The professional benefits of her cultural capital are part of maintaining relationships with friends and her partner, who are part of the same music scene.

The case studies in this section provide evidence of how processes of distinction are articulated via musicking activities on social media, although with greater emphasis on cultural and social capital gains within music cultures (in Thornton's sense) and personal relationships, rather than competition between music genres or social class in Bordieuan theory. This could be related to the bubble-like orientation of current social media platforms, in which intensification of existing relationships is privileged over the expansion of personal social networks. In comparison to the previous section, these examples from Anabel and Rose have also shown that maintaining personal relationships may be more important than processes of distinction even for people in the music business, particularly in a context of migration. The examples of Teresa, Daniel, Rose and Anabel also illustrate how musicking activities on social media contribute to the reinforcement and reproduction of genre normativity, whether as aesthetic judgements or as unwritten rules of behaviour within a genre. In this sense, internally-oriented distinction practices are articulated on social media not only by musicians and people in the music industry, but also by audiences and fans who reinforce internal norms towards people at the margins of that music culture. However, these do not seem to be translatable into economic capital nor to accessing a given habitus with further resources. The next section provides additional evidence of the prevalence of relationship maintenance through the circulation of music media as cultural capital, and how it can concentrate around specific users, linking these practices to the circulation and display of sacralised items of musical taste.

2.4 Relationships, Genre, and Cultural Nodes

In earlier studies of music and the internet (Wikström 2013) technologies such as social media are described as the cause of changing habits of music consumption, such as the move of sacralised music collections to social media platforms. Similarly, previous theories of distinction and subculture (Bourdieu 1984; Bennett 1999) emphasize consumption as the main mode of engagement with music. In contrast, the following sections show that relationship maintenance by participants who posted music media frequently from their sacred music collections constitutes a crucial part of social media musicking, rather than analysing these practices in terms of consumption or distinction.

2.4.1 The Informal DJ

An interesting case study on the social media dynamics of cultural capital, fandom and the display and circulation of music objects is the analysis of what I call informal DJ figures, exemplified by the social media habits of participant Cynthia. She is an eager fan of musics from the black Atlantic, including hip-hop and rap; R'n'B; soul and neosoul; dancehall and reggae; funk; jazz; and world music. Cynthia was very active on MySpace until its decline and has maintained that engagement on Facebook over the years. She first turned to MySpace to find people with similar music interests, whom she had not been able to find locally, and found contacts who later became good online friends. On some occasions, Cynthia has met face-to-face with people whom she met online, and has forged long-lasting friendships with them, notably attending music events together. When she moved to London, she was able to mobilise some of these connections to form a stable group of friends with similar music interests. Therefore, she has been able to transform online weak ties into strong ties in some instances. Cynthia is an online cratedigger, always trying to find new interesting music. She intensively uses her Facebook and Spotify accounts for social and musicking purposes, and posts links to songs from Spotify and YouTube on Facebook several times per day to share her discoveries – as many as a dozen per day sometimes, to the despair of some of her contacts. In some cases, she tags friends on these posts to make sure that they are notified, and thinks carefully about which tracks are made public on her Facebook profile. While she said she does not think in terms of playlist or DJing and just looks for music worth sharing (Cynthia 17 January 2018), she also admitted she was motivated by discovering and selecting good tunes for others. In addition, both on Facebook and on the small WhatsApp group where she interacted with friends, her selections were often directed towards Monday

motivation or Friday pre-party moods. So, to an extent, the music is chosen depending on different days and times of the week to suit her followers. Additionally, Cynthia observes and analyses the responses to her postings and reflects on the impact of her music selection, thinking of her Facebook profile as having a particular reputation for sourcing quality content. However, she rarely includes personal comments or evaluations of pieces – with the exception of heart emoticons as a shortcut for ‘I love this’ (Fig. 2.8). When followers interact with her posts, she replies and provides further suggestions for artist or genre, but conversations rarely continue for long periods of time. For these reasons I argue that Cynthia’s online musicking habits are similar to those of a radio DJ, researching, selecting and broadcasting musical discoveries. On one occasion, she was selected as content curator for a music page on Facebook, finding an outlet for her musical passion. Yet this role was informal and unpaid and did not last. Besides, she has never sought employment in the music industry, and has a day job in London in a completely different sector, not thinking of herself as a DJ. When I interviewed Cynthia about her music and social media habits, she highlighted how this passion for music allowed her to find a network of friends and interest groups, and how she was happy to help others to discover new artists and tracks (Cynthia 17 January 2018). She was aware of how algorithms could make her hard work go unnoticed but trusted that she had a good public profile by now so that people would occasionally look for her content. She also realised that many suggestions from algorithmically-curated features of platforms were part of her discovery but highlighted her ability to distinguish good material within the algorithmic selection and to predict successful emerging artists.

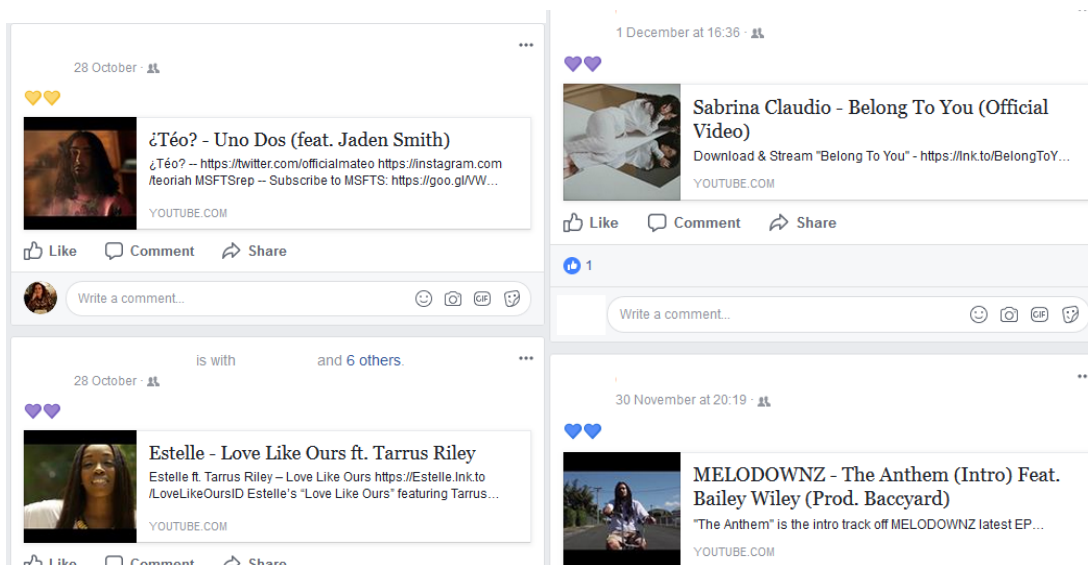


Fig. 2.8 Examples from Cynthia’s Facebook timeline

Cynthia's musicking practices are the most paradigmatic example of a kind activity that is undertaken by many users. For instance, these informal DJ selections also match the activities of Sue and Teresa, who however think in terms of an overall session of tunes for their audience, with an awareness that repetition can bore them or drag them away (Sue 29 September 2017; Teresa 6 October 2017). Yet Cynthia was significantly more active than others.

The free labour (Terranova 2004) of informal DJs such as Cynthia creates nodes of music circulation and musicking intensification on social media, around which other users develop their sporadic musicking practices. These DJs' sociality-through-music provide others with online equivalents of radio selectors, but with diachronic access to music content and additional tools for direct communication with them. Moreover, while music selections can perhaps be monetised by algorithmic technologies, selectors are not oriented towards the potential economic benefits of their role. Simultaneously, these musicking activities help informal DJs to collect and maintain social capital within groups of fans of those music genres, and in some cases to enrich their offline sociality through displays of taste and cultural capital. Yet while Cynthia may have used these practices in the past (on MySpace for instance) as a distinct activity from her offline social life, on Facebook she continues to do so with mainly pre-existing contacts, some of them imported from MySpace. Her musicking activities are rather oriented to cultural and social capital looking inward within a music scene in Thornton's sense, rather than Bordieuan boundary-making distinction against other groups, and even less to access a given habitus of resources. Moreover, the music selections provided by informal DJs such as Cynthia contribute to the establishment of genre canons as mentioned in the sections above, providing a public display of the sacralised items of selectors imbued with symbolic cultural capital.⁴ However, this canon reinforcement is still internally-oriented to her contacts, rather than having an expansionist purpose. Overall, Cynthia's musicking practices were mainly oriented to maintaining and finding friendships. The following case studies provide further evidence of the use of cultural capital to maintain relationships.

⁴ The difference between displayed and played music media items will be developed in chapters 4 and 5.

2.4.2 The Informal Archivist: Hashtags as Index Cards

A similar role can be observed in the musicking activities of informal archivists, such as participant Sandra. She likes a wide spectrum of rock-related genres, including indie rock; folk-rock; alternative rock; pop rock and grunge. Sandra is very active on Twitter, Spotify and Last.fm, and sporadically on Facebook and Instagram. Her listening sessions are permanently registered through Spotify and Last.fm, which she finds helpful in discovering new artists and self-tracking her own musical habits. In addition, Sandra runs the unofficial Spanish fan club account on Twitter for one of her favourite bands, promoting and documenting the band's tours and news. This is an informal and unpaid role, although she does help the official PR of the band with social media tasks. She also uses Twitter and Instagram to post songs that she likes, to build momentum before attending live gigs, and to report on them live. For these music activities she has invented some hashtags, which are unique to her account alias.⁵

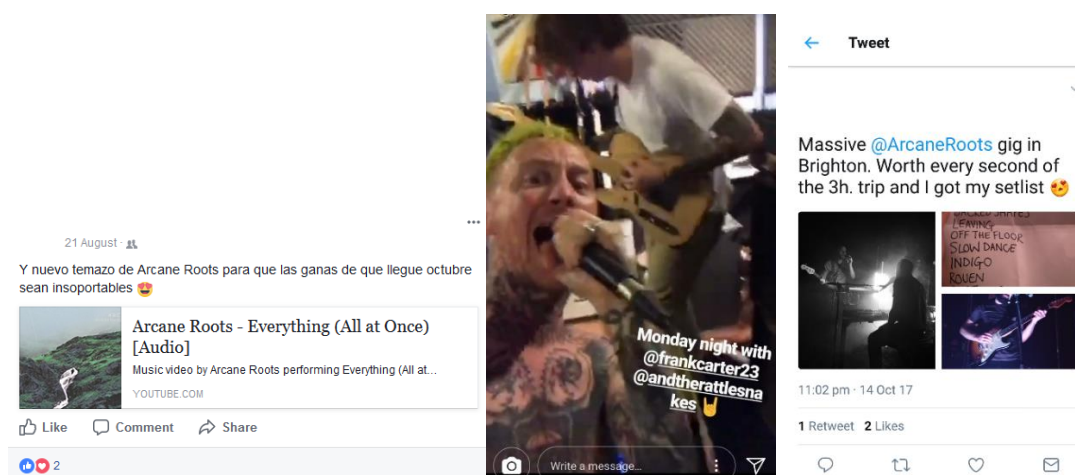


Fig. 2.9. A selection of Sandra's posts on Facebook (left), Instagram (centre) and Twitter (right). The Facebook post announces the concert later reported on the Twitter post.

Her online musicking habits fulfil three roles: fan; informal archivist; and informal reporter, in which hashtags function as index cards to navigate the content. In the interview, Sandra explained that she understands her free labour as fandom, and besides some free perks such as the unlikely chance of meeting her idols at concerts, does not seek wider benefits nor to find employment in the music industry (Sandra 26 November 2017). Her work career is not related to music. She admitted having had some immaterial benefits from her online music

⁵ I am not providing the hashtags for privacy reasons.

activity over the years, but only on a couple of occasions has she made long-lasting friendships. When I asked her about her criteria for curating her posts, she did not seem to be worried about audiences (except on the fan club account) and explained that she was rather oriented towards documenting and archiving her music experience, which through the affordances of social media and streaming platforms can be shared with others.

However, although cultural capital did not seem to be a crucial source of benefits, an important reason for her to archive her musical experience was nonetheless related to relationships, using this cultural capital to maintain social capital. Sandra shares musical interests with her sisters back in Spain, and until she moved to the UK, they used to attend events together and share their new music discoveries. Due to her migration, these family music activities can only happen sporadically now. Therefore, documenting and archiving her musical experiences and making it easily retrievable in the social media data maze also allows her to keep sharing those moments with her sisters and to maintain a close relationship with them. Accessibility is more important than it may initially seem in social media activities; as other participants such as Elisa pointed out, without a systematic use of hashtags or similar tools, navigating the musical content of even one own's Facebook profile is an impossible enterprise, and this constitutes one of the greatest pitfalls of online musicking (Elisa 18 October 2017). Therefore, Sandra's music archiving fulfils several roles. First, although she does not seem to have gained any additional cultural or social capital within fan groups, her musicking activities on social media provide her with the means to maintain her pre-existing social capital transnationally, preserving an intense relationship with her family, the most relevant social group in her life. Second, her personal archive is also publicly available through hashtags, so she also takes on the role of a rock archivist by creating a dynamic memory archive of her music experience that is shareable. Additionally, when these archiving activities develop within live music events, she is also taking on a third role as a music reporter. Even if her musicking practices could also be understood from a fandom perspective just focusing on her fan club account, and with an element of rock canon reinforcement within her close ties, boundary-making between social groups or classes did not seem to play an important part in a Bordieuan sense. Most of her activities were oriented towards familiar relationships. The following section provides further evidence for the analysis of music circulation as cultural capital on social media and its relation to transnational family relationships.

2.4.3 The Musical Family Guardian

Musicking practices similar to Sandra's, linking cultural capital, genre, and family relationships, were visible in the social media activities of participant Sue, who migrated to the UK for work reasons, leaving her children, brother and parents in Spain. Sue's social media musicking first attracted my attention early in the fieldwork because she had (and still has) a characteristic way of posting music. Every evening, she would post a YouTube link to a song on her Facebook profile with the caption "Night night", often a famous rock or metal song from her youth between the 1970s and 1990s (Fig. 2.10).

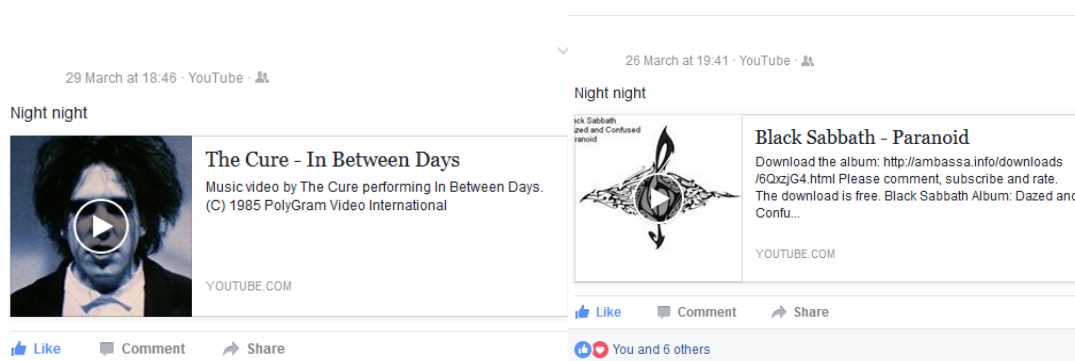


Fig. 2.10 Sue's evening posts with the caption "Night night"

In one of our conversations (Sue personal conversation 2017), I asked her to whom she was talking in these captions. Sue explained to me that to an extent, she is the "spiritual guardian" in the family in terms of music, but now she cannot fulfil this role as before. Since she lives here, she cannot have long conversations with her family every day, whereas before they used to talk about music all the time and make music recommendations to each other. Sue also explained that because she lost all her records in her divorce, she cannot ensure that their children have a good material music library. For these reasons, she feels that she has lost her ability to "keep them on the good path" musically speaking. This is also important to her because she has created a special relationship with her children by training them to listen fully to albums and evaluate artistry and musicianship, as an additional task of her mother role. For Sue, posting a song every evening with the message 'night night' is the equivalent of saying goodnight to her children, making sure that "they listen to at least one piece of good music per day" (ibid.).⁶ In addition, Sue would also post pictures of the family attending concerts or festivals, keeping the responsibility to maintain a family album (see Rose 2010).

⁶ There is a ritual element in this practice, which will be analysed in chapter 6

Therefore, her musicking practices use the circulation of cultural capital on social media as a way of maintaining her mothering duties and keeping an active relationship with her family.

Comparable musicking activities were also undertaken by participant Jose, who often posts pictures of the family attending music events. These musicking activities allow him not only to reinforce family ties with his wife and daughters, but also to report in real time to family in Spain and Venezuela on their life in the UK and to maintain an archive of family life. It should be noted that Jose's extended family has always been involved in different sectors of the music industry as composers, sound system DJs, instrument distributors, and record publishers, and their passion for rock music continues. Jose worked in Venezuela and Spain in different roles with his family and had his own record and merchandise shop in Spain, which later also included event sales. However, he chose to change his career when he and his family moved to the UK. He still has some contacts in the rock music industry but does not seek to reactivate them for employment. Therefore, his musicking activities on social media show that he is still in the know, but do not provide him any economic benefits, as in the case of Anabel and Rose. He focuses on maintaining relationships with family, in the same manner as Sue and Sandra, and to a lesser extent, friends. His musicking activities are also part of an extension of parenting duties and keeping a digital family album.

2.4.4 Musicking Nodes and Relationships

The case studies of Cynthia, Sandra, Sue and Jose provide further evidence concerning the links between the circulation of music online as cultural capital, transnational relationships, and informal practices of selecting songs and archiving a music genre on social media. In the cases of Sandra, Sue and Jose, these participants use social media music practices to maintain relationships with their nuclear and extended families. In this sense, it could be argued that social media musicking provides home-making tools (Bonini 2011) for Spanish members of transnational families. However, rather than social media technologies becoming tools to re-enact locality, musicking activities on social media provide migrants with tools to maintain ties and relationships with home localities, as well as to form a 'transnational family habitus' (Vuorela 2002: 79-80) through music practices. Similarly, the musicking activities on social media of Sue and Jose allow them to develop mobile phone-parenting dynamics, including intensive mothering (Madianou and Miller 2012) in the case of Sue.

These forms of musicking also extend other familiar roles as custodians of the family media archive (Rose 2010). Music-related postings allow migrants such as Sandra, Sue and Jose to keep an informal family library on social media, publicly visible to other members of the family. It can include music libraries of sacred items (particularly when the physical copies have been lost and only a reference to another library such as YouTube exists as a symbol, as Sue explained) or family albums of music events. These archives may be ephemeral and unreliable, but this is far from crucial as their role is to maintain the social relationships of participants through crafting dynamic memory objects rather than to perform identity or class distinction permanently. However, these archives are rarely set as private information. Music and pictures are posted for the wider audience of the social media contacts of participants, rather than targeted at family members. As participants explained, this is because the pre-existing strong ties assume certain levels of engagement, expecting that people will look for posts from their family members and other close ties. Sue argued that her music posts are indeed family conversations, as they only get reactions from her family members (Sue, personal conversation, March 2017). Other participants said:

“Mainly I get feedback from my sisters and the people that I have de-virtualised [met in person] (...)” Sandra, 26 November 2017

“It has happened to me, that from people that didn’t post or commented for a while, suddenly one day I log in and I see twenty likes to twenty different posts. So, I know that in the end, some people have me in their subconscious.” Cynthia, 17 January 2018

Moreover, the examples above illustrate that cultural capital is a tool put to work, rather than an outcome. Participants’ musicking activities on social media do not seek to improve their social or cultural capital in comparison to other social groups and are mainly directed towards their friends or family members and maintaining ties with them. Even Cynthia, who had found new friendships through her previous music activities online, is now focused on maintaining a relationship with those who are already part of her group of friends.

It could be argued that these informal archives and selections in the cases of Cynthia, Sandra, Sue and Jose, reproduce the genre canon in a similar manner as outlined in the previous two sections. Cultural capital and its collections of agreed milestones of a genre are reproduced and publicised when they are circulated, particularly in the context of musical parenting. However, the boundary-making role of displays of taste seems to be secondary to relational uses.

More importantly, these four case studies show that while groups and circles around a music genre may not be stable entities that can be clearly defined, some people within certain groups constitute quite stable nodes of musicking within wider sporadic forms of music engagement. While subcultural theory takes an extreme view of intense engagement with a music genre to the point of almost pathologizing it, and while thinking in terms of sacred items can perhaps convey the idea of a fixed set of static musical items, this section has shown that sociality and relationship maintenance through intense musicking practices are dynamic and commonplace, particularly in a context of transnational migration.

2.4.5 Locality, Migration and Polymedia Privacy

There were some exceptions to the patterns outlined in the previous sections. In addition to the cases of Anabel and Rose discussed above, for whom music is both a professional currency in and out of the groups they inhabit and a tool for the activation of friendship and sociality, one more case study provides interesting insights into the maintenance of personal and professional ties through social media musicking.

Javier is an avid gamer who likes a wide range of music genres, but he is especially inclined towards film and videogame scores and contemporary orchestral music. He was into heavy metal during his teenage years and still likes the genre, but now also enjoys rap, rock, pop, techno, trance and ambient electronica. Javier has a long experience with online platforms and social media, and keeps an active Facebook profile and YouTube account with playlists, besides other profiles with less activity. His musicking habits vary slightly on different platforms. He sporadically posts music on Facebook, mostly scores and contemporary orchestral music, but he quite regularly adds tracks to his YouTube playlists which are much more eclectic. When I asked him about his criteria, he said that he did not think that his playlists on YouTube were popular outside a couple of his long-standing friends, so he felt that they remained a more personal space (Javier 5 December 2018). While he would post on Facebook to share with all his contacts in general, his YouTube playlists were oriented towards personal use, even though others can see them. Therefore, he argued that his Facebook posts had a slightly higher impact on his local connections, including work-related contacts. While he uses Facebook posts to maintain relationships transnationally and social capital locally, his YouTube playlists are rather oriented towards maintaining his pre-existing strong ties and to self-archiving.

In Javier's musicking activities on social media several elements outlined above collide. They seem to include both external processes of group distinction in the Bordieuan sense and internal cultivation of cultural capital within groups in Thornton's conceptualisation, yet once again there is not an aim to transform cultural capital into economic capital. He also practices scalable sociality (Miller et al. 2016) to manage local and transnational ties. However, rather than engaging in complex privacy settings (Costa 2017), concerns about context collapse are addressed by distributing cultural capital and music affiliations across different platforms through polymedia choices (Madianou and Miller 2012), separating different spheres of life to an extent. He also maintains personal and professional relationships through the display and circulation of his cultural capital, but musical experiences are mostly self-archived, rather than displayed. However, once again music preferences were made widely available to contacts, rather than posted for specific people only or concealed from particular social groups. The persistence of publicness criteria also sheds light on important theoretical aspects of social media musicking.

2.5 Towards a Post-Bordieuan Perspective on Social Media Musicking

The case studies outlined above show that the musicking activities on social media of Spanish migrants in London are mostly oriented towards pre-existing relationships of transnational nature, rather than feeding the maintenance of social capital in local communities that can be transformed in economic benefits or access to a specific class habitus. For this reason I argue that while musical cultural capital may be used as currency in social media platforms in similar ways as those suggested by Thornton, most of the musicking activities of users do not seek to reproduce and maintain distinct groups or social classes in a Bordieuan sense. The focus on locality and policing the borders of social groups or classes seems to be the exception, rather than the norm, in these case studies of social media musicking. Even when the circulation of music as cultural capital aims to cultivate the wider social capital of users, as seemed the case for Cynthia and Javier, it only addresses a local or subcultural community in specific cases and it rarely seems to have an impact on class or economic goals. If anything, class plays a role by its lack of permeability: participants do not expect to establish relationships with groups of people outside of their immediate social circles. Moreover, a subcultural approach seems outdated in a music market such as the one that arises from participants stories, where cross-genre listening habits are common.

It could be argued that practices of self-othering, which appeared in the previous chapter and here, constitute forms of 'subculturating' to an extent, because they build identity and belonging through self-positioning as marginalised. However, in the case of migrants this seems overtly optimistic, as it assumes the flexible and ephemeral character of the experience of migration by treating marginalisation as a matter of choice. As the case studies in this chapter show, the status of participants as migrants plays a crucial role in their musicking activities, in a form that almost overrides any efforts to regroup around a community of taste or music genre. As indicated above, the initial reduction of sociality as a consequence of migration has a certain persistence over several months or years, and results in this othering of Spaniards for extended periods of time, especially if their language skills are low. Paradoxically, the liminal character of migrant lives makes evident the unfitness of Bordieuan theory in contexts of economic deprivation, where support from relationships that are firmly established may become safer social investments than the often-unattainable expansion of local ties through music taste, or even less plausible class aspirations. Indeed, for Spanish migrants, "achievements of wealth and status are hollow unless they can display them before an audience living elsewhere, in the authentic heartland of their imagined collectivity" (Werbner 2002: 10). Therefore, while subcultural theory seemed to eventually devolve into a theory of consumption of music, identities, or lifestyle focused on choice (Bennett 1999; for a critical view see Hesmondhalgh 2005), I argue that the agency of migrant social media users is directed towards relationships and sociality when it comes to musicking.

Likewise, most of these participants did not tailor their musicking activities or posts to conceal specific parts of their music lives from some of their contacts, making the concept of subculture as opposed to the mainstream irrelevant. Rather, they shared their music activities with all so that the different groups and spheres of their lives could be concealed from the platforms' data mining. Users do not need to target music content and activities to specific contacts or members of a specific group, because their pre-existing relationships with friends and strong ties with relatives allows them to overcome algorithmic mediation, and to be seen and responded to by the intended audience. Whether as informal DJs or as family archivists, users do not need to engage with platforms' privacy settings in order to have specific musical experiences shared with particular groups or contacts. Their close ties look for the music content addressed to them as part of their relationship maintenance. Even in cases where users prefer to manage different life spheres separately, they engage with polymedia choices (Madianiou and Miller 2012) rather than with privacy settings. Indeed, there is a gradation of relationships between music and the social in Born's (2011) sense, but

in most cases this is done through the cultural tools of social life, rather than through engagement with the platforms' affordances. Elective intimacy (Chambers 2013) and scalable sociality (Miller et al. 2016), seems to fit these practices better than subcultural or context collapse approaches.

Similarly, the focus on canons and their reproduction also has its semiotic limitations. While the reproduction of the rock canon seemed to be quite important in the sociality of transnational families, its meaning is unclear. In Spain, the rock canon can represent cosmopolitan affiliations with the scenes in the UK or the United States and symbolise counterhegemonic politics, particularly for women. However, the rock canon can also represent a mainstream conservative cultural choice in contrast with, for instance, reggaetón or rap. As it was the case with the examples in Chapter 1, it is difficult to provide a univocal reading of certain music genres and identify them with specific social groups and their politics, and even less with class that would support a Bordieuan perspective. Likewise, the polysemic character of music videos does not always allow for the association of social media posts with specific values without room for multiple interpretations. This chapter has attempted to contextualise the case studies to demonstrate the specific uses of cultural capital as currency to maintain and manage relationships, rather than arguing for a general abstract association between certain cultural genres and group belonging.

It could also be argued that commodity-oriented environments such as online music platforms do not fit with a subcultural approach, and such a perspective shows its limitations in the analysis of playlists. Playlist use and following is relatively low because of the interface issues mentioned in the first section of this chapter, such as poor navigability and ease of sharing.⁷ Streaming platforms are oriented towards monetising individual consumption, rather than to promote musical social capital, and they are unlikely nodes of group sociality. Playlists and streaming platforms in general are rarely primary sources for interpersonal or group activity and for this reason they remain of secondary importance in musicking activities. Rather, they generate an additional circle of closeness in social media's scalable sociality (Miller et al. 2016): those that follow playlists on streaming platforms are only very close friends or family, as was the case for Sandra and Javier above. This relative marginalisation of playlists on streaming platforms in comparison with music posts on social media also makes them of little relevance for the maintenance and reproduction of groups. If playlists are only addressed to, and used by, close ties, then they cannot contribute to

⁷ Spotify introduced a new feature that allows songs to be shared on Instagram and Twitter in 2018.

reproducing the canon beyond that limited audience. In short, their value as cultural capital is low and can only be used as currency among close ties. Just as the use of playlists to perform identity is limited, so is their capacity to maintain and reproduce groups and capital. This is even more striking from the perspective of class distinction, which is unattainable through these kinds of musicking practices. In addition, the examples in this chapter hint at the importance of temporary fandoms, which chapter 4 will develop.

2.6 Conclusion

The previous chapter shows that approaching social media musicking only as identity performance is inadequate because it provides insufficient insight into interpersonal and group relationships. It relies on the essentialist association between the pieces of music media and particular social groups, establishing a problematic mirroring relationship between music and social media practices that relies on expressivist politics. In this chapter, I have attempted to overcome these limitations by using the concept of cultural capital to understand social media musicking and relationships as inherently collective practices where music knowledge is used as currency. The case studies above show that through musicking activities on social media, music genres and their politics are articulated as part of online processes of sociality, whether as externally-oriented distinction in Bourdieu's sense or internally-oriented maintenance of social capital as Thornton conceptualised. However, this approach has also proven to have its limitations: it is equally reliant on relatively simplistic readings of genre; and family ties and the migrant status disrupt the links between locality and music affiliations that theories of social capital assume as stable entities. More importantly, in the case of Spanish migrants in London, their focus on online-online transnational relationships and privacy by oversharing makes it difficult to argue that musicking on social media contributes to processes of Bordieuan class distinction. The cases studies show that even when individuals engage in the circulation and reproduction of their cultural capital in order to socially articulate their belonging to a genre and its politics, this does not have an effect beyond their immediate circles of close ties or their economic habitus. Rather, their musical currencies help them maintain and reproduce their pre-existing social capital. Spaniards in London use their musicking activities on social media as practices to manage their social relationships through elective intimacy and scalable sociality. However, instead of advocating here for an unstructured perspective, the case studies show that this circulation of music does indeed appear to be organised around relatively stable nodes of continuous musicking generated by committed fans and family members in a wider mediascape of fluid engagement and taste collectivities. In this sense,

this chapter contributes to the analysis by showing that informal social roles and tacit understandings of music's social value are crucial in online social dynamics, because they carry the weight of most of the musicking work for the maintenance of social relationships.

The next chapters depart further from this focus on performativity, identity and cultural capital. They follow the conceptualisation of Kassabian (2013) whereby the ubiquity of music media in online environments promotes forms of everyday musicking for sociality that cannot be reduced to dynamics of identity or cultural capital, taking an anthropological perspective on music activities in context. Musicking sociality co-exists with social media platforms' encouragement of collecting social capital and defining oneself, but it cannot nonetheless be reduced to those activities. Music media availability is taken for granted in this mediascape, and thus becomes a crucial grammar of symbolic social interaction. Such use of social media musicking for sociality also generates new approaches to fandom, as will be developed in Chapter 4. Before moving on to analyse fandom, Chapter 3 will bring the macropolitical approach back to the discussion, illustrating how certain subversive uses of music appeared in the social media landscape of Spaniards in London, thereby illustrating the contemporary context of this study.

Chapter 3 – Politics and Comedy

3.1 Introduction

The musicking activities analysed in previous chapters refer to social dynamics that may be applicable to other populations and contexts. The social media micro-politics of identity, gender, relationships and social capital are not specific to migrant populations or Spaniards, nor to UK-based communities. However, during the development of the research, two significant events in parliamentary politics marked participants' social media activities as Spanish citizens and migrants in the UK: the United Kingdom European Union membership referendum result in June 2016 (the Brexit referendum) and the attempted referendum for self-determination of Catalonia in October 2017 (the Catalan independence referendum). As this chapter shows, these two events contributed to the circulation of political commentary on social media wherein music and comedy played a crucial role in articulating opinions, thus providing new forms of political participation. Yet the dynamics around comedy and parody music videos were not obvious at first, as engagement seemed low, and conversations remained either short or polarised. This chapter addresses the phenomenon of social media musicking through music parody and comedy videos in the aftermath of the Brexit and Catalan Independence referendums and its significance for the Spanish migrant population in London. The case studies show the relevance of imagined conceptualisations of citizenship in online practices, providing evidence of emerging cultural understandings of politics in times of conflict. In the Spanish context of limited freedom of speech, this chapter asks what people do with, and of, comedy music videos when they are shared and circulated on social media. In doing so, this chapter enriches the analysis of the previous two chapters by stressing articulation and performativity over expressivist points of view. This perspective also brings back the macro perspective of politics to the discussion, but without approaching the topic in subcultural terms where politics are articulated through the creation of social sub-groups, instead arguing for an agency-based perspective against a stigmatisation of online politics. In support of this analysis, it is necessary to lay out the historical and theoretical background of these case studies to understand the phenomenon of comedic video circulation on social media, particularly among Spaniards.¹

¹ Throughout this chapter I follow the conceptualisation of Comedy Studies that distinguishes comedy as intentionally funny, from humour as unintentional or haphazardly funny (Mills 2005; Lockyer and Pickering 2008). I use humorous as adjective synonym to funny, and humoristic as relative to a humourist when the video has a comedian as specific author.

3.1.1 Media, Comedy and Music Practices

Current ways of consuming comedy and entertainment online are part of longer media histories of comedy as a kind of reflective sense-making (Bennett 2007) particularly prone to becoming a politically-charged tool, due to their capacity to give a political voice to traditionally powerless groups of society, as well as to circumvent control. Since the second half of the twentieth century, mass media incorporated music and comedy as part of its entertainment offer, often commenting on politics and nationhood (for Britain see Wagg 1992; for Englishness see Medhurst 2007). Besides, comedy has always been central to the construction of national identities and it is linked to specific cultural understandings of humour (Medhurst 2007). This mediascape of convergence of comedy and politics has boosted the public image of comedians who make political commentary their trademark and enjoy wider audiences thanks to entertainment television, helping them to become political candidates or campaigners in some cases (Arthurs and Shaw 2016; Bosco and Vernay 2012). As Wagg (1998) points out, a comedian “in the age of impression management, as truth-teller and iconoclast, may carry more public credibility than the politician” (1998: 271). In recent years there has also been a rise of politicians using appearances on late-night comedy shows as a tool to gain trust from the public (Lichter and Baumgartner 2014; Gray 2009), blurring the distinction between politics, journalism, and comedy even more. Politicians may also find seemingly unexpected success due to their comedic value (Hall et al. 2016; Jones 2009). Additionally, the phenomenon of pop stars-turned-politicians is nothing new (Street 2006) and comedians also use music performance as part of their routine sketches, particularly rap (Garrett 2015), taking on the role of music artists in TV shows. The revolving doors of politics, comedy, and music are an integral part of this mediascape.

Participatory culture practices are also embedded in wider genealogies of media practices (Jenkins et al. 2013). At the peak of personal video-camera consumption, television promoted the format of humorous video shows and dedicated considerable programming to broadcasting content that they had selected from audiences’ submissions, paving the way for newer social understandings of humour and Web 2.0 technologies (Garrett 2015: 333). The advent of the internet as mass medium also gave rise to a visual culture of irony specific to online sociality as part of its emerging literacies. Emoticons, memes, and *leetspeak* (spelling and vocabulary for online text-based interaction) form an emotional grammar that inherently references comedy and humour. In recent years, commercial media productions and amateur videos have expanded to YouTube and other online platforms (Belt 2015). As several authors point out (Lockyer and Pickering 2009; Holm 2017), humour and comedy are

central aspects of modern everyday life and of various media formats. Humour and comedy have become “an unavoidable aspect of how we approach and understand the world as a site of meaning, politics and life itself” (Holm 2017: 8), increasingly focused on laughing about the structures of society through provocation and absurdity (ibid: 6).

Besides the explicit use of music in comedy, music and humour have been widely studied from a compositional and aesthetic point of view, in terms of the management of listeners’ expectations and incongruity in songs (Hayward and Hill 2017; Plazak 2015; Denisov 2015; Kay 2006; Kefala-Kerr 1996; Damonte 1995) and screen media (Mera 2002). These compositional uses understand music as having a comedic intention on the composers’ side, while they expect a humorous reaction from the listener. Music has also been approached as intentional comedy in parodies of a genre (Spirou 2017; Covach 1995) and mash-ups (Brøvig-Hanssen and Harkins 2012). Its significance as a vehicle for political commentary has equally been the subject of considerable study (Turner 2015; Peddie 2006), particularly in hip-hop and rap (Vognar 2011; Jenkins 2015; Potter 2006) and from a linguistic perspective (Shryock 2015). Music video as a genre has also been influenced by the ‘YouTube aesthetic’ of comedy (Vernallis 2013: 121) and comedy itself is one of the defining characteristics of contemporary music videos. Additionally, minorities and marginalised groups have used music to articulate counterhegemonic discourses, in order to attempt to circumvent censorship and promote transgressive messages, with different degrees of explicitness and success (Way 2018; Friedman 2013; Whiteley and Sklower 2014; Peddie 2012; Hilson Woldu 2006; Grossberg 1997).

A paradigmatic example of the convergent genealogies of music, media, and comedy is the Spanish carnival tradition. Music performance has been historically used for political commentary and counter-cultural protest by carnival groups, with Cádiz’s carnival currently having the most popular performances in Spain (Sacaluga Rodríguez and Pérez García 2017; García Gallardo 2014, Schrauf 1998). In its current form, the carnival comprises a mix of street busking performers and formal groups who participate in the annual carnival competition set in the city’s theatre. These groups are divided into four different categories according to the number of members, the instruments used and the degree of serious and comedic content of their songs, with the smaller groups being the most witty and informal. The content of the songs often refers to current political affairs at local, national or international level. Although the groups prepare their performances throughout the year, it is from mid-January to mid-February when the official competition takes place and it is broadcast live on TV and online streaming by Andalusian public TV channel Onda Cádiz-Canal

Sur. During that period, these videos circulate on social media as part of the ritualised yearly cycle of music traditions (see Chapter 6) in its particular iteration of political satire. This kind of carnival-related musicking is further discussed in the second case study outlined below, for its significance to the social media practices of Spaniards in London in the aftermath of the Catalanian referendum.

3.1.2 Legal Context

In addition to the above perspectives on media, humour and music practices, to understand the use of comedy and parody for political discussion, the Spanish legal context should not be neglected. The current diminished state of freedom of expression in Spain explains considerably the recourse to comedy to discuss political affairs. As Preston (2012) argues, the post-dictatorial agreements of the “Pact of Forgetting” and the Amnesty Law of 1977 became the milestones for Spanish governments to enforce a particular version of history on Spanish society, in which fascist policies and crimes are forgotten, pardoned or justified. This legal framework institutionalised dictatorial and genocidal denialism, giving rise to a nation-state in permanent democratic liminality (Desfor Edles 1998) that continues, rather than disrupts, Francoist criminal law. Later legislation further supported this reading of history, restricting freedom of political expression well before the advent of the internet with the *Decreto-Ley sobre seguridad ciudadana 2/79* (“Decree-Law on Citizen Security”) (Oliver Olmo 2015). Exceptional anti-terrorist laws such as the Organic Law 1/92² and crimes such as “injury to the Crown” in Organic Law 10/1995 also limit civil society freedoms such as freedom of speech and freedom of the press, and target criticism of the post-Franco establishment. In addition, in recent years even stricter laws have been approved on the grounds of national security such as the Organic law 4/2015, popularly known as *Ley Mordaza* (“Gag Law”) (Bilbao Ubillos 2015; Peña-Lopez 2017: 10; Revilla et al. 2015: 18; Pukallus 2015: 2; Oliver Olmo 2015) with prison sentences given to online activists (Kassam 2015; AFP 2017). Although similar laws exist in the British legal corpus, these are rarely upheld against the exercise of human rights such as freedom of speech. In Spain, this legal corpus is often applied to artists, musicians, journalists, and other citizens who might use the grounds of freedom of speech to criticise the government, the Franco regime, the

² Organic laws in Spain require a special procedure that demands the approval by a qualified majority, and they are reserved for specific issues outlined in the Constitution. In contrast, Decree-laws are processed as executive orders.

Royal Family or the security forces. Prison sentences have been given to musicians and artists, particularly Basque and Catalan (Cantor-Navas 2017; Freemuse 2004; Loughrey 2018). The “gag law” also punishes those who recirculate online content “that offends the State and its members”, whether they are the source of such content or not. This includes any criticism “of the idea of Spain”, seeking to punish the use of public space for political demonstrations, physically or virtually (Peinador 2016: 6; Jones 2018). These laws are applicable when political commentary is produced through satire and comedy, and the government also proposed a legal reform to ban political memes that was not processed in parliament (Samuels 2016). However, its lack of legal status has not prevented court rulings against transgressive online images (Rights International Spain 2018). This legal framework also lacks a specific mention of crimes where fascism is promoted or endorsed, and hate speech is paradoxically often used against minorities and those who challenge institutional politics or the involvement of the Roman Catholic Church in state affairs. The precarious situation of freedom of speech and expression in Spain has been reported by human rights organisations (Human Rights Watch 2015; Amnesty International 2017) and national and international academics (Pukallus 2015; Oliver Olmo 2015). Therefore, considering this context I argue that the Spanish legal framework is based on an ‘old regime of post-truth’, in which the re-writing of history and the distortion of facts has been a foundation stone of the institutional politics of the country since the 1930s. Instead of looking at dynamics of post-truth in media practices as something linked to the development of internet technologies, or the rise of right-wing political discourse in recent years, in the case of Spain there is a well-established institutional tradition of validating historical revisionism and right-wing discourses, prosecuting their opponents.

Fieldwork evinced that the Spanish old regime of post-truth and the abnormal application of laws in contradiction with human rights such as freedom of speech, merge to co-create a restricted understanding of freedom of expression amongst Spanish migrants in London. The contrast between those who agree with current legislation and those who oppose it is particularly heightened online, especially when navigating the Spanish Twittersphere. This context influences the attitudes and behaviour of Spaniards on and towards social media, as well as their online political engagement, promoting both self-censorship and resistance beyond the physical borders of the country. For instance, Teresa tweeted in response to a news piece about the queen of Spain with the text: “Ahem... I am going to self-censor again because if I said what I think I would complete two [university] degrees in prison” (Fig. 3.1).



Fig. 3.1. Teresa’s tweet

During fieldwork, instances in which a social media user would warn others of the risks of expressing their opinions or political discontent occurred frequently. For example, in the following example of Jasmin and a friend on Facebook (Fig. 3.2), they joke about an accident that the former President Mariano Rajoy and another MP had in 2005, but Jasmin stops the conversation:

J: Oh dear, why didn’t that helicopter crash any harder?

Friend: Don’t say that lol

J: Well, yes

Friend: The truth is that it would have hit two birds with one stone and incidentally it would have rendered a service to humanity, because they are so harmful lol.

J: We will go to pen, shhh

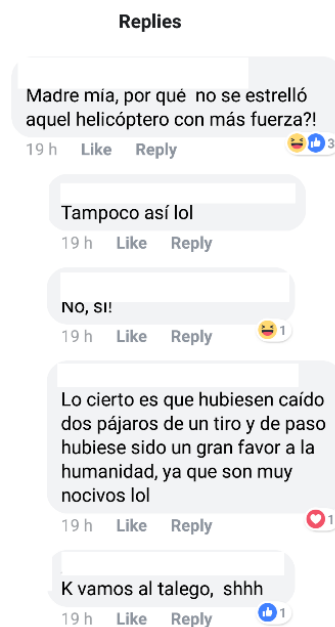


Fig. 3.2 Conversation between Jasmin and her friend

However, these dynamics of self-censorship also appear between strangers, confirming two further aspects: first, that Spaniards are conscious of being monitored online and consequently, at risk of committing an offence; second, that people use online

communication to warn others about those risks, engaging in civic practices (Fig. 3.3). In the following caption, members of the Facebook group *Españoles en Londres* discuss bullfighting while one person reminds the others of the risk of criminal prosecution:

A: When you say “true culture” you are not referring to torturing and murdering the bull right?

B: I thought lol was enough to convey irony

C: I think the key is in the ‘lol’

D: Careful, the prosecution office is reading you

C: Hi your excellence [State prosecutor] Mr. Maza.

We say all this without malice.



Fig. 3.3 A conversation about bullfighting on a Facebook group

Although there is an element of performed comedy in these conversations, they show that for these users their status as emigrants living outside of Spain does not equate to a feeling of freedom of expression outside of the Spanish legal framework. If anything, interviews with participants showed that online political debate and its restrictions are an important part of their experience of migrant citizenship, creating hybrid identities between the economic migrant and the political exile. In this sense, the democratic liminality outlined above is further interrelated with the liminal status of migrants, not only between homelands but between degrees of forced migration. It could also be argued that in such a repressive context, the circulation of musical satire may be an act of activism rather than a mere source of entertainment. The context of democratic liminality could imply that the circulation of media is a practice undertaken as a form of protest, as Luisa did (Fig. 3.4).

Besides illustrating the influence of state control, these examples from Teresa, Jasmin, Luisa, and others also show that formal political commentary and comedy entertainment are deeply interrelated, especially on social media. The following section attempts to theorise the dynamics of convergence of comedy, politics and music before addressing the specific case studies of this chapter.



Fig. 3.4 Luisa’s post on Facebook commenting on the prison sentence for Catalan rapper Valtoryc.

She would later post other rap songs produced in response to this sentence.³

3.1.3 Music, Politics, and Comedy Assemblages

Mediatized ensembles of music, comedy, and political commentary are not phenomena generated within social media, which instead enable people to consume, distribute and re-circulate music and video content embedded in wider dynamic genealogies of media and music aesthetics. Here, Spanish cultural understandings of civic discourse and humour interact to create ironic and reflexive approaches to politics in response to institutional manifestations of power and control, which in the case of Spain exert considerable influence on online practices. As outlined above, the distinctions between political commentary and comedy in the social media age are unclear (Jones and Thompson 2009).

In this complex mediascape, it could be tempting to refer to the idea of virality or the spreadability of content in social media (Chiaro 2018; Jenkins et al. 2013) to explain the circulation of musical satire. However, as Meikle (2016) argues, the use of the metaphors of virality and spreadability locate agency in the media text, rather than in people, considering

³ At the time of writing, Valtoryc is in exile in Belgium preparing an appeal.

the media text as a biological entity: something that spontaneously generates and spreads itself, with a life of its own, rather than being transmitted by active human agents. The concept of 'meme' carries a similar bias. Coined by Richard Dawkins (1979) as part of his framework for evolutionary theory, it refers to a nongenetic behaviour or idea that humans might show and reproduce for cultural reasons. Although the role of the "algorithmic black box" (Bonini 2017) should be considered in the overall picture of online media circulation, understanding the role of human agents provides a richer understanding of how social media content travels. Even in the case of memes, users still engage in a semi-public communicational action with its own emerging grammar that refers to cultural trajectories of remixing and repurposing media (Meikle 2016: 55-58). Understanding the music parodies that circulate on social media only as viral memes means ignoring the references to longer genealogies of music covers and subversive uses of music that have been outlined above.

In contrast with the reductive conceptualisation of media as viral, the entangled relationships between comedy, music and politics find better theoretical models in the recent conceptualisations of assemblage and Actor-Network theory (ANT), particularly from Literary Philosophy, Anthropology, Musicology and Human Geography. As several authors point out (Marcus and Saka 2006; Müller and Schurr 2016), the use of assemblage and ANT theory in recent years has often been useful for researching contemporary phenomena because they provide conceptual tools for analysing elusive cultural dynamics such as cultural texts, which may be viewed as "networks or relational events" (Korsyn 1999: 56) assembled from various components. In the rhizomatic assemblage model (Deleuze and Guattari 1980), the different points and levels of signs in a whole (humans, institutions, media, political organisations or any other agents) are interconnected and its internal dynamics are in constant flow, creating a map of signs with multiple entry points and lines of flight that temporarily comes to form a relational entity that can be considered as assemblage, but that is not a subject or an object as such reducible to the sum of its parts. This assemblage changes its character with each of the changes of its structure, for instance the different speeds of relational flow or changes in its strata, articulations, or nodes, in the manner of an organism in constant motion, formation and dismantling and therefore, has no clear boundaries. However, it does not produce new families of signs as in tree-like and organic models and its constant flow makes it inherently non-hierarchical. Assemblage theory provides a highly adaptable theory to contemporary media, because it considers different fields of life such as reality, representation and subjectivity as interconnected flows that form plateaus, which are in turn interlinked in the form of temporary rhizomatic

assemblages. Assemblages could be understood “as a collection of relations between heterogeneous entities to work together for some time” (2016: 219) and as ensembles of ‘mediations’, being “entities that ‘carry’ while transforming, translating, and modifying musical sound, thereby participating in musical experience (Born and Haworth 2018: 609; original emphasis). A similar approach can be outlined through the principles of ANT which theorises emerging associations between human and non-human entities by focusing on the processes that build, maintain and break them. It specifically addresses the relationships between people and technology, as well as the exertion of power across distance and through distributed agency. As Born and Haworth highlight, in Latourian theories of assemblage “a mediator creates what it translates as well as the entities between which it plays the mediating role” (Latour cited in 2018: 609), therefore the combination of “sound, discourses, social relations, technologies, sites (and so on)” (ibid: 610) are what constitutes a media genre (an online music genre in their specific approach) as a dynamic entity. Both theories have in common their relational approach to society and they have often been used in combination, through a selection of specific theoretical aspects of each one to suit different research objects focused around the concept of assemblage (2016: 220), as Born does. They equally provide “ontological choreographies” (Thompson in 2016: 218) to explain the dynamic relationships between apparently disparate social elements, and they both highlight that assemblages work not only because certain elements exist together; but because they are active agents. Similarly, both frameworks deal with the flexibility of assemblage formations and how the elements can easily break apart and reform in another structure. However, early ANT had a stronger focus on empiricism and the actual that privileged fixity, while assemblage theory is centred on the virtual potentials of these structures, being more open to unexpected effects. Similarly, ANT understands non-human entities as actors equal to human ones with a capacity of action and mediation of its own, a conceptualisation from which I digress for the reasons explained above in relation to viral and memetic approaches. Although the role of algorithms is acknowledged throughout this thesis, and even understanding social relations, music, technologies and sites as an assemblage as Born and Haworth (2018) do, it seems rather unpractical to focus on the role of machine components when the ultimate objective of this research is to understand why people interact with music and social media in the way they do. Even understanding algorithmic technologies or legal corpuses as actors would eventually bring back the discussion to a human-centred study, because those non-human entities are designed, programmed, implemented, shaped and fed by humans.

The comedy, music, and politics assemblage can be remarkably well understood using these models. This assemblage sits at the intersection of various mediascapes, including broadcasting, social media, entertainment, and music industries, and it is governed by the dynamics of changing and emerging cultural understandings of power, institutional politics and legality, information, public participation, and comedy. It is populated by its agents (mainstream and underground musicians; comedians; politicians; audiences; and citizens), which act as nodes in the overall dynamic structure. Any changes in one of these elements changes the character of the overall assemblage as well as the rest of the elements. The music parodies discussed in this chapter are illustrations of the intersection of all these levels and nodes, where one particular music video may be understood as comedy under a particular legal framework, and as legal or social offence under another. Thus, media genres are created through the interplay of these different planes as Born and Haworth (2018) argue. For instance, an individual may take on roles as both comedian and grassroots activist, producing different kinds of media content, both self- and industrially-produced, for an heterogeneous audience of music fans, activists and the general public. Similarly, the same piece of music media may be considered as harmless parody at first, and then become an element of political resistance. Likewise, social media users are also citizens and voters who may, in turn, produce their own media content between the private home video and mediatised activism. The assemblages of music, comedy and politics may disintegrate and reform, creating new sets of relationships and therefore new entities and genres. New music genres and modes of musicking may emerge from a new combination of these mediations at any one time. Overall, assemblage theories seem better equipped to analyse the potential and unexpected media genres and relationships than a vague conceptualisation of media objects as viral.

It could be argued, nonetheless, that these theoretical approaches reproduce the same problem as virality metaphors in a different form, because human agency is still neglected. Marcus and Saka (2006) warn that by using the concept too literally, the focus of assemblage theory on flux and becoming can indeed become a dead metaphor. Assemblage does not address systematic understanding of processes, and it should be used with caution when referring to relatively stable entities such as the social groups that are the object of anthropological enquiry. Likewise, Müller and Schurr emphasize that ANT neglects the corporeal and expressive capacities of humans (Thrift in 2016: 219), diminishing the human subject as a category in its framework. Indeed, if non-human entities are considered equal actors to humans, the deeply political stance of the Deleuzian model of assemblage seems

overlooked.⁴ Still, an agency-based understanding of assemblage that is applicable to the context of social media, comedy, and politics is possible through Deleuzian theory. As John Phillips (2006) argues, the original concept of *agencement*, later translated as assemblage, implies both the ideas of arrangement and fitting, as well as the acts of arranging and fitting, containing in itself a reaffirmation of agency within an event. In this sense, Phillips highlights that assemblages as used by Deleuze and Guattari are not descriptions of states of affairs, but the actions that create and destroy the conditions of existence of the very own elements that form the assemblage. In addition, Müller and Schurr stress that a crucial aspect of assemblage theory is desire and wish (*désir*) as the key element that makes disparate social realities coalesce together and break apart, linking the actual with virtual potential (2016: 224). Therefore, to analyse assemblage formations the focus needs to be on the production of this desire and wish/will, with and in the process of assembling as co-constitutive elements (2016: 226). The agency-based approach to assemblage consequently brings back an affective dimension to relationships and the creation of new media genres, as well as a human-centric perspective, and it is in this reading that it contributes to explaining the case studies of this chapter.

To summarise, the music media analysed in this chapter are flexible, ever-changing cultural products that cannot be clearly classified as only entertainment, activism, or artistic production. Investing these cultural products with a life of their own, or simply pointing to their unclear boundaries and changing dynamics, reifies their role as social constructs and reinforces the idea of separate elements. Instead, I argue that they should be studied as multi-faceted dynamic entities which are part of an interconnected whole that exists through the agency and will of its human and human-generated machine components. The following case studies illustrate that in the music, comedy, and politics assemblage, agency and will are put to work through music circulation choices on social media, giving rise to an affective online citizenship in the context of the Brexit and the Catalanian referendums.

3.2 Case studies

Two events in parliamentary politics impacted the fieldwork and data collection, specifically affecting Spanish migrants living in London: the Brexit referendum in June 2016 and the

⁴ To focus on algorithms instead of focusing on Mark Zuckerberg as an enabler of fascism seems the opposite to what Deleuze and Guattari would have done. Assemblage theory was, after all, deeply informed by the post-1968 situation of the French Communist Party and its rigid structure.

Catalonian independence referendum in October 2017. These events provided two unexpected case studies that are discussed in the following sections. Although music parody and satire are permanent features of the Spanish mediascape, in both case studies the amount of comedic content circulated immediately increased within the groups observed. With the circulation of news through traditional or social media, and the subsequent expert and amateur analyses of the consequences of the events, participants turned to discussion in online platforms. Later, they created new subgroups within social media platforms to discuss these topics separately. Within days, the first pieces of music video started circulating. The platforms that provide better tools for the creation and maintenance of groups such as Facebook, WhatsApp and Telegram proved especially fertile for this kind of musicking. The case studies below will show, however, that a quantitative approach to this topic based only on the speed and amount of music circulated and commented does not fully explain the dynamics that emerged.

3.2.1 Musical Satire and the Brexit Referendum

In June 2016, the European Union membership referendum held in the UK produced a result in favour of leaving the European Union, confirming a historical socio-political rupture between the two powers. Beginning in March 2017, the UK government started a negotiation process with the EU that at the time of writing this thesis is still ongoing. One of its first noticeable consequences is the questioning of the status of European migrants in the UK. It is yet to be confirmed whether Freedom of Movement will still apply, and on what terms European citizens will be allowed to stay in the UK after Brexit. Many other details are still under discussion, and speculation has characterised the negotiation process between 2017 and 2019. After an initial shock period of a few weeks in which people in the groups observed (including some research participants) did not seem to believe the result as binding, many Spanish residents came together to create groups on Facebook, WhatsApp and Telegram, with the purpose of sharing information regarding immigration regulations and other administrative matters. In most cases, these groups were created from previously existing groups or networks, which progressively grew to include more users. In my capacity as insider-subject and researcher-outsider, I joined three Brexit-related groups on Facebook, and I was invited to join a closed group on Telegram of about 20 users through a Spanish *tuitstar* resident in London. I did not join new Brexit-focused WhatsApp groups in addition to the all-purpose ones that I joined at the start of the fieldwork. However, these groups

were not just a selection of individuals from the original sample because other non-participants were involved. Rather, they were an additional collective environment to observe participants who were already in the chosen sample, and observe group dynamics.

These groups were quite different from each other. The Facebook groups originated from previously existing online groups of Spaniards in London and the UK and were mostly formed by people who did not seem to have other things in common or know each other in person. They were large groups (between 1,500 and 5,000 users) and their demographic was varied. Although a couple of the groups' administrators were more active on social media than the average, most groups were not very active in comparison with the original ones. However, these groups seemed to have activity peaks on the days when news reports from Brexit negotiations or information from the Spanish Embassy were released. In contrast, the Telegram group developed from a network of around 20 London-based Spaniards who knew each other virtually through Twitter, or in person. Some members of this Telegram group were relatively popular in the Spanish Twittersphere, with several thousand followers and connected with wider networks of Spanish *tuitstars*. The users of this group belong to a very specific demographic of middle-aged graduates, postgraduates and doctors; and mostly lower-middle class in terms of income. Although the group was originally created to share information regarding the Brexit process, it quickly became a friends' group, where activity is constant and other topics are discussed (as Veronica's example in Chapter 1 shows). They also met in person regularly during 2017. The atmosphere was also distinctively different from the Facebook groups: more prone to complex analysis of and reflection on the information released and less inclined to outbursts of desperation when navigating the news about bureaucratic processes. Besides, the Facebook groups have names such as *Brexit, y ahora qué puedo hacer?* ("Brexit, and now what can I do?") and *Españoles en UK surviving Brexit* ("Spaniards in the UK surviving Brexit"), while the Telegram group is called 'Bloody Immigrants', illustrating the different levels of ownership of the political situation. Although this disparity in self-identifications appeared early in the research during observation and informal conversations, it was confirmed by the responses to the referendum result. The discourse on immigration control promoted by Brexit supporters clashed with some of my participants' self-identifications as relatively privileged migrants with freedom of movement. It was the Brexit process that had made them immigrants-in-the-making, reinforcing the sentiment of being politico-economic exiles — their right to stay questioned in the UK, and unable to return to Spain because of the economic recession. When the immigration control discourse became dominant in the British media, many users on the Facebook groups

expressed their surprise at being considered migrants, despite their higher proportions of low-skilled members, whereas for most of the high-skilled members of the Telegram group, their identities as migrants were already understood and assumed. The different demographics definitely played a role in the kind of discourse that developed in different groups, but surprisingly low-skilled individuals seem to be more reluctant to identify as migrants.

The two most popular Brexit-themed pieces of music parody and satire were, particularly on Facebook groups, first, a rap song by comedian David Vujanic titled “F**k Brexit” (Vujanic 2017);⁵ and second, a reggaetón-flamenco cover of 2017 summer hit “*Despacito*” by two Spanish migrants living in Manchester, under the name El Primo Juan feat. Ismael Balotelli and titled “Despa-Brexit (cover)” (Primo Juan 2017). Vujanic’s piece is a rap in English, and the video illustrates with rap aesthetics an aggressive and satirical reaction against the referendum result and the anticipated changes in immigration policy. In the “*Despacito*” cover, the lyrics in Spanish mimic the original song, expressing love and hate emotions towards the British people, while also criticising the expected immigration restrictions. Interestingly, these songs are not Spanish. Vujanic’s piece is sung in English from the perspective of an Eastern European migrant and “*Despacito*” is reggaetón-pop from Puerto Rico. Thus, the popularity among Spaniards of these two online videos could indicate that the emerging identity work outlined in Chapter 1 is also present in groups, and explains why these songs were circulated. In the case of “F**k Brexit”, it shows that at a moment when the status of Europeans in the UK is being questioned, Spaniards identify with a Pan-European struggle for rights in the UK. In the case of the “*Despacito*” cover, although it could be questioned whether reggaetón is now a Spanish genre (see Chapter 1), it also shows that emigration and Brexit have not fostered a return to reductive understandings of Spanish identity, fostering instead forms of Pan-Hispanism. Certainly, it made Spanish regionalism seem secondary in this context and supports Medhurst’s (2007) argument that comedy plays a crucial role in creating national identities but without an essentialised notion of it. However, as Chapter 1 shows with different music examples, the performative aspect of identity and its relationship with articulating self-definitions is not specific to musical parody and satire, nor to the Brexit context.

⁵ In this case Vujanic created the fake group *4N Boyz*, rapping as his own character *Bricka Bricka*, a construction worker from Eastern Europe. Further analysis on Vujanic’s use of rap and comedy can be found on Williams (forthcoming).

The first idea that comes to mind when a specific user is observed posting music with explicit political content is that they must be interested in discussing ongoing political debates. As Liz Giuffre points out, musical content in comedy media enables users “to set up (or subvert) expectations, develop narratives, pose questions and ultimately gain a laugh.” (2017: 11). In this sense, it could be argued that posting musical parody and satire allows a sort of argumentative performativity, where the piece of music acts as a shortcut to start a conversation about a specific political issue. However, the explanation is more complicated. In the Facebook groups observed, the songs indicated above were popular because they were often shared. But observing these groups’ activity showed that this kind of musicking activity rarely engaged audiences. These music videos were ranked and commented on by a handful of people, but they did not appear to generate long conversations about politics. Only on one occasion, when the “*Despacito*” cover’s performers shared on Facebook groups their concerns about being reported by the *Daily Express* as a proof of “Spanish rage at British expats and tourists” (Nair and Ortega 2017), users responded showing their support and a longer conversation was maintained (Fig. 3.5). It is interesting to note that the *Express* here seemed to have committed, inadvertently or not, an error of musical interpretation, by identifying the love-hate feelings expressed in reggaetón and flamenco songs at face value. Indeed, in both musical traditions it is common to narrate love stories in romantic terms by including both joyful and resentful elements of love relationships. Considering the *Express*’ choice of highlighting the specific lines of the lyrics *quédate en tu isla y bañándote en tus playas* (“stay on your island and swimming on your beaches”) instead of earlier passages in the song such as *cuando vengáis a Mallorca siempre seréis bienvenidos* (“when you come to Majorca you will always be welcomed”), it seems that the *Express* was consciously trying to create this specific effect of enraging readers and driving traffic towards their website.

Intriguingly, the lack of engagement with political parody songs on Facebook in the groups observed (except for the above) contrasted with other instances where the same songs were shared. Both Vujanic’s and El Primo Juan’s videos generated substantial amount of political and musical discussion when they were distributed by the creators in their own Facebook and YouTube profiles and when other entertainment Facebook pages re-circulated them. To explain this disparity, it could be argued along the same lines as Belt (2015) that engagement is higher when users identify something as user content, rather than as commercial. However, it is difficult to maintain this argument when the people who recirculate the songs on these Facebook groups are just communicating at user-to-user level, as will be further explained in the following sections.



Fig. 3.5 The news piece that appeared on the Daily Express website (left) and the Facebook post by Juan alerting others to the controversy generated, which received hundreds of comments (right).

The dynamics on the private Telegram group differed from those described above on Facebook groups, yet they also remained obscure at first glance. Vujanic’s song was also shared in this group but because of the character of the group and the platform used, it did not appear in isolation generating a posting. The musical parody was used to illustrate the ongoing conversation about Brexit, rather than to start it. Hence, although an argumentative performativity took place, the song seemed to be adjacent to political commentary rather than replacing it or calling for discussion. Engagement here was not so relevant to observe, because ongoing engagement was an overall characteristic of the group. Moreover, this type of music sharing as part of ongoing conversations about politics did not seem to be platform-bound. Another instance of this same use of music occurred when two participants in the Telegram group, Teresa and Veronica – a translator and a doctor in Political Science respectively – were commenting on a news piece on Twitter about Brexit that defined British residents in Spain as expats, rather than migrants (Fig. 3.6). They publicly responded to the article posted, criticising the newspaper’s approach to the subject, but also responding to each other in their comments. The short conversation ended when Veronica posted the song “I’m British” by Professor Elemental (Professor Elemental/iammoog 2012), to illustrate her argument. “I’m British” provides a rapped list of British traits of character and attitudes in a satirical register, giving Veronica a musical ready-made to satirize the politics of Britishness and to continue arguments that she had discussed with Teresa on Telegram. As participants showed here, even if this particular song does not deal with Brexit, nor it was specifically written as Brexit-related satire, it can be equally used to illustrate conversations about Brexit

because it caricatures definitions of Britishness. It was not surprising that Veronica, and not another participant, used a video about caricatured Britishness, and not about Brexit, to illustrate her point with a more nuanced and complex critique than “Fuck Brexit” and the “*Despacito*” cover.



Fig. 3.6 A conversation about Brexit between Teresa and Veronica on Twitter.

For participants this was from the start both a conversation between them, and a public conversation, illustrated with a song written by someone else. Therefore, Belt’s (2015) argument that noncommercial videos have more political appeal to be shared in comparison with perceived commercial content does not apply here. Rather, it shows that posting musical parody as argumentative performativity can appear as the source of political discussion, as was the case on the Facebook group; or as an illustration of it, as in the Twitter conversation. This example also reiterates the identity articulation mentioned above and in Chapter 1, showing as well that, to different degrees, anti-British attitudes have emerged in the post-Brexit context among Spaniards and other migrants, and this translates into their social media musicking. “I’m British” represents a moderate, yet insightful criticism against the idea of protecting Britishness that seems to underlie Brexit politics, while “F**k Brexit” illustrates a more extreme and less analytical criticism of this kind of identity-centred politics. The differing demographics seemed to influence group dynamics in two ways. First, since the participants observed in Telegram have higher levels of education, they can articulate complex ideas with references to more cultural resources to understand and discuss parliamentary politics. As a result, they use music media as an audio-visual aid in their

ongoing arguments, rather than as the focus of the conversation. Second, lack of engagement could be explained because users of large groups usually do not have strong ties with other users, and thus they may not be motivated to join political discussions. Similarly, it could be argued that large public groups are not as inclined to sociality as smaller private groups, and thus create different levels of engagement. Nevertheless, this argument has its limits because users of large groups may equally perceive them as ongoing asynchronous conversations about specific topics, and therefore not different in purpose compared to small private groups. Indeed, as the examples in Chapter 2 have also shown, perceived levels of privacy (rather than actual) are a compelling argument to explain why people post on social media. However, argumentative performativity does not entirely explain why people post these comedic music videos, and the ambiguity of the political situation should not be downplayed. As Simon Weaver (2018) highlights, the “serious absurdity” of Brexit as discourse of contradictory ‘situational irony’ produces the ambiguous effect of providing a source of comedy from a serious topic, while paradoxically, comedic answers may respond better to issues raised than serious analysis. The next case study regarding the Catalan independence referendum of 2017 further sheds light on why music and comedy may be used to respond to politics.

3.2.2 Musical Satire and the Catalan Referendum

In October 2017, the Catalan government held an unofficial referendum about the independence of Catalonia from Spain. The referendum was not agreed with the Spanish government and was strongly repressed, exacerbating the escalating tensions between the two administrations. International news coverage showed the referendum results as well as the consequences of police interventions on-site (Russell, Slawson and Greenfield 2017). The conflict is still ongoing, with several Catalan officials having sought asylum abroad or being imprisoned after they were accused of rebellion by the previous Spanish government.⁶ In this sense, the Catalan crisis represents an additional episode in the history of repression outlined in the previous chapters, whereby the central government treats Spain’s multiculturalism as a threat, and strongly curtails democratic normality and freedom of speech.

⁶ Trial started on 12 February 2019, still ongoing at the time of writing.

When the conflict escalated in the first week of October, opposing political views were quickly reflected in the dynamics of Facebook groups such as Spaniards in London, which became a cradle for hate speech. Strong disagreements appeared often, and group admins regularly intervened to police users. In one of the largest online groups of Spaniards in London (over 47,000 members), the unionist, right-wing Galician administrator banned several dozen Catalans who were vocal against the policies of the Spanish government, while allowing pro-unionist neo-nazi propaganda and hate speech to circulate on the site for several days, including a specific post that called for a *Kristallnacht* in London against Catalans (as reported in Glaister 2017). Confrontational dynamics also resulted in unionist Catalans being expelled from Catalan groups on Facebook in retaliation. Although new online groups did not seem to emerge from this political context, the pre-existing groups for Catalans in London grew considerably as they were joined by users who had been expelled from other groups. Users and administrators actively campaigned against groups with opposing views and the climate in posts and comments was conflictive and extremely polarised. For instance, the admin of the largest group of Spaniards in London suggested that “Catalan Spanish” people leave the Catalans in London group because of their independentist stance to create their own (Fig. 3.7). The first person to reply commented “there is only one resolution (sic). Blood and Fire.” This reply came from the same member who would later post on the 6th October suggesting the *Kristallnacht*.

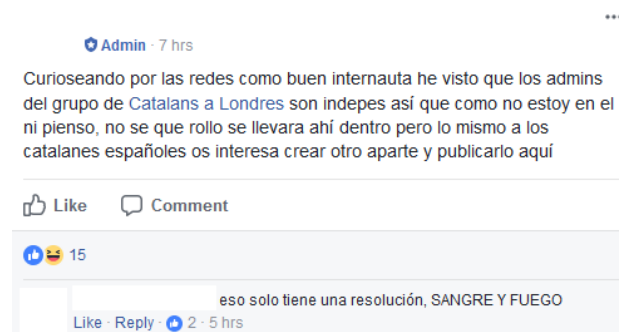


Fig. 3.7 A Facebook post on a group promoting hate speech

In this context of online hostility, political music parody seemed to be slightly less common than in the Brexit case study. However, one particular music video that was often shared by Catalans was the parody rumba song “*No estaba muerto*” (“He wasn’t dead”)⁷ produced by

⁷ This song is a cover of the Catalan rumba classic “*El muerto vivo*” (“The lively dead”) by Peret (itself a cover of “*El muerto vivo*” by Guillermo Gonzalez Arenas and popularised by Rolando Laserie), that tells the story of a man given for dead who was instead just too drunk to return home.

the satirical Catalan television show *Polònia* (“Poland”) (*Polònia*/TV3 2017).⁸ In this video, an actor plays dictator Franco singing that he is alive and well as confirmed by recent events, while two back up dancers dressed as riot policemen perform rumba moves (Fig. 3.8). While the rumba music is light-hearted, the lyrics are quite critical of the Spanish government’s policies towards Catalonia and the post-Francoist structure of the Spanish state.



Fig. 3.8 A post on the Facebook group ‘Catalans in London’ with the caption “you have to see it, very good”.

A second music parody, although produced a month after the referendum events and slightly less popular on the Facebook groups, was the rumba song “*Amigos para siempre*” (“Friends for Life”) produced by the TV show *El Intermedio* (*La Sexta* 2017).⁹ In this video, the comedians play 1970s rumba artists while the lyrics call for dialogue and resolution of the conflict (Fig. 3.9).

With similar dynamics as in the Brexit case study, these two music videos seemed to be widely shared on Facebook groups, but this popularity did not generate much engagement. These videos were ranked on or commented by only a handful of people when they were shared in groups of several thousand members, and even less when they appeared in personal profiles. Likewise, this contrasted with the capacity to generate political

⁸ The name of the show is a reappropriation of the derogatory term *polaco* (“Polish”) used against Catalans. The origin of the term is uncertain, possibly originating as far back as the 18th century. Its pejorative use was reactivated during the Franco regime due to Nazi influence, although Catalans may have also used it to indicate their perceived colonised status.

⁹ This song is a cover of Catalan rumba “*Amigos para siempre*” (“Friends for Life”) by Los Manolos, which in turn was a cover of the original written by Andrew Lloyd Weber for the 1992 Summer Olympics in Barcelona.

commentary and discussion when the music video was posted in other contexts, such as the shows' own Facebook pages and YouTube channels.



Fig. 3.9 Diana's post on Facebook sharing the video of "Amigos para siempre"

In short, although this case study reiterates that music parody can generate conversations about politics and thus parodies are posted as performative elements in online communication, this tentative conclusion should be once again taken with caution. The examples provided contradict the assumption that engagement with commercial content such as TV productions is lower than with user-generated. They also contradict the idea that smaller groups with stronger ties (such as the Facebook group of Catalans in London) are more prone to sociality and engagement. The case study also further confirms that identity articulation for Spanish migrants and its social media performances are not unaffected by Spanish regional politics, as was outlined in Chapter 1. In that sense, Medhurst's argument about comedy and parody as a form of building and articulating national identity mentioned in the introduction to this chapter, works equally in reference to regional identities. Yet these tentative conclusions do not take the discussion very far if performative dynamics are not confirmed to create engagement.

Another kind of music video that circulated within this case study were carnival songs from the annual competition in Cádiz explained in this chapter's introduction. With each edition of the carnival, music videos with excerpts of performances circulate on social media, especially those pieces from larger and more serious carnival troupes that comment on current political affairs. In the first months of 2018, several runners in the competition

performed compositions where the Catalan referendum was the main topic of the lyrics, and eventually these music videos started circulating on the social media groups of Spaniards and Catalans in London. In these cases, the videos posted generated slightly more engagement and comments, in contrast with the examples described above. The most widely shared performance was a song performed by the carnival troupe *La Playa*, (“The Beach”) (Fig. 3.10) where the group criticised Spanish citizens who had protested Catalan independence instead of protesting the government’s austerity policies of the past few years, calling for class solidarity (Onda Cádiz Carnaval 2018).¹⁰ In this particular case, people felt compelled by the music video to debate the adequacy of the lyrics in describing the situation and gave arguments for and against Catalan independence. Although there were some extreme views, the debate was remarkably well conducted, in comparison with the comment sections of news pieces about Catalonia that had been shared in the same groups weeks before.

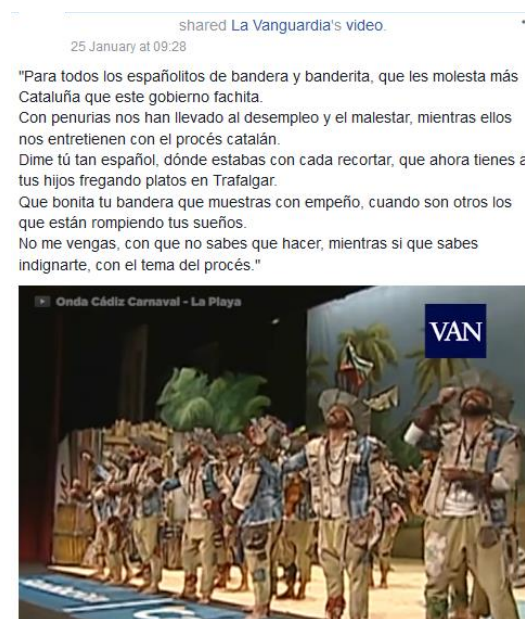


Fig. 3.10. A post on the group Spaniards in London with a song by *La Playa* troupe and a transcription of its lyrics.

The higher capacity of carnival songs to generate temperate political debate, while referring to conflict, identity, and migration, confirms not only that music postings can be argumentative performativity but also that they can generate a type of interactive public sphere. Musical satire and parody are an adequate response to political engagement, and comedy is indeed a serious matter in a context of repression, particularly when it deals with

¹⁰ Although the full performance has political content, the song that was most widely shared runs 7.55 -10.18

a topic that intrinsically evokes the absurd as Weaver (2018) highlights, such as repressing voters. However, this may only be possible when the conflict has de-escalated and within groups of similar political affiliations. Yet the singular capacity of carnival songs to generate different kinds of sociality also indicates a need for further analysis of this emergent public sphere.

3.3 Discussion

3.3.1 Engagement and Musical Politics in Context

The generally low level of engagement with political satire music videos and the uneven capacity of different genres and agents to create sociality in terms of political discussion could be interpreted from different perspectives. Ideas of privacy and safety, historical forms of political engagement and the relationship between algorithmic mediation and human agency could partially explain the observations made in the case studies. First, the lack of engagement with music videos that appear as inherently political could be explained looking at users' ideas of privacy and safe spaces. As pointed out to me by participants during interviews, people are rather cautious when it comes to talking about politics on social media. Sandra expressed her online self-censorship in these terms:

“I used to put more things [online] about politics before, but now I am tired of it. (...) I have family in Venezuela and I don't make comments about [President] Maduro because it could create conflict (...). I know that they have sensibilities against him, (...) so I better keep it for myself.”
Sandra, 26 November 2017

This self-censorship is also partly due to the exceptional legal framework explained above, and users' fears of public discussions becoming not only socially but legally problematic. Indeed, the Spanish political context and its legal framework may not fully qualify as a Western democratic system and Spanish culture at large sits between Western and Mediterranean understandings of informal social control. Participants engage more freely in small circles, or rather in spaces that they perceive as less public or less open to scrutiny.

In addition, the two case studies show that the trope of social media as a space for online activism needs to be reconsidered: intense political conflicts do not always transfer to online sociality in the Spanish context, at least not in the sense of creating debate nor resistance. When freedom of expression may be legally or socially sensitive, users see the risks of participatory culture as too high and do not engage with others, even if the content is based

on comedy and music. When participants were quite vocal about their opinions in our conversations offline, they told me that they still chose not to participate in order to avoid legal risks and online conflict. In this sense, the findings from the case studies outlined above confirm the thesis posited by Costa (2016: 79) in reference to southeast Turkey: that in certain areas of the world with ongoing political conflicts, public Facebook is a conservative place, understood as an online space of surveillance where people avoid confrontation. The self-censorship examples outlined at the beginning of this chapter seem to be the norm when it comes to online politics.

In the case of the Telegram group observed, it could be argued that in small groups with pre-existing strong ties, political satire and parody music videos are accessories to pre-existing sociality and are thus not as important or influential in group dynamics. However, conservatism should not be downplayed; small groups with strong ties and face-to-face interaction might also want to avoid confrontation. Indeed, the most politically conservative person in the Telegram group left in mid-2018 after a series of political discussions. In this respect, I agree with Bonini (2011) claiming that music and social media are indeed home-making tools. However, these case studies among Spanish migrants demonstrate that feeling at home is a complex process with both positive and negative sides and that home-making can sometimes mean an extension of state surveillance or self-censorship. This conceptualisation combining home-making media practices with the perception of surveillance attached to the idea of home, explains why engagement and debate is higher when users address the creators and the commercial channels directly. In the case of *Polònia*, they may be perceived as an ideological safe haven. In the case of Vujanic and El Primo Juan, they may be perceived as spokespersons, bearing the responsibility of the messages of their songs; hence people engage directly with them and in their support, rather than manifesting to users in general what their political opinions are through commenting on video postings. This framework of home as space of surveillance also helps to explain the disparate dynamics in differently sized groups. Very small groups, as in the Telegram example, constitute safe spaces where political discussion does not require self-censorship; while middle-sized and large groups cannot guarantee this – as was the case with the migration of Catalans from the Spaniards in London to the Catalans in London group, when hostility and censorship became commonplace.

Second, the more enthusiastic response to carnival music videos could stem from its character as historic ritual of political subversion. The Spanish tradition of carnival constitutes a pre-established space for critical political discourse with its own set of rules and

allowed transgressions. The critical discourse articulated during the carnival starts and ends with it; it does not really have consequences in the parliamentary political arena and its purpose is to fulfil the ritual, rather than to transcend it (see Chapter 6). Similarly, while the repressive legal corpus has been applied to other music genres and artforms, as explained at the beginning of this chapter, it has never been used against carnival composers or performers. Consequently, for symbolic and practical reasons it constitutes a safe(r) space with a greater character as a democratic public sphere. However, as Thompson (2009) points out, it may be that with carnivalesque representations of conservative figures, people engage in both supporting and criticising them (2009: 216) and mediated forms of caricatured comedy may sometimes fail to criticise political discourse, focusing on mocking the individual (Weaver 2018). The fine line between make-believe political conservatism in comedy and real defence of repression can be difficult to distinguish (Lockyer and Pickering 2009: 11). Thus, together with the ritualistic character of carnival, there is a further neutralisation of subversive elements, making carnival music media a safer, more conservative space of engagement and a representation of heteroglossia. This might also explain why carnival songs that talked in favour of the Catalan referendum were equally shared in groups of Spaniards. Music videos “function as polysemic narratives and images of viewer fantasy and desire” (Shuker 2005, quoted in Spirou 2017: 139), which in this case could be political fantasies of conflict and resolution of the different sides.

Although these are compelling interpretations of the motivations to post and engage (or not) with political music parody, it could be argued that algorithmic mediation overrides them, introducing a third element in this discussion of findings. To begin with, individual users and their uploaded music media may experience difficulties reaching audiences and being seen, in comparison with major broadcasters and premium users. Platforms’ design and their mediation could also be responsible for the speed at which certain media artefacts circulate, and thus how quickly a certain music video falls to the bottom of a group’s page. However, this would not dismiss the argument of human agency, nor fully explain how the same content finds disparate levels of engagement in different circles, because the speed at which media circulates and becomes obsolete is not only a result of platforms’ affordances. Rather, in some of the groups described in the case studies above, the rate of postings that people add per minute is such that it would be unreasonable to expect users to engage with all that is shared. Even in small groups such as the Telegram group described above, messages can exceed 500 daily on average. It is because of both human and algorithmic-led acceleration of posting speed that engagement rates per posting are low. Instead of concluding that

algorithmic-led acceleration of content and its travel speed makes people unable to see and engage with things, the argument could be turned around: the same song is posted several times in the same place by different users because even if they are unable to see previous content and the conversations generated, the political content of the songs is compelling enough to lead them to share it with others. Therefore, instead of understanding engagement as the number of comments or reactions a specific video achieves, the success of a music video parody could be measured by how much it is circulated. However, in a repressive context such as the Spanish mediascape where media choices can have important impacts on people's lives, this multiplication of postings should not be read as virality but as active political engagement.

In relation to algorithmic mediation and politics some authors have stressed the idea of the echo chamber (Garrett 2009) or the filter bubble (Pariser 2012) against human agency, understood as the inability of a given user to engage with people and ideas outside of their social circle of political affinity because algorithms effectively filter content to reinforce users' previously established reactions and search terms. However, my observations seem to contradict this argument. During fieldwork, participants changed their views in relation to Brexit or the Catalanian independence, sometimes nuancing or interpreting the same statements in different ways as news circulated within a day or a week. Their affiliations and political approaches might have not undergone sudden radical changes but were nuanced and more complex over time as they were confronted with new information. This is not necessarily due to the speed of news circulation on social media, but rather an inherent condition of political ideas as flexible and dynamic. As Dubois and Blank (2018) point out, only a small portion of the population are at risk of echo chambers because people are exposed to a wide variety of media, especially those who are politically interested. Lack of engagement does not necessarily mean that political content in the form of music parody and satire did not influence users. It rather shows that influence over opinions has an intangible character that requires closer observation of subjects than what is observable on the screen. The final section of this chapter explains further the characteristics of this active political engagement through music circulation, providing a theorisation of this emerging public sphere.

3.3.2 Coping Strategies and Online Citizenship

Considering the above picture of social control and acceleration of content circulation, it bears asking why people post and share music media at all. Although performativity and articulation of opinions and identities is an important element, it does not give the whole picture. Safe spaces of expression and mediatised political rituals such as carnival are also part of the process, but again they leave many other riskier instances unexplained. For further analysis, it is necessary to turn to users' experiences. Although it could be said that music allows users to comment, mock or embrace politics, it is necessary to study how this happens in detail for this particular group of participants. Two further reasons explain the circulation of political music parody: their use as coping strategy and their character as manifestations of online citizenship.

A significant part of the fieldwork conversations involved discussing contemporary politics to a greater extent than initially planned. The Brexit referendum in June 2016 and the Catalanian crisis in October 2017 put politics at the forefront of the migrant experience, and they still have an important impact on participants' lives at the time of writing. When I spoke to participants informally or during interviews, they expressed that at different stages they had felt overwhelmed by politics. Sue spoke in this manner about Facebook groups even before the Catalanian crisis exploded, highlighting her weariness of polarised political discussions:

“These days I am not following many Facebook pages because everybody is talking about the independence, and it makes me sick. I mean, you can have your opinion, you can defend feeling Spanish (...) but there are right and wrong ways to do so. I have read such atrocities... it makes me think: well, Hitler and Franco are alive inside so many people here [in Spain]. (...) When there are posts about Galician pride and silly things about Galicia and jokes...., then yes, I like them.” Sue, 29 September 2017

In some cases, participants described the feeling of being bombarded with bad news from both Spanish and British news outlets to the point of needing to have a break from social media. Rose pointed out that in October, being from Barcelona, she had been receiving bad news for weeks since the start of the Catalanian crisis (personal conversation 2017), on top of Brexit news. A few days later during the interview, she also interrupted our conversation about politics:

“It makes me really sad, those comments [online]. If they [Spaniards] hate us so much, why don’t they let us go? [gain independence] (...) What is currently happening is pathetic. I feel such helplessness, such anger (...). And then when the politicians appear on tv... disgusting. Anyway, let’s talk about music.” Rose, 25 October 2017

Sandra also expressed similar feelings of being overwhelmed, and she took a three-week break from social media in mid-October 2017, only returning to social media when news of her favourite band’s new tour started to be released. In this sense, participants’ attitudes suggest that when politics are too tiring or depressing, participants find that music and comedy provide coping mechanisms. Not only does music in general motivate people to reconnect with the outside world via social media after a stream of bad news, but music parody and satire seemed to provide relief in difficult political times just as other forms of comedy.¹¹ Managing engagement with music and with social media are coping strategies to deal with intense streams of conflictive institutional politics.

Despite these seemingly straightforward explanations linking low engagement to repressive context and media acceleration, and seeing the use of music and comedy as a coping strategy, these musicking practices can be further examined as forms of political engagement. Considering the statements by participants and the picture of low engagement presented above, it could be argued that such self-isolating attitudes, turning to music and comedy in this manner, may well imply that social media musicking activities eventually lead to a rejection of civic duties, such as staying politically informed and active. However, instead of analysing the impact of comedy TV and social media on people’s political engagement (Hollander 2005; Becker 2011; and Hoffmann and Young 2011), painting a rather passive picture of the audience as subjects, I argue that emerging media activities are themselves inherently political, as Loader et al. 2014 highlight. Certainly, watching comedic and humoristic content should not be understood as a mindless activity. As Bennett (2007) points out, “a probing and illuminating form of cynicism” (2007: 282) might be a responsible and reflective kind of citizen engagement. Besides, the Catalanian referendum case study shows that in a context of repression, the circulation of political ideas is indeed a form of engagement. Consequently, I suggest that posting and circulating satirical and parodic music videos on social media constitutes an emerging “everyday vernacular of political life”, in the same way postulated by Brassett and Sutton (2017) in reference to comedy shows, that contribute to the process of understanding, debating and reflecting on political issues.

¹¹ Memes and other ritualistic forms of comedic communication will be examined in Chapter 6

Although this may seem a return to the performative argument mentioned above whereby music media is circulated to perform political arguments, I would focus on how ordinary people engage critically with politics via social media as a form of political agency, rather than performativity, as Higgins (2015, quoted in Brassett and Sutton 2017) suggests. Therefore, the circulation of musical parodies and satire testifies that in times of important political changes, users resist the repressed and impoverished discourses of traditional media by employing emerging “satirical literacies” (2017: 258) on social media.

If the circulation of music satire and parody is an everyday vernacular of political life, an additional element of collective communication should be considered. The picture of low engagement and participation outlined above goes beyond dynamics of repression or concentration of online interaction in small, significantly active groups (Biel and Gatica-Perez 2009). Testimonies from fieldwork demonstrated that music circulation as a vernacular of political life has an abstract and symbolic dimension of sociality that is not related to direct political engagement or impact. Participants referred to music parodies and satire in a positive light, and most of them seemed to appreciate them, even if they did not circulate them often or engaged with them by commenting. While musical parodies were not specifically discussed in interviews, in informal conversations participants described those music videos as funny, and they were thankful that others had posted them for everybody to see, even if they usually did not contribute. They appreciated them as forms of video gifts and as a positive feature of online groups because they were useful for dealing with political issues, as a sort of collective solidarity gesture. They also understood their own postings in the same way. This understanding of music parody and satire as collectively good was part of wider understandings of the role of music online. For instance, Diana, who often posts political content, merged the therapeutic capacity of music and positive news with a larger sense of political information providing a benefit for humanity:

“I post things that have provided me some sort of benefit, so that others can also have it. An interesting video, (...) or good news, because there are so many bad news these days. So, I think: ‘people would like to see this’. Like that, ‘people’, everybody, humanity. Because it is something positive or good, you know?” Diana, 10 October 2017

Two further elements arise from this analysis. First, participants understand that some users provide an equivalent to a public service for others when they recirculate music parody and satire, perceiving a civic connection with others even without showing engagement with them. Therefore, I argue that engagement is not necessary to create social alliances. Users create and maintain civic partnerships in these symbolic gestures that are sufficient to

maintain their sense of being in the group. Therefore, in order to understand how music parody and satire as everyday vernaculars of politics are put into practice, it is necessary to look at both visible and invisible processes; for instance, when users join groups about Brexit but do not participate in them. Instead of considering those users as ‘lurkers’ I argue that political music parody posting can create citizen engagement and political debate that might not always be visible to the researcher, but not only because it may happen in private groups. The everyday vernaculars of politics provide political literacies and civic engagement at symbolic levels that go beyond what happens immediately around the social media platform or the specific music media object. Moreover, they also allow individual political reflection that is only perceptible at micro levels. Second, the idea of circulating music and political media with an abstract and broad understanding of the audience, as Diana describes, seems to evoke a link between the individual agency of users and a humanity-wide imagined ‘they’, as Lovink and Tuters (2018) also suggest. Indeed, the popularity of entertainment or parody pages whose purpose is exclusively to recirculate content for profit, taking the role of a social media broadcaster, or that of a business dedicated to the monetisation of pre-packaged temporary alliances, is precisely based on this imagined citizenship. After all, these “alternative collective identities” based on Jonah Peretti’s (1996) interpretation of Deleuzian theory were the basis for the foundation of the site BuzzFeed and its creation of political clickbait. As was shown above at the beginning of this chapter, civic warnings and other forms of citizen action are important elements in the social media activities of Spaniards, particularly in relation to music and censorship. These elements of civic togetherness and online solidarity contribute to the formation and maintenance of online social groups and provide the principles for these imagined communities of citizens.

Ultimately, what this active online citizenship implies is that the humanist intention of recirculating political music media is directly linked to the existence of the group as such, bringing the discussion back to the conceptualisation of assemblage discussed above. People imagine this assemblage of music, politics, social media, and comedy as formed of temporary alliances built and articulated through these interactions. As the original theory of assemblage suggested, in these case studies it is the will/desire of the human agents to connect these spheres for the common good through their social media activities of recirculating music and comedy that constitutes the assemblage itself, such as the civic partnerships of online groups. Moreover, following Born and Haworth’s (2018) theory of genre formation, the case studies above show that new social media genres of political musicking emerge through the literacies and agency of participants. The same video may

form a kind of musical, political, mediatised and comedic assemblage when it is located on a particular group (for instance a civic alliance based on a satiric protest), and a different one in another (a space of repression based on the same said video). It is through the agency and will/wish of users that these assemblages as groups and media genres are formed and dissolved. The fantasies and desires of conflict and reconciliation are key constitutive actions as well as parts of the whole. Through the understandings of civic participation and the actions of human agents to recirculate music media, the whole is constituted or dismantled. Moreover, the constant circulation and interaction of music media with users, and the overall social context, destabilises the meaning of these acts of online citizenship. The significance, debate and articulation of ideas that “*Amigos para Siempre*” or “F**k Brexit” generate, changes over time on social media and beyond, as parliamentary politics move forward and the social context transforms. Just like the understandings of identities examined in Chapter 1, political ideas and approaches of users are in flux, so the meanings, alliances and articulations provided by these musical politics are transitory. Nonetheless, rather than think of music circulation and politics as a marginal, stable formation of citizen resistance as subcultural theorists did, I argue that music parodies and satires and their online circulation provide the means to create temporary political alliances in contexts of political conflict, through the agency and will of users.

3.4 Conclusion

To understand music and politics circulation on social media it is necessary to go beyond ideas of virality or pathologizing approaches. Explaining how music circulates requires understanding why people post, rate, re-circulate and engage with music media in their everyday social media activities, but equally it requires addressing why they do not engage, abandoning expressivist perspectives. To achieve this, some elements of the context and the characteristics of political music parody and satire have been considered. Political music comedy sits at the intersection of several genealogies of media, music, comedy and counterhegemonic politics and it cannot be considered simply one or the other. In addition, the online activities of Spaniards in London are influenced by two further elements: first, the repressive legal context and its restriction of music and online speech; and second, the persistence of the carnival tradition as a place of political participation. Both elements influence the recourse to comedy to discuss politics and the resulting varied levels of engagement with other kinds of music satire.

Although understanding these structures is useful, the objective of this chapter has been to account for, and understand, what people make of political music parody given these circumstances. In this sense, I have argued that performative aspects such as articulation of identities and political arguments are important reasons to post and engage with these videos. In the context of Brexit, people use political music parodies to make sense of their status as European migrants, politico-economic exiles and Britain's 'others'. In the context of the Catalanian Independence conflict, Spaniards find resources in political music parodies to articulate their support for or opposition to the blocks involved. In both cases, the music videos illustrate users' fantasies of conflict and reconciliation. In addition, the performative aspect of posting music videos on social media provides tools to start, illustrate and articulate discussions about these political topics as well as alternative sources of information and analysis about parliamentary politics. In the case of carnival songs, another sphere of sociality that is put to work through posting political music parody is ritual. As explained above, subversive political discourse in carnival songs is a defining feature rather than an unexpected act of resistance, partially explaining its higher popularity in terms of online engagement. Musical satire also provides coping mechanisms to ameliorate the stress of dealing with politics. In this sense, music media in general and political parody specifically provide an outlet to criticise or to isolate oneself during periods of excessive and continuous political engagement, whether as ritualised protest or ritualised ascetism.

But perhaps what is most interesting about these reasons to engage with political music comedy and parody is how they converge into wider understandings of sociality. Users engage in forms of online citizenship by warning others of censorship, effectively acting towards the construction of social and political alliances. Users also perceive the circulation of musical parody and satire videos as unexpected gifts from fellow citizens, which act as symbolic objects of public cohesion. Social alliances are formed and maintained from the visible and invisible effects of music circulation on the civic and political lives of users. Identity articulation, political discussions, ritual protest: all contribute to this online citizenship construction at collective and individual levels. As outlined in Chapter 1, online music circulation and posting as a global practice does not lead to a dissolution of citizenship. On the contrary, it creates new ways of articulating citizenship and forging collective solidarity, particularly in cases where there is an anonymous identification with others in the form of imagined communities or an abstract 'they'. As Michael Billig points out, "we belong to a society in which (...) humour is seen as a necessary quality for being fully human" (2005: 13). It is in their humanist perspective that these collective alliances are thought of, formed and

maintained. Besides musical comedy being a vernacular of online political life, the humanist desire for collective political action and the specific actions of users when recirculating this kind of music media give rise to an assemblage of music, comedy, politics and citizenship that provides new forms of sociality. However, it is not only musical content with explicit references to politics that contributes to musical citizenship. The chapters that follow will further illustrate the relationship between online musical citizenship and musicking activities through online fandom and through rituals of music circulation and exchange.

Chapter 4 – Post-Social Media Music Fandom

4.1 Introduction

In seeking to understand music circulation on social media, one of the first elements that comes to mind is fandom as an active performance and articulation of musical taste. In chapters 1 and 2, the analysis of social media musicking activities related to identity performance and social capital hinted at the relevance of fandom practices within online music circulation. The discussion that follows in this chapter addresses this topic directly, demonstrating how the analysis of musicking on social media can bring new perspectives to the study of fandom and how fandom practices are a motor of music circulation online. Performing and embodying fandom identities motivate the circulation of music on social media profiles. To an extent, putting cultural capital to work to maintain relationships partially depends on fandom activities to generate that capital. Furthermore, interacting with artists and other fans also enables the maintenance of a wealth of social musicking activities that have been present since the early days of the internet. More importantly, in the contemporary social media and streaming mediascape, commercially and algorithmically-promoted fandom push fans to intensify their engagement while simultaneously discouraging or suppressing certain fan practices through their design. The industry co-option of fandom clashes with reflexive approaches to music circulation and fandom by users. As participants point out, users are still active agents in their fandom activities as social prosumers, able to distinguish a variety of temporal engagements with music, including ephemeral, and even absent, listening practices. Yet the acceleration of music circulation, which could be understood in terms of a loss in value or a trend towards disposability, indicates instead the importance of sociality over subcultural fandom goals: a rich social life online requires sharing music often with many users, rather than within a specific subculture. Therefore I argue that to understand why music is circulated on social media, a post-object perspective needs to be adopted, within which social interaction and its temporalities prevail over the fandom objects and the maintenance of fan groups.

4.1.1 Context

Since the 1990s, studies of fandom have abandoned the conceptualisations of fans as passive receptors of popular culture and approached fandom practices from the perspective of

participatory culture (Jenkins 1992; Jenkins 2006a; Andrejevic 2008; Duffett 2013). As it is outlined in the literature review, according to these recent perspectives, fans are not just mere members of the audience, but publics who interact collectively with the media they value (Jenkins et al. 2013). This perspective on fans as active agents and creators of new texts has been crystallised in the neologisms of prosumer (Toffler 1980; Beer and Burrows 2010) and produser (Bruns, cited in Jenkins et al. 2013), referring to the twofold capacity of fans to receive media texts as commodities but also reproduce and transform them into cultural resources. Indeed, Burgess and Green (2009) understand the practices of content production, remix and annotation as forms of cultural citizenship, of which Chapter 3 has shown some examples. Expanding from these studies of fandom, this chapter precisely addresses this duality by investigating the lived contradictions of participants as both receptors and consumers of music media and reflexive producers of new media content. In addition, these modes of fan agency co-exist on social media platforms with diverse manifestations of technological “algocracy” as conceptualised by Aneesh (2006), understood as the governance systems articulated through computer algorithms and based on the tracking and analysis of large corpuses of data, with the capacity to predict trends and probabilities or to suggest and influence judgment. However, as will be developed in this chapter, fans are aware of algocratic mediations and therefore reflect and adapt their practices when necessary.

Reflexive fan agency should also be understood in the context of a post-social media technoscape. However, here I depart from Sociological approaches that establish a clear generational divide between pre- and post-social media users according to age or platform use (Rosenthal and McKeown 2011), and also from understandings of social media as inherently postsocial because of their use of digital objects as “communicative bodies” (Miller 2008). Instead, I reiterate the arguments outlined in Chapter 2, whereby social media technologies have been commonplace since the late 1990s and are fully integrated in everyday social life, and to an extent are taken for granted by users. Participants understand online-online social relationships as a normalised part of their daily routines, and maintaining these ties is no longer dependent on one specific platform as online sociality migrates with technological change. The same could be said of streaming platforms, because the focus is no longer on accessibility, which is also taken for granted, but on choices of sound quality and sociality (Durham and Born forthcoming) in the same sense that Madianou and Miller (2012; also, Miller et al. 2016) describe with the concept of ‘polymedia’. Moreover, both social media and streaming platforms seem to have entered a declining curve (Grasmayer

2017), well past the “here-comes-everyone moment” (Johnston 2016). Despite the difficulty of predicting the speed or character of these technological changes (see Harding 2016 and Manjoo 2017 for predictions yet to be materialised), what crucially marks the contemporary mediascape as post-social media are the societal changes in regard to their moral approach. The whistleblowing news about Facebook’s breaches of privacy (Cadwalladr and Graham-Harrison 2018) and the discourses of repentance of former social media celebrities (McNeal 2015) have led to the emergence of a culture of disenchantment with social media technologies that some have named “The End of Trust” (McSweeney’s 2018). This combination of taken-for-grantedness and normalisation with decline and disenchantment form the cultural basis of the post-social media technoscape.¹

Digital and online music practices also develop within this post-social media culture. Revolutionary and fascinating aspects of the technology are no longer central, as Kim Cascone (2000) foresaw in his conceptualisation of the post-digital in music, because “the medium is no longer the message; rather, specific tools have become the message” (2000: 12). His conceptualisation of the “aesthetics of failure” resonates with the exploration of algorithmic fandom that is outlined further below in this chapter. Online music practices could also be understood as post-social media because as Johansson (2018) theorises, they develop within the wider framework of online connectivity culture. In this sense, the social aspects of social media culture are inextricably related to the practices of listening and sharing music with others, no longer distinguishable as two separate social spheres.

To summarise, participatory forms of fandom, algocratic systems of platform governance and the context of post-social media and post-streaming technoscape, inform the discussion outlined in the following sections of this chapter, influencing how participants think about their online musicking.

4.2 Fandom and Performativity

Before tackling the post-social media landscape of fandom activities, it is necessary to reiterate the relationship between performative aspects of social media and music fandom. From the arguments made in the first chapter with regards to identity performance, it

¹ At the time of this thesis going to print, social media platforms work to remove the livestream of a racist mass-shooting in New Zealand, which was originally uploaded to Facebook (Hern and Waterson 2019). Events of this kind further confirm the paradigm shift from the optimism of the early 2000s to the current post-social media ‘end of trust’ era.

follows that fandom can be performed and embodied as an element of personal identity in a social media profile. A selection of music media posted by a user on a social media profile usually indicates a preference for that genre or artist not only as a form of identification, but also as a display of fandom. For instance, in the case studies of Jasmin and Rose in Chapter 1, fandom for a specific music genre or band was being performed at the same time as cultural and gender identity. In this sense, belonging and identity performance are two sides of the same coin, because these kinds of social media posts can be understood as both a performance of personal identity and a performance of belonging to a group of fans, as for instance Elisa and Daniel displayed (Fig. 4.1).

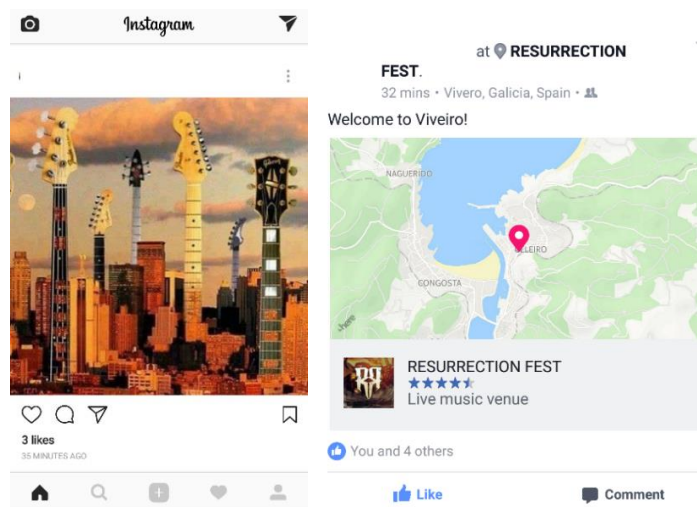


Fig. 4.1 An Instagram post by Elisa (left) and a Facebook check-in post by Daniel (right).

Similarly, publicly-performed online fandom is a commodity in its own right on social media, as Duffett (2013: 241) points out. Following the analysis outlined in Chapter 2, taste and belonging to a music culture can be articulated through the process of crafting a social media profile and its contents. Fandom activities create and produce the cultural capital that participants use as currency in their online sociality. The participatory forms of fandom that characterised the case studies in the previous chapters provide evidence of the overlap between fan groups and relationship maintenance through the online mobilisation of cultural capital. The case study of Cynthia shows a paradigmatic form of online fandom directed towards the maintenance of social capital. The case studies of previous chapters also show the relationship between personal fandom and transnational family ties, such as the case of Sue and her social media posts about gig attendance (Fig. 4.2). It was also revealing that my participant Sandra defined part of her musicking activities on social media with the Spanglish neologism *fangirleo* (“fangirling”), despite recognising that her online

activity was deeply concerned with maintaining her family connections, confirming the dual character of these fandom performance practices.

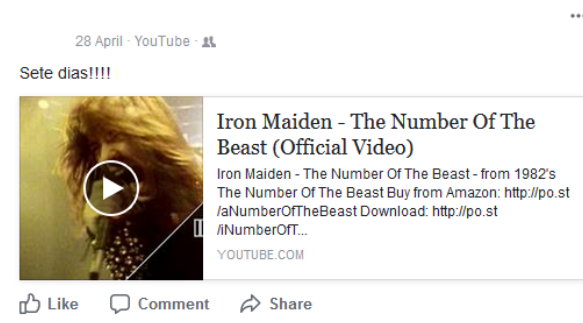


Fig. 4.2 Sue's Facebook post with the caption "Seven days!" as a countdown to the concert she was going to attend with her brother and sister-in-law, who were tagged in the post.

However, a focus on the performative aspects of online fandom or a subcultural approach to fans would encounter the same limitations highlighted in previous chapters. The polysemic character of music media complicates univocal explanations of identity and music. The politics of a particular genre can articulate references to opposed identities, and insights from social media observation depend on explicit evocations of cultural identity. Similarly, the understanding of music media on streaming and social media platforms as sacred collections of subcultural items does not quite fit their social use, as will be further developed in this chapter. Subcultural approaches proved useful to account for the circulation and maintenance of relationships and social capital as contacts, but less so to understand dynamics of class distinction and access to monetary capital. Music as a circulated and exchanged currency for purposes of sociality prevails over its use to police group boundaries. Instead, to understand why music circulates online, the following sections address the dynamics of fandom on social media through a focus on agency and temporality, looking at how the activities and timeframes of social media interaction influence the online musicking practices of the research participants.

4.3 Fan Agency and Online Communities

As previous studies show (Jenkins 1992, 2006a; Duffett 2013), online fan communities contribute to collective meaning-making by discussing norms and experiences, and by establishing expertise criteria. Fan culture also creates group identity, defining the relationships of individuals with the outside world. In addition, since the rise of online participatory media, local music cultures and periodic fandom rituals have incorporated

elements of continuous online social activity, creating hybrid processes of online-offline fandom behaviour (2013: 239). Posting and sharing music on personal profiles responds to these hybrid processes that produce and reproduce fan cultures, their boundaries and their rituals as online-offline practices (Fig. 4.3).



Fig. 4.3 Daniel's video message on Telegram with the caption: "Yesterday at Download [Festival] they did a circle [mosh] pit while 'Heavy', from Linkin Park, was playing. Thanks to those anonymous heroes."

However, it would be misleading to approach all music fandom practices on social media from a symbolic perspective. Tangible aspects of sociality such as interacting with artists and fan communities are crucial in social media musicking. Through these platforms, users can develop "intimacy at a distance" (Duffett 2013: 237) with their favourite artists and with fellow members of the fan community, just as they develop the other kinds of relationships examined in Chapter 2. Musicking activities that help to establish and maintain contact with bands provide social capital rewards beyond social media, such as meeting artists or accessing promotional offers. For instance, Sue often mentioned that thanks to social media she could follow her favourite band Iron Maiden, giving her the chance to meet them in person in both informal and promotional settings (Fig. 4.4). Similarly, online interaction within fan communities gives users access to privileged information and to a lesser extent, new connections. As explained in Chapter 2, Sandra and Cynthia were good examples of these practices, sharing and circulating music for social capital purposes such as making friends in the fan community.

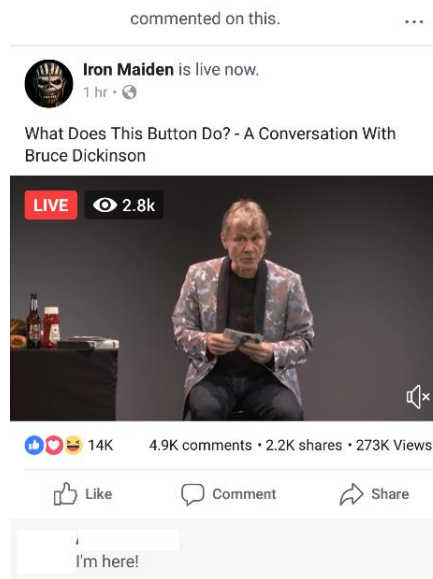


Fig. 4.4 Sue's comment on the Facebook live streaming of Bruce Dickinson's book launch. She also posted a picture of herself and her brother with a copy of the book at the event.

Sandra also specifically mentioned her excitement when the social media manager of one of her favourite bands contacted her to ask for help with promotion, because this meant that she was one step closer to her idols. She explained her social media activity in these terms:

"Yes, [I post] to help them but also... I am not going to lie to you... so that they realise that you know them, and they take you into account... So they know that you exist." Sandra, 26 November 2017.

In this respect, to fully understand the motivations behind social media musicking, the use of platforms for promotion should not be overlooked, particularly in its manifestation as a result of industry practices. Besides the activity of aspiring artists promoting themselves (Suhr 2012), the promotion-related practices of individuals play a crucial role in music circulation. For instance, since Facebook's commercial strategy changed to incorporate direct deals with other businesses such as music-related pages, it is common for fans to participate in competitions and draws that run within the platform. Although many of the competitions inhabit the unclear borders of social media legality and its internal rules, their prevalence has increased over time. This format of competitions usually requires users to perform actions such as liking, sharing or commenting a post to enter a draw or win a prize such as concert tickets, meet-and-greet passes or merchandise. These often industry-led promotional actions on social media contribute to a significant part of the circulation of music media on these platforms, focused around specific artists or events. The musicking practices around these online draws adds another layer of fan activity related to the tangible

rewards mentioned above, and their connection with fans' aspirations to interact with their favourite artists.



Fig. 4.5 The author participating in a prize draw on Facebook.

Therefore, users' agency is directed towards both aspects of social media platforms when they undertake musicking activities: on one hand, culture-making and relationship maintenance through fandom; and on the other, tangible rewards such as social capital and valued prizes. In contrast, companies and artists are oriented towards the circulation of music media for free promotion. The next section outlines how users are not oblivious to these different dynamics.

4.4 Fan Reflexivity and Solidary Fandom

Instead of only considering music fan agency on social media as the cultivation of "the perception of accessibility and proximity" (Duffett 2013: 238) without distinguishing social and economic activities, I argue that users maintain a reflexive approach to their social media fandom depending on the context. On one hand, participants confirmed that musicking activities oriented towards meeting less-known artists or helping emerging bands to promote themselves were positive, confirming the insights of Jenkins et al. (2013: 14). For instance, Anabel and Javier said:

“I realise that even if I am not a mass medium with a huge audience, if I put something on the spotlight I will generate more audience at some level for that artist, and maybe more money. I am conscious of it and I try to generate interest for particular artists. (...) I like to be responsible of giving visibility to things that I think that deserve it.” Anabel 7 November 2017

“I think that sometimes I have done it. When I have found an artist that was very good but was not very well-known, or almost completely unknown, on YouTube. And I have shared the video with the idea that the guy deserves to be listened, and that he should be more popular. (...) That’s the only instance where I think if my posts have a [economic] result.” Javier, 5 December 2017

On the other hand, many also pointed out that any social media interaction with famous bands’ social media accounts or with the hope of helping or meeting an established artist were pointless. Some participants said:

“I put it [on social media] because (...) if people want to find out what others say about them [the band] ...to let people know that they are very good. For minor bands these little things are useful. The more people post about it and the more you publish on your social networks, the more they become known, which is ultimately free advertising. But if the band is worth it, it doesn’t cost a thing to help them. (...) I know that Pearl Jam does not need my support... that’s more fangirling (...)” Sandra, 26 November 2017

“If it’s a minor band, yes, but you are not going to send a message to Metallica like ‘hi, what time’s the show tomorrow?’ If it’s a minor band, ok. Because you to go a concert with other 300 people and at the end you can have a beer with the band or whatever. But with popular bands no, it’s absurd. (...) Maybe one day the [well-known] artist reacts to something that you said to them [on social media] and they reply with a smiley... but from that to interaction... (...) Popular bands are really difficult to access, unless you know someone. Just because you send them a message [on social media] you are not going to become mates.” Rose, 25 October 2017

“As a general rule, yes. If there’s something that I like... Well, with some bands it doesn’t matter if you promote them. I can like Iron Maiden very much but even if I share the link to their website, what is it going to do for them? Maybe two more people that visit their site? But during Resurrection [Festival] there were many small bands that weren’t known at all. In those cases, yes, I like to put their Bandcamp (...) or their Facebook or whatever; an official link so they get some traffic. Because it’s a way of thanking them after all. Like: ‘hey, I dig what you do’. So look, if five people click on that link, it’s five more people. And maybe two of those will like the band.” Daniel, 15 January 2017

Participants did not consider meeting an established artist as more than a chance to take a picture or get an autograph, being conscious of how industry-led music fan events are run to exploit avenues for free advertising. In contrast, they thought that the chance of meeting an emerging artist would more likely lead to a meaningful social interaction, thus orienting their social media musicking to those possibly richer socialities. In addition, participants were aware of the difficulty of having an impact or winning something through interacting with the social media accounts of famous artists, as they are professionally managed and their reach is wide. Participants also highlighted that while their own fan activity on social media might be an effective promotional tool for those without a considerable following, they considered it unnecessary to help with the promotion of famous artists. If anything, they considered it unfair to give more media space to established acts, understanding their actions as a way to redress the imbalance between famous and emerging artists. In this sense, these musicking activities oriented towards promoting emerging talents were not related to artists who appeared as crucial musical influences in participants' music fandom practices.

These practices of reflexive and solidary fandom provide interesting insights into music circulation on social media. As highlighted at the beginning of Chapter 2, fandom practices linked with previous online socialities such as the underground-oriented musical dynamics of MySpace, still influence music practices on current social media platforms, driving people to invest in social relationships with emerging artists rather than commercially successful ones. Participants' responses also illustrate how users distinguish different instances of free 'fan labour' (Baym and Barnett 2009; Terranova 2004), assigning differing moral judgements to them. They are aware of the relevance of data traffic, even over actual engagement such as listening. Therefore, users consider free labour as positive solidarity when it helps emerging artists, but not when it feeds other commercial economies. In this sense, I argue that solidary fandom is a manifestation of the existence of social prosumers, who evaluate their participatory agency within the framework of the music industries in capitalist environments. To understand the motivations of users in posting and circulating music media, the moral and political aspects of solidary fandom must be considered. Moreover, the music fandom activities described by participants do not seem to be primarily inclined towards an idea of policing the boundaries of subcultural fan communities and their members, but rather, towards sociality and political principles, confirming the arguments in chapters 2 and 3. However, these practices may be at odds with the platforms' understandings of music fandom and their active role in shaping online music practices. The

following sections delve into these two elements: the disparity between user and commercial understandings of fandom and the prevalence of sociality-oriented fandom, linking the analysis of algorithmic and user agency with different aspects of online temporality.

4.5 Algorithmic Fandom

Since the advent of streaming and social media platforms, contradictions between fandom practices, previous understandings of fandom and algorithmic definitions of fans have come to the fore. As Johansson et al. point out in their study, users “experienced their music use as having accelerated with the introduction of music streaming, but also that music streaming had accelerated their interest in music as such” (2018: conclusion). Platforms have attempted to change – sometimes succeeding – what it means to be a music fan, often for economic purposes. According to Hills (2018a), this mediation of fandom has created clashes not only with users’ practices, but also between opposing algorithmic designs. Streaming platforms, and to a lesser extent social media platforms, use data-mining technologies to identify fans of certain genres and artists even when users do not self-identify as such. Platforms also claim to be able to generate fandoms, using listening data to target suggested music content to users. The objective of streaming platforms such as Spotify and YouTube is to lure fans into longer engagement with related music content and monetise this engagement.² At the same time, streaming platforms aim to commercially dominate and control the private sonic sphere in the same way that Muzak did for the public sphere (Johansson et al. 2018). To their advantage is the socially normalised use of digital music as an everyday soundtrack for other activities (Nowak 2016), in contrast with more controversial platform-promoted consumptions of media (such as the binge-watching television practices that Hills describes). In this sense, fandom is algorithmically co-opted and oriented towards intensifying music consumption, rather than neutrally hosted for the production and maintenance of fan communities. Streaming platforms aspire to impose an “algorithmic hegemony” (Hills 2018a) over fans’ listening practices, with the aim of becoming the “gatekeepers of algorithmic publics” (Bonini 2017; Gandini and Bonini forthcoming).

² Nick Srnicek (2018) points out that all internet-related companies are now oriented or migrating their investments to data-mining and AI, rather than monetising their service through subscriptions or advertisement, regardless of the functionalities they offer to users to harvest their data. In that sense, there is ultimately no difference between Spotify, Facebook, Google and Apple, from a business sector point of view.

Illustrative of this strategy is Spotify's prioritization of industry-sponsored and commercially-curated playlists and its abandonment of the previous interface format showing user-generated compilations as primary suggestions. At the same time, platforms use verification technologies to discourage and punish particular kinds of fandom and authorise others. As Hills (2018a) explains about Ticketmaster, ticket selling platforms block superfans from buying multiple tickets for the same show in different locations, punishing serial concert-goers (binge-shoppers or binge-patrons) in the name of resale control. Social media platforms shuffle the feed content so that users with high levels of posting activity (such as Cynthia and Sandra described in Chapter 2) do not appear as often as they post or interact with others, hiding binge-posting and DJ-like practices. Paradoxically, ticket-selling platforms sometimes also allow users to improve their verification scores by posting on social media about artists.

In other words, the algorithmic approaches to fandom used by platforms fail because they are based on two erroneous premises. First, they maintain a contradictory approach towards intense forms of music consumption, both encouraging it and discouraging it. Second, as Hills (2018a) points out in relation to viewing practices, they suggest that fandom can be predictively identified and targeted as a result of algorithms, equating listening data to fan investment. In both cases, whether as generators or authenticators of fandom, algorithms and platforms create tensions between the practices and experiences of users and their predictions. This is even the case when algorithmic curation is aimed at encouraging fan responses, because it fetishizes the circulation of content as an end in itself (Dean 2005, quoted in Jenkins et al. 2013). For instance, Spotify's launch of a partnership with Facebook in 2011 included the feature of publishing listening patterns without individual sharing prompts, as a streaming of posts with the hashtag #NowPlaying. Unless opted out of, this feature generated Facebook posts for each listening item in real time. It proved to be very unpopular with users, with participants mentioning matters of privacy and profile cluttering, in similar terms as Johansson (2018) found, and it is hard to find users who have not opted-out. Similar issues are also prevalent on YouTube, with features such as autoplay and recommended videos. For both platforms, research participants pointed out the lack of privacy when using their accounts in social settings, as well as the problematic prediction of taste for people that use their accounts for both personal and professional activities, for instance as a worker in the media industries. For example, Anabel pointed out that algorithmic playlist curation cannot distinguish listening to a song while writing an album review or researching a genre – and the critical approach that it involves – and listening to

an album with authentic fandom investment. This was problematic for her because, as a freelance journalist, she needed access to music, but her streaming profiles were subsequently affected. She was annoyed by the absence of a feature on Spotify and YouTube to opt out of algorithmic data collection so that her personal profile would remain true to her taste (personal communication 22 September 2017). Moreover, algorithmic curation of music is designed to cater to individuals, and does not work well with people sharing accounts, such as families or couples. It is equally problematic considering that any individual may have an unlimited number of accounts. For instance, Anabel shares her Spotify account with her partner, and this generates considerable algorithmic interference. Not only are her research activities recorded as fandom, triggering Spotify to suggest similar style and genres to her and her partner, but recommendations can also fail to match the listening practices of two separate users who may like, as in this case, different styles of jazz.

Algorithmic curation of fandom was even more inadequate for the musicking practices of Fernando and Teresa. When Spotify first appeared on the market, they both decided to open individual accounts and use them to listen to music. However, after several changes to the platform's policies and the establishment of subscriptions, they decided to open a new joint account, as a sort of shared household item. However, they never closed the previous ones. While Fernando only uses Spotify to listen to classical music, Teresa uses it mainly to listen to alternative rock from the 1980s and 1990s. Consequently, they both keep saved playlists with their favourite albums in the separate accounts and the common one is more used as an online radio. As Fernando explained, the algorithmic recommendations were deeply flawed for them for two reasons: first, their tastes were too disparate to provide a common ground for a playlist or album that Spotify could suggest; second, they already know what they like and have taken the time to arrange their record collection on the platform. Spotify will, most likely, never show them a new item that is really of interest to them. Fernando also pointed out that algorithmic recommendation for classical music connoisseurs is largely pointless because most listeners would know which pieces, interpretations and recordings they prefer and keep them in forms that are easy to access, rather than wait for Spotify to suggest them (personal conversation 2017). In contrast, Anabel and her partner were also considering a 3-account set up to resolve their algorithmic issues, because despite the inadequate design of the platform, they still wanted to use a tool that facilitated sharing music recommendations with each other and with friends (personal conversation 2017).

Although these examples may not be representative of most Spotify users, for whom 'discovery' playlists are useful (for instance for Cynthia), shedding light on these non-

normative uses of the platform is useful for demonstrating the interrelation of algorithmic and human practices. It could be argued that algorithmic fandom's pitfall is the inability to recognise the existence of fandom publics (Jenkins et al. 2013). While algorithms use data similarity to see fans as aggregates of individuals and equivalent to audiences, fandom publics are collectivities "that actively direct attention to the media that they value" (2013: 166), rather than just sharing taste by chance. In addition, platforms such as Spotify seem to naively disregard the multiplicity of uses, publics, and social settings of music streaming, and generally the social aspects of musicking activities. Personal curation and circulation of music allows users to intensify their involvement with collectives and individuals (2013: 170) as the case studies in the chapters above have shown, and this sociality remains central to explaining music sharing on social media. Moreover, the inadequacy of a one-formula-fits-all algorithmic curation of fandom reveals that users and algorithms are part of an interrelated system that produces different kinds of fandom, based on the mutually-mediating types of curation that Durham (2018) indicates. The practices of fans influence how algorithmic curation and construction of fandom works, while algorithmically-promoted kinds of fandom influence, in turn, the kinds of fandom articulated and the practices of users and fans. Audiences are aware of algorithmic mediation and datafication of their practices, as the examples above have shown, and thus modify their practices to fix the issues encountered. In this sense, any work of online curation such as a playlist or a Facebook post is a result of an interrelated system, in which users, fans, freeloaders, producers and industry agents are mutually-influenced, taking different roles at different times or even several roles at once. Therefore, algorithmic curation pitfalls are socially generative: it is because platforms fail that new social dynamics of musicking appear within the interplay of users and audiences with technologies. As Cascone (2000) foresaw in regard to digital music creativity, algorithmic fandom curation also fosters an aesthetic of failure: musicking practices showing that technologies are far from perfect, understood as intrinsic characteristics of the musical experience.

The next section will show how these algorithmic failures promote diverse practices of control and ownership, as well as sociality-centred uses of streaming and social media opposed to the consumption-centric affordances of platforms. Moreover, algorithmic fandom is also problematic because it does not distinguish between practices thought of as ephemeral engagement and practices oriented to continuous and more permanent social dynamics. It also ignores the decline of genre-specific subcultural practices in a mediascape of music abundance.

4.6 Temporary Fandom

Despite platforms' efforts to redefine what fandom means by trying to intensify users' engagement with specific genres and artists, people still retain a great deal of agency in music consumption. This section analyses opposing practices to the dynamics explained above, where people rather than algorithms articulate new forms of fandom through their interactions with social media and streaming platforms.

As outlined in the previous sections, many instances of musicking cannot be categorised as fandom, neither in its algorithmic sense nor in a subcultural one. First, listening and sharing music via streaming platforms may belong to instrumental uses such as research. Second, post-streaming and post-social media fandom does not seem oriented towards the formation and maintenance of subcultural groups as much as to the maintenance of relationships and sociality, the practices of solidary fandom or working towards tangible rewards – forms of real capital, rather than symbolic. Even in the case of Daniel above, who posted about normativity and fandom, his activities were oriented towards reinforcing and performing these norms within his group of friends on Telegram, as much as towards other internet users. Instead, here I argue that to take the discussion further it is necessary to consider how temporary and momentary music practices create ephemeral experiences of belonging whereby a fan group forms temporarily to occupy a space for their own purposes (Gray 2009, cited in Jenkins et al. 2013), disrupting algorithmic intensification and subcultural understandings of fandom as stable groups. These brief engagements help users to sample different music fandoms and to articulate multiple fan roles. This kind of temporary music engagement is consistent with contemporary depictions of the audience as 'cultural omnivores' (Peterson 1992) and with wider offline practices of temporary fandom, evinced in the management of music venues. For instance, in recent years classical music venues have targeted new crowds benefitting from these temporary fandoms by providing orchestral arrangements of pop album milestones, allowing crowds to sample each other's scenes for one evening. Similar strategies are used at large music festivals, where most of the acts only perform short sets, allowing the audience to sample a variety of genres without the engagement required for a full show, actively promoting the emergence of eclectic crowds.³ However, while sampling music fandoms in offline contexts is a costly enterprise economically and socially (potentially damaging to personal image in terms of performing a

³ The RAH 2018's Proms sold tickets for an Ibiza night, and organised Daft Punk-themed shows in previous years. Many festivals such as Glastonbury and Womad run large parts of their schedule on 45 and even 30-minute sets.

type of fan or music connoisseur), streaming platforms and social media allow users to explore genres and scenes with fewer associated risks, and without the need to form a collectivity as such, actively fostering eclectic musicking. Social media may enable users to temporarily occupy an online fan space and join fan groups at any level of commitment, without any previous investment. Similarly, momentary types of fandom are also enabled by social media through the posting of music media on personal profiles. When users post a song, they temporarily perform and sample a genre and its fan sociality, but without committing to all aspects of its fandom. Many of the examples from Facebook and Twitter provided in the previous chapters can also be read as temporary, bite-sized engagements with a specific fandom (Fig 4.6).

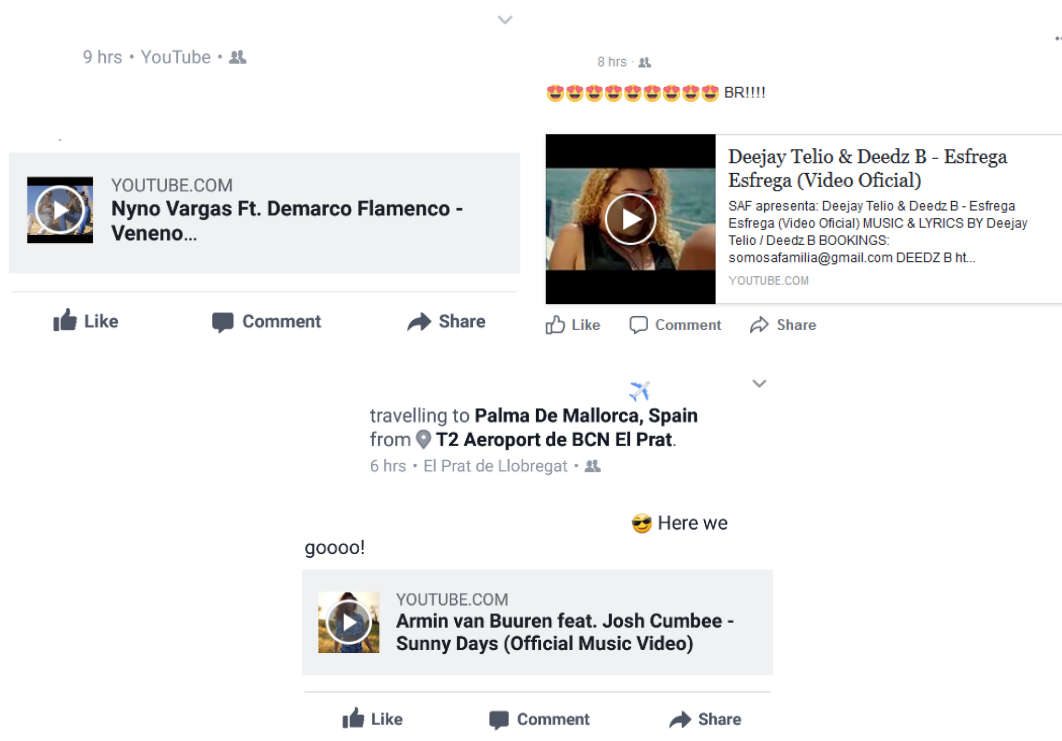


Fig. 4.6 A selection of Jasmin’s posts on Facebook with Electrolatino, Brazilian Funk and House music. Likewise, temporary music engagement seems to be an important argument for the creation of playlists on Spotify and YouTube. First, users can create playlists to learn and memorise concert set lists of bands that they might not be familiar with, or to prepare for the live shows after the release of a new album, giving a temporary role to these music selections. Second, users can also create diverse compilations to sample and engage temporarily with specific genres, without being committed fans.

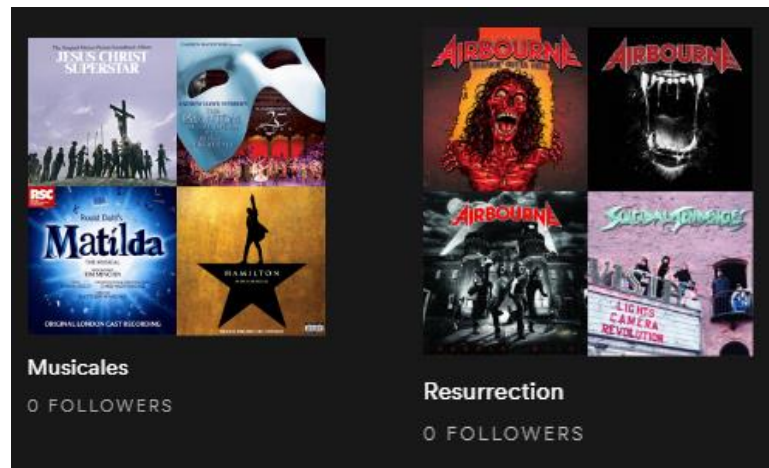


Fig. 4.7 Daniel’s Spotify playlists for musicals (left) and a festival setlist (right)

Yet users’ more explicit acknowledgement of the difference between being a fan and temporarily experiencing a fandom, comes to the fore when looking at the concept of ‘guilty pleasure’. When users refer to musical guilty pleasures they recognise being temporarily but actively engaged with a piece of music. However, they present this activity as a sort of rewarding or pleasure-inducing listening where agency is not involved to the same extent, or has a different character from intense, serious listening. Several of my participants have Spotify and YouTube playlists named ‘guilty pleasures’ or similar terms that reflect this conceptual mindset in their playlist making, as a separate category from the rest (Fig. 4.8a). For instance, some participants in the Telegram group created a collaborative playlist of this type as part of their collective musicking practices (Fig. 4.8b).

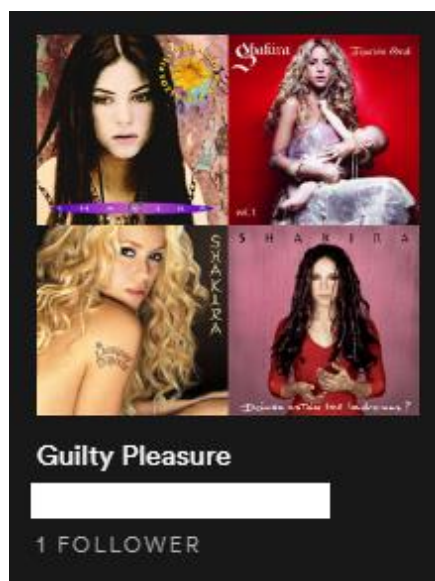


Fig. 4.8a A Spotify playlist shared between Sandra and her sisters with music by Shakira.



Fig. 4.8b A Spotify collaborative playlist of 6 members of the Telegram group ‘Bloody immigrants’ with LGBTQ-iconic artists. The name of the playlist is slang for “queering”.

Interestingly, these playlists often include songs from teenage and early youth years, which in turn evoke specific locations. Given my participants’ demographics, the prevalence of Spanish and Latin-American artists and genres in these playlists suggests two further aspects. First, the relationship of musical guilty pleasures with ideas of non-serious engagement, immaturity and memories of early music experience. Streaming platforms allow nostalgic returns to earlier stages of musical life without exposing users to social scrutiny. In this sense, temporary fandom and this kind of collective streaming archives should also be understood as ‘dynamic memory’ (Ernst 2012), functioning as a musical time-machine that enables musicking processes of nostalgia. In the case of Sandra and her sisters, the ‘guilty pleasure’ playlist evokes a moment in time of their collective experience growing up together. In the case of the ‘bloody immigrants’ playlist, the collaborative musicking practice evokes a collective experience and understanding of youth, gender, and coming of age. In addition, this time-travelling temporality can be conceptualised as either an extension of past musical practices into the present, or as a ritualised return to past fandoms that does not feed present practices because it lives in its own ritual space. Second, this prevalence of Spanish and Latino genres points again to the boundary-making character of Latin-American music for Spaniards analysed in Chapter 1; in this case as temporary, non-serious fandom.

It could be argued that these temporary alliances and fandoms assembled via collaborative playlists may dissolve completely or suspend group interaction after their objective has been attained, because their practices are directed towards “boundary publics” (Jenkins et al. 2013: 173): the temporary adoption of fan practices to draw lines between groups via self-identification, rather than the establishment of new fandom groups as such. However, returning to identity and subcultural arguments about border policing would not be useful at this stage, because it would lead the discussion to the same semiotic issues highlighted in previous chapters. Similarly, the case studies presented here can hardly be described as cyclical fandom (Hills 2005) presenting more a structure of temporary engagement than of repetition, particularly not in the psychological and identity-focused character than Hills

describes. If anything, Sandra's guilty pleasures playlist would be an expression of family identity (with her sisters) and the Bloody Immigrants playlist is also a group articulation of belonging. Moreover, these examples show that even if the distinction between general audience and temporary fans may be blurry, investigating temporary fandom practices and fandom sampling does not reduce all fans to followers (Hills 2018b). In these case studies, participants work on playlists, curation, and sharing as modes of ownership, in contrast to those who use streaming platforms more passively as expected via the 'discovery' playlists. Perhaps these practices are more accurately described as 'islands of fandom' (2018b: 497), but not just as a result of datafication. Users consciously craft and share these musical landscapes with others, creating these musicking archipelagos of interconnected ephemeral fandom practices. Therefore, rather than boundary publics, these temporary practices may be emerging forms of fandom publics, focused around sociality and interaction and particular understandings of collective affect.

These examples of temporary fandom also show that while people tend to self-regulate their music engagement through active choices depending on context, algorithms fail to fully account for these distinctions. In that sense, streaming platforms are both enablers and concealers of these practices. On one hand, algorithmic tools for curation enable and promote temporary musicking activities, because they give users unprecedented access to, and discovery of, music, becoming instrumental to fandom sampling and temporary engagement. On the other hand, they fail to distinguish between different instances and levels of active engagement because of their quantitative approach. Platforms try to create fans and induce fandom practices from what might be guilty pleasure-like or work-related momentary engagement and other instances of temporary participation and low engagement such as background music at social events. While streaming platforms enable music listening as a tool to provide company or offer a Muzak-like background (in the same way that is possible with TV, and as was the case with music television during the 1980s and 1990s), their algorithmic design does not account for it. Although it is true that these varied forms of engagement result nonetheless in consumption-oriented fandom, monetised and subsequently co-opted by platforms as Bonini (2017) argues, examples above show that users retain a great deal of agency to develop their own socialities and musicking practices. Similarly, sampling fandoms and enjoying guilty pleasures or temporary modes of musicking may be understood as another iteration of modern capitalist practices of commodification of music. The next section shows that this argument about consumption loses strength when the social shelf life of playlists is considered.

4.7 The *Unlistened* playlists

At this stage, it is important to highlight a second aspect of temporary fandom and the inadequacy of algorithmic curation on streaming platforms for analysing questions of value and consumption: while practices of fandom on social media and even guilty pleasure-curation on streaming platforms may seem to evoke a certain continuity in engagement and taste, this is difficult to demonstrate by looking at the actual use of playlists. Participants provided several reasons that make playlists a music object mostly used around the time of creation, rather than for continued or cyclical engagement.

In the case of musicians such as Anabel and her partner, creating playlists on streaming platforms to share with each other and with other members of their bands is useful to prepare for gigs and future employment. Playlists are a practical way to prepare a repertoire around a concept or genre and to compile and share specific tracks to focus on arrangements and covers. However, these playlists have a short life because as soon as the repertoire preparation moves to the rehearsal phase, they are no longer necessary. This is quite a pragmatic use of playlists, but it contributes nonetheless to algorithmic feeds and temporary conceptualisations of fandom. Yet they are not listened to beyond the specific timeframe of the preparation of the gig. For this reason, it seems inadequate to understand them as consumer commodities or at least they should be given a different type of temporary value. If commodification through algorithms traces listening, repetition, and skipping patterns in a temporarily-used playlist in preparation for band rehearsals, the data may not say much about the users' fandom preferences.

A similar approach to playlist curation and sharing was mentioned by Sandra. When she prepares setlist playlists to learn lyrics and build momentum before attending a concert or festival (often shared with her sisters), she is aware of this temporary character. The only uses of these compilations are the temporary activities of fandom linked to preparing for concert attendance. The playlists remain in her Spotify profile as a reminder or archive, but they are rarely used to listen to the songs later. To an extent, the playlists seem to be accessories of lived music experience, rather than becoming integral parts of music experience itself. Although the role of pre-concert activities is important in the ritual, this example shows that certain kinds of playlist use can only ambiguously be conceptualised as commodified listening, and certainly not for extended periods of time, nor with great value as commodities. Likewise, the pre-festival playlists that were illustrated by Daniel, and other sample playlists created by users, seem to be a digital counterpart to trends in festival

programming towards promoting temporary fandom, and indeed Spotify often provides festival playlists as part of its commercial partnerships. But the use and value of these playlists is only temporary. In this sense, playlists that are no longer listened to have the same commodity status as CDs: once the purchase of the object has been recorded, the commercial distributor has no further data about its use or impact in a given social context. It is only through its continuous use that music streaming is effectively commodified.

This prevalence of ‘unlistened’ (yet not silent nor deaf)⁴ playlists appeared time and again in interviews with participants. Javier pointed out that his YouTube playlists only have a handful of followers, so they are rarely listened by others. Cynthia also noticed that some of her followers do not engage with her posts for days or weeks but will then interact with a series of them in a very short time, demonstrating that her followers use her posts as stored DJ playlists, and that their engagement with them is focused on very specific timeframes. In this sense, the Facebook music posts that have been analysed in previous chapters are also unlistened items of music media, which do not generate continuous engagement, but rather represent potential on-the-spot music engagements. Thus, interestingly, the timeframes of musicking activities based on a single song or video on Facebook and a full playlist on Spotify can be virtually the same. Their value as commodities is, therefore, surprisingly similar, because of these patterns of ephemeral music engagement. Consequently, while streaming can be considered as more co-opted than pre-digital music practices because it commodifies access, purchase (in digital downloads) and listening of music, through temporary and ‘unlistening’ practices users’ attempt to redirect fandom towards sociality and interaction, rather than consumption. Although all activities that happen within platforms are measured and commodified, these sociality- centric nuances of temporal music engagement suggest that users may not understand fandom as an intense, continuous engagement and expertise with a genre or artist. The next section uses the evidence outlined in this chapter to propose an alternative perspective on online musicking practices as post-object engagements.

4.8 Post-Object Music Fandoms

The existence of practices of unlistened playlists, temporary fandoms and musical guilty pleasures outlined in this chapter not only show the timescales of music engagement and circulation on social media and streaming platforms, but also illuminates the cemeteries of

⁴ The playlist is indeed a sound source and it may have been listened to once or twice. Similarly, the playlist is far from deaf because since it collects user data, it listens to the user choices and taste.

past fandoms and rarely-engaged listening practices. Many social media and streaming profiles hold large quantities of musical corpses in their social sense, which are neither useful to users nor engaged in active social activities. Yet these pieces of music media are alive algorithmically speaking, because they keep feeding the fandom definitions of platforms and shaping the musical experiences of users when they are online. As explained above, the conceptualisations of fandom extracted from this data mining are, at least, questionable. These case studies also serve as reminder of the temporal character of ethnomusicological research, which remains a crucial caveat to equally consider in digital musicking.

While this chapter attempts to argue for the specific approaches to fandom required to understand streaming and social media practices, the acknowledgement of short patterns of engagement does not seek to place a negative value onto these practices, as they might not be far from pre-digital understandings of fandom. Cassette mixtapes in the 1980s and 1990s were also understood as 'wishtapes' (Rando 2016) articulating a desired reordering of music and sociality, and were shared and temporarily used for social or instrumental purposes but without long-term continued engagement. Fandom was also defined in terms of the sacred collection of items that an individual held, including the purpose-oriented mixtapes created by people and their peers to communicate definitions of identity and taste (Fenby-Hulse 2016). However, while different conceptions of time and consumer goods cycles existed in the 1980s and 1990s, I still think that arguments analysing digital music circulation and consumption as radically different from analogue listening practices can only be sustained if online digital activities are given an aura of infinite immateriality or atemporality – as Fenby-Hulse (2016) seems to do in comparing the time and material resources required to create analogue mixtapes – that they do not have in practical terms. It is from this approach to digital practices, as materially diminished activities which exist out of normal conceptualisations of time, that temporary uses of digital music and momentary engagement with shared music media seem a disappointing counterpart to analogue practices, or as promoting disposability in music consumption. In addition, this chapter outlines social uses of playlists precisely to prove that the social dynamics of mixtapes are continued in, rather than disrupted by, online practices, confirming that they are still an "emotionally durable design" (ibid.) in which people invest time and curatorial resources. Similarly, the analysis of temporary forms of fandom enabled by platforms outlined above question approaches to digital music practices as radically more commodified than analogue ones, shedding light on inherently social and unmeasurable uses of streaming beyond just quantifiable listening as expected. Rather, these case studies point to emerging

understandings of time dedicated to music, where fandom sampling and hardly-used playlists are reflexively incorporated and integral to other social musicking practices, online and offline, but are not inferior to them (just as mixtapes were not inferior to purchased CDs). These kinds of temporary fandom and time-constrained engagements with digital music show changes in conceptualisations of time and the circulation of music media products, more than changes to importance or value as Fenby-Hulse (2016) seems to maintain. Even if streaming platforms have more information than narratives (Manovich 2001) and deprive the listener of the embedded social meaning of pre-digital formats such as the mixtape, practices of sharing and collective playlist making try to recover those sociality-focused forms of fandom, indicating that not all human agency is lost in a mediascape of commodification.

What these kinds of engagement with music do instead make evident is that the symbolic – yet pragmatic – character of fan activities no longer seems attached to, and bounded by, a specific object of fandom. As Baym (2018) posits, fans insist on feeling and relationship despite undertaking ephemeral involvement, focusing on interpersonal connections, rather than object or content, which is no longer the locus of user agency. Even if fandom activities have always had a social component, the specific dynamics of internet-mediated fandom intensify the social aspects over the content of the fandom itself. Reiterating the points made in chapter 2 and 3, the case studies in this chapter show that the agency of fans is inherently socially-oriented, rather than object-oriented. Users circulate and share music media to carry out fan activities through streaming and social media platforms, including listening and engaging with music. However, because produsage and prosumer values are prevalent in digital practices, fans also play curatorial and promotional roles, selecting and repurposing music media, for instance creating playlists and helping to promote emerging talents, which are activities inherently directed towards sociality and relationships. The prevalence of prosumer and produsage agency gives rise to online cultures where making media content for others to watch and hear, and not only passively consuming it, seems to be the normal response to music engagement, because music is part of the wider connectivity culture of social media as Johansson (2018) points out. However, the subcultural fandom binaries of subversive producers against either passive consumers, poachers, or exploitative data companies are too limited because, as Jenkins et al. (2013) point out, a focus on algorithmic extractivism avoids engaging with users as complex cultural beings and approaches fans as passive data sources (2013: 176). Instead, this chapter argues that users undertake their fandom practices with platform awareness, second-guessing how algorithms work, engaging

in “reflexive data practices” (Lupton 2014) with sociality goals in mind. In this sense, as Andrejevic (2008) explained about early 2.0 technologies, post-streaming and post-social media fandom is both a site of community and personal satisfaction and a place of economic exploitation, and it is recognised as such by users and fans. Moreover, the cultural capital required for post-social media fandom is focused on the ability to construct social narratives, more than on acquiring deep knowledge or skills in a particular genre or artist. In this sense, users are also not just followers, because they require social skills that involve knowing little about many fandoms in order to intensify their sociality, rather than being experts in one particular subcultural group. This reiterates the analysis made in Chapter 2, whereby the circulation of music media for sociality, rather than the collection of contacts, is the currency of post-streaming and post-social media fandom. Indeed, Burgess and Green (2009) pointed out this principle with regards to the internal social logics of YouTube nearly a decade ago. The case studies outlined above further confirm that the dominance of Facebook, Twitter and Instagram is based on the emphasis of fans on social interaction and on using music media to intensify their sociality over the algorithmic design of streaming services, which are focused on intensifying fandom practices. This prevalence of social sites over streaming sites that work as on-demand radio or smart libraries explains the practices of temporary engagement and the unlistened objects perspective outlined above: musical objects are put to work, and engaged with, as far as they fulfil a social purpose. In that sense, post-social media attitudes to fandom are influenced by the temporalities of sociocultural activity, rather than by the industry cycles of artists and platforms, with notable exceptions such as highly-anticipated media events.

In this sense, I agree with Williams (2015) and Baym (2018) in claiming that contemporary post-social media and post-streaming fandoms are also “post-object”, because the locus of fandom activities does not revolve around the media object and its commercial shelf life, but rather around its ability to construct social narratives. Music media objects are at-the-ready resources that are put to work when necessary to socially articulate fandom and to use fandom as social glue for wider practices of sociality. The algorithmic or commercial temporalities of music objects are secondary, because the dynamics of social life dictate the timelines of fan activities and their recourse to music media objects. As Hills (2005) indicates, instead of a reified study of fandom based on specific fan cultures, theoretical investigations should consider how fans move from fan objects to social objects, rather than defining themselves through their fandom, analysing how users move practices and objects nomadically across different media (2018b). Additionally, considering this post-object

mediascape of music fandom and in light of the issues of temporality described in the previous sections, it could be argued that the value of music as currency is low in monetary terms, because users do not seek to retain and reuse music media objects. Similarly, the easiness of access to music media through streaming platforms and the low economic cost may suggest that the value of music has decreased in comparison with pre-digital standards. Yet it is precisely such easiness and abundance of music in this mediascape that gives it a crucial social value in online practices.

4.9 Conclusion

This chapter has discussed how fandom practices are involved in the circulation of music on social media, providing an additional perspective on the analysis of identity, relationships and taste outlined in the previous chapters. It began with a further explanation of the dynamics of performativity and identity in relation to fandom, providing an outline of fan online agency as prosumer practices. Examples from participants show that fandom can be articulated as a form of culture-making on social media, through reproducing norms and reinforcing interpersonal relationships and group belonging. In addition, the agency of users is also directed towards tangible rewards promoted by industry agents. Indeed, the statements by participants included in this chapter demonstrate that users undertake online fandom activities with a reflexive approach of awareness vis-a-vis industry practices, weighting their contributions towards promoting emerging artists through free solidary labour. Moreover, users are aware of algorithmic mediation on social media and streaming platforms which raises issues between the differing understandings of fandom. While participants use streaming platforms and social media to research, share music with others, or even engage in practices of temporary fandom, algorithmic curation fails to distinguish these practices from other forms of engagement because it is oriented towards monetising activities, rather than providing tools to build fan communities. These contradictions come to the fore especially in temporary fandom activities and fandom sampling practices, as when participants make use of guilty pleasures or temporary playlists, where the social purpose of the music activity prevails over fandom-oriented goals. Furthermore, the purpose-oriented use of playlists on streaming platforms further highlights that algorithmic curation is ill-equipped to understand the logics of unlistened or rarely-engaged music media. Although algorithmic data-mining may be commercially successful and an element of commodification, its value as a reflection of musicking practices or music trends should be

questioned. Moreover, in the post-streaming and post-social media era, it is necessary to rethink the meaning and purpose of fan activities as post-object, because musicking activities (such as music circulation and playlist curation and sharing) are focused on producing sociality, rather than on subcultural fandom or communities around an object of expertise. However, this does not mean that the value of music has decreased. The following chapter will illustrate that in post-social media musicking, the social value of music media is crucial to fostering and maintaining public spheres as imagined communities. The circulation of music media online helps users to creatively organise social publics with their own moral economies in order to navigate music ubiquity and digital abundance.

Chapter 5 – Imagined Audiences and Imagined Listening

5.1 Introduction

To understand why people post music on social media and why music is an important element of media circulation practices online, previous chapters provided responses focused on users' motivations for undertaking these activities. Identity performance, social capital, political participation, and fandom practices all contribute in explaining music circulation and shed light on the complex relationship between sociality, musicking, and human agency on social media platforms. However, the intended audience is an additional, crucial element in musicking activities, essential to understand why people post music: "(...) it is in those relationships that the meaning of the act lies. (...) and they model, or stand as metaphor for, ideal relationships as the participants in the performance imagine them to be (...) (Small 1998: 13). In chapters 2 and 4, audiences were approached from a social capital and fandom perspective, but these perspectives have proven to be limited when dealing with symbolic aspects of sociality that do not aim at the reproduction of subcultural fandom communities. Chapter 1 showed how ideas of otherness are crucial to musicking practices on social media. Chapter 3 also provided evidence of music sharing as a form of citizenship, highlighting the importance of imagined conceptualisations of the audience as a community. In these previous chapters, the analysis of engagement and interaction with social media posts showed that such a perspective is a useful tool for dissecting the social dynamics of online musicking, hinting at the importance of users' conceptualisations of the audience in their varied uses of platforms for their daily musicking practices. In addition, the insights from playlist uses on streaming platforms in Chapter 4 also provided a post-object perspective on online musicking. If music is compiled, circulated, and exchanged by users despite having temporary use value and providing monetary value only for industry agents, it means that its relevance as a social object of exchange operates at a symbolic level. This chapter looks at the varied levels of audiences involved in musicking practices and the relevance of conceptualisations of imagined audiences (Litt and Hargittai 2016; Marwick and boyd 2010; boyd 2006) on social media, understood as a "mental conceptualization of the people with whom we are communicating" (2016: 1) and their relationship with media circulation and sociality. Users think in terms of imagined audiences to navigate not only context collapse, but also to make sense of their social participation in a context of mediatised liveness and ubiquitous music. Moreover, this chapter further tackles practices of not listening yet nevertheless engaging with music online, arguing that social media musicking is governed by

tacit understandings of imagined listening and the circulation of potentially silent (unlistened) music media. In the discussion that follows, practices of imagined listening are understood as the mental conceptualisations of how the audience will listen to a posted song, but also of how both the user that posted a piece of music media and the audience will remember and evoke known songs and sounds from visual cues in the social media interface. This can be interpreted from two opposing perspectives. On one hand, it can be read as a sign of the commodification of music due to excessive ubiquity. On the other hand, it can be understood as a reflexive practice of users for managing their scalable sociality, helped by the visual capabilities of music media objects on social media. I finally argue that such social dynamics of music circulation point this enquiry to the analysis of broader moral economies and cultures of circulation of music objects on social media.

5.2 Social Media Audiences

Audience studies before the internet tended to approach the subject in terms of a dichotomy between passive consumers versus active producers, even if this was never an accurate account of pre-digital music practices (Jenkins et al. 2013: 159; Tsioulakis and Hytönen-Ng 2017). Audiences have produced paratexts as intertextual discourses alongside the main official media texts, contributing with crucial narratives, social relations, and meaning-making processes, well before the advent of the internet. In addition, as outlined in the literature review, social media and musicking activities require a theorisation of the audience as active subjects who understand their engagement with media as meaningful social and political participation (Ruddock 2007). Indeed, in the previous chapter the discussion of “fandom publics” (2013: 166) pointed towards considering the existence of a public sphere within fandom communities, as well as towards acknowledging the audience (the public) within fans. In comparison with pre-existing media such as television and newspapers, social media and other 2.0 technologies are based on enabling the existence of an audience within the audience, to whom the activities of active members of the audience are directed. Many authors have pointed out that 2.0 technologies allow users to be new kinds of producers by combining their practices as producers, consumers and users (Jenkins 2006a; Beer and Burrows 2010; Bruns, cited in Jenkins et al. 2013). From such prosumer analyses it follows that these platforms also make possible the multiplication of audience levels, because they enable multiple and flexible audiences for messages emitted from any point in the network at any given time. Social media platforms combine one-to-one messaging, with one-to-many

broadcasting and many-to-many publishing tools. One user may direct one message or post to family members, another one to friends or fellow fans, and the next to the online community in general. At the same time, these messages may be received by different and sometimes unexpected audiences, which the user may or may not be able to control depending on the platforms' specific affordances.

Indeed, different definitions of audience are present in the case studies outlined in the previous chapters. While some participants share music media with their family such as Sue, others directed their music discoveries towards friends, acquaintances or other fans, as for instance Cynthia. Some users also considered the civic roles of their music circulation, thinking in terms of a political public sphere such as Diana, as well as the impact of their actions on industry agents, through for instance, practices of solidary fandom. The scope of their musicking activities also varies from post to post and through multiple personal profiles as Sandra illustrated. Some musicking activities are also directed to more than one kind of audience. These insights lead to the argument that several interconnected levels of audience are present at any one time in social media practices. Musicians and artists direct messages to their fans and followers, while social media and music industries direct their design and messages to users. At the same time, users address messages and activities towards their contacts, or a section of them. Any user, including artists, may also use a social media platform to communicate specifically with friends and family. Public corporations and music industries also try to target specific groups within this mediascape. Considering the affordances of 2.0 platforms, communication travels from any point in the network to any other, including users and fans directing messages to artists and corporations.

The expansion of the concept of audience through 2.0 technologies goes beyond "narrowcasting" (Waterman 1992) and individualised "webcasting" (Young 2004) approaches, because it understands audience structures as interconnected networks where all agents can potentially be senders and receivers, often simultaneously. As outlined in Chapter 3, the understandings of ephemeral collectivities (such as audiences that are created and dispersed through online activities) work as an assemblage-like structure, rather than in a traditional dyadic model of communication with neatly separated groups of senders and receivers. In this sense, the creative outputs of music media, the modes of distribution, and the forms of consumption are all part of the same interrelated practices. When users post a music media object in a social media profile, they are at once creating a new media output, more or less creatively; circulating it; and consuming or experiencing it. Therefore, the contemporary prosumer mediascape of social media and streaming platforms requires

multiple and overlapping conceptualisations of the audience and their interactions to be studied as a system of social understandings, rather than as an established network structure of communication. The next section outlines the emerging social understandings of audience that appeared during fieldwork.

5.3 Imagined Audiences

To understand why people post and share music on social media, the case studies presented so far in this thesis have provided explanations that highlight the different groups addressed, such as family and fans. However, the social media and streaming mediascape and its generation of multidirectional audiences is based on users' limited control over the distribution and reach of their musicking activities. With the exception of a couple of specific tools, users cannot be sure that their online music activities will always be received (and even less engaged with) by the intended audience. While industry agents in this mediascape may have greater control over their target audience, individual users need to operate within the targeting affordances of the platform, usually limited to instant messaging and tagging in posts. In addition, the unfriendly design of platforms when it comes to separating life spheres – because of their construction for data mining purposes – subsequently creates context collapse and discourages users from using complex and time-consuming privacy settings. To navigate the multiple audience levels, platform affordances, and context collapse, users ultimately need to think in terms of “imagined audiences” (Litt and Hargittai 2016), understood as a “mental conceptualisation of the people with whom [they] are communicating (...) when the actual audience is not known” (2016: 1). These imagined audiences can be targeted or abstract, and users may fluctuate between these mental constructs before, during and after posting a message or piece of music media (Fig. 5.1).

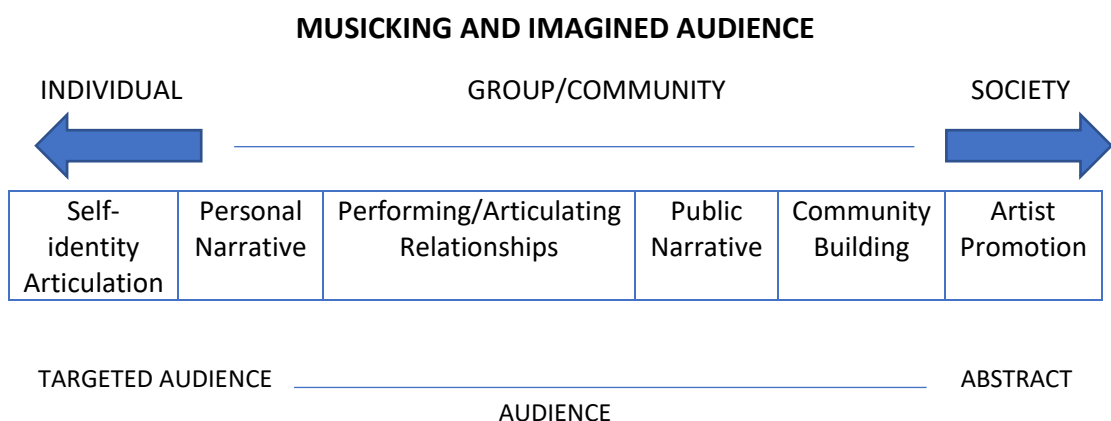


Fig 5.1 Musicking practices on social media in an imagined audience spectrum

Examples of targeted imagined audience were the cases of Sandra and Sue, who shared music on their profiles with their family members in mind. Sandra also shared music in her fan club account directly targeting fellow fans, but as her Twitter account is public, this targeting of fans turns out to be merely a mental construct. In the same way that Born and Haworth (2018) indicate, musically imagined communities are assembled through the online practices of music circulation themselves, rather than pre-exist as defined entities. Through sharing music on social media these groups are imagined and mentally re-enacted as communicating and sharing musical ideas and taste. The concept of imagined audiences implies imagining communities of people who potentially receive and engage with the music media shared, whether they are imagined as fans, friends or family. In the cases of Sandra and Sue, their families are re-imagined as interconnected entities, and an idea of togetherness through music circulation practices is maintained despite physical displacement. In addition, imagined audiences are also imagined communities of listeners that are produced and reproduced through musicking practices on social media, as the mental constructs of posting users when they think of others as potential listeners of a song. However, such imagined audiences are also imagined constructions of the audience through diary-like practices, where the intended audience does not have access to the content of the message. When I asked Jasmin whether she had anyone in mind specifically when she posted music, she clearly explained that she may have a targeted audience in mind, but this does not mean that the said audience actually has access to her posts:

“Often yes. But that person does not have to [necessarily] be on my Facebook. For me it is important to post it because that’s how I feel in that moment. (...) That’s why I post many songs.”
Jasmin, 12 October 2017

Similarly, Elisa pointed out that if people share music on their social media profile to express conflicting feelings such as those deriving from romantic relationships, the audience is automatically self-selected: the person to whom the message is directed will understand that they are being addressed (Elisa, personal conversation 2017). However, this is also imagined by the person that circulates the song.

This mental conceptualisation of imagined audiences as imagined communities of listeners is further revealed in terms of abstract imagined audiences. Confirming Litt and Hargittai’s (2016) analysis, most of my participants articulated in various terms that their idea was to post music for everybody, which others could access for their enjoyment or personal

flourishing. These abstract approaches equally imagine groups and communities as recipients of musicking activities. Participants share and circulate music as a way of putting into practice these symbolic imaginations. As noted in Chapter 3, Diana evoked this abstract imagined audience as equating to society and humanity as a whole:

“I post things that have provided me some sort of benefit, so that others can also have it. (...) So, I think: ‘people would like to see this’. Like that: ‘people’, everybody, humanity (...).” Diana, 10 October 2017

As Nancy Baym points out, “music fans feel a moral obligation to share music they love with one another” (2018: 92). Such conceptualisations of morality are also confirmed by Johansson et al.: “If music is a daily companion and is as important as breathing, it may be seen as a common good” (2018: conclusion). In this sense, the practice of sharing music (the medium) may also be the message, understood as an imagined social benefit. Javier also responded with an abstract reference to goodness:

“It’s quite rhetorical. I can’t say that it has a specific objective. The general feeling that I have when I share any kind of song (...) the purpose would be the same as for sharing a beautiful picture: to share beauty, good feelings. That’s what is behind anything I share.”
Javier, 5 December 2017

Jasmin added to her previous statement a principle of common enjoyment:

“Also because I find the music interesting, so that my friends can listen to it.” Jasmin, (ibid.)

Cynthia and Daniel also seemed to specifically understand the imagined character of this assumption:

“I am sharing it with the people that are supposedly there (...)”
Cynthia, 17 January 2018

“I don’t post it thinking about anyone in particular, because I don’t know who is going to receive it. I can imagine who will get it, because I know who I follow [on Twitter] and who might like it, but I can’t know for sure.”
Daniel, 15 January 2018

In all cases, their conceptualisation of abstract imagined audiences confirmed that motivations to post and circulate music on social media stem from this act of thinking of, or imagining a community of listeners that might enjoy it, which may be formed by individuals unknown to the user. More importantly, similar arguments to those outlined in the case studies of Chapter 3 reappeared when discussing audiences. Users understand their music

practices on social media as symbolic citizenship actions, oriented towards distributing music for the common good.

For targeted imagined audiences, it could be argued that there is a process of boundary-making at a symbolic level. When users imagine an audience, they are mentally creating that boundary between those who will understand and engage with a musical reference and those who will not. However, because the intended audience may not reach the message, these boundaries may not show themselves clearly in terms of engagement and response. At an individual level, nonetheless, users may produce and reinforce their own ideas of boundaries between groups and imagine inclusions and exclusions. In musicking practices oriented towards abstract imagined audiences, users may also be testing these boundaries, utilising musical media and its (sub)cultural references to help them distinguish different groups. Like fandom sampling through online musicking, this exercise does not have a significant cost for users (except for context collapse) but has the potential to help people make sense of the social groups around them, their norms and their cultural values. Looking at the case studies analysed in previous chapters, which show that context collapse may be of secondary relevance for the participants of this study, this argument of the cost of posting music is again not confirmed. Indeed, Litt and Hargittai point out that when targeted imagined audiences are in mind, they are usually the least judgemental and therefore engaging with privacy settings seems irrelevant (2016: 8). Still, additional analyses can be drawn from these practices. Imagined audiences are also useful for users to adapt to the social media environment of music circulation. The wider media context where these practices develop is both cause and consequence of thinking in terms of imagined audiences. The following sections will illustrate these further uses of conceptualising online musicking as an activity aimed at an imagined audience.

5.4 Mediatized Liveness

Considering the multiple and flexible character of social media audiences, and the use of imagined audiences to navigate them during online musicking activities, an additional aspect of social media activity should be explored. Imagined audiences are also necessary articulations for users because social media's foremost characteristic is mediatized liveness, understood as a mental conceptualisation of social media as a live experience of sociality that is mediated by platform technologies. This takes place through two different avenues, continuous platform activity and live broadcasting. First, platforms feed the illusion

of round-the-clock activity and communication between users and encourage practices that bring liveness to the interface. Although users' practices may not be as intense and continuous as the platforms require, the liveness character is maintained through algorithmic technical means. Algorithms use built-in virality and marking trends to play a role in the liveness of social media, and sustain this live character by shuffling content and showing new activities and new music to the user. However, it is important to understand human agency within such engineered liveness. In a mediascape that promotes and intensifies continuous interaction, users respond to the perceived liveness of social media by posting and circulating music media of their choice, sometimes in response to the activities of real and imagined audiences. Paradoxically, as the examples in previous chapters show, this is most likely made by posting and circulating static links as carriers of the music media (or even images that only serve as visual remainders of music) that others may or may not see and listen to. In that sense, users need to think in terms of imagined audiences in order to participate in the algorithmic and human logics of liveness of social media. But at the same time, the liveness of platforms is maintained because users keep circulating music media (although static to an extent) to communicate with their imagined audiences. Therefore, this idea of an imagined audience for one's own music activities is a necessary condition for the re-creation of an exciting social liveness online. The production of significance through the concept of imagined audience is necessary for the maintenance of the social media liveness character itself.¹ With such conceptualisation I concur with Weaver (2018) that signifier (image or sound) and signified (the communal experience of liveness) become virtually the same: in social media liveness, what you see is (almost) what you get. Paraphrasing Cascone (2000), in online liveness, specific tools are the message.

Second, mediated imagined liveness also occurs through live broadcasting. While the rise of streaming with the success of YouTube was theoretically based on many-to-many broadcasting (the original slogan was "Broadcast Yourself"), its original configuration was designed for pre-recorded and edited video and only later included live streaming. Consequently, it created social dynamics characteristic of both social media-centric targeted sociality characteristic of curated content (Burgess and Green 2009), and live-broadcasting of the recorded everyday to an abstract worldwide audience. In any case, when users upload or live-stream their music activities, they are imagining abstract and targeted audiences for

¹ To a certain degree, this is a similar argument to that provided by Shank (1994: 122) for the concept of music scenes, whereby the overproduction of significance as "more semiotic information (...) that can be rationally parsed" is a necessary condition for the production of an exciting scene.

these two kinds of social interaction. More importantly, user-generated broadcasting is based on user-generated video as a form of vernacular communication and creativity (ibid.). In the current mediascape dominated by Facebook and where most of YouTube content comes from industry and commercial agents (Van Dijck 2013: 116), this history of user broadcasting and video as online vernacular has been reactivated with the relaunch and promotion of live streaming from personal social media profiles, as a step up in liveness from posting edited video and media hyperlinks to online repositories such as YouTube and Spotify. Consequently, for broadcasting and live streaming practices, once again users need to think in terms of imagined audiences to make sense of their activities when they cannot know for sure who the audience is. Yet it is because users broadcast themselves that the platform succeeds in creating mediated liveness.

Thinking in terms of imagined audiences for livestreams also means that their sociocultural value lies precisely in making possible an imagined liveness. Since mediation, storage and asynchronicity are prerequisites for its existence as a form of communication, livestreams create forms of imagined liveness: a user may be livestreaming a music activity, but the imagined audience may not be present at all. Similarly, the audience may engage with the livestream when it is already finished. In this sense, imagined audiences and imagined liveness are inseparable sides of the same coin. In social media live musicking experiences, mediation and reproduction are inscribed within the experience from the start, as Auslander (2006) pointed out regarding mediated performance in general, making the distinction between representation and repetition (Attali 1985, cited in Auslander 2006), signifier and signified, nearly impossible. The use of a specific tool, in this case livestream capacities, may once again be the message of imagined liveness, a polymedia choice that aims to transmit 'I am here and this is the real me and this is what is happening'. Therefore, when social media users upload a live music stream from a concert, DJ session or any other music event, they are bringing liveness to a music event that until recently was mediated as static recorded video or sound by the platform. Since posting a live video of a concert was not possible before, users settled for posting a hyperlink to music media that was pre-recorded. This vivification of mediation serves the interests of both agents: the platforms acquire an aura of liveness and realness that allows them to further integrate their use in daily life, while the users utilise this intensification of liveness for seemingly more authentic online practices of identity, relational, political or any of the motivations analysed in previous chapters, in comparison to posting hyperlinks.

To summarise, every time music is circulated on social media as hyperlink and as live streaming, different understandings of the audience are put into practice. Imagined audiences can refer to specific groups of people or to abstract ideas of the social. At the same time, imagined audiences can be thought of as synchronic live audiences or asynchronous engagements. In addition, such understandings of audience are fluid and subject to change before, during, or after the musicking practices of posting, engaging and commenting take place. The mediatised character of social media and streaming platforms makes necessary the mental construct of flexible imagined communities of listeners to make sense for people to contribute to its liveness. Therefore, to answer why people post and circulate music on social media, a possible explanation would be because they imagine that there is an audience, as this is one of the basic principles of diachronic online communication. Similarly, other characteristics of online platforms require users to imagine audiences, and particularly to conceptualise them as flexible and abstract, when they circulate any kind of digital media. The next section addresses how imagined audiences are an even more important aspect specifically for social media musicking, and how thinking in terms of imagined audiences for music creates emerging modes of listening.

5.5 Ubiquitous Music and Imagined Listening

A defining characteristic of musicking activities on social media is the availability and ubiquity of music (Kassabian 2013) in online environments. As Johansson et al. (2018) point out, a study of online musicking practices is indeed a study of music's ubiquity, particularly regarding streaming. Music media can be accessed easily through streaming platforms and recirculated by users without any costs, beyond an internet connection, thanks to ubiquitous computing (2013: 1). Social media and streaming platforms are sufficiently integrated to allow music media to travel between them and to be portable through smartphones, without any need for linearity in listening practices or location-bound habits that other music formats require. Music media is always at users' disposal for their everyday culture-making activities, even in offline circumstances, as was the case through earlier technologies such as the iPod (Bull 2012; Nowak 2016). This presence of music media online provides additional listening environments to its ubiquitous inhabitancy of offline physical spaces (2013: 2; Sterne 1997), enabling the appearance of music in private and public places where it was not present before. This ubiquity of online music gives rise to emerging understandings of music media

as a continuous, ongoing stream like radio, in comparison with genre or artist-focused listening (Johansson et al. 2018). Music is approached as a utility, as Negus (2016) indicates.

The ubiquity and availability of music media favour its taken-for-grantedness: users forget its commodity character precisely because it is always accessible. It is this ubiquitous accessibility that allows music to be shared and circulated as an additional element of online sociality, contributing to its relevance in online settings. At the same time, users do not assume that online music media will always be available and accessible in the future and do not presume that platforms will maintain a civic role as public libraries. Rather, they seem to think that storing music has become a time-consuming luxury in this mediascape of ubiquity, and that they must adapt to varied availabilities for their social purposes. The practices of Sandra and Sue described in Chapter 2 illustrate this sort of adaptation, relying on a kind of live online archive or dynamic memory. Here I quote Sandra at length, who illustrated well this intricate relationship between taking for granted online music and being aware of her lack of control and archive of music:

“To listen to music, I don’t download anything anymore. I listen to everything on streaming. (...) One day the internet will end, and I will kill myself (laughs), because I won’t have any music anywhere, apart from a couple of CDs (...). If the internet disappears, it will be like when the Library of Alexandria burned... because so many things will be lost. Sometimes there is a video on YouTube that you really like, and you think: ‘I should download this’. But you don’t. And then they delete the user or the video for copyright [infringement] and ... it has happened to me often, and I had a hard time (laughs). (...) There are programs to download them [YouTube videos], but I’m the worst. You think: ‘they won’t take it down’ but then they do! (laughs). (...) You take it for granted. (...) It has happened to me with many concert videos from the early years of some bands, which are really worth gold. (...) I even remember the name of the user, because I’ve watched the bloody video so many times. But I didn’t download it because I’m the worst. One day I tried to research if it was somewhere else, or if I could find the contact details of the user to ask for a copy, but I couldn’t find anything.” Sandra, 26 November 2017

At the same time, users are also aware that in a mediascape of ubiquity and prosumers, their musicking activities can be insignificant and get lost in the media maze. The constant media inputs from users and industry agents, and the acceleration of music market cycles, are not unperceived by users. They admit their own struggle to keep up with music releases, friends’ and platforms’ recommendations, and other musical paratexts. Additionally, in certain contexts the offline recommendations of friends and family may carry an aura of authenticity inherited from pre-digital formats, and thus be more appreciated than online

recommendations, as Johansson et al. (2018) conclude. Consequently, users are understanding of how others manage their time and attention to deal with the sheer volume of music recommendations, and aware of the difficulties experienced by imagined audiences to see and maintain engagement with their musicking activities. Therefore, when users post and circulate music on social media, they understand that it might not be listened to by those intended, assuming that practices of selective inattention are present online just as they are offline. This is particularly true of users with high levels of activity, who assume that their contacts may not be able to listen to their recommendations and discoveries:

“If someone wants to listen to it and likes it, fine. If not, so be it. I know that nobody cares about it too much, because everybody has their [Twitter] timelines full [of information], so the probability [of someone listening] is low.” Sandra 26 November 2017

“In general people do not react much to songs, I’ve noticed that. Maybe most of them don’t even listen to them. But that’s not only for me. I’ve seen that for other people that share music; they almost never have reactions. I think that on Facebook people are just scrolling down all the time and when they see something that requires stopping and listening, they don’t even click it. (...) When I share something on Facebook I know that people are not going to listen to it. I give people the opportunity, but I know that they are not going to listen to it.” Javier, 5 December 2017

This awareness of the lack of listening and engagement matched other statements provided by participants who commented on their criteria about music clutter on social media, almost referring to music as background noise. Cynthia’s friends often commented on nights out that she posts too much music per day to be able to listen to it. Veronica was also shocked by the volume of Sandra’s tweets when Pearl Jam announced their last tour (Fig. 5.2):



Fig. 5.2 Veronica’s message to Sandra on Telegram (in Spanglish): “My Twitter is bloody Pearl Jam”. Sandra replies: “I am going to do a London, Barcelona, Madrid and Lisbon [tour] like a lady.”

Considering these statements from research participants, which highlight their awareness of imagined audiences' lack of listening while sustaining the social relevance of practices of music sharing on social media, I argue that in a mediascape of ubiquity, musicking activities on social media for imagined audiences (as imagined communities of listeners) also create practices of imagined listening, understood as mental conceptualisations of how the audience will listen to a posted song. Users circulate and share music media imagining that specific or abstract groups of people will not just see them, but also imagining that, at the point of reception or later, they will listen to them (or even further engagement such as watching and listening in the case of music video). Cynthia was clearly thinking of her musicking activities in these terms. When I asked her why she shared so much music on Facebook, she said:

“Because I am optimistic (laughs), and I think that at some point people will remember and say: ‘let’s listen to that song that [Cynthia] posted’. I don’t know, it’s leaving the door open, so if they remember, they can have access. Even if they don’t listen to it in the end. (...) they don’t have time. (...) I don’t care getting home and finding that I don’t have a single like. I know that someone is going to listen to it, (laughs)... I know it is a strange thing (laughs) (...). I think that it goes like this: thinking that someone is going to watch it [music video], someday.”
Cynthia, 17 January 2018

Imagined listening is here also understood as the mental practices of both the user that posted a piece of music media and the audience as they remember and evoke known songs and sounds from visual cues in the social media interface. Sandra clearly referred to this idea of imagined listening, arguing that the memory of certain tunes can be sufficient to engage in musicking practices, focusing on the visual element of social media interaction:

“(...) I posted that Cindi Lauper GIF [moving image without sound] from ‘Girls Just Wanna Have Fun’ in response [to a conversation about feminism] (...) but you fill it in with your mind (laughs) (...). In an imaginary way, you sing the song for yourself in your mind (...) this is because some songs are so iconic.” Sandra, 26 Nov 2017

Therefore, I argue that online music media, whether it contains sound capacities or not, can be part of the non-sonic online mediations that Born and Haworth (2018) point out. When users share a music video that is imagined to be listened to or when users share a piece of music-related visual media, these non-sonic online mediations are put into practice as forms of imagined listening. As suggested above, these practices blur the distinction between signifier and signified, because the circulation or encounter of the visual representation of music is indeed the music experience itself.

These articulations of imagined listening by Cynthia here and also by Javier above in relation to ‘giving people a chance’ seem to imply a civic reasoning about sharing music for the audience’s enjoyment, but this is assumed by users, rather than known. Indeed, the assumption of the listeners’ response is one of the elements that Kassabian (2013) identifies as part of the mediascape of ubiquitous music. While in pre-digital mediascapes of music scarcity it was safe to assume that music would be listened to for reasons of time and value (related to authenticity), in a digital mediascape of ubiquity this is not the case. Similarly, while ubiquitous music in offline environments generated a “ubiquitous mode of listening” (Kassabian 2013: 10) related to the attention economy of shopping mall-like spaces (Sterne 1997), I argue that ubiquitous music in online environments generates imagined listening, which is related to the attention economy of social media spaces.² Therefore, social media musicking is not only based on conceptualisations of imagined audiences and mediated liveness, but also on practices of imagined listening. Furthermore, imagined listening as a social media-specific mode of listening is also related to the existence of unlistened playlists that were mentioned in Chapter 4. The last two sections of this chapter provide two possible interpretations of this mode of listening for social media musicking.

5.6 Excessive Ubiquity and Silent Music Commodities

The discovery that most of music media circulated between social media and streaming platforms is not listened to by users could be analysed from a negative point of view. The paradox created by the ubiquity of music media whereby it becomes a silent object (or unlistened, as it was defined in the previous chapter) could be read as a sign of music’s value loss in society, or even as an example of the purposelessness of social media technologies and their practices as Lovink (2011) argues. Lack of listening online can also be interpreted as in offline contexts, understood as reification and commodification (Sterne 1997). If music is not being listened to, it confirms its transformation to a commodity because the presumption of the listeners’ response effectively supplants relations between people (Sterne, cited in Kassabian 2013: 3). In this sense, it may be argued that there can be excessive ubiquity when music addressed to specific individuals is not listened to,

² Sterne does not use the concept of attention economy, but this seems implied in his article. The concept was coined by Michael Goldhaber (1997), who defines it as an economic system of scarcity that pushes internet users to attract the attention of others. He understands all human conversations as an exchange of attention, particularly those that do not seek to convey any information, such as phatic salutations and other instances of illusory attention, as in for instance, online one-to-many communication.

transforming online music media into an overabundant, silent commodity. Indeed, in the conversations among Cynthia's friends (Cynthia's friends 2017) there was this idea of a lack of listening because of excessive music posting. In the example of Veronica above (Fig. 5.2), she also seems to convey an idea of excess. Teresa also summarised very well the link between excessive ubiquity and imagined listening, paired with the reflexive approach to managing recommendations mentioned above:

"I try not to be annoying with music, because I understand that is a very personal matter. And second, because just as I usually do not click on the links from other people, I understand that they don't do so with mine. Maybe they only click... for instance if I post five links, maybe they only click on one. The rest, they either remember them [the songs], or they don't care, or they are in a context in which they cannot listen to them. So, I don't share them with any intention, because I put myself in their place. Teresa, 6 October 2017

In these examples, however, there does not seem to be a clear idea of excess. Rather, users seem to have an abstract idea not only of the audience, but also of the concept of excessive ubiquity as well, which remains undefined. In addition, these ideas of excess are also present in the DJ-like practices discussed in Chapter 2, where participants described thinking about their overall sharing practices so as not to bore their audience. Yet, participants still maintained their posting habits despite this acknowledgment of excess. Therefore, I argue that silent and unlistened music commodities exist in addition to listening practices, rather than as a sign of their decline.

A mediascape of excessive ubiquity requires individuals to ignore music and sound sources nonetheless, fostering an environment of lack of engagement and transforming music media into silent (unlistened) commodities. Moreover, if audiences and listening practices need to be imagined, the social relevance of music and the importance of its online circulation and practices may seem to be insignificant or in decline. Moreover, if online music is understood as an ongoing stream similar to radio, lack of listening may indicate a loss of social relevance. Music's social utility may have acquired an abstract character in digital environments to the extent that it has been stripped of its defining feature of sound. This argument could be taken so far as to affirm that in such an environment, circulating and sharing music is pointless, because others will not listen to it. Certainly, without the evidence presented and discussed in the previous chapters that suggests otherwise, it would also be relevant to question why users embark in such an activity at all, if the aim of listening is not achieved and users seem to be aware of these dynamics. However, a crucial element of social media interfaces and

practices provides a counterargument: since social media is primarily a visual mode of communication that works within the screen medium of computer technologies, when music media circulates on social media it does not need to be listened to generate engagement, because it works as a visual, and to a lesser extent, textual cue. Post-object imagined listening is possible thanks to the evocative capacity of visual objects and music's ability to create "distributed subjectivities" (Kassabian 2013: xxv). The final section of this chapter outlines how the reflexive attitudes of participants towards musical abundance on social media settings fosters a visual use of music media.

5.7 Reflexive Abundance: Music as Visual Object

A second interpretation of the cultural logics of imagined listening is the circulation of music as a visual object. Social media and streaming platforms, and their mediascape of ubiquitous music, generate an attention economy that results in the circulation of music media as silent objects. However, in contrast to the previous approach of excessive ubiquity and silent commodities, this phenomenon could also be approached from a positive perspective. Since these platforms provide users with an integrated visualisation of their musicking activities through their interface design (in comparison with P2P platforms, for instance), users do not need to listen to music to engage with its references and content. Thinking in terms of imagined communities of listeners is a useful tool for users to approach the abstract aspects of communication within social media platforms. They are aware, however, that social media audiences are formed by those who see and interact with music media, whether they listen to it or not. In a mediascape of ubiquity and excess, music becomes a visual object because users can see a media link or thumbnail and imagine the piece of music being circulated. While in Chapter 1 the use of band iconography was oriented to evoke national and subcultural identity, in this conceptualisation an algorithmically-created visual representation of music evokes the sonic aspects of music itself. Thumbnails and links are not only gateways to music media library sources, they are also visual representations of sound that allow users to socialise around music in an image-dominated context such as social media interfaces. As the statements of Sandra and Teresa above suggest, imagined listening is possible because the visual cues such as the names of tracks and artists or the iconographic representation of a song or album act as pointers for those who are 'in the know' or who remember the songs. The audience thereby becomes self-selective, as they do

not need to hear the music they already know, especially if they are in a social context that does not allow them to do so.

The circulation of music as visual object is not surprising considering the rise of visual posts in comparison with text in the past few years and the wider development of online interface cultures. In social media, visual content dominates as a form of communication (Miller and Sinanan 2017: 1) because images help users create understandings of reality, rather than representations of it (Miller and Sinanan 2017; Nicolescu 2016; Steyerl 2013). It should be noted that music media circulation is also a form of image production, because every time music is shared with others, an interface visualisation is created. Therefore, the role of music in online sociality is inherently linked to the histories of visual culture and internet-enabled music archiving and circulation. The creation and circulation of music-hyperlinked images can be understood as a sort of folk relational art (Steyerl 2013), a visual way to make sense of social life. Moreover, as is the case with other visual art objects, music media within a user's personal profile may be understood as a sort of precontextualised readymade (Olson 2008) that manages to construct a narrative by way of association (for instance, the identity processes analysed in the Chapter 1), creating distributed subjectivities (Kassabian 2013) and interpersonal and collective sociality. These visual ready-mades of music are also related to other practices that develop around auditory ready-mades, inserting and recontextualising sound evocations within different media, such as sampling and remixing. As the previous section outlines, critical perspectives of the internet may suggest that there are proper mediated representations of music, necessarily scarce and intrinsically defined by their sound qualities (for example, record collections), therefore dismissing the abundant and silent circulation of music media online as irrelevant, commodified and inauthentic. However, in the online music mediascape where archival practices and "tissues of quotations" (Barthes, cited in Olson 2008) are the foundational and ubiquitous forms of presentation and production of music (as in Spotify for instance), the circulation of music as a visual object that refers to its sound counterpart compellingly addresses the core of musicking practices on social media as intrinsically visual practices. Infinite social worlds of online musicking exist in practices around what seems to be background (aural and visual) noise, to the extent that it may be a central element for social media to successfully create sociality.

These silent uses and circulation of music suggest that perhaps, when dealing with online culture, a distinction similar to that usually employed between silent and talking in film is required. Just as silent cinema is still cinema in cultural terms, silent music is still music within

online cultures of circulation. Instead of thinking of silent media as the precursor of a more technologically advanced art form, the rise of visual communication through online technologies makes it plausible that a sort of emerging media form of silent music may be appearing with the intensification and abundance of music availability online. However, this may be taking the argument too far considering how iconography works in music. Indeed, the circulation of music media by relying on visual over sonic and textual elements is not specific to online musicking and sociality. In other offline mediascapes of abundance, this prioritisation of the visual and the use of imagined listening as social dynamic has also been used. Vinyl artwork and records, for instance, are displayed in collectors' homes as references to their music knowledge, thereby also making use of a kind of imagined listening. Moreover, the number of people who buy copies for display (Fig. 5.3) but do not listen to the records has significantly increased with the abundance of vinyl in its recent revival (Savage 2016; Harris 2013), therefore pointing to the cultural value of certain music pieces and albums, even for those who might have not listened to them at all, or not more than a couple of times. The availability of records as cultural objects and their low cost as commodities enable their use as visual cues that evoke the music, just as happens online. This brings the discussion back to the notion of musical sacred items, and the display of music iconography as totems, whether as ephemeral online postings, or permanent wall posters.³



Fig. 5.3 A vinyl display in a framing shop in North London. The shop advertises its Instagram account on the left bottom of the window.

³ Ritualistic musicking will be addressed in Chapter 6.

Despite this rising culture of music media circulation as visual object, online music has the advantage of being able to be transformed into a sound source on demand. It is misleading to suggest that the circulation of music on social media does not generate engagement or does not achieve its goal. Here it is necessary to reiterate the argument for a positive conceptualisation of imagined listening as a tacit cultural understanding that underlies musicking activities on social media. In contrast to a negative perspective focused on excessive ubiquity, I argue for an approach that understands these musicking dynamics on social media as reflexive abundance, understood as the reflexive management of musical abundance online by social media users. In a mediascape where music is available and easily retrievable and where users can engage with a plentiful supply of music recommendations from friends, family, critics, algorithms, and different sectors of the industry, people adapt in smart ways, rationing and rationalising their listening practices. This tacit rule of use in music media circulation is normalised and understood by users, as the interview statements in previous sections show. Sandra and Elisa acknowledged that their audiences and they themselves use self-regulation practices to deal with music postings:

“[the hashtag] is also in case someone wants to silence me. (laughs) (...) I am thinking about them.” Sandra, 26 November 2017

“I don’t want to bore people, so sometimes I send them music directly and I don’t share it with everybody.” Elisa, 18 October 2017

This self-regulation allows users to make sense of the mediascape of cacophony and to maintain agency in their personal music choices. On one hand, they can continue to contribute to the liveness of platforms and therefore to the social life of their different locales by circulating and engaging with music online without any significant costs. On the other, they can manage their individual attention micro-economy according to their life schedules, social relationships, and music interests. These musicking practices of reflexive abundance also provide users with additional means of administering their varied levels of scalable sociality (Miller et al. 2016: 3). Through their active choices about circulating new or old songs, and about how to engage with the music circulated by others, they define and manage their social relationships. If “online listening constitutes a recognition of others” (Crawford 2009: 533), listening and responding at length to music recommendations can be understood as a deeper engagement reserved for close ties, while rating only or not engaging at all may be used for acquaintances. Sharing a well-known track may be used to connect with those contacts who do not share other interests. Therefore, the abundance of music in online environments does not necessarily lead to a loss of social value. Rather, it indicates

that responses will vary according to the different audiences that are imagined and engaged with it, so that online musicking practices acquire richer complexity. While completely silencing a contact on social media may entail sanctions and risks offline, different levels of listening engagement allow users to manage their relationships without associated dangers. In this sense, imagined listening is not only a necessary characteristic of online sociality around music media because of ubiquity, it is also a socially positive feature of online practices of music circulation, helping people manage relationships without conflict.

Two social dynamics further support the conceptualisation of imagined listening as the implied cultural norm of social media music circulation. First, as outlined in preceding chapters, users direct messages to specific people via direct messaging, tags and hashtags, and other interface tools when they explicitly want to encourage others to move from imagined listening to actual listening. These practices further highlight their acknowledgment of the social dynamics of imagined listening, and the conceptualisation of imagined and actual listening as two separate practices:

“I am not thinking about anyone in particular (...) otherwise I would tag them.” Daniel 15 January 2018

“If you tag people, they will get the message for sure.” Jose, 17 November 2017

“I am not going to force them and tag them in everything. But in punctual things that I think that are hits and they should know, then yes.” Cynthia, 17 January 2018

Second, the assumption of imagined listening as the underlying cultural habit of social media also explains the trend of sharing nostalgia-ridden music media items. Because well-known anthems and old-time classics can evoke the memories of the song, they are perfectly fit for musicking practices of imagined listening. Sue mentioned these evocations of memory in relation to maintaining ties:

“People say that to me often, ‘thank you for posting this and that’. I remember once, a friend that I met working on the fairs, that went back to [her country] (...) I put that [2005] song and she replied ‘thank you, I’ve had that song in my head for weeks and I couldn’t remember the artist or the title. You’re the best!’ So, yes, people write to you ‘this song is so cool, it has been so long without listening to it, thank you for sharing it.’ And you like that, because everybody enjoys getting likes.” Sue, 29 September 2017

Thinking in terms of effectiveness, users have more chances to be understood and to communicate a message if the song content is known. Posting or circulating newly-released

music media puts this communicational aspect at risk, or at least challenges potential listeners in a way that may be at odds with these practices of imagined listening. Therefore, practices of imagined listening also make recourse to the hauntological practices that Reynolds (2011) describes, in which a musical era is re-enacted and quoted through media objects and sonic references.

In addition, the circulation of potentially silent commodities indicates the prevalence of use value over exchange value. From a critical perspective of excessive ubiquity, people do not listen to music because of lack of time and this leads to a loss of music's power to articulate sociality. But reflexive practices of abundance show instead that users do not have to listen to music in order to socialise around, and through, music. Their social exchanges can continue even without an explicit recourse to sound, because online environments work as a "medium that contains previous forms of media" (Steyerl 2013) (Fig. 5.4).



Fig. 5.4 Elisa's post with a music-related meme.

It could be argued that, silent or talking, music media circulated within the social media economy are nevertheless algorithmic commodities. However, if users do not listen to or view the content of these links, their contribution to monetisation is not very clear. While the social value of music and its symbolic role in sociality seems to remain intact, its exchange value is indeed affected by such practices of imagined listening. Similarly, these musicking practices put into question whether the post-object engagements with music outlined in the previous chapter are instead instances of soundless engagement. When music is circulated on social media its integrity as an audio-visual object is relevant for a minority of strong ties, whereas for most weak ties its cultural value lies in its visual characteristics. Although this

may be different in the case of subcultural groups and ties with the required cultural references to understand the music being circulated, the arguments presented in the preceding chapters would suggest that social relationships and therefore use value, rather than subcultural reproduction and exchange value as currency, are the focus of these practices.

5.8 Conclusion

In previous chapters, the case studies described presented users as part of varied imagined collectivities, such as nations, families or fandom groups, providing compelling explanations for their different approaches to online musicking. This chapter adds to those insights by addressing the question of the imagined audience, including the abstract and symbolic aspects that enable its emergence as a cultural practice. To understand why people post music on social media, considering musicking practices as post-object sheds additional light on this area. However, it does not address complex multi-layered understandings of its reception by the audience-within-the-audience. Users articulate abstract and targeted imagined audiences to make sense of their musicking activities in an environment where the audience is uncertain, and their music recommendations might not be listened to. Thinking in terms of imagined audiences also helps them to manage context collapse and to re-enact groups and togetherness. Moreover, abstract imagined audiences provide an articulation of musicking activities as practices carried out for the common good. In addition, imagined audiences are part and parcel of the imagined liveness of platforms, in which the distribution of algorithmically- and user-generated content finds its social logic. Imagined audiences are also necessary cultural understandings that govern music circulation, because music ubiquitously inhabits online media, creating complex attention economies. Consequently, if music is ubiquitous and audiences are imagined, musicking practices rely heavily on imagined listening practices that refer to the expectation that others will listen to the music media shared, or even that the music-related posts serve to evoke their memory of it. Indeed, in a mediascape of excess ubiquity, not all music media can be listened to. However, imagined listening and the circulation of music as silent does not necessarily indicate a loss of value in social terms. Music and sound are evoked through their visual representation in social media interfaces, allowing music media to fulfil their role as a cultural object of sociality. Music media as a visual object helps users produce understandings and make sense of their social lives online, similar to how it does this offline. Moreover, the role of music in online sociality

is approached by users from a reflexive perspective, which helps them scale their sociality. However, if imagined listening is the tacit cultural norm that governs social media musicking practices, it bears asking whether these engagements are really post-object or actually soundless or silent. Moreover, the prevalence of music practices of imagined listening, where the visual aspects of music media are used to evoke musical sound, points this enquiry towards a focus on musicking practices from a wider perspective, including those where sound is only involved as a mental construct. The statements of users presented in this chapter also echo the insights of Chapter 3, confirming the emergence of moral economies and cultures of circulation, which link online musicking practices with the pursuit of a civic common good. Furthermore, the prevalence of visual evocations of music also opens the question of how ritualistic aspects are involved in these practices. These issues will be addressed in the next, and final, discussion chapter.

Chapter 6 – Musicking Rituals and the Moral Economies of Music Circulation

6.1 Introduction

In chapters 1 and 2, social media platforms were approached almost as if they were a communication medium, through which identity can be performed for others and relationships can be maintained. Chapter 3 also adopted this perspective to an extent, outlining how politics can be articulated through social media platforms and music media objects. Up to Chapter 4, the circulation of music on social media has been approached as a transmitter of meanings to an extent, investigating how the semiotics of the music and video texts help people articulate other spheres of life, such as fandom, identity or politics. Although this perspective provides valuable insights to investigate why people circulate music on social media, it also demonstrates the limitations of considering internet technologies merely as communication tools, as if they were an aseptic vehicle of meanings.

All these chapters attempt to balance the discussion by introducing political and moral aspects of culture-making through online musicking, notably with the investigation of the politics of Spanish identity in Chapter 1, the discussion of understandings of civic values in Chapter 3 and the focus on algorithmic and solidary practices of Chapter 4. The focus on social media forms of fandom and understandings of audience in chapters 4 and 5 further demonstrates that a number of these music circulation activities seem to be oriented towards the construction of morality through musicking: they are understood as users' put-into-practice ideas about what music and society are and ideally should be. Indeed, statements from the research participants in chapters 3 to 5 hinted at the importance of moral values associated with these online musicking practices, and the emerging moral economies that arise from them. These chapters also conclude by highlighting the sociality- and meaning-making character of social media musicking practices, which not only are fostered and generated by the technological conditions of the online mediascape, but also often start and end within the online context, where their internal logics reside. As Chapter 5 shows, online-to-online audiences and imagined communities of online listeners underlie a great deal of musicking interactions on social media and streaming platforms. Paraphrasing Small (1998), the circulation of music media is the stuff of social media culture meaning, rather than just the manifestation of structural social systems. After all, the circulation of media (whether as image, sound or mediated text) is a crucial component of social media interaction, even to a ubiquitous and excessive degree. Yet if silent music circulation and

imagined listening are the tacit norms that govern social media musicking as Chapter 5 demonstrates, it bears asking why people circulate music at all. To answer this question, approaching ritualistic processes through visual references to music and their emerging moral economies as online “cultures of circulation” (Lee and LiPuma 2002: 2) is crucial. On one hand, the prevalence of the circulation of music as a visual cultural object is related to the rise of online ritualistic practices. On the other hand, ritualistic music practices are related to emerging systems of online morality.

This final chapter further demonstrates how online musicking practices are culture-making activities through investigating online cultures of music media circulation within social media and streaming platforms, focusing on how they produce values and emerging moral economies through the use of visual musical objects and ritualistic practices. It first contextualises social media rituals within the wider sphere of human rituals, particularly gift-giving and exchange cultures. Music has an essential role in these rituals, both as a valued element of exchange and as an accompaniment in the transitions between human and supernatural (transcendental, spiritual) experiences. This is particularly true in music performance rituals, where these values are enacted and put to work to create collective meaning. Social media musicking rituals are also further contextualised as part of other visual media rituals that take place on these platforms, with which they share their governing moral principles. This theoretical introduction is supported by four case studies of ritualistic musicking on social media: music as meme; mourning rituals; music games; and hybrid online-offline music rituals. These visual culture-based case studies provide evidence which helps in understanding the ritualistic elements of musicking on social media and the moral economies that arise from them. Lastly, a discussion of the relationship between musicking rituals in the context of “algocracies” (Aneesh 2006) reveals further symbolic and moral elements in these cultures of circulation, providing arguments to apply this conceptualisation to a macro perspective. The chapter concludes by questioning the extent of ritualistic practices of musical citizenship in other areas of society and their resilience in the current mediascape.

6.1.2 Music, Social Media, and Ritual

The relevance of rituals and other symbolic processes in human interaction and music practices is far from new to anthropologists and ethnomusicologists, particularly in the case of those that involve music exchange. Since the foundational texts of Anthropology (Malinowski 1922; Mauss 1922 (1990); Munn 1986) revealed the cultural relevance of material exchanges, the analysis of symbolic interaction through material culture and music has been central in the development of those disciplines. As explained in Chapter 1, identities are linked to the dramatized ritual of placing oneself in a network of relationships through musical choices, as Frith (1996) pointed out before the internet's coming of age. In addition, ethnomusicologists have investigated how the meaning of a musical experience, including that of listening, appears as a social matter by defining imagined social processes (ibid: 250); even if people might perceive meaning as a value intrinsically embedded in the music itself (ibid: 252). The specific relationship between music rituals and performativity has also been examined in ethnomusicology and popular music studies. Studies of music, shamanism and healing rituals (De Martino 2013 (1961); Howard 1989) highlight the intrinsic value ascribed to music as social remedy. In contemporary contexts of performance, a selector or DJ has shamanic attributes, arguably mediating as the master of ceremonies (Finkentscher 2000) between the human and out-worldly experience of listening and dancing to music (Rietveld 2013, 2004; Gerard 2004). Likewise, any music performance involves active and passive agents who contribute to ritualistic practices (St John 2004) emphasizing "the universality and timelessness of the proceedings" (Small 1987: 11), as well as a sort of "intellectual harmony" (Hutnyk 1998: 403) in the shared experience of sound and rhythm. The ritualistic character of music performance events is further confirmed by the existence of rituals-within-the-ritual, such as the encore (Webster 2012).

As discussed in Chapter 2, material musical artifacts are often part of sacralised collections that are put on display for others to see (Wikstrom 2013), becoming physical representations of musical and moral values. Regarding online musical objects as (im)material culture, Uski and Lampinen (2014) note that, in online music exchange, the development of norms and values is directed at a perceived ideal of music authenticity. Baym (2018) analyses the exchange of music as a gift within social and monetary economies, and how fans feel the moral obligation of sharing the music they like to connect with others. Johansson et al. (2018) also highlight that music may be seen as a common good because of its ubiquitous presence. Confirming these studies Chapter 5 has demonstrated how an imagined practice of listening

is indeed at the core of social media musicking, and Chapter 3 has hinted that in civic imaginations, music is thought of as containing an intrinsic social value.

Similarly, social media anthropology has pointed out how social media platforms such as Facebook can be a vehicle for institutionalised and informal religious practices, taking also the role of a meta-friend as Miller (2011; 2012) argues, showing how social media practice can be “a moral activity in and of itself” (Miller et al. 2016: 212, referring to the case studies by MacDonald 2016 and Venkatraman 2017). However, these studies have not analysed the specific role of music. Similarly, when Critical Theory perspectives have investigated the specific dynamics of music platforms (for instance Bonini 2017), they have not considered economically unproductive practices such as rituals, which seem at first glance unable to disrupt power dynamics. Even the subcultural perspective outlined in Chapter 2 omits the music practices that appear as socially unproductive, assuming a causal relationship between online social interaction and personal benefit. The pitfalls of this approach have been brought to light with the examples of informal DJ and archivist practices developed in Chapter 2. If the focus is on personal or economic benefits, a wide range of musicking practices, such as those outlined in this chapter, remain unexplained. Similarly, if music circulates mainly as a visual object, a further analysis of visual practices that contain references to music needs to be developed. Rituals are an intrinsic part of social life, and this is not different in the case of social media interaction. The following sections address this gap in the research, outlining some ritualistic practices related to the circulation of music content. Their intention is twofold: to demonstrate that the increasingly visual circulation of music fosters ritualistic practices, and thus in ritual practices new moral economies emerge.

6.2 Music and Media Rituals on Social Media

6.2.1 Visual Context

Before analysing the ritualistic dynamics of musicking practices on social media, it is necessary to contextualise them within other visual media practices that take place on social media. As it will be developed in this chapter, some musicking rituals on social media follow pre-existing sets of rules and timeframes that derive from offline music rituals, while others are generated from the specific visual cultures of social media technologies. The latter types are linked to the wider cultures of media circulation that emerged with the rise of the internet and the rituals associated with them, but they also follow pre-existing conventions

of repurposing media and music. However, it is difficult to classify social media musicking under just one of these categories. Most of the practices that are analysed in this chapter involve a combination of pre-existing and emerging, externally and internally referenced, musicking rituals.

As shown in previous chapters, the circulation of media (whether as image, text, video or other mediated forms) is a crucial element of social media interaction. This is to a great degree due to how morality, norms, and rituals can be articulated through the circulation of images and text (Miller and Sinanan 2017: 188), especially through memes.¹ Memes are crucial to understanding emerging online cultures, to the extent that they have come to be the moral police of the internet (Miller et al. 2016: 172), including both the representations of the normative (Fig. 6.1), and the communal striving to control online normativity (2016: 156) (Fig 6.2). This was indeed the case in the Spanish social media sphere, although in many cases the text used was in English rather than Spanish. Memes also exemplify of how specific tools can be the message (participation in the culture) rather than the medium, illustrating once again how the distinction between signifier and signified may be difficult to sustain in internet practices (Cascone 2000; Born and Haworth 2018).

when you're funny but ugly



Fig. 6.1 A meme about online normativity liked by Daniel on Twitter

¹ Although Chapter 3 introduced a caveat about this concept because of its biological coinage, its use persists in internet studies, with a meaning closer to the definition provided by Patrick Davison (2007) as “a piece of culture, typically a joke, which gains influence through online transmission” (ibid: 122), which seems to bring human agency back into the concept. Although several theorists have still criticised the use of the word meme, even under this adapted definition, to describe online media practices (Jenkins et al. 2013; Meikle 2016), it continues to be used for lack of a better term. The use of the word meme is also widespread in popular culture and it was impossible to avoid during fieldwork conversations with participants. Consequently, I maintain the use of the concept throughout this chapter, understanding that the focus on memes as cultural practices is sufficient to avoid any biological analogy.

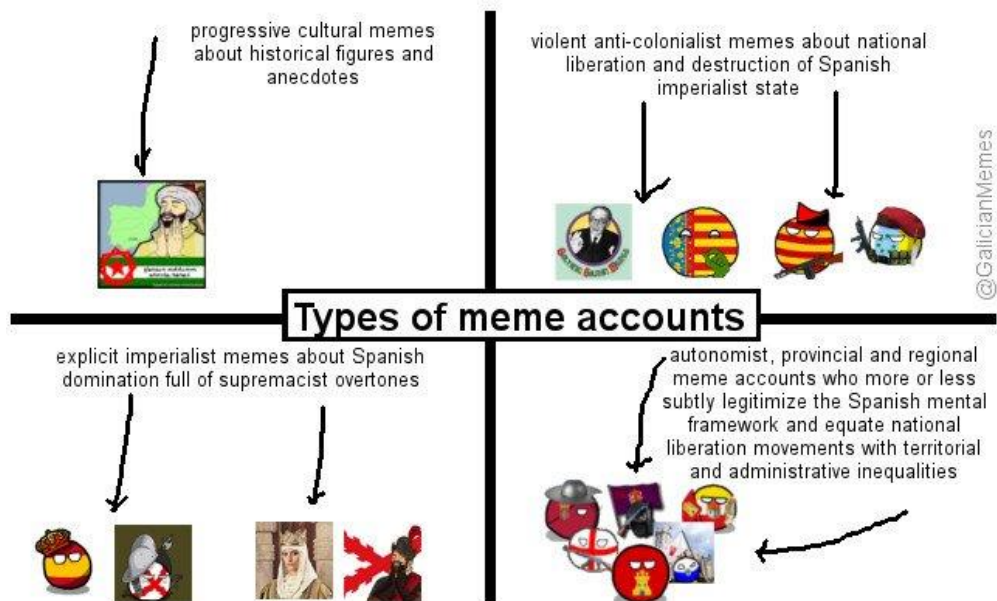


Fig. 6.2 A reflexive meta-meme by Twitter user @GalicianMemes which classifies other meme accounts on Spanish Twitter in relation to regional political conflicts.

The ritualistic character of the meme is further illustrated by their role as everyday rites, as Miller et al. (2016) and Venkatraman (2017) highlight. The circulation of media on social media platforms has integrated pre-existing social rituals such as daily salutations and greetings, and religious daily habits (2016: 166; 2017: 87), considerably replacing and extending both social conventions and rituals such as small talk and daily prayers, and (im)material objects such as greeting paper cards and email e-cards (Fig. 6.3). After all, social media is based from its inception on meta-mechanisms such as liking and retweeting that do not necessarily address the content, but the ritualised approval and salutation of others. As Chambers (2013) highlights, the meaning-making activities of online sociality involve a ritualization of relationships through the exchange of cultural artefacts.



Fig. 6.3 A morning salutation shared in a Facebook group of Spanish women in London with a moral ‘menu of the day’: “A cup of blessings, Peace toast, Faith jelly, Strength juice (sic) and love fruit”.

This kind of memetic online media circulation can also be used to articulate any of the topics described in the preceding chapters, such as national identity (Fig. 6.4), feminism or family relationships. As Chapter 3 argued, the circulation of memes is part of older practices of media circulation, including the recourse to humour and cartoon in situations of political struggle and ‘funny pages’ of cartoons in newspapers (Figs. 6.4 and 6.5). As Ruddock (2007) points out, apparently meaningless media can be politically charged and thus highly relevant to culture-making. This could also be understood as a ritualistic form of political agency, as will be further developed in this chapter in reference to music.



Fig. 6.4 A 2009 cartoon by Galician cartoonist Luis Davila shared by Elisa as a ‘Facebook memory’ where a Castilian big fish tries to eat a small Galician fish because he “feels threatened”. Elisa adds “that’s how it is, nothing has changed”.



Fig. 6.5 A Brexit-themed meme shared in the Facebook group *Espanoles in UK – Surviving Brexit* that imitates newspaper advertisements.

Yet the aim of this chapter is to shed light on the specific area that remains unexplored in previous studies of social media visual culture: how these moral-oriented ritualistic cultures of visual media circulation are crucially articulated through different kinds of music media. This section proposes four case studies of music as memes; music mourning rituals; music games; and musical online-offline rituals to show how the ritual exchange of music-related visual media objects provides new contexts in which users can build social life and relationships, create culture and meaning, and consequently, establish, question and reproduce moral norms and values.

6.2.2 Music as Meme

In the context of visual memes as forms of sociality and culture-making, it is not surprising that memes with musical content (or paramusical, as defined by Tagg 2012) have also become widespread in the Spanish social media sphere. The circulation of music as meme on social media could be approached from three different perspectives: as a music video cover (for instance the countless versions of Gangnam Style); as a comedic image related to music or its iconography; and as a ritualised or moral meme. However, as will be shown below these three perspectives are different ways to approach the same musicking practices, rather than a classification of different activities or different music media objects.

Regarding the first approach, memetic music video covers did not originate with the rise of social media, because they are embedded in longer histories of comedy media. As pointed out in Chapter 3, the cultures of circulation of funny and parodic videos on the internet existed before the appearance of 2.0 technologies. Exchange of music covers are also part of the history of online media circulation. Peer-to-peer platforms were used not only to share original songs (and later films), but also to circulate media files that were considered funny or entertaining, such as music parodies. Likewise, the long history of music covers has been a permanent feature of the music industry (Plasketes 2005: 145) to the extent that, since the 1980s, both music industry and audience have entered a “Cover Age” (2005: 1) maintained through the continuous collage and intertextuality of canonised pieces, particularly in the form of analogue remix and digital music sampling. The combination of this culture of covers and sampling, the online cultures of media circulation in peer-to-peer and 2.0 platforms, and the ritualised practices of social media such as moral and funny memes shown in the previous section, together contextualise the use of music videos as memes as a continuation of

previously established media practices. Although Web 2.0 affordances have boosted these practices, they rely on previously-existing online and offline media and music cultures.

Where music as video memes are addressed in music scholarship (Terwiliger 2014; Howard 2015; Stock 2016; Kärjä 2018), the analysis focuses on specific music pieces, particularly those where a dance craze becomes the essential feature, with the intention of analysing the history or politics of its video covers. Although the focus on one specific piece of music is understandable, the problem with these approaches is precisely that they overplay their cultural value as music, to the detriment of their ritualised memetic use. Often, they try to establish a clear genealogy of covers from the original to the latest version, making a *de facto* distinction between music video covers and memes, even if acknowledging that these music covers are based on internet-based cultural principles. However, the distinction between a video cover and a meme is not so clear in social media environments (as Miller and Sinanan 2017: 10 indicate about photography). What I propose here is a wider conceptualisation of the music video object as meme that understands the sonic, visual, and cultural aspects as part of the ritualised memetic practice, closer to Shifman's (2011) analysis. If often the music in a video is only used as background reference to make possible the emergence of a visual meme, especially when the content is not localised in a place or clearly attributed to an artist – as for instance in the “Harlem Shake” (DizastaMusic 2013) – I argue that its role as a ritualised practice oriented towards morality prevails (or at least should be considered) over its character as creative musical output.

In the context of this case study of Spanish migrants in the UK, 2017 did not have a widely successful video meme. The summer hit “*Despacito*” (Fonsi 2017) did not reach the success of “Gangnam Style” (Psy 2012) and it did not generate an internet meme as such. Yet when it was covered by the Spanish migrants described in Chapter 3 it took the form of a meme: a piece of creative audio-visual media circulated for comedy and morality, where musical skill is far from crucial. Still, the “*Despacito*” cover was meant to be listened to, but this may not be necessary to turn a music video into a meme. Considering the circulation of music as a silent visual object explained in the previous chapter, it follows that the visual representation of a music video, such as a thumbnail view, can be turned into a meme. If music travels through social media as a visual object to transmit an idea or a moral value, rather than as a piece of music intended for listening, becoming a part of a ritualised form of sociality, it plays the role of a meme. In the following example (Fig. 6.6), Elisa shared a song by Guns N’ Roses

with a translation of the lyrics on the day of the Parsons Green train bombing.² This kind of post uses the evocation of a music piece and its iconography to transmit a moral message, rather than to generate music listening.



Fig. 6.6 Elisa's post on Facebook sharing the song "Civil War" by Guns N' Roses.

The use of music video as moral meme happens especially when there is no creative input from users, and videos are simply recirculated rather than remixed or remade. This is particularly evident when comparing the daily greetings analysed by Sinanan (2017; Miller et al. 2016) and Venkatraman (2017; Miller et al. 2016) with the ones found in my online field site among Spaniards (Fig. 6.7). As pointed out in Chapter 2 in relation to Sue's case study, family rituals such as salutations can be enacted through these daily musicking practices.



Fig. 6.7 Diana's post on Facebook with the caption "Good morning" (left) and Sue's post on Facebook with the caption "Night night" (right)

² The Parsons Green train bombing took place on the 15th September 2017, when a 'bucket bomb' exploded inside a train at Parsons Green underground station in London. It is considered a case of Jihadi terrorism.

These examples of music videos as salutation memes are closely related to the establishment and policing of normativity, as they attempt to set up ritualised practices of courtesy and politeness in the social media environment. Even if they might not refer explicitly to the concept of karma that Venkatraman (2017) indicates, a similar moral convention seems to be present in these practices. Moreover, the use of music knowledge in the form of iconography and other elements of cultural capital may be important for users' participation in the ritual, rather than their integration in a given subcultural group. Knowing the cultural reference becomes necessary only to identify the kind of salutation. The circulation of music in the examples above consequently becomes a sort of moral meme: a performance of conventions about good online practice and values, rather than a way of policing music taste. Once again, the role of music here seems mostly visual and imagined: well-known pieces are used for meme-like purposes, rather than expected to be listened to. In this sense, some of the examples provided in the preceding chapters can also be approached as visual content and particularly as musical memes.

On many occasions these ritualised practices around musical memes do not even require songs to be recirculated, because they are evoked by an image that is used for the meme, with the assumption that the other users will have a certain response to it (Fig. 6.8). The use of music iconography for comedy or morality does not require a music video or song link to be circulated. Messages can be transmitted by referring to images of shared cultural objects, where music knowledge may be just one of the elements required to understand it. Here practices of imagined listening are crucial for the emergence of memes, because the idea circulated is purely based on visual content (image and text) yet contain an explicit but decontextualized reference to a music piece. This was the case of the examples in Chapter 1, where the examples of feminist detournement of reggaetón icons are memes oriented towards comedy and articulating morality, but also requiring imagined listening.

Other non-sonic references to music are also made in memes that address genre normativity, rather than a specific piece of music (Fig. 6.9). In these cases, striving for morality and normativity are privileged over practices of imagined listening. However, in the same manner as memes can be ways of participating in politics, these visual music memes can also be forms of online musicking practice, even if they do not refer to a distinct piece of music.



Fig 6.8 A meme based on “*Despacito*” and a Monty Python’s sketch circulated on Twitter (left). A meme based on “*Y nos dieron las diez*” by Joaquin Sabina (right) shared on Facebook with the caption ‘I am going to check Facebook and off to bed. And the clock struck 10, 11, 12, 1, 2, and 3.’

When your non-metal friends listen to metal with you.



Fig. 6.9 A meme shared by Daniel (left) and a meme shared by Jose (right) on Facebook.

The prevalence of the visual over the sonic aspects in memetic practices is paradoxically not exclusive to memes, as Born and Haworth (2018: 634) point out in relation to vaporwave and the rise of internet-centric music genres. Indeed, the avant-garde memetic practices of music genres such as vaporwave stem from these forms of musicking via the anti-sonic, such as airport music and absurd music loops. These new genres use sampled audio sources as cultural references, giving rise to new aesthetic understandings about what music is and to musical objects not intended for extended listening. Similarly, these non-musical, parodic

references to music appear in musicless music videos (Sánchez-Olmos and Viñuela 2017) almost becoming moving-image versions of memes. Therefore, as indicated above for salutations, memetic practice does not necessarily revolve around the content itself as an aesthetically pleasant media object, but on the ritualised construction of sociality and normativity through music media.

A combination of practices of musical iconography, imagined listening, and emergent normativity around music also appears in “absurd music memes” (Chan 2018), which are closer to the ones analysed by Shifman (2011), Stock (2016) and Terwilliger (2014). This kind of music videos follow the internet culture of humour and absurd repetition ad infinitum, remixing audio and visual content to create nonsensical song parodies, demonstrating the paradoxical existence of musical memes based on anti-musical principles. Absurd music memes inhabit the opposite side of the normative spectrum from the salutations of Diana and Sue above: they constitute pieces of music made to amuse or annoy the audience by making it unpleasant or absurd to listen to songs, promoting a culture of music circulation based on non-normative sociality, humour, misbehaviour and even rudeness, rather than music. This is the case, for instance, with James Nielssen’s remixes of the song “All Star” by Smash Mouth (Nielssen 2016). These memes nonetheless achieve their function as social glue as Chan (2018) indicates, by going against the normative conventions of music video and actively discouraging people from listening to a full piece, based on shared criteria for humour and pre-existing knowledge of music video. Instead of just using imagined listening to evoke the original song, absurd music memes aspire to subvert musical expectations. In that respect, they are closer to the reflexive activities of vaporwave fans described by Born and Haworth (2018: 633), wherein shared codes of media and humour practices form the basis of the genre. Similarly, they aspire to create “uncanny parodies of genres that are rarely listened to as music” and “aspiring less to be original than to evoke the bizarre experience of surfing the continuous flow of data online” (ibid: 636). However, this kind of memes did not seem very pervasive among my participants.

The ritualistic character of these absurdity-centred musicking practices on social media highlights the need to avoid assuming causal relationships between people and value in meaning creation online, to include activities that seem at first less socially pleasant than posting music based on personal taste. As Katz and Shifman (2017) point out, online nonsense can be the source of affective meaning. However, these and other memetic practices should not be understood as examples of music’s irrelevance in social media interaction or as negative consequences of internet technologies. On the contrary, they

reveal how music is deeply ingrained in social life, to the extent that its cultural references are so widely shared that they do not need to be listened to, and that they are thought of time and again as sacred symbols of morality and wisdom. Music memes are, therefore, not less musical, but rather, more-than-musical. Consequently, when music is circulated as meme, in the different forms outlined above, this is part of a ritualistic practice for two reasons: on one hand, they are part of ritualised forms of communication (sometimes phatic) that evoke sonic messages through music iconography that are contained in visual, sonic, or textual cues; on the other, they give rise to norms and morality about music and sociality in an emerging social context such as social media. The following sections explore further ritualistic aspects of online music circulation by addressing its relationship with wider social rituals.

6.2.3 Mourning Rituals

In recent years, a growing scholarship has addressed the area of music celebrities and mourning rituals on social media (Van den Bulck and Larsson 2017; Mitchell et al. 2016; Cole Miller 2015; Courbet and Fourquet-Courbet 2014), in addition to studies of mourning through social media in family settings (Venkatraman 2017: 127; Dalsgaard 2016; Lim 2013; Odom et al. 2010; Wahlberg 2010) and mourning celebrities in general (Gil-Egui et al. 2017; Kern et al. 2013; Forman 2012; Hutchings 2012). They demonstrate how music fans and social media users in general utilise social media platforms to collectively mourn music celebrities and to share grief with their social circles. This was further confirmed for Spanish migrants in London, who often engaged in this kind of ritual of “parasocial interaction” with music celebrities (Gil-Egui et al. 2017; Duffett 2013: 239). Posting a mourning message to a social media platform enabled for them “a plausible geography of the dead”, where “cyberspace is an unseen medium for the transfer of messages through unseen realms” (Walter 2011 cited in Gil-Egui et al. 2017). It also allowed users and fans to look for support and recognition of loss, as Van den Bulck and Larsson 2017 suggest. During my fieldwork in 2017, this mainly happened around the unexpected suicides of Chris Cornell, leader of the band Soundgarden on 18 May; and Chester Bennington, the leader of Linkin Park on 20 July (Fig. 6.10). Similar rituals were also enacted with the death of Malcolm Young of AC/DC in November and Fats Domino in October, although with significantly less impact. This indicated the relevance of emotional upset and trauma as intensifiers of these rituals, rather than popularity or celebrity as a factor in isolation. Participants expressed during interviews

their therapeutic use of these practices to come to terms with the news, and their seemingly unconflicted takes on parasocial interaction with a 2.0 idea of the supernatural:

“When Chester Bennington died, it hit me really hard. (...) people don’t understand the power of music, and that the singer that is accompanying you in your bad times, is basically your virtual friend (sic). (...) Sometimes, music is more a friend than some people. (...) 20 years ago, you couldn’t share your grief with someone in Los Angeles, but now you can. (...) And you know that there are people that feels like you and you don’t feel alone. (...) I also feel that it is a way to honour the deceased, expressing your appreciation for that person that had an impact on your life (...)”
Sandra, 26 November 2017



Fig. 6.10 A Facebook post by Sandra (left) and a Twitter thread by Daniel (right) mourning Chester Bennington’s passing away with messages to him. Sandra writes: “Thanks for opening the door to the music that I enjoy so much today and for being the cries of rage of my teenage years. Chester, yesterday you turned off music for me, I hope it does not take long to light up again.” Daniel tweets: “I am left with [the memories of] enjoying them a lot here. May the earth rest lightly on you.”

Although it is beyond the scope of this research to analyse these rituals in depth, for the purposes of this chapter mourning rituals represent an additional musicking practice on social media that highlights the use of imagined listening through visual references to music, often with a moral intent. Mourning rituals are based on imagined listening through social media posts, which are addressed to both an imagined supernatural realm localised in the online platform (where the deceased is also localised) and the imagined communities of fans and listeners. In addition, they sustain and extend the imagined relationship of the music fan with the artist, which is largely built through social media technologies, providing an

extension of this already parasocial relationship with a musical deity (Rojek 2001). They are also symbolic practices that attempt to establish a set of shared values and norms around ideas of taste, affect, and politeness. However, once again their social function is not so much to inscribe the user in a given subculture as it is to fulfil the ritual in accordance with the moral compass of social media sociality (Fig. 6.11) through a form of “hauntology” that refers to a ghost musical presence (Reynolds 2011). As Miller (2012) points out, a cosmological character that in the past was given to the divine is attributed to social media when users understand it as a point of witnessing, where their moral actions are subject to adjudication (2012: 158).



Fig. 6.11 Sue’s post on Facebook

These mourning rituals are not only used in the memorialisation of celebrities: social media users also engage in musicking practices as mourning rituals for their families and close ties (Fig. 6.12), as previous scholarship indicates (Venkatraman 2017; Lim 2013). These practices are related to pre-existing offline instances when music accompanied a morning ritual, as well as evoking uses of music to heal from personal grief (De Martino 2013 [1961]). As Miller and Sinanan point out, memetic practices also contribute to these familiar kinds of online memorialisation (2017: 70), effectively using social media technology as a “portal to the past” (Born and Haworth 2018: 629). Music mourning rituals on social media also illustrate that memetic practices, understood as the circulation of music media with a moral intent, not only address humour and music normativity; the uses of imagined practices to transmit moral messages is also relevant for important tragic events such as death.

Yet the distinction between mourning rituals and funny music memes is not always clear. One of these boundary formats are the “not you” memes, a humorous meme in the form of a collage of artists’ pictures, some of whom are deceased, in which values about music normativity and taste are transmitted (Fig. 6.13).



Fig. 6.12 Sue’s Facebook post commemorating her grandmother’s birthday. She writes “Some say grandparents never die, they just become invisible. My grandmother [name deleted] had silver in her hair and gold in her heart. Today marks 100 years of her birth and a day doesn’t go by without thinking about her. Happy birthday wherever you are [being] invisible. Here you are always present”.



Fig. 6.13 A version of the “Not You” meme circulated on Instagram, which memorialises Rock and Pop artists against reggaetón singer Maluma (centre cell). The caption reads “There are/ voices/ that/ were born/ not you/ to/ revolutionise/ the(sic)/ music.” The inclusion of Bob Dylan and Mick Jagger denotes their status as living deities.

These kinds of memes work as votive offerings, where the worshipped music deities (Rojek 2001) are thanked for their intervention in making good and restoring morality, justice, and music taste. These mixed formats may also confirm the therapeutic use of humour-driven mourning rituals on social media to help fans cope with the death of their favourite artists, as part of other emerging non-normative social practices of mourning. This specific “not you” meme sends a message to a supernatural realm, where music deities are localised, which is mediated by the social media platform as portal to the past. At the same time, the user might be sending a message to an imagined or targeted audience of other music fans, known or unknown. The meme also prioritises the visual reference over the music itself, assuming the artists will be recognised and their music known by recipients, thereby reinforcing particular values of taste cultures, combining memorialisation with distinction processes.

Ultimately, these memes demonstrate that users understand, consciously or unconsciously, the efficacy of these media items as social glue, and are therefore ready to combine them. They also demonstrate that remix practices in these cultures of circulation can be internally referential, as in this case wherein two social media genres of rituals are merged into a new one. Overall, these mourning rituals reiterate the use of visual references to music to articulate emerging understandings of morality. The next section explores another type of mixed genre.

6.2.4 Music Games and Ritual

A further example that illustrates the intersection of ritualistic musicking practices with visual cultures of music circulation and emerging value systems on social media are what I call music games.³ In these semi-structured games that travel through the personal feeds of users (rather than game apps or music-based videogames), a person informally proposes to others on a social media platform to provide a selection of songs, albums, or artists, and to post them publicly. These games can be found in various formats: as a one-off posting, as a conversation in the comments section of a single post or tweet, and as a longer-term engagement challenge that requires regular posts or tweets for a number of days or weeks.

³ Although these games could be considered strictly social media quizzes, since they do not match the performative approach in recent literature on music and video gaming (Austin 2016; Kamp et al. 2016), I would still argue for maintaining their definition as social media-based music games for two reasons. First, these games are not necessarily based on any specialised music knowledge, but on affective attachments to songs. Second, they do not have a direct reward or prize as such, having perhaps as only consequence the intensification of relationships with pre-existing contacts or the public performance and recognition of cultural capital.

In the specific long-term example of Figure 6.14, the game enables processes of memorialisation, nostalgia, affect and genre normativity in the same way that some of the examples above have shown. Many of these longer games also require that the player sends the request to another person to continue the game, reproducing other social media features designed to ‘poke’ or ‘wave’ at someone. By nominating people in a game, they will receive a call for attention in the form of a notification, which in turns mirrors the memetic salutations shown above and the offline social convention of waving at someone. Moreover, by compiling music selections (Fig. 6.14) these ritualised practices also evoke previously-existing cultural references, such creating mixtapes and playlists. Such personal lists of favourites are difficult to experience as compilations as they appear dispersed in several postings or tweets, and unlikely to reach a specific user in the social media environment, yet they exist nonetheless as self-referential and ritualistic list-making. In this sense, the ritual evocation of music and its iconography is their main characteristic, in a similar vein as the case studies described in Chapter 4: curated playlists that will rarely be listened to but are compiled for temporary or imaginary recipients.

Evidence of ritualistic practices oriented to morality appear more clearly in music games that are circulated and contextualised with a piece of explanatory text outlining its principles, often arguing for the collective benefit of sharing personal tastes with others in order to build a meaningful social media community and experience. These kinds of games are oriented towards creating a moral culture about what social media should be, where music is once again understood as an intrinsically good element of sociality that can counter a perceived negative side of internet culture (Fig. 6.15). The circulation of music within these games is considered as somehow holding a redemptive power against online evils, with the ability to cure those affected. This godly power of music is related to the karma-like orientations towards a common good that are outlined above in the memetic practices of Elisa, Sue and Diana above, promoting a form “intellectual harmony” (Hutnyk 1998) through circulating music in the divine space that Miller (2012) mentions as the locus of moral judgements. This intrinsic value of music also refers back to the citizenship engagements described in chapters 3 and 5.

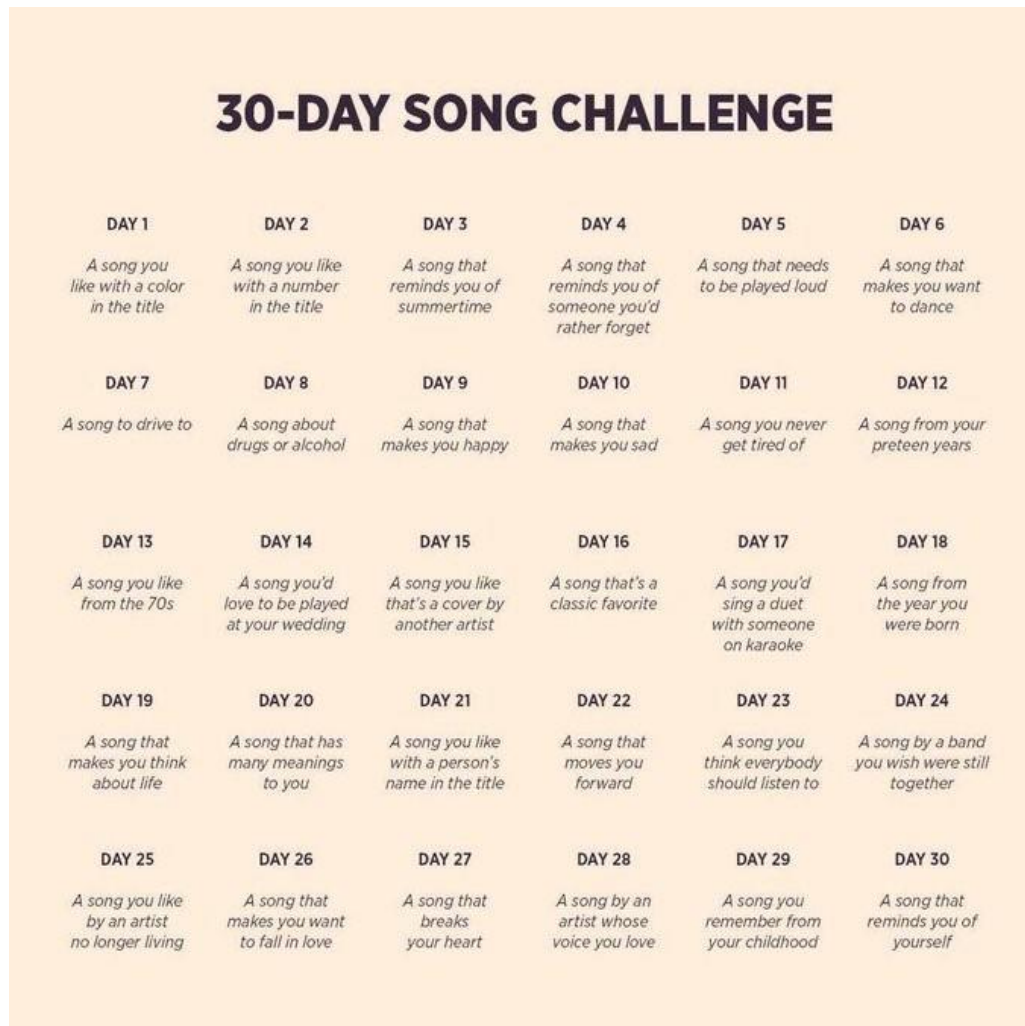


Fig. 6.14 A game circulated on Facebook and Twitter with a 30-day song challenge.

La idea es llenar Facebook de música, rompiendo con la monotonía de selfies y amarillismo. A quien ponga "me gusta" se le asignará una letra y deberá seleccionar un músico, banda o artista y deberá postear un vídeo incluyendo el presente texto en su muro.

Fig. 6.15 A Facebook music game caption that reads: "The idea is to fill Facebook with music, breaking the monotony of selfies and sensationalism. Those who put 'like' will be assigned a letter and they will have to select a musician, band, or artist and post a video including the present text on their [Facebook] wall."

Other types of ritualistic music-based games do not have such an openly moral component, being mainly oriented towards the kinds of memetic memorialisation processes that have been described in the previous sections. They require users to post, comment on, and circulate music that they already know, presumably reinforcing practices of imagined

listening. These games are particularly used by commercial accounts (Fig. 6.16) to maximize their followers' engagement and improve algorithmic performance.⁴

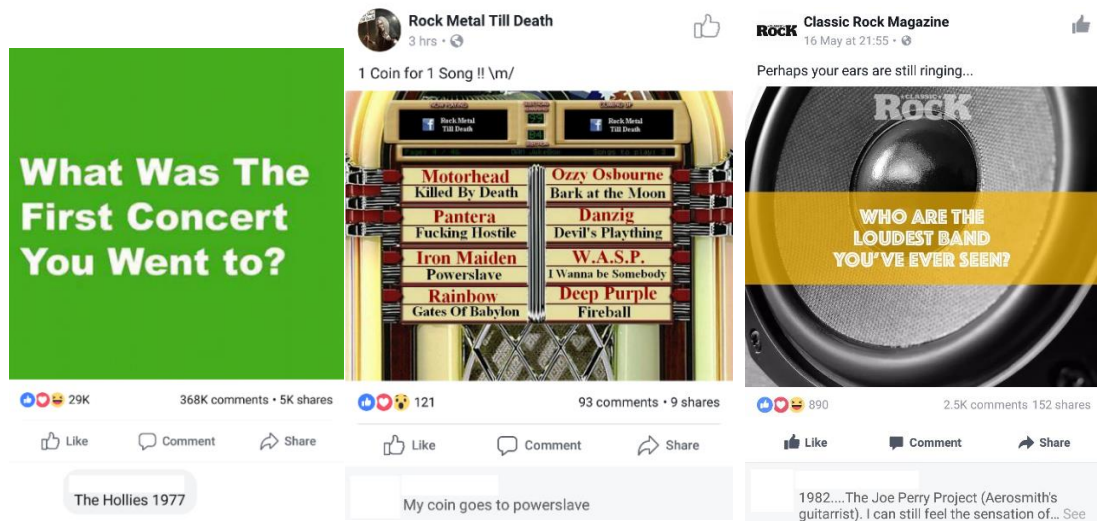


Fig. 6.16 A selection of music games in which Sue (centre) and Jose (left and right) participated.



Fig. 6.17 Jose's response on Facebook to a game proposed by Absolute Radio. In this case the musicking activity is arguably materialised because "the best two" will be selected to be played.

⁴ These games are deeply in contradiction with the discovery narrative outlined in Chapter 4. It would be interesting to see future research addressing whether these games are an invention of social media companies themselves to increase users' engagement (thus in contradiction with streaming platforms), or if they stem from people's vernacular practices.

In other cases, these games (Sue in Fig. 6.16 and Jose in 6.17), also mirror offline practices such as voting for one's favourite song in official lists of hits and requesting songs in a radio or TV show. Yet the offline materialisation of these lists of hits does not have a counterpart in social media, where memorialisation and genre normativity seem to be the focus. In short, while their ritualised use of visual references to music may mirror the examples described in previous sections above, their orientation towards emerging values and striving for morality is not as clear. Participation in the ritualised memorialisation and nostalgia seem to be both the musicking practice and the underlying values promoted, becoming the signifier and the signified.

In conclusion, through these kinds of musical gameplay the striving to establish online moral normativity is articulated through a ritualised, symbolic practice of visual references to music – as opposed to a conscious establishment of values and taste. If videogames such as *Guitar Hero* are based on materially reconstituting live forms of musical performance through playing and listening pre-recorded songs (Miller 2012), I argue that these music-based social media games are reconstituted, audiovisually-materialised forms of practices of imagined listening and of the ritualised aspects of music sharing and listening such as playlist or mixtape curation. However, these online re-materialisations are articulated through pre-recorded music media or visual references to them online. Music games are efficient as social glue because they provide a framed set of rules for the cultures of circulation of social media musicking, channelling collective meaning-making activities. The last case study delves further into the relationship of these rituals with offline practices.

6.2.5 Offline – Online Hybrid Music Rituals

Before moving on to the theoretical discussion of these case studies, it is worth considering how these online rituals are interwoven with offline music rituals in the articulation of morality through the circulation of music media. The yearly cycle of Spanish traditional festivities and their folk music rituals provides a calendar that frames many social media musicking activities among Spaniards. The persistence of mass music rituals linked to traditional festivities is an important element of Spanish folk culture, which is expanded and intensified through hybrid offline-online practices. Instead of arguing for cyclical forms of music circulation as a consequence of individual self-induced fandom re-experiencing and re-discovery as Hills (2005) posits in relation to the formation of the self, this section

highlights the cyclical character of pre-existing forms of musicking in social life and their relationship with online musicking.

The Spanish folk music calendar involves several genres of folk and flamenco music, dance, and singing which are present in almost all regions of the country, with differing levels of popularity. It starts in February with satirical Carnival songs being performed in theatres and in the street, and continues with Easter/Holy Week (*Semana Santa*) festivities and the religious-themed folk music that accompanies processions. It carries on during spring and summer with local festivities around a patron-saint day or local harvesting cycles in the *Ferías*, which involve local folk music singing and dancing in formal and informal settings. It concludes with Christmas celebrations and its specific kind of religious folk songs, which are performed in public and private spaces, besides local parishes. The particularity of these music rituals is that, outside of official competitions, they involve the spontaneous mass participation of large numbers of the population with varying degrees of expertise, rather than revolving around theatricalised events performed by professionals. More importantly, these folk traditions create arenas for the performance of ritualised ways of being Spanish. While Carnival allows for a liminal space of subversion and critical performance and discourse about politics and politicians (see Chapter 3), *Semana Santa* and Christmas celebrations are used to articulate understandings of religion and morality in Spanish society (including forms of syncretism), and *Ferías* and other local events are performances of authenticity and regionalist politics. Although each one of these rituals would require a separate analysis, their common ground is, on one hand, allowing for a ritualised performance of individual and collective understandings of what being Spanish means in moral and musical terms; and on the other, encapsulating these performances of identity and politics in the ritual timeframes, which follow specific quarterly and yearly sequences, usually without transferring on to institutionalised politics. As briefly outlined in Chapter 3, these music rituals and their yearly timelines contribute to social media musicking activities and foster specific kinds of engagement with music media that are both political and ritualistic (Fig. 6.18). Spanish migrants in London participate in such music rituals through their social media musicking, contributing to these ritualised performances of identity and political debate (Fig. 6.19). For instance, Chapter 1 mentioned the case of Rose, who posts the same Iron Maiden trooper with the Catalanian flag every year for Catalonia Day.

The relationship between political activism and musical rituals is complex. As Hutnyk (1998) points out in the case of the music festival *Womad*, rituals of counterhegemonic political activism may also create conservative dynamics, as they are focused on the fulfilment of the

ritual rather than practical political objectives. In particular, the Spanish case especially supports the importance of music rituals as political performativity, because it is based in the historical ritualisation of communality and democratic liminality (Desfor Edles 1998). Since political participation in Spain is constrained to a large extent because of the restrictive legal framework outlined in Chapter 3, these music rituals provide arenas for activism, discussion and articulation of politics that would otherwise be absent or diminished in the Spanish public sphere (Fig. 6.20). Moreover, the particular characteristics of this democratic liminality, where an old regime of post-truth inherited from post-Francoism coerces the left side of the political spectrum, imply that media circulation as counter-hegemonic activism is a crucial source of engagement and information. In this context, I argue that music cultures of circulation that redistribute critical folk media texts are important because they address institutional politics through vernacular language, in some cases in the name of tradition (Fig. 6.18, 6.19 and 6.21).

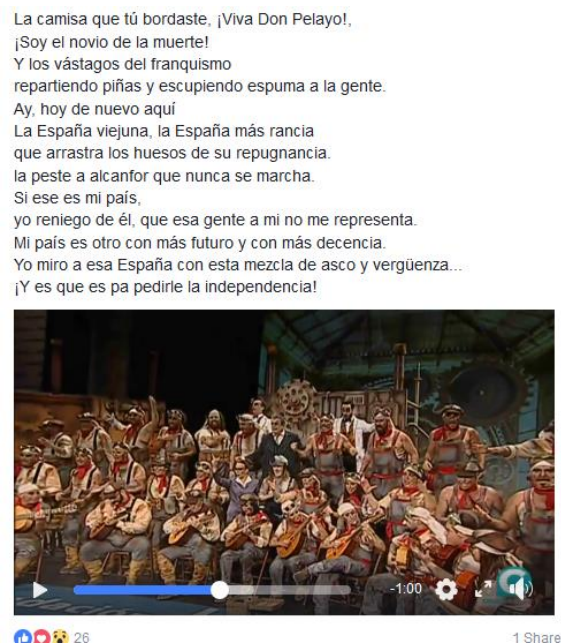


Fig. 6.18 A post on a Facebook group of Catalans in London with a song from a Cádiz carnival choir. The lyrics of the song posted criticise the Spanish state and express solidarity with Catalanian independentists.



Fig. 6.19 Jasmin’s Facebook post with the caption “let’s go to the feria”.



Fig. 6.20 Facebook captions. Left: Madrid Pride video shared in a group of Spaniards in London where the Spotify sound system is featured. Right: Video shared in a group of Catalans in London where the citizens of Goierri (Basque Country) sing the antifacist Catalan song “L’Estaca” in solidarity with the people of Catalonia.

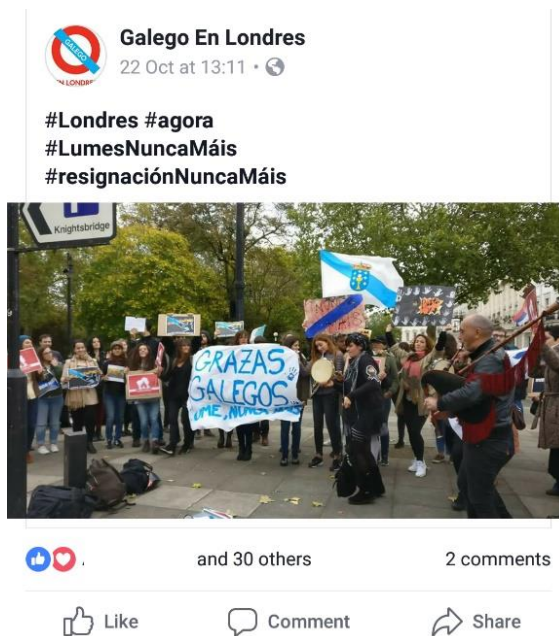


Fig. 6.21 Galician demonstration *Lumes Nunca Mais* (“Wildfires never again”) at the Spanish Embassy in London, where traditional bagpiping was the soundtrack. This video was later circulated in several groups of Galicians in London.

However, the relationship of this kind of activism with the yearly cycle of folk festivities can have a neutralising effect. Counter-hegemonic politics remain circumscribed by the spheres and timelines of the music ritual and rarely manage to generate real changes in institutional politics. The Catalan conflict and the wildfires in Galicia are two notable examples where there has been no advancement in institutional terms. This creates a further ritualistic effect, by making unresolved political debates reappear cyclically, and putting the focus on visual engagement, to the detriment of actual physical actions materially organised with specific people, as some critical theorists point out (Fuchs 2014; Lovink 2011). Consequently, social media musicking related to these ritualised politics shares the characteristics outlined in the previous case studies. They generate parasocial interaction, which uses social media as a medium to circulate media items that carry political values for the common good, while at the same time, they consider social media as the locus of moral judgements. Similarly, they are based on understandings of imagined audiences and on the endless repetition of the same messages. Moreover, in the Spanish case these instances of online musicking may also represent an inverted ritualised form of musical mourning: through the circulation of music media, Spaniards perform a mourning ritual, in which institutional immobility represents the death of politics and the common good resides in the supernatural realm, as it is forever unattainable. Therefore, the Spanish folk music cycle and its relationship with politics may contribute to the ritualization of civic engagement online. Yet participants tended to talk about their weariness of politics, rather than speaking in terms of cyclic repetition. Perhaps, to analyse dynamics of political inactivity, future research could investigate those who do not post at all or do not post about politics. Nonetheless, the relationship between the circulation of music-related visual media online, ritualistic dynamics of sociality and emerging understandings of morality and values is further confirmed with this case study. The next section summarises how these four case studies are co-creators of wider meta-rituals of music circulation.

6.3 Meta-Rituals in Social Media Musicking

The case studies above demonstrate that social media musicking practices are culture-making activities, articulated through rituals of music media circulation and governed by established and emerging understandings of morality. As Small (1998: 13) conceptualises, they “model, or stand as metaphor for, ideal relationships as the participants in the performance imagine them to be: relationships between person and person, between

individual and society, between humanity and the natural world and even perhaps the supernatural world.” The previous sections explore four areas of online ritual: music as meme; mourning rituals; music games; and online-offline hybrid music rituals. All the examples presented so far share several common characteristics as ritualistic online music practices. First, they all are symbolic activities that try to establish shared sets of norms and values around morality, behaviour, politics, affect, and taste, by connecting everyday mundane experiences with imagined audiences of citizens and fans, and the supernatural realm. These ritualistic cultures of circulation emerged within the context of media circulation on social media platforms, within a pre-existing visual culture of morally-oriented remixed media. Second, they are rooted in pre-existing social rituals such as salutations and votive offerings, including music games and traditional music rituals, and their use as outlets for political and civic discourse. Third, these ritualised musicking practices develop within the context of ubiquity and abundance outlined in Chapters 4 and 5, thus orienting ritual activities to both mundane and transient processes and to memory and the eternal, in contrast to the thesis by Miller et al. (2016: 165). Fourth, these musicking rituals are articulated through sacralised pieces of music that are either shared and well-known by the imagined recipients as historical milestones in the case of memes and music games, or that represent the ascension of an artist to the supernatural in the case of mourning practices.

In addition to this analysis of social media musicking practices as articulating ritualistic dynamics, the case studies outlined above can also be understood as part of two wider meta-rituals: communication and material exchange. If users engage in musical memetic practices to participate in the cultures of media circulation online, without a target audience in mind (as in the case of Diana in Fig. 6.7), it follows that their actions are part of a ritualised form of communication where music media replaces other forms text. In the case of music video meme circulation, users engage in a meta-conversation with the history of media and the specific cultural object, as well as with other users, real or imagined. Although different languages and grammar are present at any stage of online interaction, including internet language and platform-related communicational codes (Manovich 2001), for ritualistic purposes music plays the role of a vernacular online grammar. When users recirculate or remix a video, they are not only engaging in conversation with the direct audience that comments, rates and participates on the platform at any level; they are also engaging in a meta-conversation with the platform itself, which Miller (2011: 170) calls the “meta-friend”. Therefore, in this ritualised exchange of media messages, music takes on the role of a grammatical unit. However, this not only applies to music memes; when music is used as

part of mourning rituals, in games, or as an extension of offline rituals, it equally plays the role of a grammatical unit in the ritualised conversational process, because the premises of addressing imagined audiences, moral systems of belief and the more-than-human are indeed present. This is particularly true in the case of music media with political content, which directly replaces spoken or written political discourse that cannot be expressed through other means, as in the Spanish case. In addition, a significant part of personal communication and messages on the internet in general is made through phatic communication: GIFs, stickers and many other elements of social media grammar do not seek to send specific information, but rather play the role of social cues and small talk (Miller 2008)⁵, and music enables a rich form of this phatic conversational practices. Overall, the concepts of imagined audiences and imagined listening again prove to be necessary conditions for the maintenance of online social life as a ritualised form of communication.

The case studies above could also be understood as social rituals of music exchange. In the same way as Miller (2011) understands Facebook's textual use, musicking activities on social media and streaming platforms are also a form of Kula 2.0 ritual, where (im)material music content is the object that circulates. The music exchanges that take place in it are not under the control of any particular participant, but exist as an aggregate of smaller exchanges between friends, families and acquaintances. Even if most of the music circulated does not gather responses or comments, it works as a ritual because there is an imagined audience that makes possible the understanding of these exchanges as "gifts of co-presence" (ibid: 212), framed by previous understandings of music as gift and the mutually understood need to reciprocate (Baym 2018). Participants seem to understand these cultures of music circulation, being aware of their role in the overall exchange system, and participate in them as an everyday culture-making activity:

"(...) the same way you share information or opinions through Twitter, you share music with the same purpose: that the other person, that you think would like it or could be interested in it, receives it. (...) when I put something like 'for my girls' or 'for my friends', for me they are like presents. (...) like small moments of happiness that you share with people. (...) Not thinking about someone in particular or a specific moment, you simply say 'I am going to share this', like a present, 'I am going to send a present to the world, so that someone sees it'. Teresa, 6 October 2017

⁵ However, Vincent Miller has here a rather nihilistic take on phatic communication, almost considering it purposeless, from which I digress.

These cultures of music circulation transcend their individual participants and their intentions, potentially expanding their social worlds, whether they are conscious of it or not. In the internet-connected archipelago of users and fans, musical gifts are sent into the exchange circle without knowing who the recipient will be, or whether they will reciprocate, but with the conviction that the sent item will be valued by someone when received.

To summarise, the previous case studies are not only theme- or purpose-specific micro-rituals of music exchange, but also part of the meta-rituals of exchange and communication that take place in online social life. Such characterisation of online music gives rise to additional research questions: if music is a grammar tool, what kind of discourses are created? If music is considered a valued gift, what kind of values are ascribed to it? In short, what kind of (im)material object is online music? The next section addresses these questions, analysing the emerging moral economies of online music circulation.

6.4 The Moral Economies of Music Circulation

Considering music as a valued object of exchange could be interpreted as arguing for an approach to online music as commodity. Some critical theorists argue that sharing utopias are fabrications of social media companies to encourage users to interact with platforms and monetise their activities (Fuchs 2014; Terranova 2016; Lovink 2010). These utopias would then be promoted to extend the datafication of social life, consequently creating a mediascape where music is commodified and reified as an object that presupposes the listeners' response, as it is in other mediascapes of ubiquity (Kassabian 2013; Sterne 1997). From this point of view, music is circulated on social media because commercial agents push users to be musically active. In contrast with those critical approaches to social media that describe users as unaware of algorithmic mediation and media saturation, the previous chapters of this thesis explain people's motivations for undertaking musicking activities online, despite their awareness of algorithmic mediation. Participants admitted understanding the commodified character of online music, yet they consciously navigated the mediascape for their own sociality-oriented purposes. Moreover, evidence presented in the preceding chapters demonstrates that sharing utopias are, at least to an extent, building blocks of music cultures of circulation and rituals of music exchange, even if these may appear sometimes as unconscious social constructs. Chapter 3 argued that, in times of political turmoil and in a repressive political context, exchanging music is seen as a gift to help others cope and gain a better understanding of politics. Chapter 4 outlined how fan

reflexivity and practices of temporary and solidary fandom are used to reclaim agency against corporate influence, algorithms and saturation. Chapter 5 also showed that thinking in terms of imagined audiences and imagined listening to visual media items underlies social media musicking practices as tacit cultural norm in a mediascape of abundance and ubiquity, thus indicating the relevance of symbolic exchange over material value. Furthermore, this chapter has outlined how the ritualistic character of some musicking activities on social media points to the need to conceptualise them as music exchange rituals, and therefore question the assumption of users' lack of awareness about social media as a space for culture-making.

Instead of limiting the role of music in online exchanges to a commodity, I argue for an ethnomusicological approach that understands music as a meaning-rich cultural object. As the case studies above show, online music circulation is based on shared ideas of good and evil, which not only are intrinsically given to musical objects, but also transferred into etiquette and norms of behaviour, and that maintain customs and expectations through the movement of cultural artefacts. For instance, musical memes can be understood as a "gift of sayings" (Miller 2011: 212): encapsulated wisdom that combines musical and moral knowledge. Similarly, the circulation of music during collective mourning rituals represents an affective gift that expects to be reciprocated (or at least acknowledged), and that contains a moral lesson about life and death and the possibility to connect with the supernatural. These moral economies are at work in music cultures of circulation even when non-sacralised items are mobilised, and users do not know who the recipient will be or whether they will receive anything in return. In a way, music exchange rituals are "hope and wish" sharing utopias (Rando 2017) that are maintained by the users' actions, their understandings of music value, and their belief in the purpose of the ritual itself. In this sense, online musicking practices are socially successful in creating meaning because they are based on moral economies (in addition to the market economies that influence them).

In the case of online musicking among Spaniards, at least three additional moral principles govern communication and exchange rituals, being upheld as serving the common good. First, users understand music as intrinsically capable of educating others, not only in terms of their music-related knowledge of artists, styles and history, but also sonically and morally. Participants often evoked their educational purposes, particularly in the case of people with intense musicking activities and of participants who addressed family members. As was described in Chapter 2, Sue referred to this educational value of music regarding her teatime postings for her children (personal conversation 2017), as Jose did more informally for

instance. In relation to mourning, Sandra spoke of the value of music as “more a friend than some people” when dealing with personal struggles (Sandra 26 November 2017).

Second, this educational narrative is linked to a “discovery narrative” (Keegan-Phipps 2017)⁶ whereby users understand that finding out about new music is always intrinsically positive for all. Participants such as Javier, Cynthia and Diana saw their musicking activities as a form of spreading not just music knowledge, but more abstract concepts such as happiness, and seemed to downplay the relevance of sending to others something that they might dislike. In that sense, music has a positive value inscribed when it is sent into the exchange circle, whatever the style or artist, consequently providing a counterargument to subcultural theories of taste:

“... I like to see the reaction, the face going like ‘wow’ (happy surprise face) (...) you can imagine the face [online], although it is a bit impersonal. But I think that if they receive it as I do, like ‘wow what a great find’, then I think that someone else is having the same reaction somewhere else. So it is a little bit that, imagining it [that you could make someone happy].” Cynthia, 17 January 2018

“... because it’s positive, it’s good (...) because it makes you smile. I like to share happiness. (...) But I don’t expect anyone to answer. (...) What I wish is that someone sees it and enjoys it.” Diana, 10 October 2017

Third, these educational and discovery narratives of value are placed under the wider umbrella of civic duties and musical citizenship. However, this seems to appear as a middle ground between the religious understandings of karma that Venkatraman (2017) outlines, and a completely secularised idea of musical civics. As explained in Chapter 3 in reference to political messages, but also applicable here in relation to educational and discovery narratives, the ultimate objectives of circulating these music media items within the ritualised exchange system are linked to ideas of civic publics: improving social media communities and thus society at large. Examples in this chapter on moral musical memes and mourning also support this argument, because they seek to establish specific codes of public behaviour for the common good. As Johansson et al. point out, “if music is a daily companion and is as important as breathing, it may be seen as a common good” (2018: conclusion). Yet this belief in the power of Kula-like music circulation to achieve this civic publics still indicates a ritualistic approach to music exchange. Therefore, I argue that

⁶ Keegan-Phipps referred to this concept of the discovery narrative talking about his own project on digital folk musicking, therefore I believe that the use of the term in an online context should be attributed to him.

all these principles of education, morality, abstract happiness, and rules of online behaviour contribute to this moral economy of music circulation for civic participation and the common good, as abstract and imagined as this may be. However, the contrast between market and moral economies described in this section could wrongly suggest that these are clearly separate domains of dystopia and utopia. The next section provides a critical analysis of these moral economies, as well as outlining the ritualistic and moral elements of the market economies of the social media industry.

6.4.1 Critical Perspectives on Moral Economies and Ritualised Algocracies

The moral economies of online music circulation could also be analysed from a critical perspective, questioning the politics of these exchanges and particularly asking where the lines between ritualised and secular politics are. Here, ritualised practices are understood as everyday forms of non-institutional religious activity that follow dynamics in the manner of a ritual, in contrast to secular practices and politics that do not refer to a religious or spiritual sphere and do not follow ritual patterns. The ritualised musicking activities described in this chapter open the question of whether all activities within the particular form of technologic capitalism of social media are forms of religion. If the moral economies of music circulation on social media involve thinking in terms of the common good in ritualised ways, they denote an intrinsic belief in citizen action and human flourishing. However, it could be questioned whether this is an exclusive feature of social media interaction or of musicking activities. On one hand, considering the evidence presented in the previous sections, it could be concluded that these practices of musical citizenship are indeed ritualised, but not only because they follow the patterns of a ritual. They are everyday forms of religion to the extent that they require faith in the workings of civic publics and in how music exchange can make a positive impact in shared values. After all, in the context of Spanish ritualised politics and the specific context of state control, as well as the use of folk music explained above, the belief in political advancement of civil society could be understood as being, at least, overly optimistic. However, whether that confirms the ritualisation of Spanish politics in general, rather than the ritualistic use of social media, is also worth considering. On the other, when users circulate unknown pieces of music that have not been sacralised (as symbols of a genre, an ideology, or a moral value) or engage in practices of solidary fandom, they could be effectively de-sacralising the music circulation ritual, using the discovery and educational narratives outlined above to change the musicking culture of circulation into a secularised

space of musical civic action. But similarly, there is room to discuss whether the use of the internet itself is a form of secularisation against previously god-like gatekeepers, or whether any musicking practice within a hierarchical mediascape, such as social media platforms, is inherently ritualistic in its politics, in the sense that it is based in a belief or faith in citizen-led change and progress against commercial agents such as Spotify or Facebook.

It could be argued that because civic engagement and the attempt to establish norms of conduct is also part of wider societal dynamics, and not just rituals, the social media activities observed in this chapter respond solely to processes of cultural reproduction, rather than ritualistic practices. Users interact on social media as they would in any other public space and therefore expect norms of conduct to be the same – hence the shock that follows conflictive actions such as hacks, attacks, trolls and flames. Even if users perceived online spaces as “non-places” (Augé 2009) rather than as public spaces, it would make sense that they perform and reproduce processes of enculturation whereby rules and normativity are integrated as their own. After all, even in non-places there are set rules of behaviour and moral judgement that regulate ephemeral interaction. In that sense, musicking practices that do not have continuity in the long term, nor specific recipients, may be perceived as part of everyday secular spaces that follow societal norms, as previous chapters have described, rather than ritualised or spiritual domains as such.

It could be also questioned to what extent the politics of platforms themselves are ritualistic forms of religion, because the lines between ritualised and secular practices are even more unclear in the case of algorithmic politics. A superficial approach to social media technologies could categorise them as rational and scientific capitalist developments, while classifying human practices within them (such as the mourning practices outlined above) as ritualistic, but the dynamics are more complex. As was outlined in Chapters 4 and 5, algorithmic mediation influences social media practices to a large extent in a god-like form, often establishing the duration, quality, and speed of interactions around media circulation. This is especially true in the case of music algorithms in streaming platforms (Bonini 2017; Bonini and Gandini forthcoming), and their pushing of the discovery narrative as the core value and belief of online musicking. At the same time, users perceive the influence of algorithms but are unable to know and fully understand how they work, which surrounds algorithms with a god-like supernatural aura. Users both accept and question that their musicking practices develop in a mysterious system of algocracy (Aneesh 2006) that is understood as supernatural from the start, and which mediates their access to music and therefore to potentially spiritual experiences. Yet they believe that their practices of media

circulation can overcome, and even thwart, algorithmic mediation, at least to an extent. In that sense, a certain degree of ritualistic practice exists due to the characteristics of the social media environment. But similarly, the belief in musicking practices as potentially capable of improving humanity denotes an intrinsic faith in humans versus machines from users' part.

In addition, this religious and ritualistic approach to social media is far from limited to micro-social practices because users' faith in musical humanism has its algorithmic counterpart in the ICT industry. Besides the well-known mantra of social media companies such as Facebook using the values of connectedness, sharing, and discovery as a marketing narrative to sell their platforms (boyd 2010), a part of the avant-garde of ICT is rooted in a blind faith in progress, as James Mickens (2018) points out. The belief that algorithms, connectivity, and artificial intelligence can help people in achieving the common good is rarely questioned, even when some of these technologies are still largely misunderstood or have failed (such as the IoT and security sectors that Mickens describes). In that sense, the social media industry itself largely runs on religious practices and faith in progress, of which algocracies are the user-facing side of the ritual in a wider system of beliefs. Therefore, both at macro and micro levels, the social media practices of both users and industry agents are significantly based on ritualistic cultures of circulation of good and evil.

In view of this perspective, it could be indeed argued that the internet and its connectivity principles (Van Dijck 2013) have become fundamental values and beliefs of society, transcending its actual presence or utility. Just as in Chapters 4 and 5 the discussion revolved around the cultural constructs of music that is not listened to and circulates as silent, this conceptualisation of the internet as a ritualised religious system can be understood as a belief in media beyond its actual presence and use, that persists as a mode of life and production related to the supernatural. Moreover, if data collected from social media interaction such as musicking practices ends up feeding data sets that are used for completely different purposes (that are not fully understood, yet feared and believed) the argument for ritualised religious interaction as ultimate goal of online activities takes a broader dimension as social value. Admittedly, the Cambridge Analytica scandal (Cadwalladr and Graham-Harrison 2018),⁷ and the lack of significant consequences in terms of user abandonment, confirms rather than refutes the idea that even if users understand that their online practices are ultimately misused, they still believe in them as worthy of maintaining,

⁷ The Cambridge Analytica scandal revealed in early 2018 that personal information from millions of Facebook profiles had been collected without consent, using them for political purposes.

making the religious and ritualistic social aspects prevail over practical approaches to technology as tools. Indeed, the techno-mystical ideas of early cyberculture (Davis 1998) are still present in the ICT industry and in users' understandings of networked society, in forms that paradoxically combine a religious approach to the technocultural imaginary with a critical, almost apocalyptic, vision of technological futures. Some participants, such as Sue, Jose, Fernando, Sandra and Javier expressed in different ways that they both feared and believed in social media as places for sociality. As Chapter 4 described social media as a space of community but also of economic exploitation, here I argue that social media technologies and social media spaces are contemporary forms of religion to an extent, and that are both feared and believed in a religious manner.

To recapitulate, besides the ritualistic elements outlined in this chapter, related to the use of music as a crucial element of wider rituals such as mourning, internet communication, politics, and games, and the uses of music in offline rituals, further elements contribute to ritualistic aspects of musicking on social media. Music circulation practices on social media can also be understood as ritualised exchanges of musical objects, and as such they give rise to moral economies that support them. These moral economies are based on specific understandings of civic engagement and the struggle for the common good, such as educational and discovery narratives that promote musical humanism. But this should not be considered in isolation from the wider ritualistic context of these practices, including religious approaches to technology in capitalist society. Civic engagement and musical practices are also ritualised in their offline manifestations, and the social media industry itself runs to an extent on moral economies of progress and the belief that the internet contributes to the common good. At the same time, online practices have a mystical aura that stems from the cybercultures of the early days of the internet, and as such, negative anti-humanistic aspects fit in them as intrinsic parts of the ritual of technologically-mediated battles between good and evil, human and machine. The conclusion to this thesis suggests avenues for further research about the future of these algocratic systems and the online musicking rituals discussed here.

6.5 Conclusion

This chapter addresses the relationship between musicking practices on social media, visual cultures of circulation, ritualised social interaction and emerging systems of morality. This relationship is demonstrated by the evidence presented in four case studies, respectively

addressing music as memes, musical mourning rituals, music games, and the online manifestations of offline music rituals. They demonstrate how musicking rituals articulated through visual references to music on social media strive to establish sets of norms and values in relation to behaviour, affect, and taste, using imagined conceptualisations of the audience and imagined listening in the production of cultural meaning. These rituals also have the goal of connecting the mundane and the transient with memory and the eternal, using social media technologies and sacralised items to mediate between users and the supernatural. In addition, these musicking rituals are also used as part of wider practices of phatic communication. More importantly, these rituals are part of cultures of circulation that enact music exchange rituals, where music is understood as a valued object of exchange. These exchange rituals are based on moral economies, providing cultural meaning to music sharing as educational and discovering, and more broadly as civic engagement. This musical citizenship enabled by exchange rituals on social media develops within a wider context of rituals and civic engagement. The specific case of Spanish politics demonstrates this relationship, because it resides in a ritualistic tradition of political discussion. However, other macro phenomena also surround musicking rituals on social media. Rituals are largely the basis of internet communication, and beliefs in human development are upheld by social media companies. In that sense, musical citizenship and humanism are part of larger systems of belief that support contemporary society. In the final conclusion, further research avenues are suggested to investigate the resilience of these rituals, and whether ritualistic musicking practices on social media can coexist with commercial systems of belief and wider societal values of musical citizenship in times of media ubiquity and saturation.

7. Conclusion

Conceiving this study as an interdisciplinary research which bridges Ethnomusicology and Popular Music Studies with Social Media Anthropology and Digital Media Studies, this thesis contributes to current discussions in these disciplines by investigating the circulation of music online and its relationship with everyday sociality. Until now Media Anthropology has studied online sociality but without a specific focus on musicking practices. Ethnomusicology and Popular Music have mostly addressed online musicking practices as studies of scenes, and to a lesser extent, have analysed the circulation of specific works in music and video. Similarly, Media and Internet Studies have rarely addressed music, and when they have done so they have focused on the music industry and the power dynamics of internet-mediated music distribution. This thesis addresses the existing gap in the knowledge identified within the Literature Review and attempts to build an Ethnomusicology of online musicking, combining the methodologies of Social Media Anthropology and Ethnomusicology, with a view to explaining why and how people circulate music on social media.

The aim of this study is to understand the role of online music practices, particularly on social media, in the production and maintenance of social life. To achieve this objective, it scrutinizes why people post music on social media, and how music is an important element in online social life, shedding light on the value of music in online contexts. Specifically, this research investigates the following questions: Why do people circulate and exchange online music content? Why is music such a ubiquitous element in social media and specifically in the discourses of identity politics? What are the roles of online music exchange in comparison with previous offline practices? What are the motivations of social media users who do not receive direct benefits from the music and entertainment industries for their free promotional labour? How is the circulation of music part of wider dynamics of online citizenship and sociality? The research considers the role of online music circulation in the articulation of politics, from the micro levels of identity through to the macro dimensions of social participation and citizenship. In addition, it explores how users and fans build their own knowledge of online sociality through their daily practices and self-reflection.

As stated in the introduction to this thesis, this research project addresses these questions by conducting an online and offline ethnographic study of music activities on social media and streaming platforms among a specific, yet diverse, group of Spanish migrants in London, including an in-depth analysis of the evidence and arguments provided by participants and

set against the discussions developed in previous scholarship. This is organised around six thematic areas of identity, relationships, politics, fandom, audiences and ritual.

Music is circulated on social media because it enables a performative articulation of cultural and gender identity. This is so because social media musicking activities develop through the embodiment of music media on the personal profiles of users. This kind of online musicking is also an effective vehicle for articulating affective aspects of identity through the semiotic capacities of music media, although this may involve privileging the visual over its sonic capacities. Particularly in relation to the Spanish perspective of the study, this ethnography shows that social media musicking makes possible the online management of ethnicity and other processes of culture-making, within the complex network of cultural narratives of Spain and within the context of migration in the UK. The evidence presented in Chapter 1 also indicates that identity articulation can be performed through the reproduction of normativity or through its questioning, especially in the case of gender performance. Furthermore, the case study of reggaetón confirms the intersectionality of online identity performance, particularly when the politics of a controversial music genre are incorporated. Identity performance is thus closely related to the different ways of being Spanish online and offline.

Social media musicking activities are intrinsically social activities that enable the reproduction and maintenance of relationships, particularly in the context of Spanish migrants in London. The case studies show that the circulation of music on personal social media profiles is part of wider interpersonal processes of sociality linked to the enactment and reproduction of social groups such as friends and family. Therefore, music is circulated on social media as a form of online sociality put into practice. Chapter 2 elucidates that online music media is circulated as cultural capital, but more specifically as a currency of sociality with pre-existing ties, rather than as a form of distinction to establish new relationships in a host country. Moreover, this chapter also sheds light on how music media can be circulated as sacred items that hold specific social values within the context of particular social relationships such as parenthood. Chapter 2 also attests that the circulation of music on social media is often organised around stable nodes of committed distributors and tacit understandings of music's social value, showing that informal practices can heavily impact online musicking activities, even in large groups.

The macropolitical dimension of music circulation on social media comes particularly to the fore in relation to the contemporary conflicts over Brexit in the UK and plurinationality in

Spain. Spaniards in London undertake musicking activities on social media because it helps them articulate and perform political ideas. The evidence presented in Chapter 3 also shows that music media which articulates political content through comedy is particularly effective in a context of institutional repression such as the Spanish mediascape, although in some cases this can be part of a ritualised form of politics. More importantly, the circulation of music parodies on social media is part of online practices of citizenship that use music as a symbolic object of social cohesion with the capacity to build temporary political alliances when shared with others. Thus, music is circulated on social media because it enables forms of political practice at interpersonal and collective levels.

Social media musicking is also a contemporary form of musical fandom. Not only can fandom be performed and articulated through the embodiment of music media on a social media profile, but culture-making dynamics such as normativity, group belonging, and interpersonal relationships are reproduced through online fandom practices. Moreover, the case studies presented in Chapter 4 confirm that these forms of fandom through social media musicking develop in a context of algorithmic and commercial awareness, thus making users active agents in building them as temporary, solidary, or silent. Music also circulates on social media as cause and consequence of the appearance of fandom sampling as the typical form of online musical engagement. Therefore, social media musicking enables new forms of musical fandom, but the object of fandom may be of secondary relevance in comparison with the forms of sociality and reflexivity that it articulates. In that sense, social media music fandom is at once performative, relational and political.

An important element in explaining why music is circulated on social media are the users' conceptualisations of imagined audiences and their subsequent practices of imagined listening. The evidence presented in Chapter 5 confirms that in an environment where the audience is uncertain, and music might not be listened to, users participate in the social liveness of platforms by imagining their audiences and the impact of their musicking practices. This further confirms the value of music in online environments, which is understood as an abundant social object circulated for the common good, and with such widely shared cultural references that it can circulate silently as an evocation of sound. Thus, music is circulated on social media because imagined listening is the tacit cultural norm that governs social media musicking and because music media can act as a symbolic meaning-making object, enabling their use as cultural objects of exchange. Therefore, social media music practices find their *raison d'être* in a reflexive and symbolic social order that gives rise to specific moral economies of music circulation.

Finally, social media musicking practices are also part of exchange rituals, where soundless and visual music media are circulated for transcendental and supernatural purposes and to expand social circles. The evidence presented in the four thematic sections of Chapter 6 shows that the circulation of music media, mainly as a visual object that evokes sound and genre, helps users to establish norms and values and create cultural meaning. Social media musicking practices often connect the mundane with the supernatural, sometimes using sacralised items of music media as symbolic objects of morality, and understanding social media platforms as vehicles for and holders of the sacred. More importantly, ritualistic practices further confirm that music is considered a valued social object that is sent into the exchange circle as a practice of moral and civic engagement within the moral economies and cultures of circulation of online sociality. Therefore, in the context of social media and streaming industries, music is shared because these forms of musical citizenship and musical humanism are part of moral economies and greater systems of exchange and belief that support contemporary society.

To summarise, the research underpinning this thesis responds to the question of why people post music on social media by arguing that in circulating music online through their social media and streaming profiles users develop new forms of culture-making. Social media musicking creates arenas in which users can expand their social worlds, in turn, taking advantage of the affordances offered by platforms to develop musicking activities relevant to themselves. Sharing music links with others using the capacities of social media and streaming platforms, and commenting on and rating music content allows users to perform identity and political affiliations, for instance as Jasmin performs her self-identified Andalusianess by posting flamenco songs, or as Rose performs her cornerstones of musical and cultural (political) identity combining Catalan and heavy metal iconography, and as Diana performs her LGBTQ identity and political engagement posting music-related content. Musicking activities on social media also create temporary alliances around musical taste, for example through the creation of the 'guilty pleasures' playlist of the 'Bloody Immigrants' group. These temporary alliances can also be assembled around political ideas and forms of online citizenship, as the case studies on Brexit and the Catalanian referendum demonstrate, but also when the politics of a music genre are part of intersectional political statements as the case study on reggaeton outlines. Sharing music links also expands and enriches the social lives of users through exchanging music with known and unknown others, as it is the case for Cynthia and her community of online and offline friends around musics of the black Atlantic. Posting music online can give rise to new norms of behaviour or reinforce pre-

existing moral codes, as for instance in the musical transmission and mourning practices that Sue maintains with her family, or through the uses of music as a moral meme that Daniel often circulates. Musicking on social media also allows users to maintain relationships in migration contexts, for example with friends as Teresa does, and with families back home as Sandra and Jose show. Maintaining ties with other communities such as co-workers or former colleagues is also an important form of social media musicking, as Rose, Javier and Anabel explain for their present and past work lives both within and outside the music industries. In short, music circulation in social media environments continues and expands the roles of pre-existing kinds of music media offline, providing new forms of value to music as an inherently social object. Similarly, people post and share music on social media because it enables new ways to articulate citizenship and participate in society. Social media musicking also gives rise to new ways of understanding public spheres and collectivities, real and imagined, as well as new forms of understanding music media, sonic and visual. These culture-making practices of social media musicking also make possible other meta-cultural processes of meaning, which involve reflecting about social media technologies themselves and their power structures, and social values at large within these commercial systems. Paraphrasing Small (1998), exchanging and circulating music media is the stuff of (social media) culture: a way of being in the world that revolves around online musicking and its tacit understandings. Social media musicking is at once a performative, relational, political, fanatic (fanlike) and symbolic form of reflexive and interactive culture-making that develops in the 2.0 mediascape.

Making a contribution to Ethnomusicology and Social Media Anthropology, the thesis attempts to provide an anti-essentialist, non-pathologizing account of social media musicking. The evidence presented supports an argument against a binary opposition of consumer-producer, but also against a re-simplification of participants as prosumers. Rather, it shows how social media musicking is not only related to people and their relationship with music as products of the music and media industries, but is also related to citizenship and sociality, similarly departing from ideas of online individualism or political atomisation. In this sense, this thesis bridges the disciplines of Ethnomusicology and Social Media Anthropology by treating online musicking as (im)material culture in processes of meaning-making. If music media is increasingly online content, this thesis shows that a discussion of classic topics of Anthropology such as identity, relationships, exchange and ritual provides fruitful insights which help in understanding online cultures of music circulation. This re-materialisation of the study of online music consequently directs the discussion towards an

analysis of the different ways in which users turn the intangible experience of music into something more tangible, yet still part of cultural domains that are mainly immaterial constructions. Paraphrasing Frith (2001: 26), the six thematic areas of this thesis show that users turn the intangible, time-bound aural and visual online experience into something that has a relatively materialised impact in their social worlds. In the same way, the research supports a perspective of online communities as imagined, but takes this idea further by showing that listening practices can also be based on imagining belonging and even imagining sound. Yet these imagined practices are also ways of meaning-making and re-materialising the impact of music on the social lives of users: it is through imagined listening that online music is placed in an exchange circle where it can potentially impact others. Thus, instead of conceptualising assemblages of musicians and users as dynamics of genre formation (Born and Haworth 2018), this thesis shows how the circulation of music online is a materialisation of the will and desire of users to form, dissolve and inhabit temporary music-based alliances on social media.

The discussion also shows that a territorialised study of social media practices is necessary to highlight dynamics of place in relation to politics and musical traditions, but also that home sounds can be anything. The relationship between migration and traditional folk music may not always be present, as is the case in this study, and the home-making character of music may at times reproduce a space of repression. In this sense, the territorialised approach of this thesis also illustrates the interrelationship of local and global music cultures of circulation. Rather than arguing for a dichotomy between locally-based territorialised dynamics and global disintermediated flows, this research analyses social media musicking as a complex and overlapping disjunctive order (Appadurai 1990), where the different mediascapes are building blocks of sets of interrelated imagined worlds.

The focus on audiences and users instead of musicians provides insights about the value of music online and its associated moral economies, rather than discussing music's value as a commercial product. Although I do not argue for notions of universality in relation to the value of music, I hope that the findings of this study can be applicable to wider groups of people than analyses of mutual endorsement and value within specific music scenes. Similarly, this thesis avoids conceptualising online activities as excessive or music as diminished in value. Instead, it presents a picture of music as a valued social object in a mediascape of intense reflexive abundance, going beyond a conceptualisation of distributed ubiquity in favour of an understanding of music media as part of assemblage structures re-materialising the intangible online music experience.

7.1 Future Research

There are several themes raised in this work that require further development and open avenues for future research, particularly highlighting the need for a critical politics of music circulation. The seemingly wide reach of the moral economies of music circulation and the use of music media as online social objects of exchange may indicate an emerging unexplored field.

The critical perspectives on algocracies outlined in Chapter 6 prompt questions about the future of social media and their practices. If ritualised activities underlie social media interactions, it would be worth investigating in future research how resilient these beliefs are. In the current mediascape of ubiquity and commercial exploitation of data, it might not be long before users change their value systems due to the over-controlled character of social media and streaming platforms. If data mining awareness has not been enough to modify the cultural value ascribed to music and its socialities, this does not mean that advertising overload or lack of novelty would not have an impact on ritualised practices. Since trust is one of the technoemotions that drives online sociality (Svedmark 2016), it is worth investigating in the future what breaks users' trust in technologies and in other users. However, rather than thinking in terms of whether users are 'really' listening or engaging in online sociality (a discussion on attentive, normative or adequate modes of listening and social interaction) or whether certain social media practices indicate some sort of collective alienation, the argument of visual prevalence seems more compelling in order to explain social media and musicking trends, particularly considering the case of ritualised practices. As highlighted above, a reliance on iconography of well-known sacralised artists and pieces may already be a meaning-driven response directed at enriching online sociality in such saturated and co-opted cultures of circulation.

It is also worth considering to what extent the algocratic narratives of discovery and the prevalence of visual and ritualistic elements may influence the resurgence of orientalism online. Social media and streaming platforms provide access to the music and dance cultures of the world, allowing archived footage of other musical traditions to travel quickly to new locations. However, these music media pieces are often decontextualized and without adequate background information, fostering a voyeuristic spectacle of otherness. In addition, these music videos are sometimes re-captioned and re-formulated by users who lack sufficient understanding of non-Western cultures and occasionally engage in casual racism. Self-exoticizing practices also arise from the prevalence of visual communication and

the need to stand out from the ubiquitous presence of music media. In addition, in algorithmic systems the issues of ownership and representation are fuelled by the cultures of circulation that use remix and repurposing of media as their communication grammar, effectively providing arenas for cultural appropriation and economic extractivism. The ritualised belief in music redistribution as intrinsically good for humanity may have a negative counterpart because of its disconnection from humanities and music education. The characteristics and affordances of social media and streaming technologies both give rise to and crush musicking practices and their associated cultures of circulation. It might well be that in the future ritualistic musicking on social media becomes difficult to maintain as was once the case with MySpace. If culture rests on values whereby people are expected to live and judge each other, the questioning of how these values emerged and are validated can indeed make the mediascape change significantly. Both issues of saturation and orientalism would require additional research in their own right which is beyond the scope of this thesis, but they are indeed worth considering for future investigation.

Another area of the field of critical politics of music circulation is related to the reggaetón case study included in Chapter 1, which points to the complexity of race issues in Spain, particularly vis-à-vis the brown and black Latin American other and their music traditions. The reggaetón case study indicates the need for a separate study that considers the intersectional relationship of Spaniards as relatively privileged Europeans in comparison with Latin Americans, but at the same time includes the perspective of Spaniards as traditionally orientalist others in European narratives, which is particularly relevant in the case of Spanish migrants in Europe and Latin-American music. Spain still has a number of traditional festivities that involve blackface, and in contexts such as carnival this may be paradoxically understood as 'positive' blackface, aimed to represent and defend newly-arrived African migrants in intrinsically subversive musical practices against the political establishment. In this context, the appearance of Spanish-made reggaetón or rap could be understood as a form of blackface or as a practice of cultural appropriation, where relatively privileged metropolitans appropriate the musical languages of protest and subversion of the formerly colonised. This is even more relevant considering the recent success of flamenco-inspired trap, and the multiple layers of cultural and racial conflict it encapsulates.

Similar critical politics have been pointed out in Chapter 6 in relation to music games. If music media circulation and music quizzes contribute to improve the algorithmic performance of commercial pages and to boost users' engagement with commercial actors such as radio stations, music venues, promoters and social media platforms in general, it would be

interesting to see research in the future that investigates the origin of these games. It may well be that some of these games are vernacular forms of sociality as they are described in this thesis, but the lack of qualitative research in this area leaves many questions unanswered.

In addition to these avenues for future critical research of music circulation, some of the case studies outlined in this thesis point to possible longitudinal studies of social media musicking. Chapter 2 raises the theme of musical collection management within family settings, and whether they are still relevant forms of material culture. It would be necessary to do in-depth studies of specific families involving all their members to fully understand how they manage their digital and physical music collections and their access to them. This would provide useful insights about processes of familiar enculturation and transmission, and whether they differ from previous dynamics around physical home libraries. In the same way that Livingstone and Sefton-Green (2016) analyse for a class of pupils in relation to music learning, and in line with studies made in the Pew Internet and American Life Project that focus on home settings, it would be interesting to see how music libraries are managed by families in the Spanish context, and in the Spanish diaspora. However, such a project would require a team of researchers and considerable funding in order to generate sufficient insights, particularly to be able to compare different families across borders and transnational families settled in different locales.

Lastly, outside Ethnomusicology and Social Media Anthropology, it is also worth considering the philosophical questions raised by some of the conclusions of this research. If participants refer to an abstract, generalised other, it may be understood as proof of the rise of a vernacular Heideggerian 'they' in contemporary conceptualisations of social media interaction. Similarly, the attitudes of participants towards a kind of online musical humanism could also be studied in the same manner that Rando (2017) analyses the concepts of wish, hope and utopia in music technologies. In addition, an area that is not explored in this research is the relationship of this philosophical vernacular with the non-users and the anti-users of social media. It is worth considering for future research to what extent users define themselves as particular kinds of social actors and citizens in opposition to non-users (and vice versa), and how both groups may hold similar humanistic values in their technological choices. Although initially I had planned to include this topic, the fieldwork proved to be too intensive to develop it properly and I hope to work on this in the future.

Overall, this thesis not only responds to the questions outlined in the introduction, but also opens new paths of enquiry, pointing to the fruitful new research area that it uncovers. It is in this spirit that I conclude this project, accepting that a PhD is just the beginning of a project on which I will continue to do more research throughout my career.

References

Bibliography

- AFP, 2017. Spanish woman given jail term for tweeting jokes about Franco-era assassination, *The Guardian*, 30 March. Available from: <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2017/mar/30/spanish-woman-given-jail-term-for-tweeting-jokes-about-franco-era-assassination>. Accessed 21 March 2019.
- Airoidi, M., Beraldo, D., and Gandini, A., 2016. Follow the algorithm: An exploratory investigation of music on YouTube. *Poetics*, 57, 1 – 13.
- Allington, D., Dueck, B. and Jordanous, A., 2015. Networks of value in electronic music: SoundCloud, London, and the importance of place. *Cultural Trends*, 24:3, 211 – 222. DOI: 10.1080/09548963.2015.1066073.
- Altuna, M., 2017. Incertidumbre entre los Españoles que viven en el Reino Unido tras el Brexit, *La Vanguardia*, 29 January. Available from: <http://www.lavanguardia.com/internacional/20170129/413802171897/incertidumbre-residentes-espanoles-reino-unido-brexit.html>. Accessed 1 June 2017.
- Amnesty International Spain, 2017. *Libertad de Expresión en España*. Available at: <https://www.es.amnesty.org/en-que-estamos/espana/libertad-de-expresion/>. Accessed 13 June 2017.
- Anderson, B., 1991. *Imagined Communities. Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*. Revised 2nd Edition. London: Verso.
- Andrejevic M., 2008. Watching Television Without Pity. The Productivity of Online Fans. *Television and New Media*, Vol. 9, No.1, January 2008, 24 – 26. DOI: 10.1177/1527476407307241.
- Aneesh, A., 2006. *Virtual Migration: the programming of globalization*. Durham: Duke University Press.
- Appadurai, A., 1990. Disjuncture and Difference in the Global Cultural Economy. *Public Culture*, Vol. 2, No. 2: Spring 1990.
- Arnold, G., Cookney, D., Fairclough, K., and Goddard, M. eds., *Music/Video: Histories, Aesthetics, Media*. London and New York: Bloomsbury.

- Attias, B., Gavanoas, A. and Rietveld, H., 2013. *DJ Culture in the Mix*. London and New York: Bloomsbury.
- Augé, M., 2009. *Non-Places. An Introduction to Supermodernity*. Trans. John Howe. London: Verso.
- Auslander, P., 2006. *Liveness. Performance and the anxiety of simulation*. In Bennett, A., Shank, B. and Toynbee, J. eds., *The popular music studies reader*. London: Routledge, 85 – 94.
- Austin, M., 2016. *Music Video Games. Performance, Politics and Play*. New York and London: Bloomsbury.
- Baily, J. and Collyer, M., 2006. Introduction: Music and Migration. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, 32: 2, 167 – 182. DOI:10.1080/13691830500487266.
- Bakardjieva, M. and Gaden, G., 2012. Web 2.0: Technologies of the Self. In Bolin, G. ed, *Cultural Technologies. The Shaping of Culture in Media and Society*. Oxon: Routledge, 153 –169.
- Baudrillard, J., 1988. Simulacra and Simulations. In Poster, M. ed., *Jean Baudrillard: Selected Writings*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 166 – 184.
- Bayley, A. and Nooshin, L., 2017. Whose difference? Whose 'multiculturalism'?, *British Forum for Ethnomusicology One-Day Conference - 'Listening to Difference': Music and Multiculturalism*. University of Cambridge, Cambridge, UK, 21 October 2017.
- Baym, N., –
 - 2010. *Personal connections in the digital age*. Cambridge: Polity.
 - 2018. *Playing to the Crowd. Musicians, Audiences and the Intimate Work of Connection*. New York: New York University Press.
- Baym, N. and Burnett, R., 2009. Amateur experts: International fan labour in Swedish independent music. *International Journal of Cultural Studies* 12(5), 433 – 449.
- Baym, N. and Ledbetter, A., 2009. Tunes that Bind?. *Information, Communication and Society*, 12:3, 408-427, DOI: 10.1080/13691180802635430.

- Becker, A. B., 2011. Political Humor as Democratic Relief? The Effects of Exposure to Comedy and Straight News on Trust and Efficacy. *Atlantic Journal of Communication*, 19:5, 235-250, DOI: 10.1080/15456870.2011.622191.
- Beer, D., and Burrows, R., 2010. Consumption, Prosumption and Participatory Web Cultures: An introduction. *Journal of Consumer Culture* 10 (1), 3-12. DOI: 10.1177/1469540509354009.
- Belt, T.L., 2015. Is Laughter the Best Medicine for Politics? Commercial versus Noncommercial YouTube Videos. In Farrar-Myers, V. and Vaughn J. S. eds., *Controlling the Message. New Media in American Political Campaigns*. New York: NYU Press, 200 – 218.
- Bennett, A., 1999. Subcultures or neo-tribes? Rethinking the relationship between youth, style and musical taste. *Sociology*, vol. 33, no. 3, 599 – 617.
- Bennett, L. W., 2007. Relief in Hard Times: A Defense of Jon Stewart's Comedy in an Age of Cynicism. *Critical Studies in Media Communication*, 24: 3, 278 – 283. DOI: 10.1080/07393180701521072.
- Biddle, I. and Knights, V., 2007 (2016). Introduction: National Popular Musics: Betwixt and Beyond the Local and Global. In Biddle, I. and Knights, V., eds., *Music, National Identity and the Politics of Location*. Aldershot: Ashgate, 1 – 18.
- Biel, J. I. and Gatica-Perez, D., 2009. Wearing a YouTube hat: directors, comedians, gurus and user aggregated behavior. *Proceedings of the 17th ACM international conference on Multimedia*. Beijing, China, 19-24 October 2009, 833-836.
- Bilbao Ubillos, J.M., 2015. La llamada *Ley Mordaza*: La Ley Orgánica 4/2015 de Seguridad Ciudadana. *Teoría y Realidad Constitucional*, 36 (2015): 217 – 260.
- Billig, M., 2005. *Laughter and Ridicule. Towards a Social Critique of Humour*. London: Sage.
- Boellstorff, T., 2008. *Coming of Age in Second Life. An Anthropologist Explores the Virtually Human*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Boellstorff, T., Nardi, B., Pearce, C., Taylor, T.L., 2012. *Ethnography and Virtual Worlds: A Handbook of Method*. Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press.

- Bonini, T. –
 - 2011, The media as ‘home-making’ tools: life story of a Filipino migrant in Milan. *Media, Culture and Society*, 33 (6), 869 – 883. DOI: 10.1177/0163443711411006.
 - 2017, *Convivial Algorithms: Music Consumption in the Digital Age*. King’s College London, 14 November.
- Booth, P., 2010. *Digital Fandom. New Media Studies*. New York: Peter Lang.
- Born, G., 2011. Music and the materialization of identities. *Journal of Material Culture*, 16(4), 376 – 388. DOI: 10.1177/1359183511424196.
- Born, G. and Haworth, C., 2018. From Microsound to Vaporwave: Internet-Mediated Musics, Online Methods and Genre. *Music and Letters*, Vol. 98 No. 4, 601 – 647. DOI:10.1093/ml/gcx095.
- Bosco, A. and Vernay, S., 2012. Electoral Epidemic: The Political Cost of the Economic Crisis in Southern Europe. *South European Society and Politics*, 17:2, 129 – 154. DOI: 10.1080/13608746.2012.747272.
- Boudreault-Fournier, A. –
 - 2013. Sharing Music, Weaving the Social: A Spectrum from Montreal to Havana. Paper presented at *Music, Digitisation, Mediation: Towards Interdisciplinary Studies*. University of Oxford, July 2013.
 - 2016. The Fortune of Scarcity: Digital Music in Circulation. In Hjorth, L., Horst, H., Galloway, A. and Bell, G. eds., *The Routledge Companion to Digital Ethnography*. Oxon: Routledge, 344 – 353.
- Bourdieu, P., 1984. *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgment of Taste*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

- boyd, h. –
 - 2006. Friends, Friendsters and MySpace Top 8: Writing Community into being on social network sites. *First Monday*, 11(12). Vol. 11, Number. 12 – 14 December 2006. Available at: <http://firstmonday.org/htbin/cgiwrap/bin/ojs/index.php/fm/article/viewArticle/1418/1336>. Accessed 21 March 2019.
 - 2010. Facebook and ‘radical transparency’ (a rant). *Apophenia* blog. Retrieval at: <http://www.zephorias.org/thoughts/archives/2010/05/14/facebook-and-radical-transparency-a-rant.html> Accessed 27 August 2018.
 - 2011. Social Network Sites as Networked Publics: Affordances, Dynamics and Implications. In Z. Papacharissi ed., *A Networked self: Identity, Community and Culture on Social Network Sites*. New York: Routledge, 39 – 48.
 - 2014. *It’s Complicated: The Social Lives of Networked Teens*. New Haven, CT and London: Yale University Press.
 - 2015. Making sense of teen life: Strategies for capturing ethnographic data in a networked era. In Hargittai, E. and Sandvig, C. eds., *Digital research confidential: The secrets of studying behavior online*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 79 – 102.
- boyd, D and Ellison, N., 2007. Social Networking Sites: Definition, History and Scholarship. *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication* 13 (1), October 2007, 210 – 230.
- Brassett, J. and Sutton, A., 2017, British satire, everyday politics: Chris Morris, Armando Iannucci and Charlie Brooker. *The British Journal of Politics and International Relations*, Vol. 19(2), 245 – 262.
- Brøvig-Hanssen, R. and Harkins, P., 2012, Contextual incongruity and musical congruity: the aesthetics and humour of mash-ups. *Popular Music*, Vol.31, No.1 (January 2012), 87 – 104.
- Bruns, A., 2008. *Blogs, Wikipedia, Second Life, and beyond: From production to produsage*. New York: Peter Lang.
- Bull, M., 2012. The Audio-Visual Ipod. In Sterne, J., ed. *The Sound Studies Reader*. Oxon: Routledge, 197 – 208.

- Burgess, J. and Green, J., 2009. *YouTube: Online Video and Participatory Culture*. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Burns, Kelli S., 2009. *Celeb 2.0. How Social Media Foster Our Fascination with Popular Culture*. Santa Barbara, CA: Greenwood Press.
- Butler, J., 1999 (1990). *Gender Trouble* (Revised Edition). London and New York: Routledge.
- Cadena Ser/OhMyLol, 2017. *Becky G: "Estoy muy orgullosa de Mayores" #LaVidaModerna*. Available from: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9rW01Yiowg> Accessed 30 March 2018.
- Cadwalladr, C. and Graham-Harrison, E., 2018. Revealed: 50 million Facebook profiles harvested for Cambridge Analytica in major data breach. *The Guardian*, 17 March. Available at: <https://www.theguardian.com/news/2018/mar/17/cambridge-analytica-facebook-influence-us-election> Accessed 21 November 2018.
- Caglar, A., 1997. Hyphenated identities and the limits of 'culture'. In Modood, T. and Werbner, P. eds., *The Politics of Multiculturalism in the New Europe. Racism, Identity and Community*. London and New York: Zed Books, 169 – 185.
- Cantor-Navas, J., 2017. Spanish Rapper Cesar Strawberry Sentenced to Prison for Tweets, *Billboard*, 19 January. Available from: <http://www.billboard.com/articles/columns/latin/7662300/cesar-strawberry-sentenced-prison-tweets-spanish-rapper-def-con-dos> Accessed 21 March 2019.
- Cascone, K., 2000. The Aesthetics of Failure: "Post-Digital" Tendencies in Contemporary Computer Music'. *Computer Music Journal*, 24, 12 – 18.
- Chambers, D., 2013. *Social Media and Personal Relationships: Online Intimacies and Networked Friendship*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Chan, C., 2018. Internet Memeing as Ritualized Practice: Bricolage, Obscurity, and the Communal Mindset in YouTube 'But' Memes. Paper at the 3rd ICTM *International Music Forum, Approaches to Research on Music and Dance in the Internet Era*. CCOM, Beijing, 11 –14 July.
- Charles, C., 2019. *Psyculture in Bristol: Careers, Projects and Strategies in Digital Music-Making*. PhD Thesis, University of Bristol.

- Covach, J., 1995. Stylistic Competencies, Musical Satire, and “This is Spinal Tap”. In Marvin, E. W. and Hermann, R., *Concert Music, Rock and Jazz since 1945: Essays and Analytical Studies*. Rochester and Woodbridge: University of Rochester Press, 399 – 421.
- Crawford, K., 2009. Following you: Disciplines of listening in social media. *Continuum*, 23:4, 525 – 535. DOI: 10.1080/10304310903003270.
- Dalmonte, R., 1995. Towards a Semiology of Humour in Music. *International Review of Aesthetics and Sociology of Music*, Vol.26, No.2 (December 1995), 167 – 187.
- Dalsgaard, S., 2016. The Ethnographic Use of Facebook in Everyday Life. *Anthropological Forum*, 26:1, 96 – 114. DOI: 10.1080/00664677.2016.1148011.
- Davis, E., 1998. *TechGnosis: Myth, Magic and Mysticism in the Age of Information*. New York: Harmony Books.
- Davison, P., 2007. The Language of Internet Memes. In Mandiberg, M. ed., *The Social Media Reader*. New York: NYU Press, 120 – 132.
- Dawkins, R., 1976. *The Selfish Gene*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Deleurme, O., 2016. Españoles que regresan por el ‘Brexit’. *El País*, 28 December. Available from: http://elpais.com/elpais/2016/12/27/videos/1482840093_101140.html Accessed 21 March 2019.
- Deleuze, G. and Guattari, F., 1980. *A Thousand Plateaus. Capitalism and Schizophrenia*. English trans. Brian Massumi, 1987. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
- De Martino, E., 2013 (1961). *La Terra del Rimorso*. Milan: Il Saggiatore.
- Denisov, A. V., 2015, The Parody Principle in Musical Art. *International Review of Aesthetics and Sociology of Music*, Vol.46, No.1 (June 2015), 55 – 72.
- De Nora, T. –
 1999. Music as Technology of the Self. *Poetics*, 27 (1999), 31 – 56.
 2000. *Music in Everyday Life*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

2006. Music and Self-Identity. In Bennett, A., Shank, B. and Toynebee, J. eds., *The popular music studies reader*. London: Routledge., 141 – 147.
- Desfor Edles, L., 1998. *Symbol and Ritual in the New Spain. The Transition to Democracy after Franco*. Cambridge University Press.
 - Deuze, M., 2012. Media Life. *Media, Culture and Society*, 33(1), 137 – 148.
 - Diamant-Cohen, A. and Golan, O., 2016. Downloading culture: community building in a decentralized file-sharing collective. *Information, Communication and Society*. DOI: 10.1080/1369118X.2016.1244275.
 - DiNucci, D., 1999. Fragmented Future. *Print*. 53 (4): 32. Available at: http://darcy.com/fragmented_future.pdf Accessed 16 March 2019.
 - Dubois, E. and Blank, G. 2018, The echo chamber is overstated: the moderating effect of political interest and diverse media. *Information, Communication and Society*, 21:5, 729 – 745. DOI: 10.1080/1369118X.2018.1428656.
 - Duffett, M., 2013. *Understanding Fandom*. New York and London: Bloomsbury.
 - Durham, B., –
 2013. On Modes of Digital Music Consumption: Ownership, Possession, Access. Paper presented at *Music, Digitization, Mediation: Towards Interdisciplinary Music Studies*, University of Oxford, July 2013.
 2018. Curating Online Sounds. In Bull, M. ed., *The Routledge Companion to Sound Studies*. Oxon and New York: Routledge, 231 – 238.
 - Durham, B. and Born, G. (forthcoming). Online Music Consumption and the Formalisation of Informality: Exchange, Labour and Sociality in Two Music Platforms. Article draft from the authors discussed as part of Goldsmiths' Music Research Seminar Series, University of London.
 - Edmond, M., 2014. 'Here We Go Again: Music Videos after YouTube'. *Television and New Media*, 15(4), 305 – 320. DOI: 10.1177/1527476412465901.
 - Eldiario.es, 2017. El Cabildo de Tenerife retira la ayuda al concierto de Maluma por sus letras machistas. *Eldiario.es, Tenerife Ahora*. 9 August. Available from: https://www.eldiario.es/tenerifeahora/cabildo/Cabildo-retira-concierto-Maluma-machistas_0_674033112.html Accessed 27 September 2018.

- El País, 2017. OT suaviza la letra sexual de ‘Mayores’ de Becky G porque el programa también se emite en Clan. *El País*. 31 October. Available from: https://elpais.com/cultura/2017/10/31/television/1509452043_452012.html Accessed 27 September 2018.
- Ernst, W., 2012. *Digital Memory and the Archive*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
- Farci, M., Rossi, L., Boccia Artieri, G., and Giglietto F., 2016. Networked intimacy. Intimacy and friendship among Italian Facebook users. *Information, Communication & Society*, DOI: 10.1080/1369118X.2016.1203970.
- Feld, S., 1984. Sound Structure as Social Structure. *Ethnomusicology*, 28(3), 383 – 409. DOI: 10.2307/851232.
- Fenby-Hulse, K., 2016. Rethinking the Digital Playlist: Mixtapes, Nostalgia and Emotionally Durable Design. In Nowak, R. and Whelan, A. eds., *Networked Music Cultures: Contemporary approaches, emerging issues*. London: Palgrave Macmillan, 171 – 188.
- Fernandez, J., –

2013. *Si no puedo perrear, no es mi revolución*. Blog post on *Mari Kazetari*, 24 July. Available at: <http://gentedigital.es/comunidad/june/2013/07/24/si-no-puedo-perrear-no-es-mi-revolucion/> Accessed 2 November 2018.

2017. Chocolate remix: el reguetón lésbico calienta más que el de los machos. *Pikara Magazine*, 6 June. Available from: <http://www.pikaramagazine.com/2017/06/chocolate-remix-lesbian-reggaeton/> Accessed 27 September 2018.
- Fikentscher, K., 2000. *“You Better Work!” Underground Dance Music in New York City*. Hanover and London: Wesleyan University Press.
- Forman, A. E., Kern, R., Gil-Egui, G., 2012. Death and mourning as sources of community participation in online social networks: R.I.P. pages in Facebook. *First Monday*, August 2012. Available at: <http://journals.uic.edu/ojs/index.php/fm/article/view/3935>. Accessed 22 August 2018. DOI: 10.5210/fm.v0i0.3935.

- Foucault, M., 1988. Technologies of the Self. In Martin, L., Gutman, H. and Hutton, P. eds., *Technologies of the Self: A Seminar with Michel Foucault*. London: University of Massachusetts Press, 16 – 49.
- Freemuse, 2004. *Censorship in Spain*. Freemuse, 28 January. Available from: <http://freemuse.org/archives/197>. Accessed 9 June 2017.
- Friedman, J.C., 2013. *The Routledge History of Social Protest in Popular Music*. New York and Oxon: Routledge.
- Frith, S. —
 - 1996a. Music and Identity, in Hall, S. and Du Gay, P., eds., *Questions of Cultural Identity*. London: Sage, 108 – 127.
 - 1996b. *Performing Rites. On the Value of Popular Music*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
 - 2001. The Popular Music Industry. In: S. Frith, W. Straw and J. Street, ed., *The Cambridge Companion to Pop and Rock*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 26 – 52.
 - 2002. “Look! Hear!” The uneasy relationship of music and television. *Popular Music*. Cambridge University Press, 21(3), 277 – 290. DOI: 10.1017/S0261143002002180.
- Frizzera, A. and Campos, R., 2014. ‘¿Sueñan los modernos con ovejas acústicas?’ (“Do hipsters dream of acoustic sheep?”). *Nativa.cat*, 29 May 2014. Retrievable at: <http://www.nativa.cat/2014/05/suenan-los-modernos-con-ovejas-acusticas/>. Accessed 4 February 2019.
- Fuchs, C., 2014. *Social Media. A critical introduction*. London: Sage.
- Furundarena, A., 2017. El reguetón ayuda a crear un mundo más sano. *Diario de Extremadura (Hoy)*, 25 June. Available from: <http://www.hoy.es/gente-estilo/regueton-ayuda-crear-20170625003021-ntvo.html> Accessed 30 March 2018.
- Galuszka, P., 2015. New Economy of Fandom, *Popular Music and Society*, 38: 1, 25 – 43. DOI: 10.1080/03007766.2014.974325.
- Gandini, A., 2016. *A digital sociology of YouTube*. Paper presented at the *YouTube Conference*, Middlesex University London, 23 – 24 September.

- Gandini, A. and Bonini, T., forthcoming. “First Week is Editorial, Second Week is Algorithmical”: The New Gatekeepers of the Music Industry. *Social Media and Society*.
- Garcia, L.M., 2015. At home, I’m a tourist: Musical migration and affective citizenship in Berlin. *Journal of Urban Cultural Studies*, Volume 2, Numbers 1 – 2, 1 June 2015, 121 – 134 (14). DOI: 10.1386/jucs.2.1-2.121_1.
- García Gallardo, F. J., 2014. Andalucía en el carnaval. El modelo gaditano. In García Gallardo, F. J. y Arredondo Pérez, H., eds., *Andalucía en la música*. Sevilla: Centro de Estudios Andaluces., 175 – 202.
- Garrett, C. H., 2015: “Pranksta rap”: humor as difference in hip hop. In, Bloechl, O., Lowe, M. and Kallberg, J., eds., *Rethinking Difference in Music Scholarship*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 315 – 337.
- Garrett, R. K., 2009. Echo chambers online?: Politically motivated selective exposure among internet news users. *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication*, 14(2), 265 – 285.
- Gaunt, K. D., 2016. YouTube, Twerking and You: Context Collapse and the Handheld Co-Presence of Black Girls and Miley Cyrus. *Journal of Popular Music Studies*, Volume 27, Issue 3, 244 – 273. DOI: 10.1111/jpms.12130.
- Gelder, K., 1997. Introduction. The field of Subcultural Studies. In Thornton, S. and Gelder, K., *The Subcultures Reader*, London: Routledge, 1 – 18.
- Gerard, M., 2004. Selecting Ritual: DJs, dancers and liminality in underground dance music. In St John, G. Ed., *Rave Culture and Religion*, London and New York: Routledge, 166 – 183.
- Giesler, M., 2006. Cybernetic Gift Giving and Social Drama: A Netnography of the Napster File-Sharing Community. In Ayers, M., ed., *Cybersounds. Essays on Virtual Music Culture*. New York: Peter Lang, 21 – 56.
- Gil-Egui, G., Kern-Stone, R. and Forman A. E., 2017. Till death do us part? Conversations with deceased celebrities through memorial pages on Facebook. *Celebrity Studies*, 8: 2, 262 – 277. DOI: 10.1080/19392397.2016.1259076.

- Giuffre, L., 2017, Introduction: Music in Comedy Television. In Giuffre, L. and Hayward, P., eds., *Music in Comedy Television. Notes on Laughs*. New York and Oxon: Routledge, 1 - 14.
- Glaister, D., 2017. 'Hunt for Catalans' threat on London Spanish Facebook group page. The Guardian, 7 October. Available at: <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2017/oct/07/london-spanish-threaten-violent-catalan-hunt>. Accessed 10 November 2018.
- Goldhaber, M. H., 1997. The Attention Economy and the Net. *First Monday*, Volume 2, Number 4 - 7 April. Available at: <https://ojs.org/ojs/index.php/fm/article/view/519/440>. Accessed 21 March 2019.
- Gonzalez-Ferrer, A., 2013. *La nueva emigración española. Lo que sabemos y lo que no*. Zoom Politico, Laboratorio de Alternativas. Madrid: CSIC. Available at: <http://backend.demografia.ieg.csic.es/upload/files/cv/pdf/publication/192162489371182436626209059180.pdf> . Accessed 01 June 2017.
- Goodwin, A., 1992. *Dancing in the Distraction Factory. Music Television and Popular Culture*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
- Gouly, D., 2016. Ethnographic approaches to exploring Soundcloud's Hip-Hop Underground. Paper presented at the *BFE Annual Conference*, University of Kent. 14 – 17 April.
- Grasmayer, B., 2017. Online music is about to experience another MySpace moment. Medium, 17 April. Available at: <https://medium.com/music-x-tech-x-future/online-music-is-about-to-experience-another-myspace-moment-41af24825814> Accessed 21 November 2018.
- Gray, J., 2009. Throwing Out the Welcome Mat: Public Figures as Guests and Victims in TV Satire. In Gray, J., Jones, J.P. and Thompson, E., *Satire TV. Politics and Comedy in the Post-Network Era*. New York and London: NYU Press, 147 – 166.
- Gray, J., Jones, J.P. and Thompson, E., 2009. *Satire TV. Politics and Comedy in the Post-Network Era*. New York and London: NYU Press.

- Grossberg, L., –
 - 1996. Identity and Cultural Studies: Is that all there is?. In, Hall, S. and Du Gay, P., eds., *Questions of Cultural Identity*. London: Sage, 87 – 107.
 - 1997, Another Boring Day in Paradise: Rock and Roll and the Empowerment in Everyday Life. In Thornton, S. and Gelder, K., eds., *The Subcultures Reader*, 2nd Edition. London: Routledge, 477 – 493.
- Guimon, P., 2017. El Gobierno crea un equipo para asesorar a los Españoles del 'Brexit'. *El País*, 17 May. Available from: http://politica.elpais.com/politica/2017/05/17/actualidad/1495029932_781928.html Accessed 13 June 2018.
- Hagen, A. N., –
 - 2016a. Music Streaming the Everyday Life. In Nowak, R. and Whelan, A. eds., *Networked Music Cultures: Contemporary approaches, emerging issues*. London: Palgrave Macmillan, 227 – 245.
 - 2016b. The metaphors we stream by: Making sense of music streaming. *First Monday*, Volume 21, Number 3, 7 March. DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.5210/fm.v21i3.6005>.
 - 2015. The Playlist Experience: Personal Playlists in Music Streaming Services. *Popular Music and Society*, 38: 5, 625 – 645. DOI: 10.1080/03007766.2015.1021174
- Hall, K., Goldstein, D. M., and Ingram, M. B., 2016. The hands of Donald Trump: Entertainment, gesture, spectacle. *HAU: Journal of Ethnographic Theory* Vol. 6, no. 2 (Autumn 2016): 71 – 100. DOI: 10.14318/hau6.2.009
- Haraway, D., 1991. A Cyborg Manifesto: Science, Technology and Social Feminism in the Late Twentieth Century. In Simians, *Cyborgs and Women: The reinvention of Nature*. New York: Routledge, 149 – 182.
- Harding, C., 2016. Is YouTube's Music Domination Finally Coming to an End?. *Medium*, *Cuepoint*, 1 April. Available at: <https://medium.com/cuepoint/is-youtube-s-music-domination-finally-coming-to-an-end-d21d7e0aebf0#.q1447kzeq> Accessed 21 November 2018.

- Harris, D., 2013. Hipsters are buying vinyl records, but they aren't listening to them. *Quartz*, 19 July. Available at: <https://qz.com/103785/hipsters-are-buying-vinyl-records-but-they-arent-listening-to-them/> Accessed 4 December 2018.
- Haynes, N., 2016. *Social Media in Northern Chile*. London: UCL Press.
- Hayward, P. and Hill, M., 2017. Once in a Lifetime. Music, Parody and Comical Incongruity in *The Young Ones*. In Giuffre, L. and Hayward, P., *Music in Comedy Television. Notes on Laughs*. New York and Oxon: Routledge, 59 – 72.
- Hebdige, D., 1979. *Subculture: The Meaning of Style*. London and New York: Routledge.
- Hern, A. and Waterson, J., 2019. 'Video of Christchurch attack runs on social media and news sites'. *The Guardian*, 15 March. Available at: <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2019/mar/15/video-of-christchurch-attack-runs-on-social-media-and-news-sites> Accessed 15 March 2019.
- Hesmondhalgh, D., –
 - 2005. Subcultures, Scenes or Tribes? None of the Above, *Journal of Youth Studies*, 8: 1, 21 – 40, DOI: 10.1080/13676260500063652.
 - 2013. *Why Music Matters*. Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell.
- Higgins, R., 2015. The satirists formerly known as the audience: Citizen satire, global landscapes and the re-orientation of political debate. In: Hartley, J. and Qu, W. eds., *Re-Orientation: Translingual, Transcultural Transmedia. Studies in Narrative, Language, Identity and Knowledge*. Shanghai: Fudan University Press, 161 – 178.
- Hills, M., –
 - 2005. Patterns of Surprise. The “aleatory object” in Psychoanalytic Ethnography and Cyclical Fandom. *American Behavioural Scientist*, Vol. 48, No. 7, March 2005, 801 – 521. DOI: 10.1177/0002764204273169.
 - 2018a. Algorithmic Challenges to Fan Agency? The ‘Netflix Discourse’ of Fandom and ‘Authorised’ Participatory Culture. Paper at the *MECCSA Annual conference*, London South Bank University, 12 January.

- 2018b. Netflix, transfandom and 'trans TV': Where data-driven fandom meets fan reflexivity. *Critical Studies in Television: The International Journal of Television Studies*, Vol. 13(4) 495 – 498. DOI: 10.1177/1749602018797738.
- Hilson Woldu, G., 2006. Gender as anomaly: women in rap. In Peddie, I., ed., *The Resisting Muse: Popular Music and Social Protest*. Surrey: Ashgate, 89 – 103.
 - Hine, C. –
 - 2005, ed., *Virtual Methods: Issues in Social Research on the Internet*. Oxford: Berg.
 - 2015. *Ethnography for the Internet: Embedded, Embodied and Everyday*. London: Bloomsbury Academic.
 - Hjorth, L., Horst, H., Galloway, A. and Bell, G. eds., 2017. *The Routledge Companion to Digital Ethnography*. Oxon: Routledge.
 - Hoffman, L. H. and Young, D. G., 2011, Satire, Punch Lines, and the Nightly News: Untangling Media Effects on Political Participation. *Communication Research Reports*, 28:2, 159 – 168. DOI: 10.1080/08824096.2011.565278.
 - Hollander, B. A., 2005, Late-Night Learning: Do Entertainment Programs Increase Political Campaign Knowledge for Young Viewers? *Journal of Broadcasting and Electronic Media*, 49:4, 402 – 415. DOI: 10.1207/s15506878jobem4904_3.
 - Holm, N., 2017. *Humour as Politics: The Political Aesthetics of Contemporary Comedy*. Cham: Springer/Palgrave.
 - Holt, J. and Sanson, K., eds., 2014. *Connected Viewing: Selling, Streaming and Sharing in the Digital Era*. New York: Routledge.
 - Hornabrook, J., 2017. Music, Space and 'Sonic Theology' in London's Tamil Hindu Diaspora. Paper at the *British Forum for Ethnomusicology Annual Conference*, University of Sheffield, 21 April 2017.
 - Horst, H., 2012. New Media Technologies in Everyday Life. In Horst, H. and Miller, D., *Digital Anthropology*. London: Bloomsbury.
 - Horst, H. and Miller, D., 2012. *Digital Anthropology*. London: Bloomsbury.

- Howard, K., –

1989. *Bands, Songs and Shamanistic Rituals: Folk Music in Korean Society*. Seoul: Royal Asiatic Society.

2015. Politics, Parodies and the Paradox of Psy’s ‘Gangnam Style’. *Romanian Journal of Social Sciences* 1/20158: 13 – 29.
- Human Rights Watch, 2015. Spain: Reject Flawed Public Security Bill, *HRW website*, 9 March. Available from: <https://www.hrw.org/news/2015/03/09/spain-reject-flawed-public-security-bill>. Accessed 9 June 2017.
- Hutchings, T., 2012. Wiring Death: Dying, Grieving and Remembering on the Internet. In Park, C. W. ed., *Emotion, Identity and Death. Mortality Across Disciplines*. London: Routledge, 43 – 58.
- Hutnyk, J., 1998. Adorno at Womad: South-Asian crossovers and the limits of hybridity talk. *Postcolonial Studies*, Vol. 1, No. 3, 401 – 426.
- Instituto Nacional de Estadística, -

2016a. Censo Electoral de Residentes en el Extranjero. <http://www.ciudadaniaexterior.empleo.gob.es/es/estadisticas/index.html> Accessed 25 January 2017.

2016b. Encuesta sobre la Participación de la Población Adulta en las Actividades de Aprendizaje. Resultados nacionales y por comunidades autónomas. Available at: http://www.ine.es/dyngs/INEbase/es/operacion.htm?c=Estadistica_C&cid=1254736176759&menu=resultados&idp=1254735573113 Accessed 5 October 2018.
- Ippolita, 2015. *In the Facebook Aquarium: The resistible rise of Anarcho-Capitalism*. Amsterdam: Institute of Network Cultures.
- Jackson, L.H., 2016. *Finding Public Service Media in a Global Mediascape*. In G. Lowe, and N. Yamamoto, Eds., *Crossing Borders and Boundaries in Public Service Media*. Gothenburg, Sweden: Nordicom, 185 – 200.
- Jeffery, A., 2016. *Fan creativity surrounding Gorillaz’ Plastic Beach: Renegotiating the meanings of originary texts*. Paper presented at the *IASPM Conference*, BIMM Brighton.

- Jenkins, C., 2015, *The View from Below: Early Hip Hop Culture as Ironic Perception*. In Turner, K. ed., *This is the Sound of Irony. Music, Politics and Popular Culture*. Farnham: Ashgate, 117 – 130.
- Jenkins, H. –
 - 1992. *Textual poachers: Television Fans and Participatory Culture*. New York: Routledge,
 - 2006a. *Fans, Bloggers and Gamers*. London: New York University Press.
 - 2006b. *Convergence Culture. Where Old and New Media Collide*. New York: NYU Press.
- Jenkins, H., Ford S., and Green J., 2013. *Spreadable Media: Creating Value and Meaning in a Networked Culture*. London: New York University Press.
- Jessel, E., 2017. Chocolate Remix: The lesbian reggaetón artist taking on the ‘supermachos’. *The Guardian*, 7 May. Available from: <https://www.theguardian.com/music/2017/may/07/chocolate-remix-lesbian-reggaeton-taking-on-supermacho> Accessed 30 March 2018.
- Jimenez, F., 2009. (W)rapped in Foil: Glory at Twelve Words a Minute. In Rivera, R. Z., Marshall, W. and Pacini Hernandez, D., *Reggaeton*. Durham and London: Duke University Press, 229 – 251.
- Johansson, S., 2018. Music as Part of Connectivity Culture. In Johansson, S., Werner, A., Åker, P. and Goldenzwaig, G. eds., *Streaming Music. Practices, Media, Cultures*. Oxon and New York: Routledge. E-pub.
- Johansson, S., Werner, A., Åker, P. and Goldenzwaig, G. eds., 2018. *Streaming Music. Practices, Media, Cultures*. Oxon and New York: Routledge.
- Johnston, C., 2016. The Feed Is Dying. *New York Magazine, Intelligencer*, 28 April. Available at: <http://nymag.com/intelligencer/2016/04/the-feed-is-dying.html> Accessed 21 November 2018.
- Joinson, A., 2003. *Understanding the Psychology of Internet Behaviour*. London: Palgrave Macmillan.

- Jones, J. P., 2009, With All Due Respect: Satirizing Presidents from *Saturday Night Live* to *Lil' Bush*. In Gray, J., Jones, J.P. and Thompson, E., *Satire TV. Politics and Comedy in the Post-Network Era*. New York and London: NYU Press, 37 – 63.
- Jones, R. and Hafner, C., 2012. *Understanding Digital Literacies*. Oxon: Routledge.
- Jones, S., 2018, Spanish artist decries censorship after work dropped from art fair. *The Guardian*, 22 February. Available from: <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2018/feb/22/madrid-mayor-boycotts-arco-art-fair-opening-censorship-row-political-prisoners> Accessed 21 March 2019.
- Kaiser, M. and Spanu, M., 2018. *Volume!*, 14:2, Special Issue on Music Video Cultures. DOI: 10.4000/volume.5536.
- Kamp, M., Summers, T. and Sweeney, M., 2016. *Ludomusicology. Approaches to Video Game Music*. London: Equinox.
- Kärjä, A-V., –
 - 2006. A Prescribed Alternative Mainstream: Popular Music and Canon Formation. *Popular Music*, Vol.25, No. 1, Special Issue on Canonisation (January 2006), 3 – 19.
 - 2018. Why Is Uncle Paintbrush so Funny? The Case of YouTube Translation of a Syrian Kurdish Wedding Song into Finnish. *Yearbook for Traditional Music*, Vol. 50 (2018), 141 – 164.
- Kassabian, A., 2013. *Ubiquitous listening: affect, attention, and distributed subjectivity*. Berkeley and London: University of California Press.
- Kassam, A. 2015. Journalists take fight against Spanish 'gag law' to European Court. *The Guardian*, 15 December. Available from: <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/dec/15/journalists-take-fight-against-spanish-gag-law-to-european-court>. Accessed 7 June 2017.
- Katz, Y. and Shifman, L, 2017. Making sense? The structure and meanings of digital memetic nonsense. *Information, Communication and Society*, 20: 6, 825 – 842, DOI: 10.1080/1369118X.2017.1291702.
- Kay, P., 2006. Music and Humor: What's So Funny?, *Music Reference Services Quarterly*, 10: 1, 37 – 53, DOI: 10.1300/J116v10n01_03.

- Keazor, H., 2018. Portable Music Videos? Music Video Aesthetics for Handheld Devices, *Volume !*, 14: 2, 201-210. Available at: <http://journals.openedition.org/volume/5594>. Accessed 9 Feb 2019.
- Keazor, H. and T. Wübbena., Eds. 2010. *Rewind, Play, Fast Forward: The Past, Present and Future of the Music Video*. Bielefeld: Transcript.
- Keegan-Phipps, S., 2016. *Digital Folk: Digital media in Folk arts participation*. Paper presented at the *BFE Annual Conference*, University of Kent. 14 – 17 April.
- Kefala-Kerr, J. 1996. “Dee Dee Dee Dum” A serious role for funny music. *Contemporary Music Review*, 15:3 -4, 129 – 137. DOI: 10.1080/07494469600640621.
- Keil, C., 1994. Music Mediated and Live in Japan. In Keil, C. and Feld, S. eds., *Music Grooves*. Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press.
- Kennedy, J., 2016. Conceptual boundaries of sharing. *Information, Communication and Society*, 19: 4, 461 – 474, DOI: 10.1080/1369118X.2015.1046894.
- Kern, R., A. Forman, and G. Gil-Egui, 2013. R.I.P.: Remain in perpetuity. Facebook memorial pages. *Telematics and Informatics*, volume 30, number 1, 2 – 10. DOI: 10.1016/j.tele.2012.03.002.
- Knox, H. and Nafus, D., 2018. Introduction: Ethnography for a data-saturated world. In Knox, H. and Nafus, D., eds., *Ethnography for a Data-Saturated World*. Manchester: Manchester University Press., 1 – 26.
- Koorsgard, M. B., 2017. *Music Video After MTV: Audiovisual Studies, New Media, and Popular Music*. New York: Routledge.
- Korsyn, K., 1999. Beyond Privileged Contexts. In: N. Cook and M. Everist, ed., *Rethinking Music*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Kozinets, R., 2010. *Netnography. Doing Ethnographic Research Online*. London: Sage.
- Lampinen, A., 2015. Deceptively simple: Unpacking the notion of “sharing”. *Social Media + Society*, April-June 2015: 1 – 2 DOI: 10.1177/2056305115578135.

- Lampinen, A. and Uski, S., 2016. Social norms and self-presentation on social network sites: Profile work in action. *New media and society*, Vol. 18(3) 447 – 464. DOI: 10.1177/1461444814543164.
- Landau, C., 2011. 'My own little Morocco at home'. A biographical account of migration, mediation and music consumption. In Toynbee, J. and Dueck, B. eds., *Migrating Music*. London: Routledge, 38 – 54.
- Latour, B., 2005. *Reassembling the Social: An Introduction to Actor-Network Theory*. New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Lee, B. and LiPuma, E., 2002. Cultures of Circulation: The Imaginations of Modernity. *Public Culture* 14 (1): 191 – 213. Available at: <https://muse.jhu.edu/article/26272/summary> .
- Lichter, S.R. and Baumgartner, J. C., eds., 2014. *Politics Is a Joke! How TV Comedians Are Remaking Political Life*. Boulder, CO: Westview Press.
- Lim, M., 2013. The Digital Consumption of Death: Reflections on Virtual Mourning Practices on Social Networking Sites. In Belk, R. and Llamas, R., eds., *The Routledge Companion to Digital Consumption*. London: Routledge, 396 – 403.
- Litt, E., 2012. Knock, Knock. Who's There? The Imagined Audience. *Journal of Broadcasting and Electronic Media*, 56:3, 330-345. DOI: 10.1080/08838151.2012.705195.
- Litt, E. and Hargittai, E., 2016. The Imagined Audience on Social Network Sites. *Social Media + Society*, January-March, 1 – 12.
- Livingstone, S., 2008. Taking Risky Opportunities in Youthful Content Creation: Teenagers' Use of Social Networking Sites for Intimacy, Privacy and Self-Expression. *New Media and Society* 10: 393 – 411.
- Livingstone, S. and Sefton-Green, J., 2016. *The Class. Living and Learning in the Digital Age*. NYU Press.
- Loader B. D., Vromen, A. and Xenos, M. A., 2014. The networked young citizen: social media, political participation and civic engagement. *Information, Communication and Society*, 17: 2, 143 – 150. DOI: 10.1080/1369118X.2013.871571.

- Lockyer, S. and Pickering, M., –

2008. You must be joking: the sociological critique of humour and comic media. *Sociology Compass*, 2 (3), 808 – 820.

2009. *Beyond a Joke: The Limits of Humour*. 2nd Edition. Basingstoke and New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Loughrey, C., 2018, Rapper jailed for three and a half years after criticising Spanish royal family. *The Independent*. 24 February. Available from:
<http://www.independent.co.uk/arts-entertainment/music/news/rapper-jailed-lyrics-spanish-royal-family-valtonyc-josep-miquel-arenas-beltran-a8226421.html>
 Accessed: 27 February 2018.
- Lovink, G., 2011. *Networks without a cause. A Critique of Social Media*. Cambridge: Polity.
- Lovink, G. and Tuters, M., 2018. They Say We Can't Meme: Politics of Idea Compression. *Noncopyriot.com*, 11 February. Available at:
<https://non.copyriot.com/they-say-we-cant-meme-politics-of-idea-compression/?cn-reloaded=1> Accessed 12 November 2018.
- Lupton, D., 2014. Self-tracking Modes: Reflexive Self-Monitoring and Data Practices. Paper for the *Imminent Citizenships: Personhood and Identity Politics in the Informatic Age* workshop, 27 August 2014, ANU, Canberra.
- Lysloff, R.T.A., 2003. Musical Life in Softcity. An Internet Ethnography. In Lysloff, R.T.A. and Gay, L.C. eds., *Music and Technoculture*. Connecticut: Wesleyan University Press, 23 – 63.
- MacDonald, T., 2016. *Social Media in Rural China*. London: UCL Press.
- Machin-Autenrieth, M., 2017. *Flamenco, Regionalism and Musical Heritage in Southern Spain*. SOAS Musicology Series. Abingdon and New York: Routledge.
- Madianou, M. and Miller, D., 2012. *Migration and New Media*. London: Routledge.
- Malinowski, B., 1922. *Argonauts of the Western Pacific*. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul.
- Manjoo, F., 2017. Why Instagram Is Becoming Facebook's Next Facebook. *The New York Times*, 26 April. Available at:

<https://www.nytimes.com/2017/04/26/technology/why-instagram-is-becoming-facebooks-next-facebook.html> Accessed 21 November 2018.

- Manovich, L., –
 - 2001. *The Language of New Media*. London. MIT Press.
 - 2013. *Software Takes Command*. London: Bloomsbury.
 - 2015. Remix Strategies in Social Media. In Navas, E., Gallagher, O. and Burrough, x. eds., *The Routledge companion to remix studies*. New York: Routledge, 135 – 151.
- Marcus, G. E., –
 - 1986. “Contemporary Problems of Ethnography in the Modern World System.” In *Writing Culture: The Poetics and Politics of Ethnography*, edited by James Clifford and George E. Marcus, 165-193. Berkeley: University of California Press.
 - 1994. On Ideologies of Reflexivity in Contemporary Efforts to Remake the Human Sciences. In Marcus, G., ed. *Ethnography Through Thick Thin*. (1998) Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Marcus, G. E. and Saka, E., 2006. Assemblage. *Theory, Culture and Society*, Vol. 23 (2–3): 101 – 106.
- Marino, S., 2015. Making space, making place: digital togetherness and the redefinition of migrant identities online. *Social Media + Society*, July-December 2015: 1 – 9. DOI: 10.1177/2056305115622479.
- Mar-Molinero, C. and Smith, A., eds., 1996. *Nationalism and the Nation in the Iberian Peninsula: Competing and Conflicting Identities*. London: Berg.
- Marsh, S. and Duncan, P., 2017. Record number of EU citizens quit working in NHS last year, *The Guardian*, 30 March. Available from: <https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2017/mar/30/record-number-european-staff-quit-nhs-brexit-eu>. Accessed 01 June 2017.
- Marshall, W., 2009. From Música Negra to Reggaeton Latino: The Cultural Politics of Nation, Migration and Commercialization. In Rivera, R. Z., Marshall, W. and

- Pacini Hernandez, D., *Reggaeton*. Durham and London: Duke University Press, 19 – 77.
- Marwick, A. E. and boyd, d., 2010. I tweet honestly, I tweet passionately: Twitter users, context collapse and the imagined audience. *New Media and Society*, 13 (1), 114 – 133. DOI: 10.1177/1461444810365313.
 - Mauss, M., 1922 (1990). *The Gift*. London: Routledge.
 - McNeal, S., 2015. An 18-Year-Old Instagram Star Says Her "Perfect Life" Was Actually Making Her Miserable. *Buzzfeed*, 2 November. Available at: <https://www.buzzfeed.com/stephaniemcneal/a-teen-instagram-star-is-editing-her-photo-captions-to-show#.mikDrN9lL> Accessed 21 November 2018.
 - Medhurst, A., 2007. *A National Joke: Popular Comedy and English Cultural Identities*. London and New York: Routledge.
 - Meikle, G., 2016, *Social Media: Communication, Sharing and Visibility*. London: Routledge.
 - Mera, M., 2002, Is Funny Music Funny? Contexts and Case Studies of Film Music Humour, *Journal of Popular Music Studies*, v14, n2: 91 – 113.
 - Mickens, J., 2018. Why Do Keynote Speakers Keep Suggesting that Improving Security is Possible? Keynote at *USENIX Security Symposium*, Baltimore, MD, 15 – 17 August. Available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ajGX7odA87k> Accessed 27 August 2018.
 - Miles, A., 2014. Participation Narratives. *Everyday Participation Project* blog. <http://www.everydayparticipation.org/participation-narratives/>. Accessed 24 January 2017.
 - Miller, D., –
 - 2011. *Tales from Facebook*. Cambridge: Polity.
 - 2012. Social Networking Sites. In Horst, H. and Miller, D., *Digital Anthropology*. London: Bloomsbury, 146 – 158.
 - 2016. *Social Media in an English Village*. London: UCL Press.

2017. Anthropology is the discipline but the goal is ethnography. *HAU Journal*, Vol. 7, No. 1, 27 – 31.
- Miller, D. and Sinanan, J., 2017. *Visualising Facebook*. London: UCL Press.
 - Miller, D. and Slater, D., 2000. *The Internet: An Ethnographic Approach*. London: Berg.
 - Miller, D. et al., 2016. *How the World changed Social Media*. London: UCL Press.
 - Miller, K., 2012. *Playing Along: Digital Games, YouTube and Virtual Performance*. Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press.
 - Miller, V., 2008. New Media, Networking and Phatic Culture. *Convergence: The International Journal of Research into New Media Technologies*. Volume 14, Issue 4, 387 – 400. DOI: 10.1177/15354856508094659.
 - Mills, B., 2005. *Television Sitcom*. London: British Film Institute.
 - Mitchell, P., Bruns, A., and Münch, F., 2016. The (Net)work of Mourning: Emotional Contagion, Viral Performativity, and the Death of David Bowie. Paper presented at *AoIR 2016: The 17th Annual Conference of the Association of Internet Researchers*, 5 – 8 October. Berlin, Germany: AoIR. Available at: <https://eprints.qut.edu.au/111781/> Accessed 22 August 2018.
 - Mjøs, O. J., 2012. *Music, social media, and global mobility: MySpace, Facebook, YouTube*. New York: Routledge.
 - Morgan, D. A., 2017. *Speaking in Tongues: music, identity, and representation in jew's harp communities*. PhD Thesis. SOAS, University of London.
 - Morozov, E., 2011. *The Net Delusion. The Dark Side of Internet Freedom*. New York: Public Affairs.
 - Muggleton, D. and Weinzierl, R., 2003. What is 'Post-subcultural Studies' Anyway?. In Muggleton, D. and Weinzierl, R., eds., *The Post-subcultures Reader*. Oxford and New York: Berg, 3 – 23.
 - Müller, M. and Schurr, C., 2016. Assemblage thinking and actor-network theory: conjunctions, disjunctions, and cross-fertilisations. *Transactions of the Institute of Royal Geographers*. Vol. 41, 217 – 229. DOI: 10.1111/tran.12117.

- Munn, N., 1986. *The Fame of Gawa*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Muñoz, J. E., 1999. *Disidentifications: Queers of Color and the Performance of Politics*. Minneapolis and London: Minnesota University Press.
- Nair, A. and Ortega, M., 2017, 'Stay on your island, swim on your beaches' Spanish rage at British expats and tourists. *Express*, 18 May. Available at: <https://www.express.co.uk/news/uk/805668/luis-fonsi-despacito-Spanish-musicians-El-primo-Brexit-song-mocking-Brits-abroad> Accessed 27 February 2018.
- Navas, E., Gallagher, O. and Burrough x. eds., 2015. *The Routledge companion to remix studies*. New York: Routledge.
- Negus, K., –
 - 2016. From Phonograph to Phone; from Product to Content: Creativity, Industry and the Digital Economy. Paper presented at the *IASPM Conference*, BIMM Brighton. 8 – 10 September.
 - 1996. *Popular Music in Theory*. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Nettl, B., 2005. *The Study of Ethnomusicology: Thirty-One Issues and Concepts*. Illinois: University of Illinois Press.
- Nicolescu, R., 2016. *Social Media in Southeast Italy*. London: UCL Press.
- Nieves Moreno, A., 2009. A Man Lives Here: Reggaeton's Hypermasculine Resident. In Rivera, R. Z., Marshall, W. and Pacini Hernandez, D., *Reggaeton*. Durham and London: Duke University Press, 252 – 279.
- Nooshin, L., 2011. Hip-hop Tehran: Migrating Styles, Musical Meanings, Marginalised Voices. In: J. Toynbee and B. Dueck eds., *Migrating Music*, 92 – 111. London: Routledge.
- Nowak, R., 2016. *Consuming Music in the Digital Age. Technology, Roles and Everyday life*. London: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Nowak, R. and Whelan, A., 2016. The Digital Music Boundary Object. In Nowak, R. and Whelan, A. eds., *Networked Music Cultures: Contemporary approaches, emerging issues*. London: Palgrave Macmillan, 113 – 132.

- Odom, W., Harper, R., Sellen, A., Kirk, D. and Banks, R., 2010. Passing on and Putting to Rest: Understanding Bereavement in the Context of Interactive Technologies. *CHI'10: Proceedings of the SIGCHI Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems*. New York: Association for Computing Machinery, 1831 – 1840.
- Office for National Statistics, 2013. *Table QS213EW 2011 Census: Country of birth (expanded), regions in England and Wales*. Office for National Statistics, 26 March 2013. Available from: www.ons.gov.uk. Accessed 27 September 2018.
- Olson, M, 2008. Lost Not Found: The Circulation of Images in Digital Visual Culture. In Cotton, C. and Klein, A. eds, *Words Without Pictures*, Los Angeles County Museum of Art, 274 – 284.
- Oliver Olmo, P. 2015. *Protesta Democrática y Democracia Antiprotesta*. Pamplona: Pamiela.
- Organic Law 4/2015, (Ley Orgánica de 30 de marzo, de protección de la seguridad ciudadana). Boletín Oficial del Estado. Retrieved from: https://www.boe.es/diario_boe/txt.php?id=BOE-A-2015-3442. Accessed 27 September 2018.
- Pangrazio, L., 2016. YouTube rules: The development of young people's online video norms and understandings. Paper presented at the *YouTube Conference*, Middlesex University, London, 23 – 24 September.
- Papacharissi, Z. ed., 2011. *A networked self: Identity, Community and Culture in Social Network Sites*. New York: Routledge.
- Parrott, F., 2012. Materiality, Memories and Emotions: A View on Migration from a Street in South London. In Svašek, M. ed., *Moving Subjects, Moving Objects. Transnationalism, Cultural Production and Emotions*. New York and Oxford: Berghahn Books, 41 – 54.
- Pariser, E., 2012. *The Filter Bubble: What the Internet is Hiding from You*. London: Viking.
- Peddie, I. –

2006, ed., *The Resisting Muse: Popular Music and Social Protest*. Surrey: Ashgate.

2012 ed., *Music and Protest*. Oxon: Routledge.

- Peinador, M. 2015. Invisibilización Legitimada. Censura en la España del siglo XXI. Paper for XXXI Forum Junge Romanistik: (Un)Sichtbarkeiten/(In)Visibilidades, University of Rostock, Germany 5 – 7 March. Retrievable from: <http://bit.ly/2rTPFcD>. Accessed 9 June 2017.
- Peña-Lopez, I., 2017. *State of the Art: Spain. Report of collaborative research project 'Voice or Chatter? Using a Structuration Framework Towards a Theory of ICTmediated Citizen Engagement'*. Barcelona: UOC.
- Peretti, J., 1996. Capitalism and Schizophrenia: Contemporary Visual Culture and the Acceleration of Identity Formation/Dissolution. *Negations*. Available at <http://archive.fo/1kiSQ>. Accessed 12 November 2018.
- Peterson, R., 1992. Understanding audience segmentation: from elite and mass to omnivore and univore. *Poetics* 21(4), 243 – 258.
- Phillips, J., 2006. Agencement. *Theory, Culture and Society*, Vol. 23 (2-3), 108 – 109.
- Pichel, M., 2017. Españoles en el Reino Unido: “El ‘brexit’ nos hace pensar en las maletas”, *CNN Español*, 29 March. Available from: <http://cnnespanol.cnn.com/2017/03/29/espanoles-en-reino-unido-el-brexit-nos-hace-pensar-en-hacer-las-maletas/#0>. Accessed 01 June 2017.
- Plasketes, G., 2005. Re-flections on the Cover Age: A Collage of Continuous Coverage in Popular Music. *Popular Music and Society*, Vol. 28-2, May 2005, 137 – 161. DOI: 10.1080/03007760500045204.
- Plasquy, E., 2012. From Shop to Chapel: The Changing Emotional Efficacy of the Statue of the Virgin Mary of El Rocío within a Spanish Community in Belgium. In Svašek, M. ed., *Moving Subjects, Moving Objects. Transnationalism, Cultural Production and Emotions*. New York and Oxford: Berghahn Books, 75 – 95.
- Plazak, J. S., 2015. Listener-Senders, Musical Irony and the Most “Disliked” YouTube Videos. In Turner, K., *This is the Sound of Irony. Music, Politics and Popular Culture*. Farnham: Ashgate, 201 – 214.
- Polymeropoulou, M., 2018. Digital Music Creativity. Chipmusic from Greece. In Tragaki, D. ed., 2018. *Made in Greece*. New York: Routledge. DOI: 10.4324/9781315749075

- Potter, R. A., 2006. The future is history: hip-hop in the aftermath of (post)modernity. In Peddie, I. ed., 2006. *The Resisting Muse: Popular Music and Social Protest*. Surrey: Ashgate, 65 – 74.
- Preston, P., 2012, *The Spanish Holocaust: Inquisition and Extermination in Twentieth-Century Spain*. London: Harper Press.
- Prey, R., 2016. Musica Analytica: The Datafication of Listening. In Nowak, R. and Whelan, A. eds., *Networked Music Cultures: Contemporary approaches, emerging issues*. London: Palgrave Macmillan, 31 – 48.
- Pukallus, S., 2015. If the EU is serious about freedom of expression it should take aim at Spain's controversial 'gag law'. *LSE EUROPP Blog*, 6 August. Retrievable at: <http://bit.ly/1FLd4dU>. Accessed 9 June 2017.
- Ramnarine, T. K. –
 - 2007a. *Beautiful Cosmos. Performance and Belonging in the Caribbean Diaspora*. London: Pluto Press.
 - 2007b. *Musical Performance in the Diaspora*. Oxon: Routledge.
- Rando D.P., 2017. *Hope and Wish Image in Music Technology*. Cham: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Revilla, M., Garrido, A., Martinez, I., Molina, C., More, H., Rodriguez, K., 2015. Unexpected Consequences of Protest Actions: Ideological and Electoral Reconfiguration in Spain (2010-2014). Paper presented on the *ESA Research Network 25- Social Movements Mid-Term Conference*, Universidad Complutense de Madrid, 19 – 20 February.
- Reynolds, S., 2011. *Retromania: Pop Culture's Addiction to its own Past*. London: Faber and Faber.
- Richardson, J., Gorbman, C. and Vernallis, C., 2010. *The Oxford Handbook of New Audiovisual Aesthetics*. Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press.
- Rietveld, H. C., –
 - 2004. 'Ephemeral Spirit: Sacrificial Cyborg and Soulful Community', Graham St John ed., *Rave Culture and Religion*, London and New York: Routledge, 45 – 60.

2013. Introduction, in B.A. Attias, A. Gavanoas and H.C.Rietveld Eds., *DJ Culture in the Mix: Power, Technology, and Social Change in Electronic Dance Music*. New York, London and Sydney: Bloomsbury Academic, 1 – 14.
- Rights International Spain, 2018. Spain Fines Man for Photoshopping His Face Over Christ's. *Liberties*, 13 February. Available at: <https://www.liberties.eu/en/short-news/21536/21536> Accessed 27 February 2018.
 - Rivera, R. Z., 2009. Policing Morality, *Mano Dura* Style: The Case of Underground Rap and Reggae in Puerto Rico in the Mid-1990s. In Rivera, R. Z., Marshall, W. and Pacini Hernandez, D., *Reggaeton*. Durham and London: Duke University Press, 111 – 134.
 - Rojek, C., 2001. Celebrity and Religion. In *Celebrity*. London: Reaktion Books, 171 – 180.
 - Rose, G., 2010. *Doing Family Photography: The Domestic, the Public and the Politics of Sentiment*. Farnham: Ashgate.
 - Ruddock, A., 2007. *Investigating Audiences*. Sage.
 - Russell, G., Slawson, N. and Greenfield, P., 2017. Catalonia referendum: 90% voted for independence, say officials – as it happened. *The Guardian*, 1 – 2 October. Available at: <https://www.theguardian.com/world/live/2017/oct/01/catalan-independence-referendum-spain-catalonia-vote-live> . Accessed 10 November 2018.
 - Sacaluga Rodríguez, I. and Pérez García, A., eds., 2017. *El Carnaval de Cádiz: De las Coplas a la Industria Cultural*. Cádiz: Universidad de Cádiz.
 - Samuels, G., 2016. Spain moves to ban 'insulting' memes about politicians from the internet. *The Independent*, 11 November. Retrievable at: <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/europe/spain-moves-to-ban-insulting-memes-about-politicians-from-the-internet-a7411566.html>. Accessed 9 June 2017.
 - Sánchez-Olmos, C. and Viñuela, E., 2017. The Musicless Music Video as a Spreadable Meme Video: Format, User Interaction, and Meaning on YouTube. *International Journal of Communication*, 11, 3634 – 3654.
 - Sandulescu Budea, A. M., 2016. *Creación de Referentes Culturales Comunes a través de la red: Situación de redes sociales musicales en España y su relación músico-internauta*. Doctoral thesis, Madrid: Universidad Rey Juan Carlos.

- Scott, S., 2016. YouTube as multimodal assemblage: A methodological and conceptual frame. Paper presented at the *YouTube Conference*, Middlesex University, London, 23 – 24 September.
- Savage, M., 2016. Music streaming boosts sales of vinyl. *BBC News*, 14 April. Available at: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/entertainment-arts-36027867> Accessed 4 December 2018.
- Schrauf, R. W., 1998. La comparsa y el concurso. Andalusian carnival on-stage. *Anthropological Quarterly* 71/2: 74 – 88.
- Sen, C., 2016. El preocupante triunfo de las letras machistas del ‘reggaeton’. *La Vanguardia*, 19 December. Available from: <http://www.lavanguardia.com/vida/20161219/412718712084/letras-reggaeton-machismo-violencia-mujer.html> Accessed 30 March 2018.
- Serrano, N., 2017. Reguetón y machismo: el top 5 de la vergüenza. *ABC*, 19 April. Available from: http://www.abc.es/cultura/musica/abci-reggaeton-y-machismo-top5-verguenza-201704190236_noticia.html Accessed 30 March 2018.
- Shank, B., 1994. *Dissonant Identities: The Rock ‘n’ Roll Scene in Austin, Texas*. Hanover, CT: Wesleyan University Press.
- Shaviro, S., 2017. *Digital Music Videos*. New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press.
- Shifman, L., 2011. An Anatomy of a YouTube Meme. *New Media and Society*, 14 (2), 187 – 203. DOI: 10.1177/1461444811412160.
- Shryock, A., 2015. Irony of Absence: Literary and Technological Devices in the Rap of T-Pain. In Turner, K., *This is the Sound of Irony. Music, Politics and Popular Culture*. Farnham: Ashgate, 189 – 200.
- Sinanan, J., 2017. *Social Media in Trinidad*. London: UCL Press.
- Slobin, M., 1994. Music in Diaspora. The View from Euro-America. *Diaspora: A Journal of Transnational Studies*. Volume 3, Number 3, Winter 1994, 243 – 251. DOI: 10.1353/dsp.1994.0012.

- Small, C., —
 - 1987. Performance as Ritual: Sketch for an enquiry into the true nature of a symphony concert. In Levine White, A. ed., *Lost in Music: Culture, Style and the Musical Event*. London: Routledge, 6 – 32.
 - 1998. *Musicking: The meanings of performing and listening*. London: Wesleyan University Press.
- Spirou, P., 2017. The Lonely Island's "SNL Digital Short" as Music Video Parody. Building on *Saturday Night Live's* Legacy. In Giuffre, L. and Hayward, P., *Music in Comedy Television. Notes on Laughs*. New York and Oxon: Routledge, 129 – 141.
- Spracklen, K., 2015. *Digital Leisure, the Internet and Popular Culture. Communities and Identities in a Digital Age*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Spyer, J., 2017. *Social Media in Emergent Brazil*. London: UCL Press.
- Sterne, J., 1997. Sounds like the Mall of America: Programmed Music and the Architectonics of Commercial Space. *Ethnomusicology*. Vol. 41, No. 1 (Winter 1997), 22 – 50. DOI: 10.2307/852577.
- Srnicek, N., 2018. What to do with digital giants? Paper at *The Digital Economy: Ubercapitalism or Postcapitalism?*, Kings College London, 11 May.
- Stirling, C., 2013. 'The temporal logic of affect. Musical publics and the politics of urban space'. Paper presented at *Music, Sound and Space: Transformations of Public and Private Experience*, University of Oxford, 14 March 2013.
- St John, G. ed., 2004. *Rave Culture and Religion*. London and New York: Routledge.
- Stock, J. P. J., 2016. Sounding the Bromance: The Chopstick Brothers' 'Little Apple' Music Video, Genre, Gender and the Search for Meaning in Chinese Popular Music. *Journal of World Popular Music*, Vol. 3, n. 2, 167 – 196.
- Stockfelt, O., 2004. Adequate Modes of Listening. In Cox, C. and Warner, D., *Audio Culture. Readings in Modern Music*. New York: Continuum, 88 – 93.
- Stokes, M., —
 - 1994 ed., *Ethnicity, Identity and Music*. Oxford: Berg.

2017. *The Musical Citizen*. Distinguished Lecture Series, Institute of Musical Research, 4-11 May 2017.
- Straw, W., –
 - 2006. Scenes and sensibilities. In *E-Compós*. Vol. 6, 245 – 257.
 - 1997, Straw, W. *Communities and Scenes in Popular Music* (1991). In Thornton, S. and Gelder, K., *The Subcultures Reader*, London: Routledge.
 - Street, J., 2006. The pop star as politician: from Belafonte to Bono, from creativity to conscience. In Peddie, I. ed., *The Resisting Muse: Popular Music and Social Protest*. Surrey: Ashgate, 49 – 64.
 - Suhr, C., 2012. *Social Media and Music. The digital field of cultural production*. New York: Peter Lang.
 - Svašek, M., 2012. Introduction. Affective Moves: Transit, Transition and Transformation. In Svašek, M. ed., *Moving Subjects, Moving Objects. Transnationalism, Cultural Production and Emotions*. New York and Oxford: Berghahn Books, 1 – 40.
 - Svedmark, E., 2016. *Becoming Together and Apart: Technoemotions and other posthuman entanglements*. Doctoral thesis at Umeå University. Umeå: Umeå University.
 - Tagg, P., 2012. *Music's Meanings. A Modern Musicology for Non-Musos*. New York and Huddersfield: The Mass Media Music Scholars Press.
 - Terranova, T., 2004. *Network Culture. Politics for the Information Age*. London: Pluto Press.
 - Terwiliger, A., 2014. Music Appropriation in the Digital Age: Leekspin's Erotic Journey from Helsinki to Tokyo. Paper at the *Analytical Approaches to World Music Conference*, SOAS/Senate House, University of London, 1 – 4 July.
 - Thompson, E., 2009. Good Demo, Bad Taste. South Park as Carnavalesque Satire. In Gray, J., Jones, J.P. and Thompson, E., *Satire TV. Politics and Comedy in the Post-Network Era*. New York and London: NYU Press, 213 – 232.
 - Thornton, S., 1995. *Club Cultures: Music, Media and Subcultural Capital*. Cambridge: Polity.

- Thornton, S. and Gelder, K., 1997. *The Subcultures Reader*. 2nd Edition. London: Routledge.
- Toffler, A., 1980. *The Third Wave. The Classic Study of Tomorrow* (1989 Reissue). New York: Bantam.
- Tsioulakis, I., 2017. Soon you'll wish they would shut up!: the digitised political voices of music stars and their audiences in recession Greece. In Tsioulakis, I. and Hytönen-Ng, E. eds., *Musicians and their Audiences. Performance, Speech and Mediation*. Oxon and New York: Routledge, 151 – 164.
- Tsioulakis, I. and Hytönen-Ng, E. eds., 2017. *Musicians and their Audiences. Performance, Speech and Mediation*. Oxon and New York: Routledge.
- Turkle, S., –
 - 1984. *The Second Self*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.
 - 1995. *Life on the Screen: Identity in the age of the Internet*. New York: Simon and Schuster.
 - 2011. *Alone Together: Why we expect more from technology and less from each other*. New York: Basic Books.
 - 2015. *Reclaiming Conversation: The power of talk in the digital age*. New York: Penguin Books.
- Turner, K., 2015, *This is the Sound of Irony. Music, Politics and Popular Culture*. Farnham: Ashgate.
- Van Buskirk, E., 2017. Como el reggaetón se ha convertido en un fenómeno mundial en Spotify. *Spotify Insights*. Available at: <https://insights.spotify.com/es/2017/09/05/how-reggaeton-became-a-global-phenomenon-on-spotify/> Accessed 30 March 2018.
- Van den Bulck, H. and Larsson, A. O., 2017. “There’s a Starman Waiting in the Sky”. Mourning David #Bowie on Twitter. *Convergence: The International Journal of Research into New Media Technologies*. 18 May 2017, 1 – 17. DOI: 10.1177/1354856517709670.

- Van Dijck, J., –
 - 2013a. *The Culture of Connectivity*. New York: Oxford University Press.
 - 2013b. 'You have one identity': performing the self on Facebook and LinkedIn. *Media, Culture & Society*, 35(2), 199 – 215. DOI: 10.1177/0163443712468605.
- Vazquez, A. T., 2009. Salon Philosophers: Ivy Queen and Surprise Guests Take Reggaeton Aside. In Rivera, R. Z., Marshall, W. and Pacini Hernandez, D., *Reggaeton*. Durham and London: Duke University Press, 300 – 311.
- Venkatraman, S., 2017. *Social Media in South India*. London: UCL Press.
- Vernallis, C. –
 - 2004. *Experiencing Music Video. Aesthetics and Cultural Context*. Columbia: Columbia University Press.
 - 2013. *Unruly Media. YouTube, Music Video and the New Digital Cinema*. Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press.
- Vognar, C., 2011, 'This Ain't Funny So Don't You Dare Laugh'. *Transition*, No.104 (Souls), 102 – 120.
- Vuorela, U., 2002. Transnational Families: Imagined and Real Communities. In Bryceson, D. F. and Vuorela, U. eds., *The Transnational Family. New European Frontiers and Global Networks*. Oxford: Berg, 63 – 82.
- Wagg, S. –
 - 1992, You've never had it so silly: The politics of British satirical comedy from *Beyond the Fringe* to *Spitting Image*. In Strinati and Wagg eds., *Come on down? Popular media culture in post-war Britain*. London and New York: Routledge, 254 - 284.
 - 1998, 'They already got a comedian for governor'. Comedians and Politics in the United States and Great Britain. In Wagg, S. ed., *Because I tell a joke or two: Comedy, Politics and Social Difference*. London and New York: Routledge, 244 – 272.

- Wahlberg, M., 2010. YouTube Commemoration: Private Grief and Communal Consolation. In Snickars, P. and Vonderau, P., eds., *The YouTube Reader*. Stockholm: National Library of Sweden, 218 – 235.
- Wang, X., 2016. *Social Media in Industrial China*. London: UCL Press.
- Wasserbauer, M. and Dhoest, A., 2016. Not Only Little Monsters: Diversity in Music Fandom in LGBTQ Lives. *IASPM Journal*, Vol. 6, n. 1. DOI: 10.5429/2079-3871(2016)v6i1.3en.
- Waterman, D., 1992. “Narrowcasting” and “Broadcasting” on Nonbroadcast Media: A Program Choice Model. *Communication Research*, 19(1), 3 – 28. DOI: 10.1177/009365092019001001.
- Way, L. C. S., 2017. Authenticity and Subversion: Protest Music Videos' Struggle with countercultural Politics and Authenticity. In Way, L. C. S. and McKerrell, S., *Music as Multimodal Discourse. Semiotics, Power and Protest*. London and New York: Bloomsbury, 95 – 118.
- Weaver, S., 2018. Brexit Irony on The Last Leg and Last Week Tonight with John Oliver: Critiquing Neoliberalism through Caricature. In Webber, J. ed., *The Joke Is on Us: Political Comedy in (Late) Neoliberal Times*. Lexington Books, 65 – 86.
- Webster, E., 2012. “One More Tune!” The Encore Ritual in Live Music Events. *Popular Music and Society*. Vol. 35, No. 1, Feb. 2012, 93 – 111. DOI: 10.1080/03007766.2010.538241.
- Werbner, P., 2002. *Imagined Diasporas among Manchester Muslims*. Oxford: James Currey.
- Whiteley, S. and Sklower, J., 2014. *Countercultures and Popular Music*. Farnham: Ashgate.
- Wikström, P., 2013. *The Music Industry*, 2nd Edition. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Williams, J., forthcoming. *Brithop: UK Regional Rap in the 21st Century*. Oxford University Press.
- Williams, R., 2015. *Post-Object Fandom: Television, Identity and Self-Narrative*. New York: Bloomsbury.

- Wood, A., 2008. E-Fieldwork: A Paradigm for the Twenty-first Century?. In Stobart, H., ed., *The new (Ethno) musicologies*. Plymouth: The Scarecrow Press, 170 – 187.
- Young, G., 2004. From broadcasting to narrowcasting to ‘mycasting’: a newfound celebrity in queer Internet communities. *Continuum*, 18: 1, 43 – 62. DOI: 10.1080/1030431032000180996.
- Zheng, S., 2010. *Claiming diaspora. Music, transnationalism and Cultural Politics in Asian/Chinese America*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Videography

- DizastaMusic, 2013. Do the Harlem Shake (Original). [Online video]. Available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8vJiSSAMNWw> Accessed 12 December 2018.
- Fonsi, Luis, 2017. Despacito ft. Daddy Yankee. [Online video]. Available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kJQP7kiw5Fk> Accessed 21 August 2018.
- Nielssen, James, 2016. “All Star” by Smash Mouth but every word is someBODY. [Online video]. Available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rlYys58hsCU> Accessed 21 August 2018.
- La Sexta, 2017. "Amigos para siempre", el videoclip sobre la amistad de España y Cataluña | El Intermedio. [Online video]. Available from: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BNN-JTISWgg> Accessed 14 November 2018.
- Onda Cádiz Carnaval, 2018. Comparsa, La Playa – Preliminares [Online video]. Available from: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LTRRzu1wM7A&t=620s> Accessed 27 February 2018.
- Polònia, TV3, 2017. No estaba muerto [Online video]. Available from: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CO2G8b5kE_w . Accessed 27 February 2018.
- Primo Juan, El, 2017. DESPA-BREXIT (cover) [Online video]. Available from: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IXrok1q1ne4> Accessed 27 February 2018.
- Professor Elemental / iammoog, 2012. I’m British (Dir. Moog Gravett) [Online video]. Available from: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FkF_XpA5P48 Accessed 27 February 2018.

- Psy, 2012. Gangnam Style. [Online video]. Available at:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9bZkp7q19f0> Accessed 21 August 2018.
- Vujanic, D., 2017. F**K BREXIT [Online video]. Available from:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ysPel6eojey> Accessed 27 February 2018.

Interviews

All interviews were conducted face-to-face in London, unless otherwise stated.

Agustín Frizzera, personal communication by email, April 2014.

Anabel, personal conversation, 22 September 2017.

Anabel, interview, 7 November 2017 (2017a).

Anabel, interview, 21 November 2017 (2017b).

Cynthia's friends, personal conversation, 16 September 2017.

Cynthia, interview, 17 January 2018.

Daniel, Online Interview, 15 January 2018.

Diana, personal conversation, 16 February 2017.

Diana, interview, 10 October 2017.

Elisa, personal conversation, 15 April 2017.

Elisa, interview, 18 October 2017.

Fernando, personal conversation, 4 June 2017.

Fernando, interview, 6 October 2017.

Fernando and Teresa, interview, 6 October 2017.

Jasmin, interview, 5 October 2017 (2017a).

Jasmin, interview, 12 October 2017(2017b).

Javier, Online conversation, 19 March 2017.

Javier, interview, 5 December 2017.

Jose, interview, 17 November 2017.

Promoter, personal conversation, 1 November 2017.

Rose, personal conversation, 13 October 2017.

Rose, interview, 25 October 2017.

Sandra, interview, 26 November 2017.

Simon Keegan-Phipps, personal conversation, 13 February 2018.

Sue, personal conversation, 18 March 2017.

Sue, interview, 29 September 2017.

Teresa, interview, 6 October 2017.

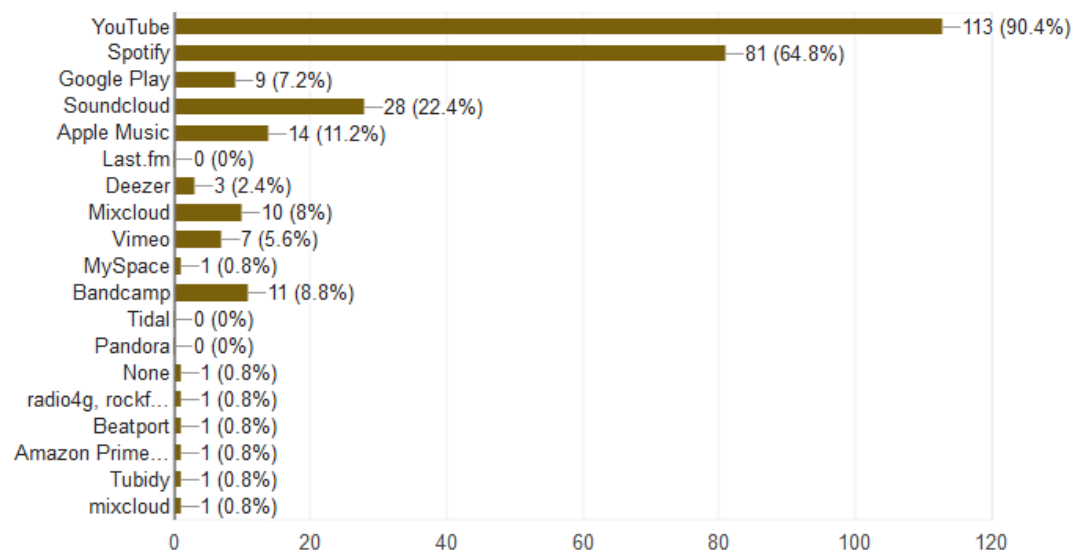
APPENDIX I

SURVEY RESULTS

Q1.

1. Which of these music streaming platforms do you use?

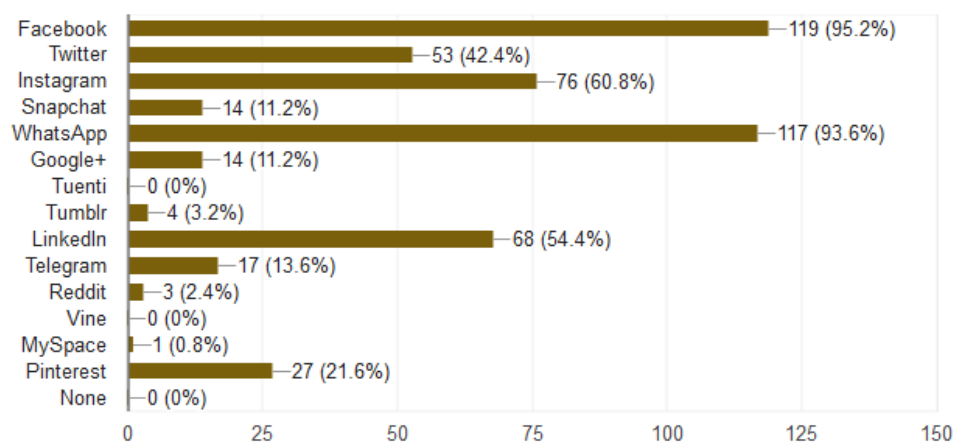
125 responses



Q2.

2. Which of these social media platforms do you use?

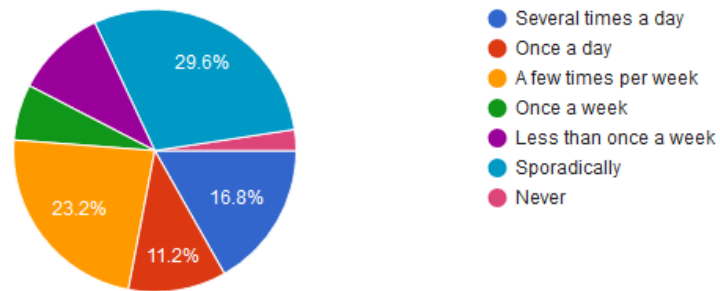
125 responses



Q3.

3. How often do you post on social media?

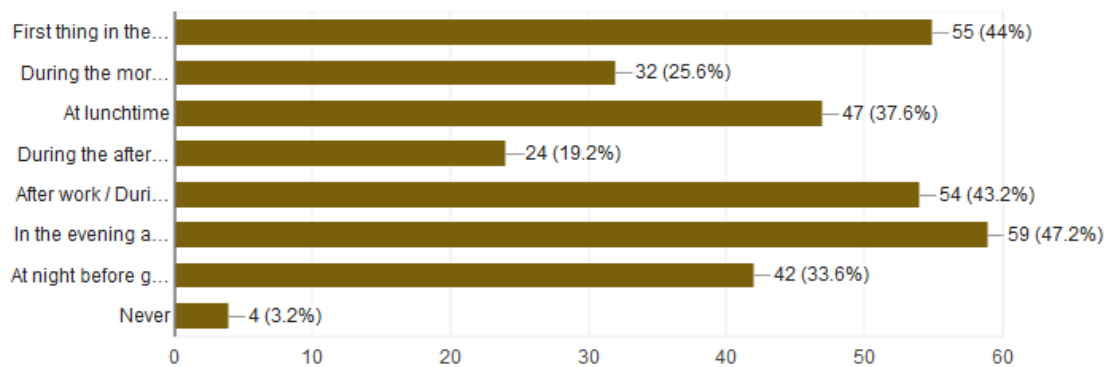
125 responses



Q4.

4. At what time of the day do you connect to social media and post?

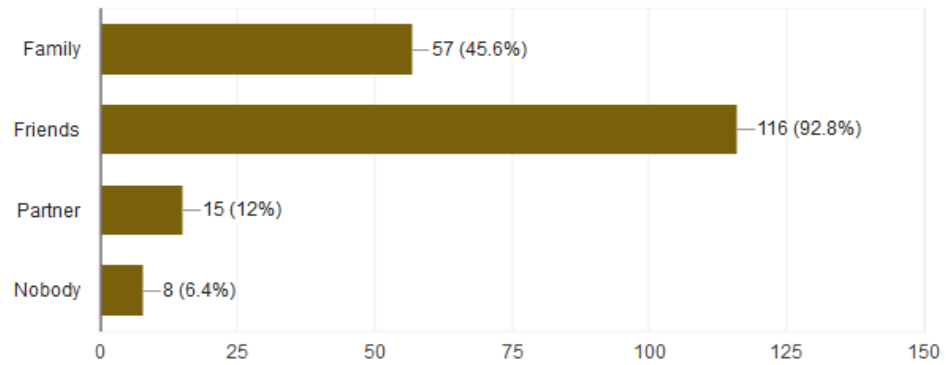
125 responses



Q5

5. Who posts regularly on your social media?

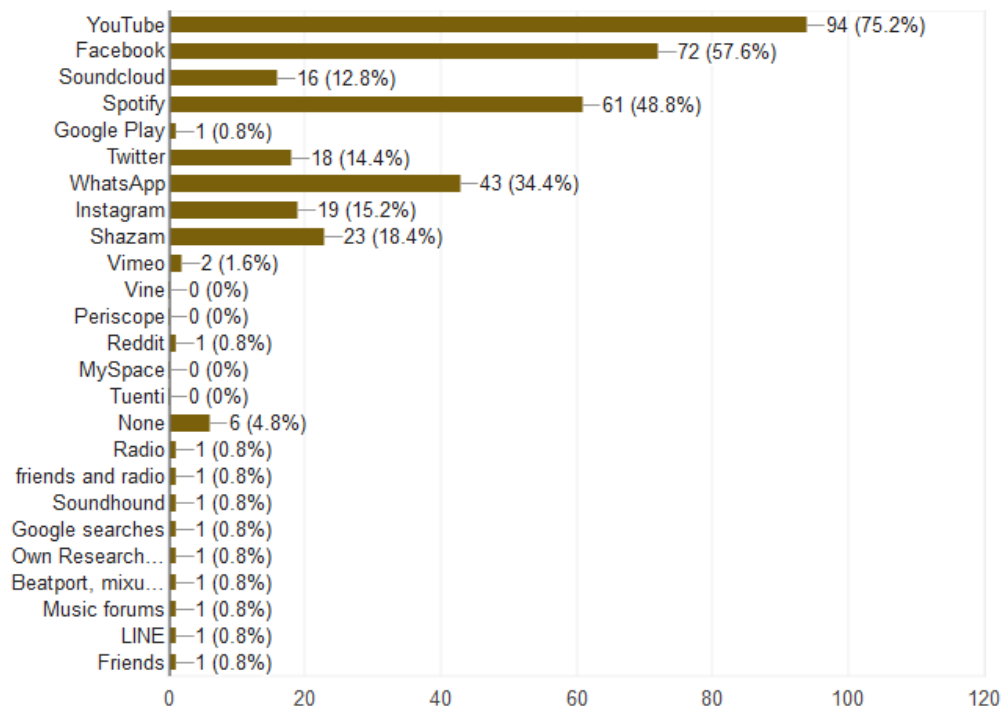
125 responses



Q6.

6. Which platforms do you use to discover, share, post and discuss music content?

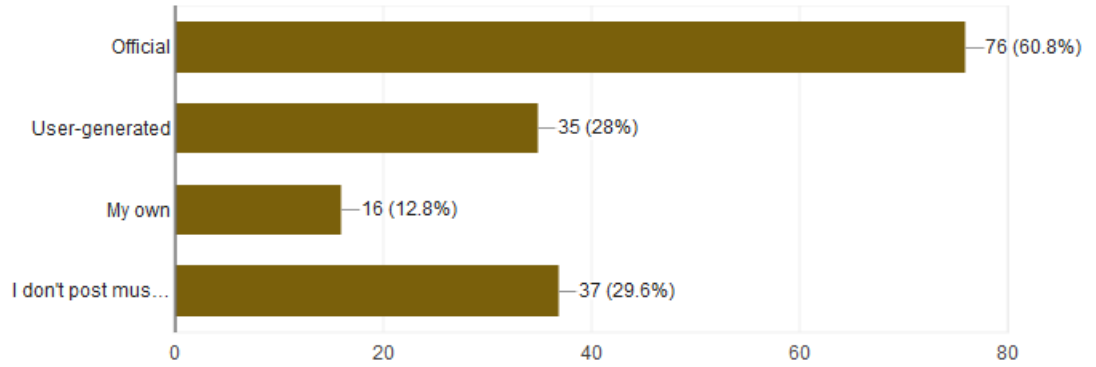
125 responses



Q7.

7. What type of music content do you post?

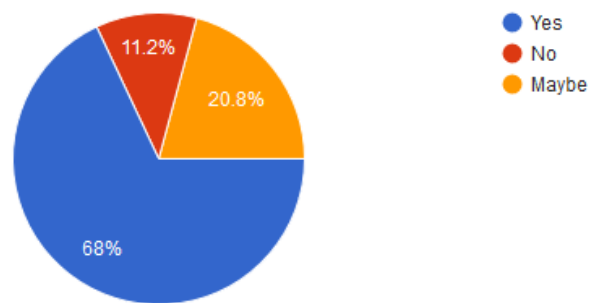
125 responses



Q12.

12. Do you think you know/discover more music due to social media?

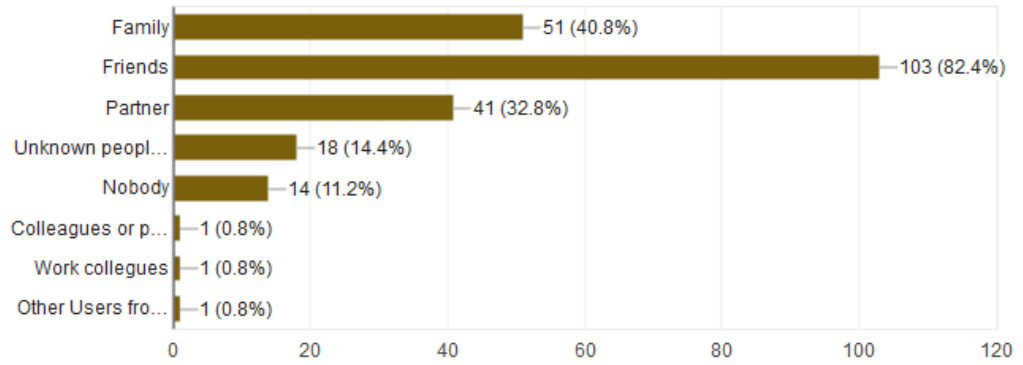
125 responses



Q11.

11. With whom do you discuss music content online or offline?

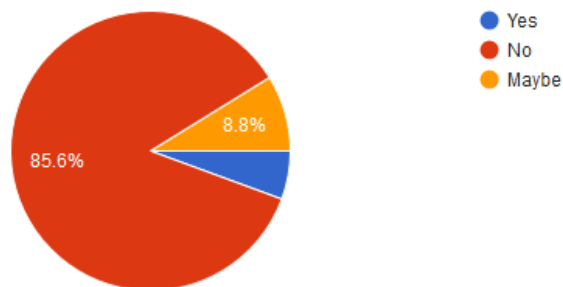
125 responses



Q13.

13. Are you worried about showing your music taste on social media?

125 responses

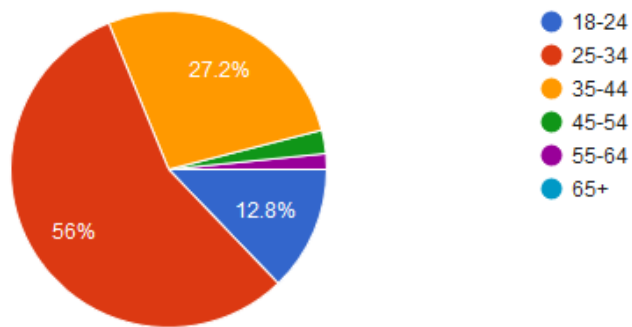


DEMOGRAPHICS

Q15.

15. Age

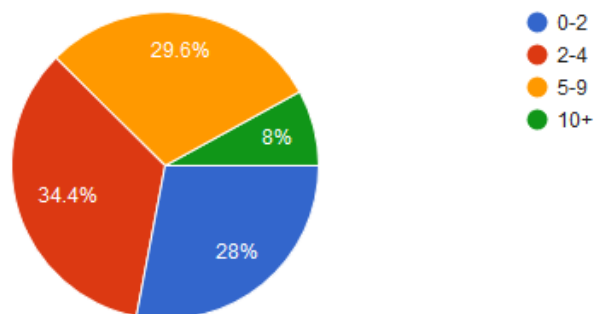
125 responses



Q16.

16. Number of years in the UK

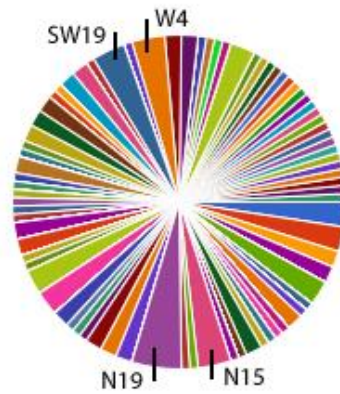
125 responses



Q18.

18. Postcode

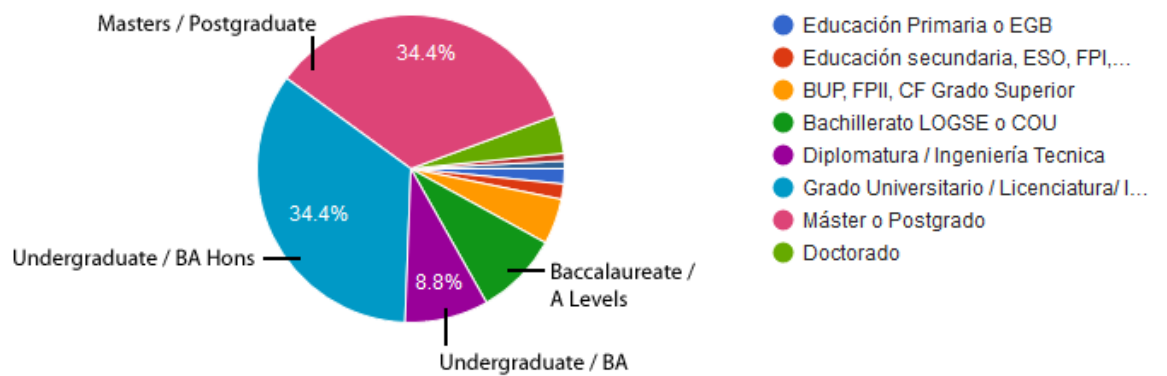
125 responses



Q19.

19. Educational background

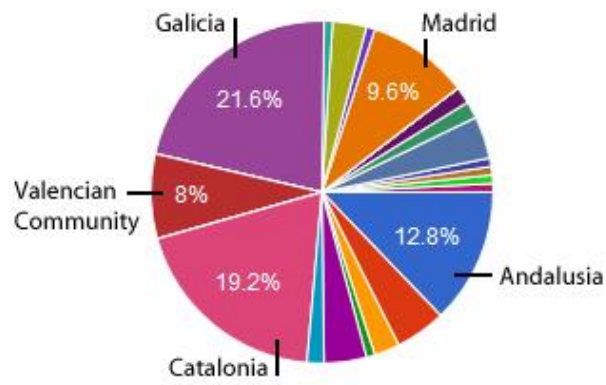
125 responses



Q20.

20. Place of birth

125 responses



APPENDIX II

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

Anabel

(b. 1987) Anabel is an online content editor from Madrid. She studied Journalism in Spain and lives in London since 2013. She is also a trained jazz vocalist. She is a friend of Cynthia.

Cynthia

(b. 1983) Cynthia is a primary school teacher from Valencia. She studied Early Childhood Education in Spain and lives in London since 2013. She is a friend of Anabel.

Daniel

(b. 1988) Daniel is a nurse from Madrid. He studied Nursing in Spain and lived in London from 2016 until early 2018.

Diana

(b. 1993) Diana is a vulnerable adults' carer from Galicia. She studied Tourism in Spain and is currently studying towards a certificate in Social Care. She lives in London since 2013.

Elisa

(b. 1984) Elisa is from Galicia and works as a shop attendant at one of London's major tourist sites. She studied Art History in Spain and lives in London since 2011.

Fernando

(b. 1977) Fernando is a Software Engineer from Galicia. He studied Computer Science in Spain and lives in London since 2015. He is married to Teresa. At the time of writing, they are considering moving to the USA, depending on the outcome of Brexit.

Jasmin

(b. 1986) Jasmin is a hotel receptionist from Barcelona. She studied Social Work in Spain and lives in London since 2014. At the time of writing she is about to enrol in a Sexology Therapy course in Madrid and plans to live between Madrid and London from September 2019.

Javier

(b. 1982) Javier is a software tester from Madrid. He is a former Spanish Army soldier and trained as a software tester in London, where he lives since 2011.

Jose

(b. 1962) Jose is an accountant from Canary Islands. He was a music shop owner in Spain and studied Accountancy in London, where he lives since 2013.

Rose

(b. 1977) Rose is a concert promoter from Barcelona. She studied Photography and trained as Sound Technician in Spain and lives in London since 2016. At the time of writing, she is preparing to move back to Spain within the next month, but plans to return to UK often to visit her in-laws.

Sandra

(b.1990) Sandra is a Telecommunications Engineer from Madrid. She studied Telecommunications Engineering in Spain and lives in London since 2014. At the time of writing she is applying for jobs in Madrid. She is a friend of Teresa.

Sue

(b. 1969) Sue is a home assistant from Galicia. She studied Cuisine and Hairdressing in Spain, and lives in London since 2012.

Teresa

(b. 1980) Teresa is a translator from Valencia. She studied translation in Spain and London and lives in London since 2015. She is married to Fernando. At the time of writing, they are considering moving to the USA, depending on the outcome of Brexit. She is a friend of Sandra and Veronica.

Veronica

(b. 1978) Veronica is a doctor in Political Science from Murcia. She studied Political Science in Spain and in Manchester. She is a friend of Teresa. She lived in the UK from 2009 until 2018.



Research Project Consent Form

Full title of Project: Understanding Musicking in Social Media: Music Sharing, Sociality and Communication

Ethics approval registration Number:

Name: Raquel Campos

Researcher Position: PhD candidate

Contact details of Researcher: camposvr@lsbu.ac.uk

Taking part (please tick the box that applies)	Yes	No
I confirm that I have read and understood the information sheet/project brief and/or the student has explained the above study. I have had the opportunity to ask questions.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time, without providing a reason.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I agree to take part in the above study.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Use of my information (please tick the box that applies)	Yes	No
I understand my personal details such as phone number and address will not be revealed to people outside the project.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I understand that my data/words may be quoted in publications, reports, posters, web pages, and other research outputs.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I would like my real name to be used in the above.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I agree for the data I provide to be stored (after it has been anonymised) in a specialist data centre and I understand it may be used for future research.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I agree to the interview being audio recorded.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I agree to the interview being video recorded.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I agree to the use of anonymised quotes in publications.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I agree to assign the copyright I hold in any materials related to this project to Raquel Campos	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

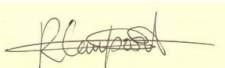
Name of Participant

Date

Signature

RAQUEL CAMPOS
Name of Researcher

Date



Signature

Project contact details for further information:

Project Supervisor/ Head of Division name: Prof. Hillegonda Rietveld / Prof. Lizzie Jackson

Phone: 020 7815 5778

Email address: h.rietveld@lsbu.ac.uk