

Proceedings  
of

**The Healing and  
Emotional Power  
of Music and Dance  
(HELP-MD)  
Symposium**

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# Preface

The Healing and Emotional Power of Music and Dance Symposium took place on May 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> 2021, hosted (online) by Instituto de Etnomusicologia (INET-MD), Faculty of Social and Human Sciences (FCSH), NOVA University Lisbon. It has been organized by myself and Dr. Giorgio Scalici, with support from Portuguese funding through the Foundation for Science and Technology (FCT), within the scope of the project “The Healing and Emotional Power of Music and Dance” (PTDC/ART-PER/29641/2017, <https://www.help-md.eu/>).

The Symposium’s aim was to bring together scholars and students working on the topic of music, emotion, and health across a variety of scientific fields, including ethnomusicology, music psychology, music education, and music therapy. Following the Call for Papers (see p. 1), the submitted abstracts were selected by the Scientific Committee and then published online before the Symposium (<https://www.docdroid.net/FffCFYC/help-md-book-of-abstracts-pdf>).

Oral presentations took place in seven sessions with each devoted to a specific sub-theme: 1) “dance, emotion, and healing”, 2) “keynotes”, 3) “music and emotion”, 4) “music, healing, ritual, and trance”, 5) “music therapy”, 6) “miscellaneous”, and 7) “ongoing field research”. One of the Symposium sessions featured an exciting double keynote presentation, with leading scholars Dr. Benjamin Koen (ethnomusicology) and Dr. Emmanuel Bigand (cognitive psychology), who I would like to thank warmly for their precious insights into the Symposium themes. All presentations, including the keynotes, have been recorded and have since been uploaded on the project’s website following the prior consent of the authors (<https://www.help-md.eu/recordings-of-the-help-md-symposium/>).

The Symposium closed following an open session that included discussion of the possibility of publishing the papers. Among the various formats referenced (book, abstracts, etc.), we chose to publish a collection of “Extended” (max. 2000 words) and “Short” abstracts (max 300 words). This mixed format was recently adopted by the “Proceedings of the First Symposium of the ICTM study group on Sound, Movement and the Sciences” (see: <https://zenodo.org/record/5514167>), a publication that served as a model for the current Proceedings.

In the following pages, the reader will find the original Call for Papers of the Symposium, the program, 16 abstracts (9 of which are “extended”, and 7 “short”), and the keynote abstracts. Instead of separating the texts according to their length, I maintained the original order of the Symposium program, preserving the thematic grouping of the papers. All the texts received were duly peer-reviewed. Finally, I would like to thank all the authors and reviewers who each gave their personal best to ensure the high quality of this publication.

Lisbon, June 2022

The Editor

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# Call for Papers

Can we explain the power of music and dance to prevent and treat illness? Many individuals around the world, from the shamans of the Indonesian jungle to the music therapists in New York, use music and dance to enhance well-being and to prevent and treat illness, but the complex elements behind this phenomenon are still largely unexplained.

On one side, cognitive scientists try to answer this question by investigating the impact of music on basic human faculties such as memory, emotions and physical abilities in people affected by different types of diseases (Alzheimer's, autism, etc.). On the other, ethnomusicologists, who focus on the cultural diversity of musical expressions, may offer an important contribution to this emerging field by describing how the relation among music, dance, and health is conceived in other cultural contexts and performance settings.

The project "The Healing and Emotional Power of Music and Dance (HELP-MD)" aims to develop an inter-cultural and inter-disciplinary comparison between musical healing practices, in order to determine the common elements among the various cultures. Moreover, the project's objective is to create a bridge between social and health sciences, to move forward from the current state of the research and offer new and unique insights.

We are particularly interested in: a) analyzing how in a given context music is used to cure, heal or prevent; b) working on an inter-cultural comparison, and c) integrating methods and hypotheses of the cognitive and the health sciences. The following questions are at the heart of the HELP-MD project:

- Can we find, in different musical and cultural contexts, similarities in the way musical activity, emotional behaviors, and healing practices are linked?
- How does musical practice relate with well-being, illness prevention and/or treatment?
- How do people engage with music and/or dance with the aim of changing their emotional and/or health condition?
- What type of symbolic associations are commonly linked to the emotional and healing power of music and dance?
- If music is widely associated with healing practices in many societies from around the world, could this be due to its potential to elicit and control emotions?
- How are bodily behaviors modified when people identify with a "sonic agent" (an intentional entity stably associated with a musical form)?

# Program

Thursday, May 20<sup>th</sup>

9:00	9:30	<b>Welcome of participants and Introduction</b>	
9:30	11:00	<b>1<sup>st</sup> session</b>	<b>Dance, emotion, and healing – Chair: Daniel Tércio</b>
9:30	10:00	Livia Jiménez Sedano	Looking at the “African discos” of Lisbon as an “every night therapy.”
10:00	10:30	Aoife Hiney	Singing and dancing the blues away: the effects of group singing and dancing classes on the loneliness scores of adults aged 50 or over in Portugal during the COVID-19 Pandemic.
10:30	11:00	Sophie Coquelin	Call dance: attention, emotion and well-being. <i>Chamarritas</i> balls on Pico Island (Azores, Portugal).
11:00	11:30	<i>Coffee break</i>	
11:30	13:00	<b>2<sup>nd</sup> session</b>	<b>Keynote presentations: Emmanuel Bigand and Benjamin Koen + discussion</b> <b>Chair: Filippo Bonini Baraldi</b>
13:00	14:00	<i>Lunch break</i>	
14:00	15:30	<b>3<sup>rd</sup> session</b>	<b>Music and emotion – Chair: Livia Jiménez Sedano</b>
14:00	14:30	Marie Cousin	Piano comping in ballet class: between catharsis and refinement of emotional palette, the generation by the music of an “emotional yoga.”
14:30	15:00	Nathalie Abou Jaoude	Cognitive differentiation of the emotional colorings of the Levantine modal scales by Lebanese children and adolescents.
15:00	15:30	Susana Sors Rodríguez	“ <i>That’s me and that’s okay</i> ”. Self-understanding through musical memory.
15:30	16:00	<i>Coffee break</i>	
16:00	17:30	<b>4<sup>th</sup> session</b>	<b>Music, healing rituals, and trance – Chair: Salwa El-Shawan Castelo-Branco</b>
16:00	16:30	Bernd Brabec de Mori	The construction of efficacy: musical ritual spaces, times, and beings.
16:30	17:00	Tamara Turner	There is no closure, no transcendence: why music and trance dancing in Algeria function as affective maintenance rather than “healing.”
17:00	17:30	Cosima Lanzilotti, Remy Dumas, Massimo Grassi, Daniele Schön	Prolonged exposure to highly rhythmic music affects brain dynamics and perception.
17:30	18:30	<b>Open session</b>	

## Friday, May 21<sup>st</sup>

09:30	11:00	<b>5<sup>th</sup> session</b>	<b>Music therapy – Chair: Giorgio Scalici</b>
09:30	10:00	Giorgos Tsiris	Spirituality as a boundary object? Ethnographic perspectives from music therapy.
10:00	10:30	Layla Dari & Davide Ferrari	The ritual healing: resonances between traditional and clinical music therapy.
10:30	11:00	Aurore Seraye	Inquiry into the history and evolution of music as a healing technique in Turkey.
11:00	11:30	<i>Coffee Break</i>	
11:30	12:30	<b>6<sup>nd</sup> session</b>	<b>Miscellaneous – Chair: Livia Jiménez Sedano</b>
11:30	12:00	Benjamin Lapidus	El Patio de Adela: music, medicine, and cultural preservation in Guantánamo, Cuba.
12:00	12:30	Tiziana Palandrani	The power of the voice in the <i>saeta</i> .
12:30	14:00	<i>Lunch Break</i>	
14:00	15:00	<b>7<sup>th</sup> session</b>	<b>Ongoing field research – Chair: B. Brabec de Mori</b>
14:00	14:30	Filippo Bonini Baraldi	Envy and “corporeal lockdown” in Maracatu de baque solto (Brazil).
14:30	15:00	Giorgio Scalici	Playing together to heal together: healing, music making and playfulness among the Wana people of Morowali.
15:00	15:30	<i>Coffee break</i>	
15:30	16:30	<b>Open session</b>	





# **Keynote speakers**

## Emmanuel Bigand



is a full professor of Cognitive Psychology at the University of Burgundy in Dijon, France, where he is the director of the LEAD lab (Laboratory for Research on Learning and Development) since 2003. He has received academic degrees in the three disciplines of

Applied Mathematics (University of Montpellier, 1984), Musicology (University of Aix-en-Provence, 1987) and Psychology (Ph.D. University of Paris X, 1990), as well as formal training as a professional classical musician (First Contrabass Prize, Conservatoire National de Musique de Versailles). Prof. Bigand's research is concerned with the cognitive aspects of human audition. His research has notably established that, contrary to the traditional views in music education, human's aptitude for music can develop implicitly in the manner of language learning. Since 2007 he has been involved in numerous projects linking musical listening and performance to cognitive stimulation and therapeutic rehabilitation. His recent research has shown that music stimulation can boost linguistic performances in deaf children, and help memorization in Alzheimer patients. Prof. Bigand is the author of more than 70 journal articles, has supervised 11 PhD theses and has been the coordinator for 5 international research programs, including the ongoing ITN EBRAMUS (European Brain and Music) network.

His research activity lies at the intersection of the humanities of music (musicology, ethnomusicology), brain sciences (psychology and neuroscience) and artificial intelligence. His initial research, carried out in collaboration with the musicologist Fred Lerdahl (who published with the linguist R Jackendoff the very influential book: *A generative theory of tonal music*) focused on the mental processes that process musical structures. He then turned his attention to studies of emotional responses to music. His work focused on the characterization of the musical emotional space evoked by different western and extra-western musical styles. The speed of emotional responses was then analysed, and Emmanuel Bigand showed that a few milliseconds of music are sufficient to trigger an emotional response to music. More recently, his research focused on the pathology of emotions in amusic patients and elderly people, and more generally on the use of music in therapeutic settings.

Books:

Bigand, E. (2020). *La symphonie neuronale*. Paris: HumenSciences.

Bigand, E. (Ed.). (2018). *Les bienfaits de la musique sur le cerveau*. Paris: Belin.

Bigand, E., Habib, M., & Brun V. (2012) *Musique et cerveau*. Montpellier: Sauramps médical.

## Benjamin D. Koen

is an international leader in the research, practice, performance, and teaching of music, meditation, improvisation, healing, health, and wellness. Dr. Koen is involved in several interrelated projects exploring music, the mind, and meditation in healing and wellbeing, goal achievement, and entrepreneurship. His focus is on the universal principles and processes that illuminate how music, specialized sound, and meaning can generate new neural pathways and bridge the conscious and subconscious mind. Dr. Koen is also involved in several recording projects primarily focused on creative improvised music, jazz-world music, and musical meditations for healing, health, and wellbeing.



Dr. Koen works across several areas in music and the arts, the social and health sciences, the medical humanities, and is a widely published author, including two ground-breaking books with Oxford University Press—*The Oxford Handbook of Medical Ethnomusicology*; and *Beyond the Roof of the World: Music, Prayer, and Healing in the Pamir Mountains*. His articles appear in such journals as *Ethnomusicology*, *Asian Music*, *The World of Music*, *ETHOS: The Journal of Psychological Anthropology*, *College Music Symposium*, *Studies on Persianate Societies*, *American Music Teacher*, *Humanities International*, and the *Journal of Anthropological Studies*, among others. Dr. Koen's research and creative activities have been supported by grants and fellowships from the NEH, NEA, the U.S. Department of Education Foreign Language and Area Studies program (Persian-speaking cultures), and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services where he served as a consultant and faculty member for the Longitudinal Training in Mind-Body-Spirit Medicine in Primary Care. Koen served as a reviewer and consultant for the Austrian Academy of Sciences and Harvard University Max-Kade Fellowship Program in medical ethnomusicology, is an Oxford University Press editor and Advisory Board Member for *Medical Ethnomusicology*, an assessor for the Australian Research Council, and was a representative and Music Presenter for the Smithsonian Institution's program *The Silk Road – Connecting Cultures, Creating Trust*.

### Books:

Koen, B. D. (in preparation). *When Music Heals: How the New Paradigm of Musical Healing and Wellbeing Can Improve Your Life*.

Koen, B. D. (2018). *Listen to Your Higher Voice—Music, Mind, Meditation Methods*. Xiamen: Xiamen University Press.

Koen, B. D. (2011). (Ed.) *The Oxford Handbook of Medical Ethnomusicology*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Koen, B. D. (2011). *Beyond the Roof of the World: Music, Prayer, and Healing in the Pamir Mountains*. New York: Oxford University Press



# **Extended and short abstracts**

# Looking at the “African Discos” of Lisbon as an “Everynight Therapy”

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## INTRODUCTION

In this paper, I propose considering the so-called “African discos” of Lisbon from a different angle; not just as clubs for drinking, dancing and having fun but also as ritual encounters with a therapeutic dimension in which people who suffer racism in their everyday lives release their pain and transform it into something else in their everynight lives. This analysis is based on empirical materials obtained in the postdoctoral project “Dancing ethnicities in a transnational world” I carried out between 2012 and 2018 at the Institute of Ethnomusicology-Centre for Music and Dance Studies (NOVA University of Lisbon). The main fieldwork setting was Lisbon and I took Madrid as a contrasting case[2]: between 2012 and 2015, I undertook participant observation in the so-called *African discos*[3], *kizomba*[4] dance schools and *kizomba* international festivals. This involved taking lessons, socializing with aficionados and partygoers, dancing with participants, having a good deal of informal conversations, observing from the DJ’s place or behind the bar. This was furthermore complemented by in-depth interviews with DJs, musicians, dance teachers, dance students, nightclub owners and the promoters behind these dancing events.

These Lisbon nightclubs, commonly referred to as *African discos*, are devoted to music and dance popular in Portuguese-speaking Africa. They mostly opened during the 1970s in the years shortly after the colonial wars of independence when musicians and leisure entrepreneurs from Portuguese-speaking Africa arrived in Lisbon and started opening live music clubs to make a living, including venues such as “Enclave”, “Casa da Morna”, “A Lontra” and the iconic club “B.Leza” (Cidra, 2010). During the 1980s and 1990s, the rates of immigration from Africa rose dramatically, driven by the ongoing expansion of the Portuguese economy, and accordingly fostering an enormous rise in the number of these nightclubs. These were the golden years for the *African discos* with some of the most popular clubs, such as “Mussulo”, “Sussusu”, “Banana Power”, “Sarabanda” and “Nells”, owned and/or managed by people from diverse Portuguese-speaking African backgrounds involved in the leisure/music industry.

These clubs tended to reproduce the daytime ethnic divisions at night (Jiménez, 2019). Ever since the first clubs opened, these spaces turned into ethnically marked *African discos* in the imaginary of citizens due to at least two factors. Firstly, many clients with experience of life in Africa[5] gathered in those clubs to share their homesickness and together built an “Africa made in Lisbon” by sharing music and dance symbols. In a hostile context, this need for expression through music and dance became much stronger than it had formerly been in their homelands. Secondly, the policies of not allowing people racialized as *Black* into the many non-ethnically marked clubs of the city often led racialised partygoers to concentrate in those clubs owned and managed by other racialised actors, where they correspondingly hoped to find friendlier ambiances.

## EVERYDAY LIFE VS. EVERYNIGHT LIFE

Let us now explore the contrast between everyday life and everynight life. According to Henriques (2018), structural racism in Portugal is identifiable across every level, whether the national law that denies Portuguese nationality to people born in Portugal to *African* parents, residential segregation, poor labour conditions, over-representation in prisons and police violence.

People suffering such difficult circumstances in their daily lives have established nightlife as a counterbalance. In these alternative contexts, the social order is temporarily suspended and may instead be renegotiated on different terms. From this point of view, we can look at these everynight pleasurable encounters as contemporary secular rituals (as defined by Martine Segalen, 2005) with a performative dimension (Tambiah, 1981). This furthermore takes place every night (building on the concept of “everynight life” coined by Delgado and Muñoz, 1997) and shapes relatively stable social groups, what St. John calls “weekend societies” (St. John, 2015). I am going to focus on one specific dimension of this modern ritual: the therapeutic dimension.

These healing kinetic symbols operate across at least three levels: first, they help transform pain into joy; second, they turn the feeling of isolation into a sense of community belonging; and third, they turn daily submission into night subversion.

### **HOW THERAPY WORKS: FROM PAIN TO JOY**

Suffering results from living as racialized citizens in a largely *White* city. This is not only about police violence but rather also about the less visible practices that take place in their everyday lives. Sociologist Luís Machado conducted a survey in which participants from Guinea Bissau reported having suffered racism when looking for a job, at work, when taking public transport, in public institutions, at shops, banks and cafes, and also when trying to access nightclubs, in Lisbon (Machado, 2001). This situation, day after day, creates a structural feeling of low personal value, a fear of not being accepted, that may lead to depressive feelings. Moreover, in a context where talking about racism constitutes a taboo (Henriques, 2018), these feelings are not easily outspoken or liberated. The dancefloor becomes a perfect scenario for expressing blocked emotions through music and body discourses and turning them into something different, a productive energy to face the next day. As Puerto Rican sociologist Quintero Rivera asserts for the case of salsa: “sadness is transformed into an energy that restores life through sonority and dance” (Quintero, 2009, p. 39).

In Lisbon, most racialized people are employed in underpaid jobs that involve high physical demands. In this sense, the dancing body liberates the labouring body and makes it regain agency. Delgado and Muñoz (1997) assert that secular *American dances* of *African* descent hide this former dimension, resisting what they call “the zombification of work” (Delgado and Muñoz, 1997, p. 20); speaking specifically of samba, Rowe and Schelling consider secular dance “one of the means by which resistance to the reduction of the body to a productive machine was expressed” (Rowe and Schelling, 1991, p. 18). In the same vein, Marissa Moorman (2008), in her historical analysis of popular music and dance in Angola, asserts that “music continues to be a means of reflecting on daily life, transcending individual suffering, performing and thus constructing gendered roles and relations, and showing that fun can be subversive and subversion can be fun” (Moorman, 2008, p. 26).

The body is central in the “therapeutic dancefloor”. According to Aníbal Quijano, one of the most prominent authors in the decolonial theoretical framework, “corporeality emerges brilliantly as the human way of being in this world and makes evident its relationship with power. It’s the body that is poorly fed, tortured, imprisoned. It’s the body that relates to the concepts of work, gender and race, the three axes on which colonial/modern capitalism relies. But the body is also home and the destiny of pleasure, of every kind of pleasure, and pain, every kind of pain. Relationships of communication, solidarity, collective happiness, individual joy, come from the body or end in it” (Quijano, 2008, p.34).

### **RITUAL THEORY AND DANCEFLOOR THERAPY**

The suffering body of the day finds its counterpart in the joyful body at night. The popular dances displayed on the *African dancefloors* of Lisbon tell diverse stories but fun is a prominent theme. These “dancing games” symbolically put together the painful and the joyful body, suffering and pleasure, melancholy and fun. This is exactly the way rituals operate on human emotions according to classical authors such as Sapir, Lévi-Strauss and Turner. According to Berthomé and Houseman, rituals are conceptualized as dynamic interactive contexts (Berthomé and Houseman 2010). Sapir (1929) insists on how symbols condense a variety of meanings that are glued together and get associated by virtue of ritual. Lévi-Strauss (1958) describes how opposite meanings are interlinked in indigenous American mythology and the ways they help in solving contradictions. According to Turner (1970), the mobilizing power of symbols and rituals lies in this capacity to unify multiple meanings, even those apparently contradictory, with strong feelings and emotions. In this way, social rules such as solidarity and unity, get associated with emotions and desires, turning low passions into honorable sensations and making them powerful to glue society.

When we talk about the making of this “African society”, this extends beyond meeting and networking at the disco and also includes the characteristics of the music and dance displayed in these clubs. Classical authors such as Radcliffe-Brown stress how dance helped maintaining social cohesion among the Andaman islanders in the 1920s (Radcliffe-Brown, 1922) while John Blacking states (1973) that music and dance constitute great material for community building in the Venda society. Closer in time, Delgado defines social dance as a privileged site for the production of cultural identities (Delgado, 1997, p. 4), and Moorman concludes that the dance music semba did not only help to build the nation but music was the space in which community was (and is) imagined (Moorman, 2008). In

the same way, the “African community” in the Lisbon context is imagined through embodied symbols of dance and music.

When people who emigrated from African countries to Portugal dance to the same music they danced to in their homeland, their bodies activate kinetic memories and these *saudades*, these melancholies, get associated with their daily sufferings and also with joy and fun. This is the way the ritual works: the suffering from daily and structural racism, the rage against those people who make them feel worthless, the sense of longing for the imagined home “Africa”, the sexual desires that may arise in couple dances, the sweat and heat of dancing bodies, the sensation of one’s own heart beating, the reverberation of loud music through the body, turn into a “collective effervescence” (in Durkheim’s terms) that is transferred to the idea of an “African community”. Such a community is created symbolically through dancing practices, a feeling of solidarity, unity and belonging, collective agency and cultural sovereignty that repairs the feelings of isolation, loneliness, social disapproval and alienation in daily life. The harmed, attacked, exploited, insulted, traumatized social body is healed through everynight rituals that turn the moving body into the main actor. This constitutes the restoration of life energies through effective collective symbols. And this, I propose, is the way that everynight therapy works.

## NOTES

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[2] The history of colonial and postcolonial relations between Africa and Portugal rather differs from that established between Africa and Spain. This results in contrasting ethnic compositions on the postcolonial dancefloors of Lisbon and Madrid as well as contrasting ways of constructing ethnicity in each context.

[3] Kizomba, in this context, refers to a form of couple dance developed in Portuguese speaking Africa and commodified in the dance schools of Lisbon during the nineties.

[4] These clubs were mostly frequented by people who had emigrated from Portuguese-speaking Africa to Lisbon; some were members of colonial society and their offspring. These were called “retornados” (returnees) even though some of the younger persons had never set a foot in Portugal before their fleeing from the Independence wars and felt just like “Africans” leaving home and not like “Portuguese” returning to their homeland.

[5] This was a common complaint among research participants both in interviews and informal conversations during fieldwork.

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# **Singing and dancing the blues away: the effects of group singing and dancing classes on the loneliness scores of adults aged 50 or over in Portugal during the COVID-19 Pandemic**

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Social isolation caused by the lockdown in Portugal due to the COVID-19 pandemic may contribute to feelings of loneliness, particularly among adults aged 50 or over. Thus, this study aims to analyse the loneliness score of adults aged 50 or over participating in on-line group singing and ballroom dancing classes during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Sixty adults (women: 68.3%; mean age:  $64.63 \pm 6.70$  years) participating in a weekly choir rehearsal or a ballroom dancing class (n:36; women: 63.9%;  $65.11 \pm 6.43$  years) and from the community, with no formal involvement in cultural/social activities (control group) – (n: 24; women: 75%;  $63.92 \pm 7.15$  years) – were assessed for loneliness (UCLA Loneliness Questionnaire/ULS-16, Portuguese version) via telephone interviews and categorized as either affinity ( $\leq 32$  score) or isolation ( $>32$  score). Between-group comparisons were performed by running t-test and chi square tests.

The groups displayed no difference for age, sex, or living alone status ( $p>0.05$ ). The prevalence of isolation was significantly higher in the control group (57.1%) compared to the choir and ballroom dance group (42.9%,  $\chi^2$ : 6.439,  $p=0.011$ ), despite no significant difference in the raw loneliness score (control group:  $34.50 \pm 7.72$ ; choir and ballroom dance group:  $31.03 \pm 8.07$ ;  $p = 0.102$ ).

Thus, the involvement in cultural and social activities such as choir and ballroom dance later in life might counteract emotional distress through improving self-perceptions of affinity. The results reflect a need for further studies regarding the effects of these two activities within this population.

## **NOTES**

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# Call dance: attention, emotion and well-being. The *chamarritas* ball on Pico Island (Portugal)

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*Chamarritas* is a traditional ball dance and music event which remains alive on some islands in the Azorean archipelago. The dance component (choreographic figures, space and time principles) comes from country dances. A square central dance floor is formed in a room with benches with musicians on one side and the audience along the other three (Fig. 1). This central dance floor welcomes groups of dancers, between seven and twelve couples at any time. From 10pm to 2am, the *chamarritas* continue one after another. Each *chamarrita* is determined by a caller, who appears from among the dancers to announce the choreographic figures to be performed. As the calls are codified and the order of the figures is improvised, the dance requires previous knowledge. During the event, the same person may perform the roles of musician, singer, organiser, dancer, caller and audience member.

Balls are frequently identified as a leisure activity even though they encompass both social and ritual dimensions. Firstly, there is a kind of horizontality among participants due to the scope for switching between different roles. There is also a certain theatricality to the ball itself as only a few couples will dance at any one time while the others observe and evaluate their performances. In fact, the boundaries of the dance floor are quite undefined. There is quite a major “periodic incongruity” (Giurschescu, 2001) between the music beginning and the dancing starting. During this time, people decide whether or not to go dancing and a caller must first be appointed (by self-nomination, by suggestion from a dancer or by negotiation among different callers). To halt a performance, one of the calls directs all couples off the dance floor and toward the bar, where it is customary for men to buy a drink for their last dance partner.

The *chamarrita* participants are mainly members of rural communities whose way of life is a combination of paid manual labor and subsistence agriculture. Physicality is important to their daily life and the inherent physical pain they experience must be dealt with. Prior to Covid, it was not uncommon to hear of participants complaining about a pain in their arm or back, however, by the dance ending, it was as if “dance/sing your sorrows away”! (inspired by the Portuguese expression, *Quem canta/baila, seus males espanta*).

The hypothesis is that the *Chamarritas* ball, socialization and well-being are interconnected. Therefore, the question is: which combinations of conditions exist that enable emotions to emerge?

The methodology for this PhD study involved fieldwork ongoing between 2018 and 2020, including participant observation, observant participation (dancing and learning how to call and play violin), and qualitative interviews with callers.



**Fig.1** Photo of the *Chamarritas* ball at Casa do Povo das Ribeiras, Lajes do Pico (February 2020).

## MULTIMODALITY AND EMOTION

Chamarritas require analysis in accordance with the reciprocity between performance and context. For the caller, it is about knowing who is on the dance floor as each caller has to call according to the competencies of the dancers. The performance is characterised by a negotiation between predictability and unpredictability. While the aim of the dancer is to not make a mistake, the caller however has to challenge the dancers and keep the group lively. This is achieved by calls that stimulate interaction, issued cheerfully which, together with the sounds made by the dancers, creates a good atmosphere (see Lajes TV footage from timing 36.30). Callers also value the fact they announce a new call at each 6/8 bar meaning they produce a continuity of sound that almost never stops for a three minute duration. This consistent sound together with an embodied practice, guarantees concentration on the present moment. Shared attention enables the emergence of collective emotion.

The link between multimodal performance and the emergence of emotion is suggested by Guillebault. By considering rhythm as an intersection between different expressive registers, the ethnomusicologist assumes that singing and dancing with a shift, and given how the performers are simultaneously coordinated as a group, creates “a specific relational mode between the performers, which is the main factor for the emotion and shared pleasure” (2014 p.39). In analysing the Azorean performance, we encounter a shift between a binary and a ternary organisation of time. This recalls the description that Plisson (2001) makes about the baroque influence over the South American musical repertoires for dance, with the swing of the baroque characterised by the usage of hemiola. In terms of organizing the performers, the musical and choreographic components imply a need for synchronisation and, at the same time, the movements between men and women are framed by point reflection and rotational symmetry. We would point out two further factors for consideration in the relationship between multimodal performance and emotion: the rhythmical articulation between expressive registers and the multiplicity of interactions.

### CHAMARRITAS AND COMMUNITY MEMBERSHIP: INSULAR VALUES VS. HERITAGIZATION

Integral to the chamarritas performance are the singers, who stand next to the musicians. According to interviewees, in former times, people would stand in line and wait their turn to sing. Love relationships might begin or finish by singing. Social criticism might also emerge. The link between social life and the chamarritas is strong. For the callers, traditionally men, they are able to build up their social prestige. A caller may be appreciated for his talents as well as for his social standing and behaviour.

Chamarritas can be understood as a reflection of the social structure. By codifying the commands, communion remains exclusive to those who belong to the community. On the other hand, this event is quite versatile, which allows everyone to find their place. Chamarritas are also transversal and occur in many situations. In recent years, they have been performed at some religious festivals, an ongoing sacralisation process driven by heritagization (Coquelin, 2020).

The PhD thesis that we are developing maintains that the chamarritas on Pico Island have been revitalised (Boissevain, 1992) since the 1990s by individuals and local associations striving to reinforce the values of rural and insular communities, such as solidarity, exchange and reciprocity. This event integrates a set of still surviving social practices, such as communally slaughtering and processing pigs, Holy Spirit ceremonies and collective agricultural tasks. In this context, promoting an Azorean identity, as the regional government has sought to do ever since obtaining autonomous status in 1976, has been less efficient than fostering the local identity, the parish. Indeed, this administrative reference corresponds to the main scope of social mobility in rural environments and to date remains of contemporary relevance. Indeed, this context of inter-knowledge among dancers fosters the emergence of the collective emotions that I witnessed (Rimé, 2007).

### THE FLOW: FROM COLLECTIVE TO INDIVIDUAL WELL-BEING

During interviews, several callers expressed how they would leave chamarritas in better moods, having momentarily forgotten about their personal or professional problems. One interviewee stated that he can only call well when in a good mood and he otherwise experiences trouble executing commands at the right time. It is not about mastering the art of calling, but rather finding a balance point, a form of effortless control or convinced letting go. What happens when this equilibrium is reached?

Csikszentmihalyi theorised the notion of flow to characterise the mental state reached whenever someone becomes totally absorbed by their activities. The psychologist speaks about

spontaneous happiness or even ecstasy when the balance between skills and the challenge is reached. This furthermore identified six characteristics of the flow that do not all have to emerge simultaneously: “Intense and focused concentration on the present moment, merging of action and awareness, loss of reflective self-consciousness, a sense of personal control, a distortion of temporal experience, and the experience of the activity is intrinsically rewarding” (Nakamura & Csikszentmihalyi, 2002, p. 90).

This description corresponds to an experience I had once while calling. I suddenly saw and heard myself as if I were outside of myself, observing the whole situation. Whilst this then seemed to last an eternity, in reality it could not have lasted longer than twenty seconds. When I returned to my body, I felt my heart beating stronger than usual and I passed the command to another caller. I did not question the callers about this notion because this flow arises at the writing stage. Despite this, several callers have asserted that time seems to go faster when the performance goes well. In the same vein, some callers stated that when they got excited, they lost sense of time. Some callers referred to an unusual mental or emotional state. As one caller explained: "I don't fix anyone (when I am calling), I'm in a jam, it's as if I'm in another dimension, the rest disappears." Another caller considered the chamarritas as the opportunity to break with the rhythm of everyday life and “to expel what is inside”.

Regardless of the call, most interviewees verbalised the effect of the Azorean guitar, the *viola da terra*, has on them, with reference to about goosebumps, raised hair, racing blood and the common desire to get up and dance.

## FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

We began this paper with physical well-being but extended onwards to emotional well-being, passing through collective and individual dimensions. The question of well-being in the chamarritas ball has to be associated with a particular way of being together, a kind of an embodied and performative sociability, thanks to musical, textual, choreographic and contextual resources.

The core of the analysis seems to be the framework of interactions and its richness, on the condition of not limiting this to verbal communication (see Houseman, 2006). The question of interactions also reminds us of the characterisation of French country dance (see Guilcher, 2004).

## NOTES

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# Piano comping in ballet class: from accompaniment to directing a class of emotions

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## INTRODUCTION

Classical ballet, an artistic and athletic discipline, inherently requires the highest technical and emotional mastery from its practitioners. The aim of this research is to analyze the role of music in the development and refinement of the emotional palette during the learning and rehearsal processes, particularly as embodied by the classical piano and hereby demonstrating how music undertakes an essential cathartic role. This research results from participant observation in ballet classes in Paris (Studio Harmonic, Rick Odums School, Institut Stanlowa among others) during the years 2011-2013 and 2016-2019 combined with the invaluable testimonies of the ballet professors Cecile Sciaux, Alienor Decaris, Magali Devigne, Yoshié Poyac and Noëlle Pique, to whom I would like to express my every gratitude.

The classical dance class, taught in French all over the world, constitutes intangible heritage with its origins dating back to the Royal Academy of Dance – founded by Louis XIV in 1661, before the Royal Opera Academy in 1669 – and is structured between a part known as *à la barre* and another called *au milieu* (“in the middle”). Each sequence is divided into a number of exercises organized in such a way as to gradually exercise the different parts of the body: *pliés, dégagés, jetés, ronds de jambe à terre*, each exercise ending with a balance exercise (*retiré à la cheville, au genou, attitude, arabesque...*) for the *barre*, or even *adage, petite batterie, pirouettes*, and various sequences, ending with combinations of jumps and extracts of solos called *variation* or *répertoire*, in the middle.

The classical dance lesson musical program includes a series of contrasting musical extracts juxtaposed in terms of tones, nuances, tempo, and melodic forms as if seeking to convey an abridged account of the infinite variety of musical effects and colours. The multiplicity and variety of emotions felt and experienced makes it possible to transform the ballet class into a lived experience, which we may relate to a “yoga of emotions”. Indeed, the practice of ballet associates some of the eight constituent elements of yoga as set out in this definition of yoga by the master Patanjali (150 BC): *asana* or postures, *pranayama* or control of the breath, *dharana* or concentration, *dhyana* or meditation, *samadhi* or absorption.

We here associate these concepts with the emotional developments encountered in the learning of dance during the class, and thus defending the thesis that this develops an emotional yoga in which the music plays a central role. As Claude Lévi-Strauss specifies (Lévi-Strauss, 1971, pp. 589-590), music contains in its form the capacity to provide a life experience, with its aspirations, expectations, tensions and conclusions so that one encounters the feeling of having lived an experience of life on leaving a performance. These emotional experiences are not endured but are ultimately voluntary, and from which their practitioners emerge appeased, transformed from within, and they carry a sense of achievement. This may at least partially explain why ballet classes for adults have grown significantly in number in recent years, and establishing their place perfectly alongside other disciplines of bodily, energy and emotional rebalancing, such as yoga, Pilates, *barre au sol*, sophrology, *qi gong* and *tai chi chuan*, among others.

## CONCEPTS AND REPERTOIRE

Paul Ekman, an American psychologist well known worldwide for having identified universal emotions, identified the basic emotions as: sadness, joy, anger, fear, disgust, and surprise, subsequently consolidated by the addition of fun, satisfaction, embarrassment, excitement, guilt, pride in success, relief, sensory pleasure, shame and contempt in 1990 (Ekman, 1999). Previously, in ancient Greece, the purification of passions was especially nurtured through witnessing a tragedy as stated in Aristotle’s *Poetics* (paragraph 1449b): “The tragedy (...) is an imitation made by characters in action and not by means of a story, and which, arousing pity and fear, operates the purgation proper to such emotions”.

The emotional states are also explored in the *Yogasutra* of Patanjali: the mind is “colored” by all of the objects it knows, including cognitions and emotions. In order to understand the difference between itself and pure consciousness (*puruṣa*), it has to free itself from these colours and become pure. *Puruṣa* cannot in itself be known as it cannot become an object of the mind.

The musical repertoire of dance classes results from progressive transformations. The initial purpose of the musical accompaniment was to provide a metric straitjacket for the structural accomplishment of choreographic movements. The violin was replaced in the 20th century by the piano but the former instrument had previously prevailed in ballet classes; in many depictions of ballet classes the violin persists, especially in works by Degas (*Le Foyer de la danse à l'Opéra de la rue Le Peletier*, 1872; *La Classe de danse*, 1872 ; *La Répétition*, 1873) where the violinist accompanies the ballet master. Following the developments in romantic music and the adaptation of dance suites and extracts from opera, operetta and piano ballet arias, a new repertoire took shape, associating popular arias with themes from the specific ballet repertoire. Many contemporary melodies arise from the court dance suites, very popular in France and Europe: mazurkas, polka, waltzes, bourrées, tangos, habaneras... This repertoire became the leading fashion through composers such as Chopin (*Valses*, *Mazurkas*), Delibes, Brahms, among other romantic then modern composers. At the turn of the 20th century, habanera and tango were the fashion of Paris. Gradually, these different dances constituted a ballet repertoire completed by jazz and modern French music (Debussy, Ravel).

However, nowadays there is no homogeneity in the repertoires of ballet classes. Over the 20th century, they changed from extreme academicism and austerity to become something dynamic and creative. A break emerged as generations of dancers themselves became teachers. Some have expressed their choice over contrasting with the repertoire they learned when they were young, that they found too repetitive and sometimes linked with non-ideal teaching methods. This rupture illustrates a reappropriation of the aesthetic and emotional content of this repertoire. The repertoire for the *barre* or *milieu* remains exclusively for the solo piano, while the variations are worked according to orchestral extracts or reductions for piano. The exclusivity of this instrument today demonstrates the creation of a specific sound identity during ballet lessons.

## WHAT “GOOD” PIANO COMPING MUSIC SHOULD BE

What are the characteristics of good ballet accompaniment music? The choice at first glance is made by the teachers according to criteria of pace and adaptability to the character of the exercise. Indeed, for the dancers, music is at the service of movement and exercise, ensuring the accentual and metric support to the exercises and inspiring energy. Unlike the spectator, who gains the feeling the dancer is interpreting the music, for the dancer the music is the stage, the floor on which to work.

The criteria mentioned by the ballet teachers interviewed were: musicality and expressiveness, which especially allow young dancers to recognize accents and tempos; the desire to dance: musical qualities such as beautiful, pleasant, not linear nor soporific, suitably rhythmic, dynamic, lively; adaptation to the character of certain exercises (for example, *adages* that are slow and sentimental or restrained, rides that are dynamic and joyful, *batteries* that can display a martial character, etc.). Other criteria subsequently appeared interlinked to the respective dancers' experiences. For example, that the music might be associated with pleasant memories of family or friends. In addition, for pupils in their early years, some private ballet school teachers integrate music from the films and cartoons enjoyed by the children to elicit their motivation.

This therefore leads to the selection of dynamic music (in terms of accents, nuances, tempos, rhythms) in preference to more melodic or harmonic music: children exercise faster as they are closer to the ground, and do not dance in the same way as adults as their movements are often faster. Beginners should be able to count the beats easily, while more advanced dancers can work on pieces with a more developed musicality. However, some teachers and dancers explain that the emotions felt relate more closely to the melodic-harmonic pattern.

As part of the lessons, some teachers change the music every three months, monthly, weekly or every session, depending on the choreographic sequence. Those playing the same music for three months might be choreographing the same *barre* (the same sequence of exercises) for three months; there is therefore a link between the piece of music and the correlating sequence of exercises. The choice of pieces also links to the emotional memories of teachers and their desire to transmit these emotions to the young dancers.

## THE SPECIFICITIES OF PIANISTS AND PIANO MUSIC IN BALLET CLASSES

Dancers and teachers confirm that the presence of a pianist completely transforms the ballet class experience. This provides the teacher with the opportunity to change the repertoire on demand, to ask the pianist to accentuate, enhance or play a particular interpretation, to modify aspects related to inner creativity, musicality, emotions or feelings, depending on the inspiration of the moment and/or the reactivity of students. From the point of view of the dancers, the musician's energy, intentions and emotions will carry the dancers and allow them to surpass themselves, and transcend the different exercises. Several dancers contacted attended dance classes accompanied in particular by Laurent Choukroun (CNSM, Paris Opera School of Dance), and testified to the specificity of his incredible pianistic performance in terms of expressiveness. Nowadays, two repertoires of "Comping piano for ballet class" coexist: artistic, made up of variations of great ballets, and training, considered as non-artistic, only for the class, made up of short music tracks.

The repertoires of many dance teachers are composed as an assemblage of different short musical pieces, composed by specialized pianist composers, then published in CD collections. This music constitutes a specialized, specific repertoire, exclusive to the dancers and only listened to during the dance class, or practicing the *barre* at home. There are two processes: the adaptation of short pieces by classical composers (Czerny, Mozart, Bach, Strauss...) and the composition of a new 21st century repertoire, specialist productions by a few pianists who gained an international reputation: including Laurent Choukroun, Sylvain Duran, Ellina Akimova, Hayumi Hiruzaki and Pietro Galli, from the Paris Opera. There is therefore a specific dynamic in the composition of the accompanying CNSMDP and Paris Opera pianists. Featuring among the composers of the end of the 20th century are: Annie Lerolle, Tadeusz Gieyszt, Huguette Lamba, Jacques Ballue, Marina Sorgan, Philippe Reverdy, followed by Laurent Choukroun, Ellina Akimova, Gallina Pronichevan, Nathalia Flament, Richard Davis, Robert Long, Thierry Vaillant, Nolwenn Collet (composing especially for toddlers) and Soren Bebe (Danish National Ballet).

The repertoire of Laurent Choukroun, the composer and conductor at the Paris Opera School, is specifically oriented towards the expression of emotions. Each composition is associated with a particular emotional state, or state of mind, illustrating the multitude of different aesthetics that music can create. Affirming that "dance is the music of the body and music is the dance of the mind", Laurent Choukroun developed a method of musical interpretation of dance movement in response to the 'physiological needs of each movement'. Through a specific network, his compositions are now in use worldwide.

This pianistic music encompasses a whole progressive panel of emotions experienced by the dancers during the ballet class and allows for emotional catharsis, on the one hand, due to their expression of multiple feelings linked to the choreographic moves and, on the other hand, because emotions which would not necessarily have been felt in a "normal" day are brought to life through the recurring order of the class. The repetition of the same musical pieces and the emotions associated with them - the most common model of course structures - enables dancers to experience them on a daily learning basis.

## CONSTITUTING A CLASS OF EMOTIONS

Ballet classes are organized according to sequences of different exercises which gradually solicit the different parts of the body and work on different techniques specific to ballet. Each exercise is performed, as described above, to a short piece of piano music, with each conveying a different character (nuances, tempo, time signature, melodic-rhythmic-form), which are never repeated in the same class. However, in expressing lived experiences, teachers and dancers agree that the music carries the dancer, reduces fatigue, improves the technical and creative potential, and impacts on both interpreting the movement and on energy as well as having to be aesthetically beautiful, inspiring and, whenever possible, linked to positive emotional representations.

In reality, the dance class is, in addition to the learning and developing of bodily techniques, a class of emotions, of feelings, an emotional yoga during which the dancer subtly transfers from one emotion to another along the emotional palette carried by the course. A state of catharsis results, and dancers touch a state of grace and peacefulness (pure presence or *sākṣitva* in *Sāṃkhya-Yoga* philosophy). If the body learns bodily technique, the mind learns to juggle the different emotional palettes carried by the music. These musical tracks, lasting one to three minutes, foster different emotional states, such as sadness, contemplation, meditation, ardour, joy, martiality, etcetera. At the end of class, dancers will have lived and felt these different emotions, sometimes contradictory, sometimes complementary. These emotions are felt by training dancers in relation to combinations of

different musical criteria: modal colour and melodic-rhythmic form, dynamics and nuances, tempos, metrics, harmony, etcetera.

A dance class would therefore become a “class of emotions”. Various different teachers maintain that classes must not only develop technical and artistic competences but also psychological aspects. According to the testimonies of the dance teachers interviewed, managing emotions makes sense when performing in a group on stage, where the perfection of the whole work derives from the dancers, who must enter into choreographic osmosis with each other with rivalry thereby discarded in favour of cohesion and understanding.

## NOTES

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# Cognitive differentiation of the emotional colorings of the Levantine modal scales by Lebanese children and adolescents

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Medieval musical treatises often evoke the musical psychological theory of music ethos inherited from Aristotelian philosophy. More specifically, the theoretical treatises of the Arab and Persian schools (Abou Mrad & Didi, 2013) postulate a generative grammar for music that focuses on modality and its underlying structures and the ethical effect of music (*aṭar*). Thus, these treaties distribute the twelve canonical modes into three emotional categories: systole or tension, diastole or relaxation, and hesychia or equilibrium.

Based on this observation, this paper aims to determine if Lebanese children and adolescents can distinguish between emotional colorings, that characterize the structural modality of traditional musical sequences. This experimental study focuses on three modes that are frequently used in the Levantine traditions: Rāst (R), Bayyātī (B) and Ṣabā (S). Tradition and scale analysis assume that (R) is more relaxing than (B) and (B) is more relaxing than (S). The main research question, therefore, seeks to answer whether children and adolescents are experiencing an increase in tension. This tension may range from (R) to (B) and from (B) to (S) by distinguishing the differences in emotional coloring in the traditional monodic modal musical sequences.

This paper presents the results of an experimental study, carried out in 2020 on a sample of 500 children and adolescents elected in a school environment. In short, these findings allow for the confirmation of the research questions, which therefore encourages the carrying out of further studies on perceptions of modal ethos.

## NOTES

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# **“That’s me and that’s okay”: Self-understanding through musical memory**

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## **OBJECT OF STUDY AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

The aim of this work is to study music as a resource for the construction of our own subjectivity. Subjectivity can be understood as the ways of thinking, feeling and doing, the socioculturally constructed meanings and feelings that constitute us. More specifically, I wanted to study subjectivity from the perspective of self-understanding[2]: how music can help us create a sense of self and understand ourselves better. Specifically, I wanted to know how talking about self-selected music could create a personal, autobiographical narrative.

To achieve this, I found it most useful to think of music as a symbol. Here, I use “symbol” as a source of meaning that makes and is made by social action; symbols exist because of and for human interaction (Velasco and Sama, 2009). It is precisely their social meaning that enables them to provoke such emotional responses in us and the reason they are “effective” in their social work (Douglas, 1970).

And what is meant by “effective”? In this work, music is perceived as one of the cultural resources able to help people construct their own personal narratives and thereby understand themselves better. I first encountered this idea in Tia DeNora’s theory “music as a technology of the self” (1999), in which she details how people use music for self-regulation or mood management (for example, picking specific music to get into a specific mood). In this study, I seek to test whether music can help us understand ourselves in keeping with music’s capacity to evoke memories. Memories are not usually faithful to reality and they change each time they are recalled at different moments in time. This implies that memory does not actually “reflect” experience, but rather memory constructs experience (Van Dijck, 2006, p. 362; Van Dijck, 2009, pp. 107-109). Furthermore, storytelling represents the best way we have of understanding ourselves (Vila, 1996).

## **METHODOLOGY**

At the outset, I wanted to focus my whole work on a single-case study but, after finishing interviewing, I felt I still lacked material. Coincidentally, the quarantine lockdown made me consider alternatives to phone interviews to protect the privacy of volunteers, some of whom live with abusive family members and expressed insecurity over talking out loud, and hence the option for e-mail interviews. Not having to transcribe each case, I finally decided on interviewing six different people. I firstly asked them to make a list of around 20 pieces of music they considered to be especially significant to them. This could mean music that evoked powerful memories, moods, or ideas. Later, through in-depth individual interviews, they told me why they had chosen each one of them.

As I initially wanted to do a single-case study and already had a dear friend as an eager volunteer and as the following participants were improvised on the go in just a short period of time, I unconsciously neglected thinking about choosing the study subjects. In the end, I realized I had interviewed six musicians as a consequence of choosing people who I thought showed most interest in this project after a brief discussion. This meant I worked with people who were close to me, as because of my own musical activities, most of the people in my life are also musicians.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

Relationship-related memories are the most common among music-evoked memories (DeNora 1999, 2000). In addition, music’s main evolutionary “function” might stem from helping to build and make stronger social bonds. Jeanette Bicknell (2007) argues for its role in mother-child bond, in keeping social groups together, and in making and keeping stable romantic relationships. In the interviews, I observed this to be the case.

Most volunteers decided to talk about their selected pieces of music in biographical and chronological order and started off by talking about music that reminded them of their parents. These

memories were both positive and negative, in keeping with their presentation as reflections on the participant's present-day relationships with their parents. In the case of one participant, some songs reminded her of a time when she felt loved by her mother but she could not help simultaneously recalling the abuse that followed in later years.

After talking about their parents, interviews usually move onto their first friendships. One displayed his arm tattoo that reads "for what it's worth, it was worth all the while", a lyric from Green Day's song *Good Riddance/Time of Your Life*, which he says helped him cope with the loss of multiple friendships in a short period of time that back then left him feeling confused and hurt. The lyrics of this song helped him accept this and also value what they had while it lasted. Similarly, while talking about a song that one participant and her ex-boyfriend used to sing together, she reflects on this relationship and declares it was the best relationship she ever had while currently encountering problems in her then-present relationship with someone else.

DeNora's idea of mood regulation also frequently came up in the interviews. Participants expressed very precise knowledge about what to listen to when they wanted to feel a certain way or to get in the mood for specific activities. However, what I found most interesting was how they talked about their feelings of identification with certain music. As DeNora explained, music can help someone get in the mood because we feel identified with what it evokes in us. Some people talked about feeling "reflected" in a song, feeling "understood", or even feeling someone's "caress". Some people talked about how specific songs helped them through depression and recovery, internalized homophobia and self-acceptance.

The key point I wish to make in this work is the metaphor of music as a dialogue (which would imply further study regarding the idea of music as a sonic agent, as someone else suggested after my presentation in the symposium). Should people be able to learn anything about themselves through listening to music, it is because music is, in a way, telling them something. When we listen to music, we project into it information about our circumstances, our feelings, how we want to feel. At the same time, music is communicating something to us through its socially-learned meaningful harmonic and rhythmic resources and our own specific memories. As one interviewee put it, "it's as if Dave Grohl was singing to me".

## NOTES

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[2] As defined by Brubaker and Cooper (2000, p. 17), "a dispositional term that designates what might be called 'situated subjectivity': one's sense of who one is, of one's social location, and of how (give the first two) one is prepared to act".

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# The construction of efficacy: Musical ritual spaces, times, and beings

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## INTRODUCTION

In human society, sound and music are used to improve wellbeing: From traditional practices among Indigenous people to clinical music therapy in post-industrial contexts, research into the effects and impacts of sound and music on wellbeing constitutes a burgeoning area of scholarly inquiry. However, the methods are mostly very distinct, as for example, Indigenous praxis is best studied with anthropological, or humanist approaches (e.g., Gouk, 2000), while clinical efficacy should be assessed by evidence based, double-blind controlled trials (e.g. Erkkilä & al., 2019). For the areas in-between, any method or mix from humanities, social sciences and experimental studies may be found.

Therefore, concepts bridging such “cultural divides” are difficult to investigate. In this contribution, I roughly compare the construction of ritual space-times and the correlation of sonic agencies with conditions for change as observed among Indigenous sound healers in the Western Amazon and certified music therapists in Austria. I have been conducting fieldwork among both populations. The methods used for this comparison are mainly based on a Latourian “anthropology of the moderns” (Latour, 2012), that is, through applying distanced ethnography, the observation of everything “exotic and strange”, and expert interviews (Bogner et al., 2009) with Indigenous Amazonians and Austrian music therapists. This discovers common factors located at an abstract level beyond simple social constructions due to the phenomena under observation being so distinct.

## RITUAL – AGENCY – ONTOLOGY

Music and sound used in traditional wellbeing-related practices are often connected to the concept of ritual healing. The term “ritual” (and even worse: “magic”) is highly problematic, mainly in a political sense as it has been used to exoticize (Brabec de Mori, 2014): to build distance in time (e.g.: in ancient times, our predecessors conducted rituals), in space (e.g.: remote people structure their world through ritual), or in socio-cultural stratification (e.g.: poor communities with little education believe in ritual healing). Therefore, the term calls for a brief definition in order to stand the test of being valid for both traditional Indigenous as well as modern application without communicating alterities.

Here, in a very dry application of Turner’s (1969) theory, ritual denotes the construction of a bounded space-time wherein social roles and relations follow different rules than those in place in everyday environments, though nonetheless in active interaction with the latter. This, taken as rigidly as it stands includes, for example, an Indigenous healing dance, a pop concert, an academic conference or a music therapy session. None of those mentioned is a ritual *per se* according to its properties but does become a ritual through a specific form of analysis that applies ritual theories to the process observed (Bell, 1992).

The question of agency inherently connects with alterations in relations within this space-time frame. Agencies, as complex and entangled as they appear in everyday life, are likewise altered within the frame: spirits become active, as do guitar amplifiers, or powerpoint projections, or unconscious personality facets. This understands agency as a construction indebted to our limited cognitive capacities: any event could be traced back through an infinite chain of causalities but a human brain cannot contain the infinite – therefore we must break this chain and insert agents. An agent must always have its agency ascribed by another agent, in accordance with Gell (1998) and can be organized in actor-networks (Mol, 2010).

Spirits, projections, or personality facets, however, require existence in order to act. This brings us to the question of ontology, of forms and ways of being. Although Descola’s (2005) four-fold model of ontologies is a useful tool for understanding different collective human ways of *worlding*, I do prefer a more flexible set of ontological fluidities that transcends the borders of defined societies – such as Latour’s “modes of existence” that allow beings in environments to pass through different ontological “modes” (Latour, 2012; see also Holbraad and Pedersen, 2017). This means that in the following comparison, I do not juxtapose any Indigenous (say, animist) ontology against a music

therapists' (say, naturalist) ontology but instead allow both traditions to pass through different modes of being and of agentive inter-creations to continuously generate new worlds – especially within bounded space-times, a.k.a. rituals.

### **THE SONIC WORLDS OF AMAZONIAN HEALERS**

To present Amazonian Indigenous sonic techniques of worlding in a nutshell requires harsh reduction. Among other scholars (e.g., Lewy, 2017; Menezes Bastos, 2013; Seeger, 1987), I have been writing extensively about these (e.g. Brabec de Mori, 2012; 2015). Here comes the reduction, focusing on musical health techniques.

The main agency lies with the singer, the healer. He (traditionally male, though during the last decades, female healers have been on the rise), when an apprentice, would endure long periods of fasting and social taboos in order to enter into contact with non-human entities, especially with the person-aspects (“spirits”) of plants. In actual healing sessions, which usually take place during night-time[2], the healer starts to sing when the patient(s), and often family members, are present and resting quietly in darkness. He sings a sequence of songs for “opening” both the session and the patient’s body, before then cleansing it from malign powers, identifying these and especially their source (any ailment is caused by a human or non-human agent) before proceeding with songs to send the harmful magical items back to the causer and finishing with songs to “close”, and protect, the patient’s body and the session. The songs are, despite her or his presence, not sung for the patient but directed towards the spirits, plants, animals and sometimes the deceased, who are considered agentive forces conceived either as responsible for, or with healing powers against, the patient’s problems. These agents are manipulated (overthrown, tricked, or seduced) by the healer’s singing so that their powerful influence upon the patient becomes positive for the latter’s well-being.

### **THE SONIC WORLDS OF MUSIC THERAPISTS**

Likewise, it feels somewhat sacrilegious to reduce the vast field of music therapy to the few sentences that follow. Many authors have dealt with concepts and efficacy within a multitude of music therapy methods and schools, applying, for example, socio-cultural approaches (Ansdell, 2014), evidence-based models (Abrams, 2010), or humanist alternatives to the latter (Aigen, 2015).

In general, in German speaking countries, music therapy is understood as either “active” (the patient plays music), “passive” (the patient listens to music), or “functional” (the music/rhythm serves for movement training). Although the therapist has received year-long training[3], the main agency lies with the patient: it is the patient’s condition that informs the therapist what to do and the therapist must always pay correspondingly close attention. Therapist and patient(s) meet in a specified room, usually during day-time, and at a specified time, often for 50 or 90 minutes. Within this framework, the therapist builds up a relationship with the patient with sound and music representing the main means for achieving this. Communication occurs between therapist and patient, commonly without any outside agencies noted. Sound and music are understood as means to, for example, enable the patient to utter emotional states, bring to the fore unconscious contents, foster communicative skills or to facilitate social bonding. Patient problems are usually understood as caused by psychological, social, or physiological malfunctions in their broadest sense, and music therapy is a method that supports and empowers the patient for coping with these.

### **MUSICAL RITUAL SPACES, TIMES, AND BEINGS**

In order to comprehend what these two ontologically distinct understandings of the use of music and sound have in common, I return to the three terms that were defined above: ritual, agency, and ontology.

In both systems discussed, we can witness a certain separation between the everyday life-world and the space-time of musical/sonic action, and with certain rules changed in the latter. In both cases, sonic action, which could be superficially denoted as “symbolic” according to a Peircean approach, is enacted. This enactment is, however, not arbitrary but connected with certain “outside” entities: other beings that are not included in ritual, such as other people, spirits, bacteria or social processes. Therefore, both situations construct a rule-set in which processes are enacted that are related a-causally with the “outside” world – a kind of magic?

How are the sonic processes in ritual connected to outside, non-ritual, social, psychological, or biological processes? A specific theory of listening (Stoichiță & Brabec de Mori, 2017) suggests all

human beings (and probably some other animals) can listen to sounds in an “enchanted” way: the acoustic event we perceive is “enchanted” with a meaning that is not measurable by acoustic means. For example, we can perceive melodies that go “up” or “down”, motives that “interact”, and we can even hear emotions or trajectories that develop during a musical piece[4]. Amazonian Indigenous listeners perceive dangerous witches or healing spirits in the singer’s register-sweeping voice, while a European therapist hears suppressed pain, or discharged emotional states in the patient’s improvised musicking. This means that by “enchanted listening”, the listener correlates a non-sonic entity (spirit, or pain, for example) with certain sonic characteristics. Then, by manipulating the sound, e.g. from aggressive drumming to harmonious humming, or from a repetitive grave singing style to high-pitched falsetto, the correlated entity is also conceived as undergoing manipulation. Amazonians hear a shift from malign to benevolent spirits peopling the dark room and the therapist hears a shift from suppressed aggression towards integrated reflection within the patient’s self-conception – for example.

The illocutionary, performative quality of the enacted is crucial: time has to be considered, in the sense that compressed ritual time ideally unfolds into the external long-term, that is, into sustainable effects that last after the session. The agents perceived in the enchanted state of the ritual (agency-ascribed sounds like falsetto voice or drum rhythms correlated with non-sonic entities) have to survive the phase of reaggregation, the exit from the bounded ritual space-time into everyday life. Should we formulate this process backwards, it becomes more tangible: how do the therapists/healers design time within the session so that the patient’s long-term trajectory thereafter becomes correlated – comprehensibly – with the process enacted within the session?

This brings in the ontological dimension. The session is in some way institutionalized and, in addition, individually adapted: both the Amazonian healer in his house, with his training and reputation, applying locally well-established methods, as well as the European music therapist in her studio, with her certificate and experience, applying legally approved therapeutic tools, are institutions. Both institutions, however, excel in their focus on the individual patient’s history and adapt their doings correspondingly. The temporal and agentive correlations that are previously constructed—during prior consultations, anamnesis, diagnosis—and during the session have to respect the ontology of the correlated: only “really existing” agents and processes can be correlated to the sound events. Here, not only can a generalized ontological difference (plant spirits exist, or Freudian repression exists) be noted, but also the passing from one ontological assumption to another. Amazonian patients may hear x-ray-machine-spirits, and European patients may hear Mongolian overtone singing: the discovery of new existents is paramount in the therapeutic process. New healing powers previously unknown to the patient are “summoned” in the session and bodily experienced therein, to be remembered in the long run. The passing from the compressed session experience to a sustainable process of approaching well-being is dependent on the remembrance of musical novelty, of sonic beings[5] that endure the fading out of their musical correlates.

## CONCLUDING QUESTIONS

Indigenous Amazonians are quite explicit in their references to sonic agencies (e.g. ensounded spirits). In modern music therapy, on the other hand, these references are much more obscure. I think this stems from the lack of precise terminology among the latter, while the former may freely talk about summoning spirits, of powerful beings of myth, and about the patient’s socially acknowledged concern with these. Therefore, for the anthropologist, it is likewise easy to observe “magical” correlations among Indigenous people, while it is considered mostly offensive were one to “accuse” music therapists of making use of “magic”. This is a question posed in a post-colonial world: do Indigenous healers “perform magical rituals” while Moderns “make use of therapeutic tools”? Can we not reverse that, or still better: apply both terminologies equally to both methods?

I suggest that, based on the present comparative analysis, the methods described here do not differ in terms of what the people involved *do* but rather how their actions are *conceptualized*. This results in both –fairly contrary– concepts (or actor-networks) of how music and sound may serve for enhancing well-being, the construction of a bounded space-time and the peopling of the same with sonic beings build the frame narrative for healer-patient-interaction and thus for the construction of efficacy.

Both the Indigenous singer and the modern therapist exploit what I would term “the magic of correlation” (without offending anyone as should be clear by now), and which becomes possible through the phenomenon of enchanted listening. Sonic perceptions are perceived as “including”, as “being enchanted with” non-sonic entities that are in some way powerful in relation to solving or improving the patient’s problems. Conceptualization (here again, see Holbraad and Pedersen, 2017, pp. 14–18) as a task of the anthropologist allows for comparing the ways in which our stakeholders

construct their sessions; but it still remains rather difficult to make it public, to openly talk about “ensounded entities” outside of the anthropology of Indigenous people or outside of marginalized esoteric circles.

Is it possible to translate these entities into a contemporary discourse about music therapy applications? Can non-scientific references, these sonic beings that abound in the practical application of sonic correlations, somehow be publicly presented or mentioned without being labelled as “esoteric” or “pre-modern”? Would these questions be automatically answered—or rather simply disappear—if we could finally achieve the decolonizing of our minds? Nevertheless, as set out in this brief summary, the usage of sound for well-being (and, to be comprehensive, for sorcery or torture) seems explicable in a cross-cultural approach and more so in a cross-ontological way of understanding the correlations between heard sonic beings and real-life forces of human development.

## NOTES

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[2] Healers may drink the hallucinogenic plant decoction *ayahuasca* (Labate & Araújo, 2002) while traditional master healers, e.g. the Shipibo *meraya*, may also dispense with this. Therefore, healing success does not depend on the substance but on the songs and the singer’s expertise.

[3] “Music Therapy is the clinical & evidence-based use of music interventions to accomplish individualized goals within a therapeutic *relationship* by a credentialed professional who has completed an approved music therapy program” (AMTA 2021).

[4] See also Bonini Baraldi (2017) for “sonic agency”, the “persona” theory by Levinson (1990) or musical agency as described by Hatten (2018).

[5] “Sonic beings” were introduced in 2012 by Victor Stoichiță and myself at the 12th International Conference of the European Association of Social Anthropologists, Université Paris X – Nanterre, with our panel entitled *Sonic Beings: the Ontology of Musical Agency*. See <https://nomadit.co.uk/conference/easa2012/p/1318> (retrieved 30-10-2021).

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# **There is no closure, no transcendence: Why music and trance in Algeria function as affective maintenance rather than “healing”**

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This paper examines how sound vibrations and music are not only social as part of a symbolic order, but how they are materially agentive: they affectively impact bodily matter, oftentimes regardless of human agency. That is to say that music is thought about medicinally, as not just temporal, aesthetic experience but as vibrating agents in ongoing wellbeing and health maintenance. In the Algerian ritual practice known as *dīwān* of Sīdī Bilāl, the ignition and structure of music cultivates a wide spectrum of trance processes so that pain and suffering can be engaged, moved, and expressed through trance-dancing. The way trance is described by *dīwān* adepts indicates that it is understood as emerging primarily from the realms of feelings, particularly the dialectical role of painful feelings. However, “healing” is not a term used by the community. Certain kinds of suffering resist closure and are not meant to be fully “transcended.” Rather, music and trance dancing here function as affective maintenance, as a system of ongoing and community supported mental-emotional care.

## **BACKGROUND**

Algerian *dīwān* of Sīdī Bilāl is a musico-ritual tradition that originated, coalesced, and developed out of the trans-Saharan slave trade, combining the practices and sensibilities of various sub-Saharan ethnolinguistic groups. *Dīwān* developed over hundreds of years of trans-Saharan traffic by the descendants of these diverse populations as they came into contact with Berber and Arab cultures and social organization in present day Algeria. Under three centuries of Ottoman rule, these populations were heavily influenced by the local, popular religious practices and socio-political organization of Sufi lineages. Subsequently, *dīwān* gradually developed into a syncretic, Afro-Maghribi ritual practice occurring across Algeria both in urban centers and the hinterland (Dermenghem, 1954; Pâques, 1964; Turner, 2017; Turner, 2020b).

Today, *dīwān* functions quite practically as mental-emotional healthcare. The ritual architecture is entirely founded on at least twelve musical suites that are divided up by content and origin so that a given ritual can contain upwards of eighty or more songs, lasting from six to eight hours (Turner, 2017; Lecomte, 2000; Poché, 1996). Anywhere from three to dozens of songs can make up a single suite and each suite requires particular ritual props, colors, scents, and ritual actions; such aesthetic protocol intensifies affective experience and, therefore, trance. Most suites have the possibility to induce trance states although, according to the nature of the songs within, trance states vary in intensity, from mild to intense “emotional” trance or, at the extreme, corporeal inhabitation by supernatural agents.

## **GOALS OF THIS PAPER**

This paper explores the Sufi ritual, *dīwān* (lit. “assembly”), in Algeria where trance, supported by musical cues and driving, serves as a bodily-affective process for precipitating and, therefore, moving toward mental-emotional pain and suffering in order that it might be felt, released, and cared for. By “moving toward” pain and suffering, I mean that space and ritual time are dedicated to cultivating a wide spectrum of trance processes wherein pain and suffering can be physically and emotionally expressed through sound and semi-codified bodily movement. Sound here includes the ritual music and other humanly produced sounds (ululations, screaming or moaning as emotional release, and the shouting of directions by ritual experts) as well as ritualized trance dancing that takes practice and skill. The approach here is one where suffering is akin to what James Davies (2011) proposes as a “positive model of emotional discontent” in that suffering is purposeful. While previous anthropologists and sociologists (Lewis, 1971; Rouget, 1985; Becker, 2004) have surveyed the mechanisms of trance, causal explanation is not my priority here. Like Jankowsky (2010, p. 24), I do not see trance as a “problem to be solved.”

With this in mind, I highlight how (1) trance can primarily be an affective process because of its resonance with human suffering; (2) suffering here has agency and is therefore something important to engage with; rather than “healing,” it is rather a kind of maintenance that is sought; (3) moving toward and expression of suffering is done viscerally through the movement of trance. Ultimately, I explore what a broader conception of trance – particularly one that attends to painful emotions – can tell us about relationships between human subjectivity, agency, and suffering. I take a sensory ethnographic approach (Stoller, 1989; Pink, 2015), fleshing out the rich taxonomy of feeling intensities that are used to describe how trance feels. I aim to illustrate what trance means “close-up” and why it matters.

## CONNECTIONS BETWEEN SUFFERING AND TRANCE

Cultivating modalities of trance is the primary goal of *dīwān* rituals. Because fully-formed trance is inextricable from some kind of human suffering, perhaps the first question that arises is, “what is the nature of this suffering?”

One could start by considering the Sufi context in which *dīwān* exists. Indeed, John Bowker asserts that, “what a religion has to say about suffering reveals, in many ways more than anything else, what it believes the nature and purpose of existence to be” (Bowker & Bowker, 1975, p. 2). In Islam, suffering is not only a way of drawing nearer to God, but it is an aspect of God’s omnipotence and omniscience; there is purpose in it even if that purpose is not known or ever revealed. Furthermore, “suffering not only forms character but reveals character: the ability to bear pain without complaint or despair separates the “sincere from the insincere” (Bowker & Bowker 1975, p. 111). Along these same lines, Talal Asad (2003) has argued that pain can be agentive, bequeathing power, rather than passive or as a state of victimization.

In *dīwān*, the religious scaffolding of suffering is interwoven with its interpersonal and ancestral meanings. Suffering enfolds multiple subjectivities: sufferer as a part of a broader, Muslim subjectivity (humble before God, a martyr) and as an individual with one’s own personal and ancestral hauntings of the trans-Saharan slave trade. These specters that need to be invited in and fed (Gordon, 2008; Turner, 2020a). Exploring suffering in *dīwān* as an ethnographer certainly had a phantom-like quality; its meanings were often just as ineffable as the trance it precipitated. First, there was a sense that one shouldn’t speak too much about pain and suffering. When others did indulge my concern with speculations, they whispered and were concise: a death in the family, relationship problems, financial stress, or illness. What was “wrong” not only depended on individual life circumstances, family history, social position, and gender but on who I asked about whom; there was no single type or cause of suffering related to trance and no single way of interpreting that trance. These kinds of cursory exchanges about “what was wrong,” then, primarily served as sympathetic symbolic gestures, a way of staking out with verbal landmarks the topography of what wasn’t being said or what couldn’t be spoken.

One reason for this was the sense of fearful respect around omnipotent supernatural beings – both God and other entities. Discussing at too much length others’ misfortunes was risky because words here had power to expand reality; speaking too much of bad things could attract them. But there was also a vague sense that simply having to speak about one’s own pain could do violence to the sufferer – that attempts to capture it in words were painful. Speaking of pain could also do violence to the existential space (Friedson, 1996) that pain inhabits – a non-linguistic space that was wrapped up with one’s destiny and relationship to the divine. In addition, speaking too much about suffering – complaint – could indicate a weakness of character, a lack of ability to bear pain that could reflect negatively on one’s faith. Indeed, some shared their stories of suffering with me primarily out of pride for how deeply they could feel or for what they could bear – like one young man who made sure I knew how emotional he could get when hearing certain songs.

However, some stories of suffering were simply not possible to convey. Personal trauma stories do not necessarily form as sequential or connected events (cf Van der Kolk, 2014). Rather than “straightforwardly referential” (Caruth, 2016, p. 11), they can emerge through the cracks of concepts, dispersed across the surfaces of a life as assemblages (or disjunctures) of sounds, sights, and smells, as patchwork memory. Here, faithfulness to such suffering is possible only through the “very indirectness” of its telling (Caruth, 2016, p. 27). For all of these reasons, there was an ultimate understanding about the anemic communicability and shareability of pain (Trnka, 2008). While silence was sometimes about the failure and perils of language mentioned above, even more fundamentally, the silence was about the stark failure of explanation (Gordon, 2008) to provide comfort or solution. Explanation was not a priority; origins or “cause” did not need witness.

Along these lines of the inarticulable, I noted that the history of enslavement of ancestors was only mentioned a handful of times – and was sometimes denied as historically accurate – as part of locating how such practices of releasing pain began. When it was mentioned, it surfaced as a largely unknown past that might be acted out in trance. Cvetkovich’s (2007) notion of ancestral “emotional archives” is helpful here – archives that pour through or grip bodies that can know things that the rest of the self does not or cannot know. For *dīwān* adepts, it was in the physical, emotional repetition of pain – by going into trance in ritual, over and over, always to the same songs – that individual suffering not only took on a presence that could be shared but that expanded and claimed social territory. To put it plainly, the storytelling act was nearly completely absent (cf. Desjarlais, 1997, p. 23); pain and suffering are, rather, physically moved – tranced in ritual.

Ritual temporalizes pain – it gives pain structure to emerge without the need for “coherent” narration. The repetition of ritual let suffering inhabit its networks of meanings where the burden of sequence was taken on by the musical structure. Suffering manifested in human and nonhuman, in personal and public ways, both as painful mental-emotional biographical histories of a subject as well as part of a larger self-other dynamic where social suffering was both “caused by” and affected one’s relations and community (Turner, 2020a). As Wittgenstein (1961) argued, all pain is ultimately relational and trauma subsumes public feeling as much as private, existing “in a social and cultural frame” rather than necessarily medical/pathologized ones (Cvetkovich, 2007, p. 464).

Indeed, early on in my fieldwork, I noted that no one ever seemed to be “cured” by ritual or was, effectively, “discharged.” I never could use the terms “healing” or “catharsis” to describe what I felt and saw because the kind of suffering that *dīwān* attends to is that which resists closure. Pauline Boss’s (2000) coining of “ambiguous loss” speaks to this dynamic where “getting over” pain is not on the horizon; there are certain kinds of suffering that not only cannot be mended but that need to be returned to, over and over, so that the emotional and physical bodies of the individual become a living memorial. While the expression of suffering in *dīwān* was not about a solution or seeking the end of suffering, it did demand a witness to that suffering, if nothing else, to demonstrate to others or to oneself – “simply the power to endure” (Kleinman & Das, 1997, p. 69).

And while the details of pain and suffering were rarely discussed at length, I spent hours upon hours speaking with my *dīwān* friends about trance: how it fills the minds, bodies, and hearts of *dīwān* adepts. Trance registers, although also difficult to talk about for their ineffability, could stand in for talking about suffering – they were often used as euphemistic taxonomies – so that it was far more appropriate to ask about trance than about suffering. Trance phenomena had a natural barrier: they were attributed to divine mystery. Consistent with Sufi epistemologies, the very inaccessibility of such knowledge is precisely what indexes its valency. If those I asked about trance did not have answers, it was because of divine mystery: they were not supposed to know and neither was I, particularly given my lack of ritual training.

While explanations offered were consistently overshadowed by the disclaimer that there is no real “getting to the bottom of trance” (which is, by its nature, never entirely comprehensible nor should it be), nevertheless, the single most cited and discussed antecedent of trance in *dīwān* was *ghabīna*: suffering. We talked about what trance does to manage or shape suffering and what it does to cause suffering, particularly when it made harsh physical demands, such as some trance states that drive a trancer to move vigorously for hours until collapsing from exhaustion. These were the ways that trance could be both a release and a pathology (Pinto, 2011).

In these ways, *dīwān* serves as an ongoing practice, a bodily-affective technique for the *management* of pain and suffering. While “healing” is commonly utilized in constellations of music and trance, I have emphasized the ongoing, hauntological nature of *dīwān* because of the ways in which it engages the never-ending struggle of life, and the inevitable, recurrent experience of suffering. By accepting that certain kinds of pain can never be cured or erased – nor should they be – an epistemological space opens: it suggests therapeutic horizons of ongoing, community care.

## NOTES

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# How prolonged exposure to highly rhythmic music affects brain dynamics and perception

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## INTRODUCTION

Recent scientific literature suggests that music affects neural activity by the so called “neural entrainment phenomenon” (Large, 2008; Nozaradan et al., 2011). Accordingly, ongoing neural oscillations entrain to regularities in the rhythmic structure of the auditory stimulus (Large and Snyder, 2009).

Rhythmic stimulation is thus also considered as a powerful tool to improve temporal prediction and parsing of the auditory signal for language rehabilitation (Schön and Tillman, 2015). However, these results come from neuroscientific research carried out using short music stimulation.

On the other hand, little is known about how extended music stimulation may affect neural activity (Becker, 2004; Hove et al., 2015; 2017). Anthropological and ethnological studies report a contradictory relationship between music and the fulfilment of trance states. In fact, music does not always seem associated with the fulfilment of trance states (Rouget, 1980; De Martino, 1988; Jankowsky, 2010; Turner, 2020). We consider a trance state as a transient and non-pathological modification in the state of consciousness, usually accompanied by a lower level of awareness of the surrounding environment.

The neuroscientific literature on music-induced trance states may be poor but there are, on the contrary, several studies concerning altered states of consciousness such as hypnosis, sleep or coma (Crawford et al., 1979; Facco et al., 2014; Lugo et al., 2016) which return important insights into how to investigate the phenomenon of music-induced trance at the neural level. In neuroscience, modifications in the state of consciousness are mostly recorded by event-related potentials (ERPs).

ERPs are very small voltages generated in the brain structures in response to specific events or stimuli (Sur and Sinha, 2009). Among the most studied ERPs are Mismatch Negativity (MMN) and P300. While MMN is governed by a pre-attentive sensory memory mechanism, P300 is generated when participants need to attend/discriminate stimuli (Näätänen, 1990; Polich and Kok, 1995). For instance, reduced amplitudes of MMN and P300 have been obtained during sleep (Campbell and Colrain, 2002; Strauss et al., 2015) and in clinical conditions of altered consciousness (e.g. coma, vegetative state) compared to healthy individuals (Naccache et al., 2005; Kotchoubey et al., 2005; Fischer et al., 2008). With the aim of investigating how regular and long auditory stimulation might affect perception and cognition, we asked twenty-two participants to perform an auditory monitoring task while their neural activity was recorded through an EEG system.

## MATERIAL AND METHODS

The auditory monitoring task (or psychoacoustic test) consisted of detecting an auditory target (the sound of a triangle) presented at different intensity levels around the participant’s auditory threshold. In detail, five levels of intensity of the auditory target were chosen for each participant in such a way that the highest level was 6 dB above the respective participant’s average threshold level. The intensity of the four remaining levels was decreased by 2 dB steps. The target sound was inserted into four different auditory stimulations respectively: Regular Intermittent stimulation (rhythmically regular and of short duration), Regular Continuous stimulation (rhythmically regular and of long duration), the

Irregular Intermittent stimulation (rhythmically irregular and of short duration) and the Irregular Continuous stimulation (rhythmically irregular and of long duration). These different types of auditory stimulation thus represented four experimental conditions. The target was presented 15 times at each intensity level in each of the four conditions (i.e. 75 times in each condition). In the Intermittent conditions (both regular and irregular), we used three blocks of psychoacoustics testing of 3 min each, separated by a very short break. The Continuous conditions (both regular and irregular) lasted 15 min each. The psychoacoustic test was run without breaks (9 min: 3 times the Intermittent condition). This was preceded by 6 extra minutes of listening to the same music (without the auditory target) within the goal of inducing a state of absorption before the target sound was again presented. The order of the four conditions was counterbalanced.

Participants had to press a button every time they detected the target sound in the auditory stimulation. Importantly, if the effects we measure were uniquely driven by the duration of stimulation possibly inducing stronger drowsiness, we should observe the same effects independently of the rhythmic structure of the stimuli.

To create the auditory stimulation, we used an excerpt (that lasts 30s) of electronic music, taken from *Dark Side of My Room* by Extrawelt, with a highly regular beat. The irregular auditory stimulus was designed by time-domain scrambling the regular stimulus in order to preserve the spectral content over longer time scales while removing the structure for the shorter timescales. This results in a stimulus that is still clearly recognizable as music but that has a highly irregular temporal structure.

We hypothesized that, compared to Intermittent stimulation, Continuous stimulation would induce an increase in the psychophysical perceptual auditory thresholds and a reduction of event-related responses by inducing an absorptive state of consciousness (Herbert, 2012; Gingras et al., 2014; Hove and Stelzer, 2018).

Importantly, this effect should be mostly visible in the Regular condition as compared to the Irregular condition and should be related to neural entrainment. We thus hypothesized an interaction between the duration of stimulation and the regularity of the rhythmic structure triggering a trance-like state; whereas the alternative scenario of no interaction (a similar duration of stimulation effect across the regular and irregular rhythmic structures) may be simply explained by a fatigue effect.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Our results suggest that psychophysical auditory thresholds increase following Continuous versus Intermittent stimulation and this is accompanied by a reduction of the amplitude of the event-related potentials to target stimuli. These effects are larger in the Regular condition and thus do not simply derive from the stimulation duration. In other words, with long duration and regular rhythm auditory stimulation, the detection of the target sound becomes less accurate and more difficult than with regular and short duration stimulation. This may indicate that the levels of stimulus perception and cognition are lowered and degraded.

Finally, a potential neural correlate explaining the music-induced modulation of the auditory thresholds derives from the sharpness of the EEG frequency profile, namely the level of brain precision to stimulus coupling (the neural entrainment index). Our results suggest that the neural entrainment index is narrower in the Continuous condition when compared to the Intermittent and absent in Irregular stimulations.

On the other hand, these results suggest an increase of network connectivity in the alpha band between the frontal and central regions. The scientific literature describes how an excessive amount of generalized brain network synchronization can lead to deleterious effects. Interestingly, in patients with epileptic seizures, the loss of consciousness is accompanied by an increase in the long-distance synchronization in the thalamo-cortical systems (Arthuis et al., 2009). Similarly, during progressive sedation, the amplitude of stimulus-related responses to median nerve stimulation diminishes while the coherence of the ongoing frontal alpha activity increases, pointing to a possible link between hypersynchronous activity and the loss of consciousness (Supp et al., 2011). Our data suggest that the prolonged listening to highly rhythmical music induces a stronger coupling between the periodicities present in the music and increased functional connectivity in the alpha-band between the frontal and central regions when compared to the intermittent listening of the same music. In particular, the greater sharpness in the frequency coupling profile following prolonged listening seems to indicate that the longer the listening, the tighter the coupling between the brain activity and the temporal structure present in the music.

In conclusion, the present study suggests that, in contrast with stimulation of shorter durations and with less engaging stimuli, highly rhythmic stimulation of sufficiently long and continuous duration induces a decrease in the sensitivity of not only the auditory system but also of perception and



cognition. This goes along with a high level of neuronal system synchronization with the temporal structure of the auditory stimulus. This effect can be interpreted in terms of an alteration in the level of consciousness and may possibly be mediated by increased functional connectivity in the alpha band.

## NOTES

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# **Spirituality as a boundary object?**

## **Ethnographic perspectives from music therapy**

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This paper puts forward a hybrid understanding of spirituality as a 'boundary object' and explores its potential for inter-cultural and inter-disciplinary dialogue regarding spirituality's place in music, health, and wellbeing. Empirically founded on my ethnographic research of spirituality in music therapy as a contemporary healthcare profession in the UK, I outline the challenges of exploring and articulating phenomena that are undefinable, multiple, and in constant flux. A pragmatic tracing of spirituality, which entailed my ethnographic immersion in everyday music therapy contexts, can re-orient our analytic lens to the doing and the experiencing of music, spirituality, and wellbeing. This on-the-ground exploration offers fertile conditions for learning, re-learning, and un-learning of concepts and practices which are underpinned by different and, at times, competing professional vocabularies and agendas. To this end, the notion of spirituality as a boundary object can be particularly helpful in achieving a degree of mutuality and coherence without imposing uniformity or final definitions.

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# **Ritual healing: resonances between traditional and clinical music therapy**

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The traditional music literature contains several studies demonstrating the values of ritual connected to music and dance. The ritual trance experience, with the power of music and bodily attitude, encourages some specific feelings, called an “altered state of consciousness”, capable of existentially reassuring people, improving their state of well-being in their roles within society and reinforcing the self-healing potential of their organisms.

In a general cross-cultural context, these rituals become a space “outside the ordinary” where participants are invited to express their emotional feelings and their interpretations of emotional excitement in ways congruent with the understanding of the social group (Becker, 2004). Like every religious, sporting or playful ceremonial, the ritual dimension incorporates its own intrinsic characteristics and rules. To function, this needs a precise setting that defines the entire context: the period of time, environment, duration and languages. Within this framework, conductors and participants (music therapists/patients) play crucial roles in the ritual attaining success.

Western music therapy is also based on the encounters, interactions, challenges and processes that lead to specific routines while therapy has simultaneously to respond ethical decision-making, effective treatment planning and successful interdisciplinary collaborations.

This paper proposes a parallelism between three different ritual dimensions: Moroccan Gnawa Music, Italian Tarantism and a typical western music therapy setting. This aims to demonstrate how music can play a central role in treatments supporting the healing processes of different human diseases.

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# **Inquiry into the history and evolution of music as a healing technique in Turkey**

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Music as a therapy or as a healing technique is the current subject of my Master's research. For this symposium on music, dance, healing, and emotion, I would like to submit a paper about the history and the evolution of music therapy in Turkey. The usage of music in *şifahanes* (hospitals), as a healing technique, may be traced back to the 9th century in Turkish history. Traditionally used to help mentally ill patients, music was also associated with the cure of certain diseases. Listening to music was recognized as returning multiple emotional benefits. The research by Dr. Burçin Uçaner Çifdalöz attests how music was commonly used through to the decline of the Ottoman State. She explains that music therapy is now slowly re-entering the medical and healing field in Turkey. However, this practice is not as widely acknowledged as it once was. In this paper, I wish to explore three themes. How has music therapy evolved since the 9th century? Why has this traditional practice declined? Lastly, how have mentalities changed regarding the healing propriety of music? Through this research process, I examine the work of Dr. Burçin Uçaner Çifdalöz and her perspective about modern music therapy. Additionally, I will explore the history of Turkish music to determine whether traditional methods are currently applied in recent music therapy. To summarize, I would propose my research can return a new perspective on music therapy. I correspondingly seek to help provide a different approach to the questions surrounding the healing and emotional power of music.

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# ***El patio de Adela: Music, medicine, and cultural preservation in Guantánamo, Cuba***

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Founded in February 2014, “*El patio de Adela/Caverchelo.comb*” is a unique community-based project that combines medical care, musical performance, and the nurturing of local cultural practices in the Loma del Chivo neighborhood of Guantánamo, Cuba. The project is led by retired pediatrician Dr. Adela Gómez Blanco and her engineer husband Roberto Warner and includes her musician brother Ramón “Mongo” Gómez Blanco, along with other musicians. In the *patio* (back yard) of their house, they utilize the music of their local Afrocuban culture to promote community-based health care solutions. The group preserves the musical and cultural traditions of their historic neighborhood, *La loma del chivo*, by involving young children who interact with elders in the community on a regular basis, thus fostering cultural transmission across generations. Adela and another retired physician colleague make house calls to assist with the immediate medical needs of the neighborhood community, including simple checkups, outreach for diabetes, self-care, and change-of-lifestyle programs. Community wellness is promoted through songs and dances that address these themes directly. The project is so outstanding that it won a competitive national prize called *El relevante*. This paper discusses the activities, both musical and medical, that the project has offered to date in order to demonstrate ways in which this model for applied medical ethnomusicology can be replicated beyond Guantánamo, throughout Cuba, and beyond.

## **NOTES**

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# The power of the voice in the *saeta*

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This work, which started out in different areas of Andalusia in 2010 and still, *in fieri*, aims to highlight a specific emotional facet that emerged on the occasion of my field research about the *saeta*, a monodic chant addressing the sacred icons parading along the streets during the Holy Week processions. I decided to investigate the local and most intimate realities of some small villages (all the interviewees live in the provinces of Córdoba, Granada, Sevilla and Cádiz), choosing to avoid the major cities where the gathering of great crowds of tourists usually affects enjoyment of the singing performances.

The *saeta* is normally performed by individuals out of devotion, as it is considered a real form of prayer, but can also be frequently played by professional *saeteros* (performers of the *saeta*) in exchange for money. As Miguel Angel Berlanga (2001) points out, there are two existing categories *saetas*: the *flamenca* and the older version, *pre flamenca* or *antigua*; the *saetas antiguas* represent the heritage of a past linked to the educational purpose of friars, the *saeta flamenca*, otherwise, was first created by singers so that the figure of the performer and their virtuosity would finally prevail.

The *saeta* might reasonably be defined as creating a link between reality and the transcendent. As evidenced by research, the *saeta* does in fact hold the ability to activate a different perception of reality at the exact moment of its performance and is capable of sharpening the senses as well as facilitating the connection with the spiritual dimension. Consequently, the power of the *saeta* lies not only in its main function as a prayer (whether individual or collective when considering the singer as the voice of the entire community participating in the ritual), but also in its scope for activating episodes of ecstasy or altered perceptions of reality.

## FEEDBACK ACTIVATED BY SINGING

However, assuming “there are no fixed models for sensory ethnography - for its research methods, analytical processes, or representational forms” (Pink, 2013, p. 267), in this short text I primarily report my personal discovery, namely a phenomenon experienced by interpreters while performing the *saeta*, which consists of the perception of feedback that emanates from the sacred images.

The cognitive sciences make it possible to study aspects that are otherwise difficult to perceive, and might help to “understand the structural factors that generate the feelings” (Blacking, 1973, p. 26). In the case of the *saetas*, phenomena such as light states of ecstasy or hallucination could not be explained otherwise as well as the role played by the music in activating the long-term memory.

The feedback many interpreters declare having received from sacred images can be understood as a state of well-being, certainly a pure emotion, a state - if not of healing - certainly of safety with “intense feelings of pleasure, wellness, peace, beauty, and plenitude” (Arias, 2019, p. 56), that is sought by the *saetero* and pursued more or less consciously for several different reasons.

We may name this an onyroid state, a sort of “disidentification”[2] (Fabbro, 2010, p. 150), in the course of which various interpreters report seeing, for example, the eyes of Christ move and gaze at them intensely and exclusively. Thereby, during the execution of the *saetas*, it is possible to recognize the desire – conscious or otherwise – to reach for the vision of God and, as we speak in terms of similarity, the cantor expects human-like feedback, a humanization of the statue.

As there is no “direct causal relationship between the sounds of music and human responses to them” (Blacking, 1985, pp. 64-87), this phenomenon remains unpredictable and sporadic, when not unique, in a *saetero*'s career. Furthermore, given the song is performed without any musical accompaniment, the state of altered perception is thereby not induced by listening to any specific rhythms and percussions (cf. Hunter, 2015).

## PERCEPTIONS OF TIME AND SPACE

The peculiarities of the *saeta* are also revealed through time, understood both as rhythm (the song has the power to coordinate and to structure) and as a sequence of actions codified by tradition. These actions boost the performance as a social event, at the exact moment in which it takes place, *hic et*

*nunc*, and responds to the need to reiterate the experience of the interpreter each year, living within a limitation “to the sacred soundscape”[3] (Seroussi, 2002, p. 266).

Even the sites of performance, codified by tradition, represent an emblematic space. Therefore, it is significant to note how the “animation” of the statue occurs exclusively during the execution of the *saeta*; therefore the trigger situation may be identified precisely as singing the *saeta* in the natural context of its performance (i.e., the road, the balcony or church) but not in contexts outside the spaces of the Holy Week or that recreate an artificial situation (competitions, festivals, concerts, etc.).

A contribution to this phenomenon may also arise from the inclusion of acute sounds when performing a melody as they contain “a propulsive force that awakens our motor and emotional activity, promoting a great variety of feelings” (Lacárcel Moreno, 2003, p. 225).

## POWER AND SYMBOLISM

The performance of the *saetas flamencas* is symbolic because their technical difficulties require performers with exceptional vocal skills. Moreover, the execution within the rite confers a particular symbolism on the *saetas* understood by the interpreter and the public in different ways.

For these reasons, the *saetas* are also, in my judgement, an emblematic example of power, perceived as a dynamic activator and process that entails prestige not only for the performers but also for the whole community. In fact, “the embodied experience is also lived vicariously when watching another’s performance (...) interplay as public-private spaces of affect circulation” (Kaur, 2019, p. 115).

This is a type of spiritual well-being, a mental gratification, which is also reflected in body well-being. In the specific case of the *saetas*, the singing can provoke feelings of liberation, catharsis or contentment due to the social reception (“*olés*” and public appreciation).

Audiences enjoy this altered state even when not actually seeing it but rather perceiving the uniqueness of the moment while also emotionally involved through the specific flamenco voice techniques, which include *quejíos* (“laments”) and *farfalleos* (“glossolalia”).

## BODY AND BEHAVIOUR

Interpreters of the *saetas* are not distinguishable from the crowd by any particular dress or attitude. We can ascribe a neutral value to the *saetero* attire “devoid of an eccentric signal, (...) confuses the reciter or the singer in the crowd of his listeners, only distinguished by his role as spokesperson, perhaps highlighted by this apparent banality”[5] (Zumthor, 1983, p. 204).

We may also note how the body’s posture, completely turned towards the sacred image and often with the hand or the arm of the singer pointing towards the image, reinforces the message in the lyrics and, supposedly, the etymological sense of *saeta* as in the Latin *sagitta* (“arrow”) (Hurtado Torres, 2009, p. 241). This occurs because “the articulatory richness of the voice imaginatively animates the objective referent, which never fades. Its spatial configuration gives lymph to the deictic dimension” [6] (Serra, 2011, p. 21).

Additionally, whenever “what the gesture recreates, in a sidereal way, is a sacred space-time”[7] (Zumthor, 1983, p. 206), extra-corporeal facets also contribute to defining this sacred space. For example, the incense smoke creates a sacred perimeter, an ephemeral but almost tangible space, at least for the sense of smell and sight (cf. Corradini, 2018).

## MULTISENSORY PERCEPTIONS

The role of environmental factors is crucial with the multisensory integration of perceptions (i.e., the involvement of various senses; hearing, sight, smell) the most powerful factor in activating the illusion. During the performance, the senses revive in keeping with how the context also includes perfumes and incense coupled with the sensations of heat developed by the crowd and the warmth of the apparatus of candles surrounding the Virgin Mary.

Furthermore, breathing in the incense always has an impact; this represents a diversified experience because of the different blends of incense dedicated to each sacred image (for example, the fragrance of the rose is often associated with the Virgin Mary in association with the incense) and hence producing an equally diversified olfactory memory.

Moreover, it is relevant that the statues of Christ and of the Virgin, the main sources of feedback, are the primary carriers of light. In fact, the human eye is structured to capture luminous and



colored phenomena, therefore, also taking into account how most processions take place at night, the statues of Christ and of the Virgin are accompanied and surrounded by a profusion of luminosity as if themselves the harbingers of light. The Virgin Mary, in particular, is followed by the *candelaria* (about 7 rows of candles), which make her a beacon in the night, while Christ is normally surrounded by *faroles* (lanterns) and with the candlelight continuing to move during the performance.

This refers to the role of fire, which holds great evocative power; the continuous movement prevents the image from freezing and warms, illuminates, gives well-being and conveys the meaning of archaic visions in which light is a very common facet to experiences of ecstasy (cf. Berardi, Ferrero, Marletta, 2018, pp. 43-64).

As regards the visual perception, the religious images “are symbols that need to be invested with a very particular intentionality, which in current language is called devotion”[8] (Fabietti, 2014, p. 193). In this case, the sound experience is also added to devotion and other perceptions.

In fact, according to David Morgan’s remarks (cf. Morgan, 1988), a sacred gaze is a visual act charged with a spiritual meaning which refers to a wider context, and which involves, as it might seem, not only the relationship between the image itself and the observer but also a visual overview that includes the observer, the audience and the rules that govern the visual relationship with the sacred image. According to Morgan, a sacred gaze represents a cultural modality as it interrelates the beholder, the observed object, and the conventions, combined with the context.

## THE ROLE OF STATUES

There would also be interest in deepening the relationship with the individual statues of Christ or the Madonna. On this matter, Agustín García Chicón, reflecting various opinions, recounts how the religiosity of the Andalusian people contains an immense pagan substratum, a relic of the Greco-Roman cults dedicated to various deities, which is manifested through singing a *saeta* to a particular statue of one’s own devotion and not to a different one (Chicón García, 1991, p. 145).

We would additionally note that the dimensions of the statues of Christ and the Virgin Mary – which are close to life size – can also contribute to perceptions of this phenomenon (the feedback). The replacement of ancient statues, either now lost or destroyed during the civil war, with more realistic versions that are close to life size, is another factor we should take into consideration. Life-size statues are a twentieth century phenomenon and have encouraged the emergence of interpersonal relationships with the statues: thus, we now have waiters and hairdressers caring about the statues (cf. Serralvo Galán, 2016). Furthermore, back in the Baroque era, the artistic representation of the divinity still remained one of the elements of persuasion, indoctrination and pedagogy (Serralvo Galán, 2016, p. 453) capable of involving the people.

## CONCLUSIONS

Well-being is not explicitly stated in the interviews but is evident from the observation of behaviours, actions, and the dynamics of the context in accordance with Alan Merriam’s considerations of music as symbolic behaviour (cf. Merriam, 1964, pp. 229-258). This implies that the execution of the *saeta* causes a feeling of well-being in the interpreter, who is thereby motivated to overcome the difficulties of performance and the fear of failure. Therefore, the *saetero* keeps chasing this feeling every year as the final result proves gratifying across several dimensions, including personal devotion, privileged communication with God, social consent and consideration.

## NOTES

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[2] “disidentificazione”.

[3] “al paesaggio sonoro sacro”.

[4] “una fuerza propulsiva que despierta nuestra actividad motriz y emocional, propiciando sentimientos de gran diversidad”.

[5] “dépourvue de signal excentrique, (...) confond le récitant ou le chanteur dans la foule de ses auditeurs, dont le distingue seul son rôle de porte-voix, peut-être mis en relief par cette apparente banalité”.

[6] “la ricchezza articolatoria della voce anima immaginativamente il referente oggettuale, che non viene mai meno. La sua contigurazione spaziale da linfa alla dimensione deittica”.

[7] “Ce que recrée le geste, de manière désidérale, c’est un espace-temps sacré”.

[8] “sono dei simboli che necessitano di essere investiti di una intenzionalità molto particolare, quella che nel linguaggio corrente viene chiamata devozione”.

[9] “elementos de persuasión, adoctrinamiento y pedagogía”.

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# Envy and “corporeal lockdown” in Maracatu de baque solto (Brazil)

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## INTRODUCTION

In this short paper, I briefly discuss how music and dance are related to health and emotions in Maracatu de baque solto (free-beat Maracatu), also known as Maracatu rural (rural Maracatu), a Carnival performance staged in Pernambuco state, Northeast Brazil.

Several Maracatu groups, with some founded in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, are present in the small cities and rural settlements that dot the Zona da Mata Norte, a region dominated by the sugarcane monoculture. They are highly variable in size (from 20 to 200 performers) but are always composed of several masqueraded dancers, two poets improvising chanted verses (*mestres de apito*), a brass section formed by two to four musicians (*músicos*) playing trumpets and trombones, and a group of five percussionists called *terno*. The men and women performing in these groups are mostly rural workers and sugarcane cutters earning very modest incomes. Every year, they spend an impressive amount of time, effort and money on participating in the Carnival competition taking place in Recife, the state capital[2].

I first approached Maracatu within the scope of the anthropology of the emotions, a topic I explored in my previous research among the Romanian Roma (Bonini Baraldi, 2021a). Working on these matters implies, among other things, seeking to understand which emotions, affects, feelings or, more generally speaking, subjective experiences are involved in musical performances (Wolf, 2001; Becker, 2004). In this regard, it came as no surprise to learn from my hosts, the inhabitants of Condado, that “Carnival brings happiness” (*O Carnaval traz alegria*), an emotion that for Judith Becker (2004) is universally associated to musical performances. However, as my fieldwork progressed and my relationship with the “Leão de Ouro” (*Golden Lion*) Maracatu members became closer, I understood that other feelings are also at stake in Maracatu performances, specifically, envy (*inveja*).

## ENVY AND CARNIVAL

We may define envy as a mix of distress, anger, sadness or pain deriving from what another person has and the subject does not have, whether a material object or an intangible quality (Schoeck, 1969/1966; Alberoni, 2000/1991). This is generally portrayed as a negative emotion: in Christian teleology envy classes as one of the seven deadly sins, and Dante Alighieri placed the envious people in Purgatory, with their eyes sewn shut. Indeed, but what does this emotion have to do with Carnival? How and why does envy interrelate with Maracatu dance, movements, sounds, poetry, and costumes?

In the Zona da Mata Norte, Carnival is the occasion for people to publicly show off their magnificent costumes; their abilities in dancing, playing music, or improvising poetical verses; their physical resistance to weight, heat, tiredness. This need and desire to show off one’s material, moral, and artistic qualities generates the effect of exacerbating the glances, thoughts and comments from other performers, both from members of the same group and from other groups. Correspondingly, comments of the following kind are frequent: “Where did he find all that money for his costume?”, or “Why is she dancing in the first line while I’m in the second?”. Carnival is marked by aesthetic profusion, enhanced competition, power relationships, and financial interest. Exaggerated glances toward what others do and have, may therefore awake the malicious, envious eye, locally known as *olho gordo* (“fat eye”), or *olho grande* (“big eye”).

As is the case in many other regions of the world (see Schoeck, 1969), the evil eye is deemed to cause misfortune to the envied person in Pernambuco[3]. During Carnival, such misfortune may manifest itself in various ways: a musical instrument breaks, a poet’s whistle suddenly does not sound, the support bus tyre gets a puncture... However, the most common misfortune striking those targeted by envious feelings is illness. According to the local discourse, illness is due to “something that enters” the body to undermine its normal functioning. Indeed, when a *caboclo de lança* experiences strong

pain in his leg, it is because somebody envies him; when a *baiana* gets sudden stomach pain, it is probably because another woman is envious of her[4].

Just as envious persons may turn to witchcraft (*catimbó*) in order to cast afflictions on their rivals, those thinking “something” has entered their bodies may consult a popular healer of the Umbanda-Jurema worship[5] in order to “take it away” (*tirar*). However, even before reaching this eventuality, the *maracatuzeiros* undertake a large set of preventive measures to avoid any possible health problem caused by envy. These measures all revolve around a fundamental concern: to “close the body” (*fechar o corpo*).

## CLOSING THE INDIVIDUAL BODY

The expression *corpo fechado* (locked, closed body), applied commonly all over Brazil, refers to a strong, healthy, protected body, as opposed to an open, exposed, vulnerable one. In the context of Maracatu de baque solto, this prescription becomes very explicit: if you want to perform safely, you need “to close your body” (*fechar o teu corpo*) or, likewise, performing with an “open mouth” (*de boca aberta*) is not recommended.

In Condado, this “corporeal lockdown” takes place across various dimensions: physical-physiological, spiritual-religious, and aesthetic. The physical and physiological closure implies avoiding sexual relations (*resguardo*) and prohibiting menstruating women from performing. A body that is releasing its vital substances outwards is an open, permeable, and unprotected body, where “something” can also “enter”. All permeable points of the body are therefore “closed”: with the eyes of the *caboclo de lança* covered by sunglasses, the mouth with a white clove, the pores of the skin with red dye.

The spiritual closure of the body is undertaken through several rituals, generally performed in the local houses (*terreiros*) of Umbanda-Jurema. The men performing in Maracatu groups as *caboclos de lança* undergo a ritual named *calço*, which literally means “to wear”. The Umbanda-Jurema medium, through sung-spoken sentences enounced while in a state of trance, closes the dancer’s body by “covering” it with an ensemble of invisible entities (*entidades*). This invisible protective shield is “put” (*botado*) onto the dancer on the first day of Carnival and “removed” (*tirado*) on the last day.

The visual aesthetics of the costumes may also be interpreted as a means of closing, and therefore protecting, the performer’s body. The shiny materials applied throughout the costume represent devices for reflecting, and therefore defending the dancers and musicians against the “big eye” of envious rivals. Moreover, the geometrical patterns sewn into the *gola* (the cape worn by *caboclos*) act as mazes in which malicious entities get lost, “bonded” or “glued” (see Gell, 1998). Under the *gola*, the *caboclo de lança* carries a wooden frame (*surrão*) on his shoulders on which hang three or four heavy bells (*chocalhos*): when he walks, jumps, and dances, the *caboclo* disseminate sounds into the environment. Like the highly reflective materials of the *gola*, the metal sounds of the bells act as an “acoustic shield” to close and protect the body of the *caboclo*. Indeed, the sound of rattles and bells have a general apotropaic function in many different societies (Schaeffner, 1978/1936; Ricci, 2012), and commonly employed in various Carnival traditions of rural Europe as protective devices against evil forces[6].

## CLOSING THE COLLECTIVE BODY

The same concern over closing and locking the body also exists on another scale, that of the Maracatu group as a whole, as a “collective body”. Indeed, any Maracatu group is locally perceived as something more than the simple addition of separate, discrete members (the participating dancers and musicians). Rather, the group emerges more holistically as a “an “animated being” or even as a “supernatural being”. Local expressions always refer to the Maracatu as a single entity: termed a *brinquedo* (literally meaning toy, puppet or doll) or *bicho* (animal, creature). Its composition also becomes a metaphor for a living being: the internal section is called the *miolo* (core, crumb, kernel) and consisting of the more sensible, fragile, vulnerable members, such as the king, the queen and the women. The *miolo* is protected, “locked in”, by two lines of *caboclos* called *cordões* (“chain sticks”), who are comparable to hard skin protecting the softer core parts. Moreover, the *calunga* (a black puppet carried by the *dama de paço*), strongly associated with spiritual and religious protection, infuses a “soul” into the *brinquedo*.

During Carnival, this decorated, animated “being” moves in the public space, showing off its visual, choreographic, musical, and poetic beauty. As is the case for any individual, the Maracatu as a whole may “activate” the envious eye and therefore requires protection. Once again, the protective strategies are multiple and act across both the spiritual-religious and aesthetic dimensions. Various

rituals are performed in order to “close the yard” (*fechar o terreiro*), protecting the headquarters of the Maracatu and the path it will follow, notably crossroads, “open spaces” where malicious entities may “enter” to undermine the normal flow of the *brinquedo*.

In Zona da Mata Norte, it is commonly said that dancers and musicians should “close the Maracatu”. The complex collective movements (*manobras*, lit. manoeuvres) performed by various dozens of dancers, demand a high level of interpersonal coordination, a concept expressed locally by the term *consonância* (consonance). On achieving consonance, thus when everybody is moving accordingly, the Maracatu is considered to be closed and therefore protected. Conversely, whenever the *manobras* are not well coordinated, there is a great danger of the group “breaking off”, a negative event expressed in the concept of *desmantelo* (dismantle, fracture).

My hypothesis is that the way of conceiving sounds in Maracatu also expresses this struggle to “lock in” the Maracatu. In addition to the “acoustical shield” provided by bells, the nucleus of the five percussionists (*terno*) perform very fast and loud rhythmical patterns (*samba* and *marcha*), which alternate with moments of silence in which the poet intones improvised verses. Interestingly, the expressions applied locally to judge the quality of a *terno* performance reveal an opposition between the concepts of “open” vs. “closed”. Precisely, “to hit the *terno* [in a] closed [way]” (*batendo o terno fechado*)” is synonymous with good coordination among the percussionists, while the “the *terno* is pierced/punctured” (*o terno está furado*) refers to poor ensemble coordination. The recordings of the *terno* in separate tracks (see Davies et al., 2020; Fonseca et al., 2021), will potentially allow us to “translate” these abstract concepts at the level of formal music analysis.

## CONCLUSION

My hypothesis supposes that the aesthetic components of Maracatu (dances, collective choreographies, and performed sounds) can be understood as a struggle to build an animated, collective body and protect it from possible threats coming from visible or invisible agents. According to this interpretative line, Maracatu becomes a ritual performed in order to ensure individual and collective health.

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## NOTES

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[2] There are only a few anthropological research studies on Maracatu de baque solto, mostly in Portuguese (Chaves, 2008; Garrabé, 2010; Amoras, 2018; Teixeira, 2018; Bonini Baraldi 2021b).

[3] The etymology of the word envy, from the Latin *in-videre* (“to look negatively”), suggests this feeling directly relates to the popular concept of the “evil eye”, “*malocchio*” (“bad-eye”) in Italian, “*mauvais-oeil*” (“bad-eye”) in French.

[4] *Caboclo de lança* and *baiana* are the two principal masqueraded characters of Maracatu de baque solto groups. For a complete description of all the characters composing such Carnival groups, see: [http://portal.iphan.gov.br/uploads/ckfinder/arquivos/Dossi%C3%AAA\\_MARACATU\\_RURAL.pdf](http://portal.iphan.gov.br/uploads/ckfinder/arquivos/Dossi%C3%AAA_MARACATU_RURAL.pdf)

[5] On Umbanda-Jurema worship, see Guimarães de Salles (2010).

[6] In the rural regions of southern Europe, during carnival or winter festivities, it is still possible to encounter masked and costumed characters similar to the *caboclos* of the rural Maracatu, walking in the village streets with rattles hanging from their waists (see Panopoulos, 2003; Raposo, 2010). Among the varieties of local interpretations of this custom, the most frequent is the magical and propitiatory

function attributed to the sound of rattles, a sound capable of driving away invisible entities considered dangerous for the individual and for the entire community and that, during this period of the year, are deemed to be more active and closer to humans. Similarly, the sound of church bells also served in past times to ward off storms and hail, and thereby protect crops.

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# **Playing together to heal together: healing, music making and playfulness among the Wana people of Morowali**

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Inside the Morowali forest, when somebody has the “inner ill” and dies, the Wana people officiate nocturnal rituals known as the *momago* and the *kayori*. Once the people gather and night has fallen, the music, produced either by two gongs and a drum or by singers, can start and thereby also beginning the ritual. By examining the ritual music of the Wana, I clarify the role and the importance of music in the healing process of the entire Wana community. During the ritual, music acts as an emotional guide, indicating the different emotions related to different musical moments. Moreover, through its ability to unite the visible with the invisible world, music transforms profane time into mythical time and helps shamans enter into trance and obtain their power as well as also engaging directly with the invisible world of emotion. Music also contributes to the playful atmosphere that characterizes Wana rituals and that permits the healing of the community through the transformation of a negative event into a positive opportunity to regenerate.

To explore the role of music in these rituals, this paper analyzes the structure and the aims of both the *momago* and the *kayori* and how music contributes to their playfulness.

## **NOTES**

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