



Kim Ramstedt

DJs as Cultural Brokers

The Performance and Localization of Recorded Music Across Time and Space



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Abstract

In this doctoral dissertation in musicology, I study DJ practices in contemporary Finland. I am particularly interested in how DJs function as cultural brokers when music in recorded format travels across time and space. The main question my study seeks to answer is how are musical cultures localized, or made meaningful in a new socio-cultural environment through DJ performances and therein related activities. This question is investigated over four research articles in three distinct case studies, each focusing on a specific musical category, conceptualized as a “disc culture” (Thornton 1995), emphasizing the centrality of recorded sound as a medium of the music. The three categories of music investigated in my thesis are dancehall reggae, Finnish *iskelmä* music and Latin American music. These categories, which from the local audience perspective represent remote musical cultures, are not to be understood as fixed, but rather as narratives that are constructed in the performance setting. The concept of performance, following Auslander (2004), is applied as an analytical concept to all empirical material. As such, although the study also includes analysis of DJs’ stage performances in a nightclub setting, I am also concerned with how the DJs work as brokers off stage. This work, which could be characterized as taking place in the space between production and consumption, influences values and meanings that listeners ascribe to the music. Methodologically this study combines ethnographic accounts with theoretical investigations. Empirical material analyzed in the study includes interviews with DJs, observational field research in nightclubs, media discourses, promotional material, individual recordings and set lists from DJ performances.

My research shows how the function of records as a medium is under constant negotiation, as records are in various ways altered and embedded into a DJ’s work. The authority of a discrete musical work is questioned in my case studies in several ways, as ideas behind records find new forms of expression and as industry driven distinctions between the live performance of bands as collective audience experiences and recorded albums as objects intended for domestic private listening are discarded. I argue that genres moving to another cultural sphere will not maintain all their inherent values and meanings, as the terms for the adaptation of the music is negotiated between the DJ and the local audience. The audience intimately involved in the localization process is, however, not a homogeneous group and members of the audience who are less engaged in the performance setting can become outside observers to the unfolding drama of the events. The DJs’ strategies to facilitate the process of localization include various practices of framing through the choice of musical repertoire, and through verbal and visual communication. I maintain that DJs play a significant role mediating between the remote production and local consumption of a musical genre. Through their work, DJs can challenge dominating cultural narratives and explore alternatives to established discourses.

Swedish Summary – Svensk sammanfattning

Denna doktorsavhandling i musikvetenskap är en studie i dj:ns roll som kulturell medlare i situationer där musik i inspelad form förflyttas över tid och rum. Den huvudsakliga forskningsfrågan är hur musikkulturer omlokaliseras och görs betydelsefulla i en ny sociokulturell omgivning genom dj-uppträdanden och däri relaterade processer. Frågan granskas i fyra forskningsartiklar genom tre fallstudier, som alla behandlar olika kategorier av musik. Den forskade musiken närmas här främst som ”skivkulturer” (Thornton 1995), vilket betonar inspelningarnas centrala roll i musiken. Avhandlingens tre musikkategorier, som ur den lokala publikens perspektiv kan anses representera avlägsna musikkulturer, är dancehall reggae, äldre finländsk schlager (”iskelmä”) och latinamerikansk musik. Kategorierna betraktas inte som fixerade eller givna, utan undersöks som konstruktioner vilka tolkas i samband med framförandet. Avhandlingens empiriska material innefattar intervjuer, deltagande observation på nattklubbar, diskurser inom media och reklammaterial, enskilda inspelningar och låtlistor från dj-uppträdanden.

Min avhandling visar hur inspelningarnas funktion som medium ständigt omförhandlas då de manipuleras och bäddas in i dj:ns arbete. Jag hävdar att genrer som förflyttas till en annan kulturell kontext inte bibehåller alla ursprungliga värderingar och meningar. I denna lokaliseringsprocess använder sig dj:n av olika strategier för att rama in den nya musiken. Det här sker till exempel genom valet av repertoar samt genom verbal och visuell kommunikation. Avhandlingen belyser dj:ns centrala roll som en länk mellan en avlägsen musikkultur och dess lokala konsumtion. Genom sin verksamhet utmanar dj:n dominerande kulturella narrativ och utforskar alternativ till etablerade diskurser.

List of original publications

“Sound System Performances and the Localization of Dancehall in Finland”. *IASPM@ Journal* 4:1, 2014: 42–55. (http://www.iaspmjournal.net/index.php/IASPM_Journal/article/view/656)

“Chase Sound Boys Out of Earth”: The Aura of Dubplate Specials in Finnish Reggae Sound System Culture”. *Dancecult: Journal of Electronic Dance Music Culture* 7: 2, 2015: 25–42. (<https://dj.dancecult.net/index.php/dancecult/article/view/688>)

“Ladies and Gentlemen”: Nostalgised Pavilion Dance Culture as a Performative Resource in the We Love Helsinki Club Concept”. *Puls – Journal for Ethnomusicology and Ethnochoreology* Vol. 1, 2016: 48–66. (http://carkiv.musikverk.se/www/epublikationer/Puls_01_2016-04-25.pdf)

“Sauna Caliente. Hybridity in the Performance Persona of Cuban DJ Norlan Working in Finland”. *Etnomusikologian Vuosikirja* Vol. 28, 2016 (<https://doi.org/10.23985/evk.60235>)

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1. Introduction

1.1. Object of study

“The storyteller takes what he tells from experience – his own or, that reported by others. And he in turn makes it the experience of those who are listening to his tale.” (Benjamin 2007a: 87)

Around the time I started working on this dissertation project, I remember talking with a friend about a German DJ whom we had just heard perform in Helsinki the night before. The event had been a success; the venue was packed and the atmosphere throughout the night exuberant. The DJ seemed to have chosen all the right records at the exact right time. He was dancing on stage and really managed to make a connection with the local audience in Helsinki. Interestingly, my friend had attended this same DJ’s performance in Berlin a few weeks earlier and was of the opinion that the DJ did not perform at all as well as he had done the night before in Helsinki. I quickly reacted by asking whether my friend was sure it was the DJ who was not at his best or was it the audience that was not right for his performance. My friend replied that now when he thinks about it, the DJ played almost exactly the same selection of music he had played in Helsinki, but the reaction by the Berlin audience was something completely different. The venue apparently did not have the same ambience and the crowd just was not enjoying the music as much.

The conversation I had with my friend illustrates the delicate relationship between a particular music, a DJ mediating that music and a local audience responding to it. A DJ performance can sometimes be assessed as a failure, while the exact same set for a different audience can be a success. Is it the DJ who is substandard, or is there an error somewhere else in the connection between the three elements mentioned above? Within club cultures you can also hear opinions of a venue not being enjoyable because of a particular crowd that frequents the place. The implication being that there is nothing wrong with the music in the establishment, it is just the wrong audience enjoying it.

In this dissertation, I investigate this relationship between music, the DJ as a mediator and a local audience. With reference to the quote from Walter Benjamin above, the DJ can be equated to a storyteller, who seeks to transmit a particular story to his or her listeners. The story here includes apart from the music itself, also narratives about the genre or style of music that the DJ is mediating. As a club and radio DJ myself frequently performing music from outside the Western mainstream of dance music, I have had to consider what kind of understanding about the music I play I am transmitting to my listeners. While I have sought to mediate the music as truthfully to its original meanings and values as possible, I know I do not have absolute control over how audiences in the end interpret and perceive the music. Similarly, my research is concerned with how music that moves across a longer spatial and temporal

distance is interpreted in a new location. The music investigated here, as ethnomusicologist Martin Stokes (1994c: 98) would suggest, is music that “we might hastily deem to be ‘out of place’”. That is music associated and authenticated via its association with particular socio-cultural, spatial or historical contexts that is placed into new remote environments. As the music travels in mediated formats to new spaces, the original meanings behind the music are reorganized. According to ethnomusicological principles, music not only reflects society, but is itself one of the forces that determines its character (see for example Seeger 1987). Music created in one cultural terrain and consumed in another disrupts this relationship between music and its immediate surroundings. In this dissertation, I am interested in how DJs facilitate this musical transition and how the function of records as a medium is under constant negotiation as they are positioned within different DJ performances and club concepts.

To understand how records travelling over a spatial or temporal distance are made meaningful in Finnish nightclubs, a process that I here call localization, I have resorted to several methods of analysis and spent as much time observing DJs at work in clubs as I have spent in libraries and archives examining discourses in different media. The various musics investigated in this dissertation, associated with such diverse cultural terrains as Jamaican sound system performances, Finnish couples dancing, and Pan-Latin popular culture, all adhere to their own “genre rules” (Fabbri 1982), and articulate values of cultural authenticity differently. As such, this dissertation, apart from analyses of the attitudes and discourses in the reproduction setting in Finland, also contains detailed discussions about the history and the primary cultural context for the musics under examination. Also, although the concept of performance functions as an overarching operative tool through which the DJs’ work as brokers, and the audience role in the mediation process is conceptualized, each case has a set of more specific questions drawn from the empirical material at hand.

1.2. Research tradition

I align this dissertation primarily with the academic discipline of popular music studies, which in itself incorporates a variety of methods, theories and traditions. What, according to British popular music scholars David Hesmondhalgh and Keith Negus (2002: 2), has connected people across the field has been an interest in “questions about the relationships between musical meaning, social power and cultural value”. These themes have in turn been shaped by an affinity to various key subjects and their respective disciplinary backgrounds. In what follows, I position my own research as part of the tradition of popular music studies by addressing these central questions within its framework. Drawing on this background, I will then proceed to present the research questions of this study.

Theodor Adorno is mentioned in several textbooks and anthologies (see for example Middleton 1990, Hesmondhalgh & Negus 2002, Aho & Kärjä 2007) as

the first theorist who, despite his extreme criticism of popular music as solely a tool for capitalism to reproduce itself, had a serious interest in studying the subject. Adorno's (see 1941) theoretical investigations of mass consumption was a first step towards an academic legitimization of a sociological study of popular music and an even more commending legitimization started to emerge in the late 1960s. At this time the music of the Beatles came to be discussed in comparison with "great classic composers" in the "critical language of classical musicology" and the music of Bob Dylan found its way into English departments where it was discussed as poetry (Cloonan 2005: 78–79). While the aesthetics of romantic poetry and the classical Western canon were, as Martin Cloonan (2005: 79) notes, "ill suited for an analysis of pop", it placed the serious study of popular music on the academic agenda.

The limitations of these musicological and lyrical analyses also opened the study of popular music to social sciences that sought to locate the subject within broader social, political and cultural trends. According to Cloonan (2005: 80), the UK had a head start here due to the Birmingham Centre of Contemporary Cultural Studies, where popular culture was already considered a serious research subject. The Marxist influenced cultural sociology that became known as cultural studies stressed the agency of audiences and celebrated the social power of marginalized groups, such as "mods" and "teddy boys", that had previously been ignored in academia (see Hall & Jefferson 1975). Although music was not the main focus of the studies, it had a notable presence in the inquiries into "subcultures" (Hebdige 1979) that raised questions about the political value of cultural symbols. The first more explicitly popular music focused study from a sociological perspective was Simon Frith's influential *Sociology of Rock* (1978) and its revised version *Sound Effects* (1981). Frith's work moved beyond pure textual analysis, addressing larger questions in the production of popular music while also questioning simplistic conceptions of the music industry as a mere production line.

On the musicological side, equally ground-breaking was the work of Philip Tagg (1979), who through his detailed analysis of film music maintained, contrary to traditional musicology, that music is not an autonomous medium but expressive of potential social and political meanings. Similarly, ethnomusicologists, usually focused on traditional music in geographically distant cultures, now began more closely examining musical meaning in their more immediate environments. Mark Slobin (1993) examined the "global cultural flow" of multi-ethnic American and European societies, Peter Manuel (1988) took on the enormous task of surveying the "popular musics of the non-western world", and most relevant for my own research, Martin Stokes (1994a) edited a collection that explored questions of identity and place through music.

Although there is great heterogeneity in the studies within various disciplines referred to above, they are all more or less connected by an ideological adhesive to defend the value of popular music. The academic study of popular

music has throughout its history, and even to this day, faced scepticism, if not “outright hostility”, as Bruce Johnson and Martin Cloonan (2009: 8) suggest, which has led to a defensiveness that leans towards unreflective celebrations. Whereas I have sought to avoid these kinds of trivial celebrations or seen it as an intrinsic value in itself to defend the “cultural value” of the subject of analysis, the other themes – musical meaning and social power – identified by Hesmondalgh & Negus (2002) in popular music studies resonates well with my own research. Although this research tradition is not without its flaws, I recognize an indebtedness to the trailblazers discussed above, whose work my own analysis in several ways builds on. I will return to these general themes in my conclusions at the end of this introductory chapter and now move on to discuss my research questions.

1.3. Aim and research questions

The primary aim of this thesis is to study how music travels across time and space in mediated form with a special focus on how club DJs in Finland perform, mediate and localize recorded music into new socio-cultural environments. The main research question this study seeks to answer is how DJs through their activities localize musical cultures across time and space. This question is investigated through a series of sub-questions, which are divided into distinct analytical themes, which I will introduce below and discuss in more detail in the next chapter.

The first set of sub-questions is concerned with the role of sound recording technology and media that provides the main musical material in DJ practices. Sarah Thornton (1995) defines cultures revolving around DJ practices explicitly as “disc cultures”, emphasizing the centrality of recorded sound as a medium of the music. This is also how I primarily conceptualize the cultures under investigation here, which makes the role of records a natural starting point. As records are sonically manipulated and reorganized in DJ sets and placed in larger cultural frameworks of meaning creation, it raises questions about the status of discrete musical pieces. Is it relevant to talk about sound recordings as musical works in club cultures and can the ideas and values behind individual records be represented in a club concept or DJ set as a whole? As the ontology of music varies under different social conventions, I will also explore how the role of records can change the perception of the music itself.

The second analytical theme explores the temporal and spatial distance that the music travels. According to Kai Fikentscher (2000: 33–34) a DJ performance “combines aspects of musical immediacy and musical mediation” in that fixed prerecorded sound is manipulated and rendered unique to a particular time and place. This means that in this process of mediation, a DJ performance also makes tradition part of the present and the global or remote part of the local. Although, it should be made clear that these paths are not one-directional. As Martin Stokes (1994b: 4) notes, music does not simply reflect, but

provides means by which “hierarchies of place are negotiated and transformed”. As music travels across time and space to reach a new environment, the DJ performance also constructs trajectories in the other direction, constructing a narrative about the place of the music’s origin. We can, thus, ask how are places constructed through DJ practices and how do these distant locations affect local sensibilities.

Finally, the last theme asks how DJs perform the music and facilitate this process of localization. How are sound recordings with their inherent cultural values incorporated in a new cultural context? How are DJs as cultural brokers framing the music, rendering remote musical elements meaningful under the conditions that the new environment places on the music. This can include using particular performance and media formats associated with the music, and it can also occur outside the actual performance setting in promotional material and media discourses around the events. As the music is localized in this sense, it is also reinterpreted and shaped in accordance with local cultural conventions. This process of cultural brokerage is here investigated as a process of performance, where DJs are not only seen to be performing on stage, but all their activities happening around their club events contribute to performing an understanding of the music. Similarly, I am investigating how audiences at the events are performing various roles inspired by the music and actively participating in the interpretation process. The dialogue between the DJ and audience is essential both inside and outside the club in social media and other virtual spaces.

1.4. Structure and delimitation of the dissertation

In addition to this introductory part, my dissertation consists of four published research articles. In what follows, I will first discuss earlier research on the topic of this study (chapter 2). I have divided this research into four categories for a clearer overview of the field and as a way to demonstrate how this study complements existing research. Following the summary of previous research, in chapter 3 I will present my theoretical framework and in chapter 4 discuss the methods and materials used in this study. In chapter 5 I summarize my four individual substudies (the research articles) and finally in chapter 6, I present the results and answers to the research questions discussed above.

In order to answer my research questions with as much width and weight as possible, I have chosen to investigate the theoretical themes discussed above from several different perspectives. In my four research articles I investigate three different musical contexts in Finland. Articles I and II deal with reggae sound system practices, exploring the performance form and customized recordings of the performers. In article III, I study the Finnish *iskelmä* music DJs and the associated pavilion dance culture as a performative resource in the We Love Helsinki club concept. In the last case study, article IV, I discuss Afro-Cuban DJ and artist Norlan as an ambassador of “Latin” music in Finland by

analyzing both his own music productions and his DJ sets.

The cases have been chosen to represent a broad variety of musical cultures, as not to limit my findings to one context. At the same time, the performance forms in each case are similar enough to provide a valid comparison between them. All DJ practices studied in this dissertation incorporate verbal commentary in the performance of recorded music as a way to engage with the audiences. Also, the DJs and other actors involved in the music scenes are in each case conscious of an element of relocation either through time or space in the performances. However, it is clear that choosing to investigate several different musical contexts and each of them only for a short period of time, has not given me the opportunity to explore deeper questions regarding the meaning creating practices in each case. My sub-studies are as discrete studies important in answering my questions regarding cultural brokering in DJ practices, but they can also be considered entry points into further investigation into the fields they represent. This strategy has also opened up for me several viable avenues for possible future research projects.

The number of cases included in this dissertation was also limited due to time and resource restraints. I had originally planned to investigate four different DJ contexts in my four articles. However, as each case required me to familiarize myself with, not only a whole new set of empirical material, but also with a different academic discourse, I realized that within the limited time I had funding for my research, I would not be able to conclude four studies on separate musical cultures. As such, two of my sub-studies are concerned with reggae DJ practices, albeit from different perspectives. One discusses performance forms and audience discourses within reggae in Finland, while the other focuses on one particular recording and medium.

2. Earlier research

Literature and academic research on DJing and club culture began to take off in the early 1990s and during the time of my research it has grown exponentially. The peer reviewed journal *Dancecult* has since 2009 published two issues per year – including special issues on for example DJs, production technologies and nightlife fieldwork – and the first scholarly anthology on the topic was published in 2013 (Attias, Gavanas & Rietveld). To account for my theoretical and thematic choices, I will below discuss the diverse field of DJ research, referring particularly to studies that I engage in dialogue with, while also pointing to some blind spots in the field that I have sought to contribute to with my dissertation. I will begin by referring to studies about the history of the DJ, particularly focusing on studies that in some way deal with DJs' work as brokers, which is most relevant to this dissertation. After this, I will discuss studies on contemporary DJ practices according to three key themes that I have identified in the previous research.

2.1. Historical perspectives

The first academic and popular monographs on DJ and club culture have mostly been historical overviews, either about the DJ or dance culture in general (Brewster & Broughton 2000; Haslam 2001; Lawrence 2003; Passman 1971; Poschardt 1998; Shapiro 2005) or more specific micro-histories and stories about particular scenes and styles, among which I here include hip hop and Jamaican reggae sound system culture (Bradley 2001; Chang 2005; Colin 1997; Garrat 1998; Katz 2003; Reynolds 1998; Rietveld 1998; Sicko 1999; Silcott 1999; Thornton 1995; Toop 1984). Much of this literature sketches a similar narrative about the development of discos in the 1970s and the succeeding electronic dance music genres of the 1980s. While repeating or questioning this narrative in its entirety is not relevant in this context, I want to point to some aspects in this history that relate to my own research on the DJ's work as a cultural broker.

Surprisingly, although DJs have since the beginning in some form always acted as musical mediators, this aspect has remained a little investigated area in DJ history. Cultural brokerage has been discussed mostly in relation to the history of radio DJs, which is also where we find the first individuals who systematically publically entertained audiences by playing records. Interestingly also for the purpose of this study, the enculturation of playing recorded music on the radio was a long process. As performance and mediation theorist Philip Auslander (2008: 4), notes, the radio was initially understood to be a "live" medium; when the radio transmitter was turned on, the broadcast transmitted in real time whatever was happening at the station. The music was, as such, also produced on location in the radio studio, or at least this impression was to be given to listeners. Indeed, the first actual programmes built around recorded music in US American commercial radio, such as Martin Block's popular 1930s

programme *Make Believe Ballroom*, sought to create the feeling of a live concert environment. As such, for a long time the use of records in radio broadcasts was also considered a suspicious enterprise, especially in the recording industry where the practice was suspected to hurt record sales – who would buy a record if it could be heard for free on the radio?

The birth of the DJ in conjunction with mass audio mediation technology is also reflected in the term “disc jockey”. In most likely the first book ever to be written about the DJ, Arnold Passman (1971) notes that the word “jockey” has, apart from referring to a horse back rider, been used for different kinds of tricksters, which is the meaning attached to the first radio DJs. They were considered to trick listeners into buying both the products they advertised as well as believing that the music they played was live. In exploring the meaning of the word “jockey”, Passman (1971: 10) traces its etymology as follows:

The label can be traced from Jacques (French for peasant), and the Battle of Hastings gave it to the Scotch as Jock (nickname for man or fellow). John, the most common of men’s names, means “Jehova is most gracious,” and its Italian, Giovanni, short-handed to “Johnny,” is the stem for “zany,” which defines a clown’s attendant who mimics his master’s act.

The disc jockey can, according to Passman (1971: 10), be equated with “the Fool” of the Tarot, who during medieval times played an important role in spreading literature and education. This “jongleur” accompanied the troubadour on his travels and had the task of providing a receptive setting for the poet’s words (Passman 1971: 10–11). Although the radio DJs that he discusses were perceived to just make a lot of noise and accomplish little for the musicians, for Passman (1971: 11) they were real Renaissance men. Like the zany “juglar” (Passman 1971: 11) or Fool, who did not have an act of his own, the DJ constructs his performance from existing material and provides a context for the music. After the initial antagonism, the power and influence of radio DJs was soon also recognized by the recording industry and DJs became important trendsetters. This is exemplified perhaps most famously by Alan Freed, who came to be labelled the “father of rock’n’roll” due to his influence in identifying and disseminating the musical trends of his time.

Whereas in the United States, since its inception the radio was part of the entertainment industry, airwaves were in Europe controlled by the national governments. In Europe, the task of the radios was considered to be more to educate than to entertain, which meant that recorded music, and especially popular music, was less frequently broadcasted. Radio journalists in Finland did not identify themselves as DJs. As Erkki Melakoski, head of *Sävelradio*, the only programme on Finland’s national public service broadcasting company YLE to play popular music in the 1960s stated:

It is not really an appropriate term to describe our programmes at SÄvelradio that contain a lot of talking. A Disc Jockey is a person whose job is to sell the music he presents. And we don't sell anything. (Kempainen 2011: 111)

As such, in Finland the practice of DJing as it is recognized today emerged not within the sphere of radio work, but in conjunction with the establishment of the first discos in the late 1960s. In this context, however, I will not discuss this history in more detail (for a summary of this development, see Ramstedt 2014), but instead now turn to earlier research on contemporary DJ practices.

2.2. Form, technology and skill

For the purpose of this introduction, I have divided these studies into three categories; (1) form, technology and skill, (2) identity and gender and (3) globalization and intermediation. In the final topic, which is the most relevant for my research, I have also included, in addition to DJ research, two studies not solely focused on DJ practices in order to provide a larger context on the subject. The division I have opted for is inspired by and partly follows the categorization that Mark J. Butler presents in his reader on electronic dance music and club cultures (2012).

First, research related to the performance form, technologies and the DJ's skill has been abundant within the last few years. In fact, I would argue that the majority of studies on DJ culture falls into this category. Within this body of research, a model that has been most useful for me is the one provided by Pedro Peixoto Ferreira (2008). Here Ferreira discusses the relationship between the "machine sound" provided by the DJ and the human movement on the dance floor. Ferreira questions simplified descriptions of agency that tend to emphasize either the DJ's or the audience's role. According to Ferreira (2008: 19), the DJ, audience, machine sound and movement are all manifestations of a common reality, which he defines as a "human-machine sound-movement assemblage". Ferreira's model, of which he also provides a graphical representation, is a valuable starting point and reminder of all the elements involved in the creation of DJ performance. What Ferreira's model does not take into consideration are all the activities, discourses and conventions outside the actual performance space that influence the event. However, it should be noted that Ferreira only presents a theoretical model, without linking it to any particular material or ethnography, which makes it a relatively ambitious project.

In my own research, I have found it important to discuss the cultural history behind the musics I study, as well as media discourses and genre conventions that affect DJ performances. Here, my research bears a resemblance to Kai Fikentscher (2000:17), who in his study on underground dance music culture in New York emphasizes the need to come to terms with "time dimensions" in ethnographic research. As Fikentscher contends, because data gath-

ered through the methods of ethnography are relatively short in their time span and can only explain a scene at a particular point in time, it can benefit from a complementary historic approach to provide a larger context. Furthermore, my research is not only methodologically inspired by Fikentscher; the theoretical model of the “disco concept” that he describes has been highly useful. According to Fikentscher (2000: 34), a DJ performance combines aspects of musical immediacy and musical mediation, in that fixed prerecorded sound is manipulated and rendered unique to a particular time and place. Although musical immediacy has remained the “basic model”, technological developments in the 20th century have meant that music production and consumption are no longer “married to each other by the immediacy of time and space” (Fikentscher 2000: 15). To understand the contemporary cultural intermediation in DJ practices which I discuss in my research, we also need to recognize the spatial and temporal division between “processes of producing and consuming music” (Fikentscher 2000: 15).

The tension between immediacy and reproducibility has been an ongoing debate in DJ culture and it has also generated lively discussion within academia. What a DJ does, or should do according to audiences and the media, is not always evident. According to Bernardo Alexander Attias (2013: 23), the increasing popularity of electronic dance music has brought these kinds of questions about the DJ’s work into the “forefront of public representations of DJ culture”. In his article on format and digitality in DJ practices, Attias (2013) discusses a highly publicized quote by Canadian electronic dance music artist Deadmau5, who in an interview admits that in his sets he does not always manually “beatmatch” records, a standard DJ practice where two (or more) corresponding records are set to match in tempo by adjusting the pitch control on the turntables enabling a smooth transition between songs. According to Deadmau5, his laptop will do that job for him, “so no beatmatching skills required” (cited in Attias 2013: 21). The controversy this statement caused among DJs and fans, according to Attias, points to an inherent paradox in DJ practices related to a presumed opposition between human skill and technological automation. Attias (2013: 29–30) asks appropriately why the use of certain technology is acceptable and the use of others is not, and “why is it acceptable to play prerecorded songs in the first place”? As Attias (2013: 17) contends, the formats themselves are here less important than “the creative discourses that contextualize them”. Rather than focusing on the technological functions themselves, by investigating where and how they are used, we can learn more about meanings behind these practices.

In one of the first studies that explores in more detail the role of technology in DJ practices, Farrugia & Swiss (2005) note that a resistance to new technologies is most apparent at grass-roots level. DJs that have already proven themselves have less to lose; they have already gained some recognition, which does not rely solely on their knowledge or record collections (Farrugia & Swiss 2005:

40). In their analysis of Internet discussion about DJ technologies in the digital age, Farrugia and Swiss (2005) conclude that the online debates are also about shifting definitions of what constitutes the work of a DJ. Ed Montano (2010) similarly notes that technological development constantly forces DJs into making choices about how they go about their profession. Using laptop computers for example provides convenience and can increase creativity and variety in a performance, but can at the same time generate accusations of inauthenticity (Montano 2010: 413). However, as Montano (2010: 414) maintains, despite changes in technology, DJs still need to be concerned with affecting the mood of a crowd through music, “regardless of format”. According to Montano (2010: 414), perhaps more important than the ability to seamlessly mix two records together, is the order in which they play and sequence the music.

Although the discourse of technology is constantly present in DJ practices, and it should be recognized as a prerequisite for the kind of brokerage I am investigating in this study, I have only partly been concerned with what Attias (2011) calls “formatism”, that is the preference for one technology or format over another. We should also remember that discourses about formats vary within different genres, which brings me to the second theme within DJ research that I here categorize as identification and gender.

2.3. Identification and gender

Kembrew McLeod (2001) suggests that the function of “genre-naming” is crucial in identity formations within electronic dance music cultures. According to McLeod (2001: 60), compared to other styles of music, “electronic/ dance music communities” introduce new subgenres at a faster pace. This is not only related to the rapid evolution of the sound of the music itself, but is, according to McLeod also constructed discursive through marketing strategies. Although, the genres I am investigating are not unequivocally associated with “electronic dance music”, McLeod’s discussion about genres is relevant to all DJ activities. As DJs mostly play music by other artists, they often need to construct their own style via discursive genre associations. In fact, as McLeod (2001: 72) maintains, genre-naming, together with slang and fashion, can function as a gate-keeping mechanism, which excludes outsiders and those “who are not hip enough to keep up”. Here, according to McLeod (2001: 73), electronic dance community members seek particularly to distinguish themselves from “the mainstream”.

This complex relationship to the mainstream within dance communities has also been investigated by Thornton (1995), whose first academic monograph on club cultures had substantial impact on research in the field. Most significantly, Thornton introduces the concept of “subcultural capital”, which has subsequently been frequently employed by scholars. Drawing on Bourdieu’s (1984) theory of distinction, Thornton (1995) investigates “hipness” as a form of subcultural capital, which can be both objectified and embodied and is re-

vealed most clearly by what it is not, that is its relationship to the mainstream. Similarly to how books and paintings can represent cultural capital, subcultural capital is objectified in record collections or fashionable attire (Thornton 1995: 27). Moreover, whereas cultural capital is embodied in manners or sophisticated conversational skills, subcultural capital can be represented through the latest slang and dance moves. Representations of subcultural capital correlate, according to Thornton (1995: 28), in complex ways with media coverage and exposure. In addition to providing tools to differentiate between various forms of media and understanding the complexity of subcultural authenticity and its nuanced relationship to the mainstream, Thornton (1995) introduces the concept of “disc cultures”. In her detailed discussion on the history and enculturation of club cultures in the UK, Thornton (1995: 54) contrasts values within disc cultures to live music cultures, suggesting that the former displaces “liveness” from the stage to the dance floor.

In a discussion on identity politics within club culture, the notion of gender cannot be dismissed. As the history of disco, and particularly its association with male homosexuality, demonstrates, gender identifications have always been an integral part of club cultures. The roots in gay culture, as Walter Hughes (1994: 147) notes, has also been one of the main reasons behind a hostility towards disco. According to Hughes (1994: 151), the technologically synthesized machine-driven music was condemned because it echoed the stereotype of gay men as “clones” who reject “natural” reproduction for a “mysterious process of self-reproduction”. The music in these discriminatory views is perceived to be as “artificial” as the homosexual lifestyle. Although attitudes towards disco and DJ culture have moved beyond these simplified associations, understanding this background that Hughes (1994) in his concise and theoretically dense essay describes has been useful for my research, not only regarding gender roles, but also concerning ontological questions about the music performed at DJ events. According to Hughes (1994: 152), by surrendering themselves and becoming an extension of the machine beat in the disco, gay men have had the opportunity to free themselves from the oppressive category of the “natural”. This questioning of “natural” positions also extends to the music itself. According to Hughes, the disco makes it hard to identify a musical work, an artist or creator. To cite Hughes (1994: 149), the mixing and the remixing of the music by the club DJ “shatter, rebuild, and reshatter any architectonics a disco song might ever have possessed, making it difficult to identify its beginning or end”.

Apart from these historical discussions about gender in DJ culture, some more recent studies have also focused on the male domination of the field. Gavanas and Reitsamer (2013: 54) argue that male domination can partly be explained by a gendered construction of technology and partly by social networks within the field, which are dominated by images of male artists and sexualized images of women. For women to advance within the field they have had

to consciously employ strategies of breaking the gender code, which has made it relatively more difficult for them compared to men. Although my research does not explicitly focus on gender divisions within the field, this imbalance should be acknowledged. Of the 13 DJs and club promoters I interviewed for my research, two were female.

2.4. Globalization and intermediation

Regarding the final topic, globalization and intermediation, the research has been relatively diverse. To begin with, I want to refer to Matsinhe's (2009) study of the dance floor as a microcosm of larger civilizing processes and a manifestation of multiculturalism in Canada. According to David Mario Matsinhe (2009: 130–131), as existing social controls grow to become part of your personality over time and function as automatic self-restraint, people also seek an emotional excitement that nightclubs can provide. Nightclubs are spaces that allow people to explore diversity in codes of conduct and etiquette in a controlled setting (Matsinhe 2009). This includes coming in contact with the habits of other ethnic groups, signalling a change in the asymmetrical balances of power between the Anglo and Franco groups vis-à-vis other immigrant groups in Canada (Matsinhe 2009: 133). Although Matsinhe does not discuss the music played at the events in detail, his research provides valuable insights into the nightclub as a liminal space that not only provides a temporary escape from everyday rules and regulations, but also functions as a space that encapsulate larger developments of attitudes in society.

DJs can also explicitly seek to facilitate for audiences coming in contact with other cultures through the musical repertoire. In his study on the drum 'n' bass scene in the outskirts of the São Paulo metropolitan area in Brazil, Ivan Paolo de Paris Fontanari (2012: 248) discusses DJs as intermediaries that introduce audiences to new genres of music by negotiating between familiar and unfamiliar references. According to Fontanari (2012: 266), DJs within the scene are experts in making unfamiliar elements, such as the drum 'n' bass music they play, meaningful by incorporating them in familiar frames of sensibility and practice. This means both transforming venues intended for other purposes into autonomous spaces where audiences can come in contact with the music, and blending the unfamiliar music with locally popular genres into the repertoire using the crossfader and EQ functions on the mixer (Fontanari 2012).

Although the DJs that Fontanari studies in São Paulo present audiences in poor working class areas with a critical opportunity to dislocate from their original place of belonging, the relocating of music in DJ practices is not always an empowering experience for audiences or artists. In fact, the dislocation of music from its original context always entails a form of adaptation and interpretation that can sometimes include misrepresentations and appropriations. Carol Silverman's article about the popularity of Balkan brass music in Europe is valuable in understanding this aspect of the process of transmission in DJ

practices. Although Silverman's study does not solely focus on DJs or discuss aspects of their performance in detail, she includes DJ remixes and events as part of a larger discussion on the non-Roma appropriation of Gypsy music. Although the DJs that Silverman (2014: 203) discusses often have good intentions, she identifies a fantasy of multicultural harmony over the club scene. According to Silverman (2014:: 203), most DJs were for example unaware of the evictions of Romani refugees in the same neighbourhoods where Balkan brass clubs were organised. Also, as non-Roma are drawn to the music for its "Otherness", Romani performers are often aware of this and have to negotiate between a self-exotification of Gypsy culture onstage and "passing as a non-Roma off-stage to avoid discrimination" (Silverman 2014: 190).

Similarly, Marvin D. Sterling (2010) discusses adaptation of Jamaican popular culture in Japan, and although he is not solely focused on DJ practices, the cultures he investigates revolve to a large extent around the reproduction of recorded music. Sterling discusses complex issues of race and the fascination with black cultural forms in Japan. Sterling also provides interesting new insights into the concept of subcultural capital, suggesting that DJs, dancers, musicians and producers to a large extent gain subcultural capital within the scene by travelling to Jamaica, where apart from exploring the culture they also learn the language. In my study of reggae sound systems in Finland, I further complicate this issue on cultural capital by presenting examples of how travelling and knowing the origin of the culture in Jamaica is not always well perceived among audiences. Nevertheless, all these social, political and economic aspects of musical adaptation discussed above are important to consider in an analysis of how music travels across time and space.

3. Theoretical framework and themes

The theoretical framework in this dissertation project grew from my interest in both the philosophy of music, particularly in the concept of a musical work, and in the relationship between the live and the mediated in musical performances. Seeking to combine these interests, in my initial research plan, my aim was to explore the ontology of sound recordings, drawing on ethnographic accounts from DJ culture. I soon, however, realized that although this could be an opportunity to present some of the prevailing theories of the ontology of sound recordings in a new light, using theoretical tools from analytical philosophy to ethnographically explore DJ practices was not an optimal solution in seeking to understand the complex layers of meaning creating processes in club cultures. Consequently, the analytical focus of my study shifted from exploring the concept of a work towards the more epistemological theorizations of performance, localization and cultural mediation. However, as records provide the raw material for the performances and the DJ's craft is largely built around manipulating and rearranging them, their status in the cultures I am investigating did not disappear completely from my research. As such, I will below first elaborate on how I have theoretically approached discrete recordings as part of the club cultures I am researching, after which I proceed to discuss the more contextual theoretical themes of this study.

3.1. The sound recording

The ontology of music has been a central theme in the philosophy of music and since the 1990s both philosophers and music scholars alike have also discussed the ontology of recorded sound from various perspectives, exploring what it is that recordings seek to store and transmit (for example Auslander 2008, Brown 2000, Gracyk 1996, Kania 2006, Katz 2004). Tore Simonsen (2012) provides a useful summary of this discussion, dividing approaches to sound recording into three categories. According to Simonsen (2012: 116–121), within the philosophy of music, sound recordings have been conceptualized to represent a work, represent a performance or considered constructions and works in and of themselves. In presenting my own theorization of sound recordings, I will use Simonsen's themes as starting points, focusing particularly on the last two, which have been most relevant in popular music. After presenting the central aspects of these themes, I will discuss the implications of legal and commercial definitions of musical ontology and how they both influence and are transgressed in DJ culture. Finally, I conclude by arguing for the importance of theorizing sound recordings in a study of musical movement.

According to Simonsen (2012: 118), considering recordings as representations of performances has been a dominating discourse in the music industry throughout the 20th century and it is probably how most listeners perceive

recordings. Although with the advancement of recording technology, records have long since ceased to be – if they ever were – documents of performances, the relationship between performance and recording has remained at the heart of notions of authenticity in popular music. This complex relationship between the live and the mediated has been most thoroughly investigated by performance theorist Philip Auslander (2008), who suggests that the recording and live performance exist in a relation of mutual dependence. According to Auslander (2008: 56), “liveness” is an effect of recording technology, rather than a technology for capturing live events. Prior to the possibility of recording sound or image, there was no such thing as a “live” performance that only has meaning in relation to an opposing possibility (Auslander 2008: 56). Within rock music, live performances have been expected to resemble records, whereas records are constructed to simulate liveness. Auslander (2008: 95) defines this as a dialectical tension, where authenticity is located in the interrelation between the two cultural objects. Obviously, the electronic dance music records associated with DJ culture make fewer claims to sound like live performances in the sense it is understood within rock music. However, I suggest that even EDM recordings can be perceived to exist in a similar dialectical tension, where they are authenticated in a “live” club setting, not by a performing band on stage, but through a collective process of authentication where the club community validates the recording.

The most broadly accepted of the theories that Simonsen (2012) discusses, is the idea that a sound recording represents a construction. According to Simonsen (2012: 119), all music in recorded format, be it popular, classical or jazz, is a construction in that the recording situation influences the artistic work. Even if early recordings can be considered documented performances in that they had to be captured in a single complete take, the performance was still governed by the conditions and limits of the technology. Philosopher Lee B. Brown (2000) has defined “rock records” according to this approach as “works of phonography”. This means that sound recordings do not merely represent the idea of an abstract work, but all details stored on the records constitute the work, “just as the hues and brightness of paintings and etching constitute them” (Brown 2000: 363). Drawing on Brown, Simonsen (2012: 120) further suggests that as discrete and complete works, records do not inherently provide information about how they were produced. The break between creation and listening means we cannot know for certain “what lies on the other side” (Simonsen 2012: 120). As the work comes to life through our speakers, how the sounds were originally created is, according to Simonsen (2012: 120), irrelevant.

While I do agree that records are constructs more than documentations, I find the idea that they are clearly defined and isolated discrete “works” problematic. In his chapter in the thought-provoking anthology *The Musical Work: Reality or Invention* (2000), popular music scholar David Horn points to how the term “work” is seldom used in the discourse of popular music practice. On

the rare occasions that the word is employed, it is mostly used to signal a completion, a whole entity or total collection as in “the complete recorded works of” (Horn 2000: 15) a particular artist, seemingly implying that it is not possible to add anything more to the body of creations. While this everyday usage of the concept has the connotations of a finished product, the infrequent use of the word signals a suspicion towards the concept of a discrete and complete work with regards to popular music recordings. Still, as Horn (2000: 33–34) notes, the prominence of records as artefacts of popular music has led us to think that “the record is the work” (original emphasis), and that the popular music industry in particular does what it can to support the notion of records as an end product for easier marketing and trade.

As the formal industrial structures are intimately tied to cultural practices, we need to also confront these commercial and legal dimensions of musical works and how they are historically and culturally contingent. Popular music scholars Simon Frith and Lee Marshall (2004: 5) suggest that legal definitions of a work have become a means of not only reimbursing creators economically for the use of their material, but a means of controlling this usage and restricting creative work. As music philosopher Lydia Goehr (1992) discusses in her seminal essay *The Imaginary Museum of Musical Works*, the concept of a work shaped by aesthetic, technological and economic developments at the turn of the 1800s, subsequently also defined norms and practices within Western classical art music. Later in the 20th century this idea of a musical work that became dominant in Western culture was “enshrined” in copyright law, as media and music scholar Jason Toynbee (2006) articulates it. But at the same time, new musical cultures emerging in conjunction with recording technology opposed the idea of strongly differentiated musical works. These new musical forms, organized according to a principle that Toynbee (2006) calls “phonographic orality”, represented most significantly by the blues, point to how legislative and industrial structures are not always in sync with how music is created and experienced in practice, which DJ culture also exemplifies.

Sound recordings as works are not simply mass-produced commodities whose meanings are also mass disseminated identically in all their reproduction situations. As Arjun Appadurai (1986: 3) declares, “commodities, like persons, have social lives”. In DJ practices commercial mass-produced recordings can be remixed and reconstructed into unique works for a particular performance setting. However, with expanding economic globalization copyright regulations are also being harmonized across national boundaries, placing cultures with fundamentally different ideas about the essence of music in the regime of a European derived notion of a musical work (Frith & Marshall 2004). Ethnomusicologist Anthony Seeger (2004: 159–160) maintains that the Euro-American copyright legislation’s failure to address a lot of so called traditional music has spread across the world as an aspect of colonialism with many societies having their music exploited as commodified products. The various musics in-

vestigated in this dissertation, associated with such diverse cultural terrains as Jamaican sound system performances, Finnish couples dancing, and Pan-Latin popular culture, all adhere to their own ontology of music. While I do not explicitly discuss the ontology of music or sound recordings in all my cases, the function that records have within each culture is significant in understanding the logics of the music and should be accounted for also when investigating musical movement across time and space. This brings me to my second theoretical theme of localization.

3.2. Localization

The notion of what I here define as localization and its associated process of globalization have been heavily debated and variously defined within a wide range of disciplines. In this study, I refer to localization as the process of how music moving across time and space is adopted and interpreted in a new locale. In what follows I will discuss in detail how I have conceptualized this theme in my research and review the theories I draw on. I will start by discussing locality as a source of perceived authenticity within popular music, then investigate tensions between the local and the global or remote and finally, explore how in the localization process a narrative about the remote culture is also constructed.

According to Steve Jones (2002: 213), much writing in popular music, “academic and journalistic, fixes on the notion that geographic location of a particular group or sound is a good thing”. This fixation on location can partly be explained by a need to anchor music in a particular social and historical moment and achieving a specificity, whereas movement tends to denote a diffusion of values and loss of authenticity. Linking music to a particular location has also been seen to oppose what has been considered a sinister anonymous globalized pop market. As Sara Cohen (1994: 118) suggests, musicians linked to a particular place are identified in popular discourse as real people with roots, integrity and honesty as opposed to glitzy pop stars that represent commerce and marketing strategies. This discourse of authenticity is important to acknowledge in a study concerned with the movement of music. The “splitting of sounds from sources”, as Steven Feld (1995: 99–100) notes, is not just a monolithic technological move, but has to be seen as varied practices within the flows and circulation of cultural objects conditioned by the experiential and material situation of producers, “exchangers” and consumers. As such, in my use of the concept of localization here, it is intimately tied to globalization, contrary to the general tendency to cast these ideas “as inevitably in tension” (Robertson 1995: 29) with each other.

Most of the musical cultures studied here do not have Finland as their only avenue of dissemination. They are disseminated across the world, participating in the construction of a “world culture” (Lechner & Boli 2015: 2), as listeners regardless of their location share the experience of the music. At each loca-

tion, however, the disseminated music will be interpreted differently. Roland Robertson (1995) has used the term “glocalization” to describe this kind of interrelation between the local and the global. According to Robertson (1995: 30), glocalization involves the simultaneity and interpenetration of both the global and the local, or both universalizing and particularizing tendencies. Understanding the movement of cultural practices or artefacts as a process of glocalization suggests that they also adapt to their new surroundings in order to become more accessible to a new group of people. Also, as Robertson suggests (1995: 26), much of what is perceived to be local is often to a large degree constructed on a trans-local basis (see also Straw 1991). Accordingly, the popularity and localization of a particular genre in Finland needs to be investigated with relation to larger international musical trends. Although Robertson’s (1995) model of glocalization is useful in this regard, the notions of “universalisms” and “particularism” that Robertson debates in his writing are not as relevant in my own work where questions revolve more around different kinds of particularism. As my case studies do not all relate to a geographically distant global movement of music – I am also studying a regional and temporal musical transfer in Finland – I have found it more appropriate to use the term localization as a general description for the interpretation of music in a new setting.

What this localization entails specifically varies within the articles of this dissertation and, depending on the context, I have used different terms to describe this process. Apart from localization, I talk about recontextualization, reception, processes of hybridity and of a transnational musical dialogue. Mark Slobin (1993: 91) similarly, in his research on how marginal musics borrow elements from hegemonic standardized styles and performance practices, suggests that although some words are more suitable than others, no single term can cover all possible nuances and that it might be useful to use a larger vocabulary. Slobin (1993: 90) himself uses the concept of “domestication” to describe how music is “brought into the subculture from the superculture”. This process, however, relates mostly to how “codeswitching” (Slobin 1993) between different categories can be heard on recordings, in the sound and structure of the music itself. As my study is more concerned with context than text, Slobin’s (1993) conceptualization is not entirely applicable.

An important part of the globalization process is that people, particularly via digital technology, can participate to an increasing degree in cultures distant from them. As Toynbee & Dueck (2011: 3–5) note in the introduction to their edited anthology *Migrating Music*, in the contemporary period of globalization characterized particularly by increased global capitalism, music moves more quickly primarily as a result of the relocation of people and the rise of new communication technologies. My study concerns both the movement of people – as migrants, travellers and tourists – and the movement of recordings, mostly in digital format. Following Toynbee & Dueck (2011), I do not either subscribe to theories of globalization that suggest the development of global

cultural networks has been sudden and recent. Although the characteristics of musical movement has changed and is today more direct than before as a consequence of digital technologies, musicians and musical styles have always travelled.

It should also be noted that it is not my intent to equate musical cultures within the borders of nation states. Although socio-cultural conventions potentially enclosed within Finland's borders can affect music culture within them, the localization I am concerned with is more site and scene specific. Acknowledging, as Raymond Williams (1985: 87) notes, that "culture" is one of the most complicated words in the English language, I will not seek to determine concrete borders around what signifies a musical culture in this study. In broad terms, a musical culture is understood in my study as a set of customs, practices, meanings and values around a particular music. The locales under investigation here, where these different cultural elements meet, are particular genre communities in urban Finland and club spaces understood in broad terms, not confined to the physical place of the venue. Following Edgar & Sedgwick (2008: 82), who note that in cities people become especially aware of "culture" as they interact and exercise power to sustain their own values against assaults from others, I argue that these spaces are apt for investigating how practices, meanings and values around music migrate. However, it is not my aim to make universal claims with regards to a national Finnish culture outside of the material I have analyzed. In fact, to cite another anthology on the topic, according to Krüger & Trandafoiu (2014: 17), music can be the means by which people experience alterity and it has the potential to erect new hybrid spaces outside the impositions of nation-state culture and politics, which is what I claim the audiences in my cases to a large extent participate in.

Finally, the last and crucial aspect of localization in my study is how the interpretation of music in a new context also constructs an idea about the music in its original setting. As ethnomusicologist Martin Stokes notes in his seminal edited volume (1994b: 3–4), music is important in informing our sense of place and can provide means to renegotiate its hierarchies. A record collection can for example be used to transcend the limitations of physical place and construct trajectories across space (*ibid.*). Drawing on Anthony Giddens (1990), Stokes (1994b) suggests that this "relocation" through music is a particular consequence of the modern separation of space from place. The latter, referring to a physical setting situated geographically, has in modern times become "thoroughly penetrated by and shaped" (Giddens 1990: 19) by influences distant from it. This separation enables us, as Stokes (1994b: 3) notes, to construct a multitude of places through music that can be "quite idiosyncratic". With relation to the musical cultures I am studying in this dissertation, this also brings about aspects of postcolonialism and it should be acknowledged that discourses around music can also reproduce representations based on preconceived exoticized associations. As ethnomusicologist Johannes Brusila (2003: 167) suggests,

ideas of locality particularly within discourses of world music often follow what Edward Said (2003: 54–55) calls an “imaginative geography” that dramatizes distance and difference in order to intensify a sense of self.

3.3. Performance

The concept of performance has been the most significant instrument and analytical tool in my analysis. I will below discuss my use of the concept in four distinct ways; (1) as a general approach to conduct ethnomusicological and popular music research, (2) as a tool to analyze the context of DJ practices, (3) as a way of interpreting audience conduct and behaviour and (4) as a tool to interpret how meanings are constructed in the reiterations of performances.

Musical performances have often been a focus of ethnographic research in ethnomusicology. More than works and compositions, music is analyzed as it occurs in performance. As Pirkko Moisala (2013: 10) notes, ethnomusicological research seeks to understand music as a performance of not only sound, but also of culture taking into consideration the meanings and conventions associated with music making. Anthony Seeger’s (1987) musical anthropology has been particularly influential in this regard. Rather than understanding musical performances to represent cultural meanings according to Alan P. Merriam’s (1964) original theory of ethnomusicology, Seeger (1987: xiv) proposed that music is not only a part of social life, but that musical performances contribute to the “construction and interpretation of social and conceptual relationships and processes”. In other words, music not only reflects pre-defined meanings and values in society, but also participates in the creation of them. Whereas Seeger (1987) focused mostly on formal musical performances, other scholars have suggested that musical performance research should comprise, not only the actions that create the sound, but all moments that occur at the time of the performance. Marcia Herndon and Norma McLeod (1981: 46), for example, suggest that the study of performance should include “both performance practice and its contexts”.

Philip Auslander (2004) has designed a method for the analysis of performance practice and its context particularly with regards to popular music performance. Although Auslander (2004) suggests that recordings are legitimate objects for performance analysis, his model is restricted to the musicians that construct the recordings and the context around them. Nevertheless, I argue that Auslander’s model can be useful also in the analysis of the reproduction practice of recordings and its contexts. Auslander emphasises the need to include in a performance analysis the underlying rules and norms which we use to understand a performance, which I suggest is beneficial particularly with regards to DJ practices. According to Auslander (2004: 5), the experience of popular music performance derives not only from a direct sense of the musician’s physical actions that produce sound, but from a knowledge of different genre conventions and performance styles. Also, popular musicians perform

their star personalities largely through images in recordings, promotional material and various forms of media coverage (Auslander 2004: 9). Although the DJs in my research are not the kind of superstar DJs that would most aptly suit Auslander's description of popular music performers, the discursive and visual representations of the DJs' activities are critical to how audiences perceive their performances and events as a whole. As such, in analyzing the "performance persona" (Auslander 2004) of DJs, I have incorporated in my analysis a wide range of discursive and visual material and sought to identify relevant genre conventions and social norms that inform the performances.

Another tool from performance theory I employ to analyze the context of DJ performances is the concept of "framing", drawing particularly on Bauman (1975) and Bateson (1972). In his theory of folklore as a performance, Richard Bauman (1975) highlights the importance of studying how something is communicated, rather than analyzing in detail the communicated text as a fixed object. Framing is here understood as a form of metacommunication informing an audience about an occurring performance, enabling them to place it in its proper context. Similarly, according to anthropologist Gregory Bateson (1972: 188), framing is a way of giving instructions and aiding observers to understand a message included within the frame. Applying these approaches to popular music, Simon Frith (1998: 209), suggests that performance in this sense can be understood as "a way of standing back from content and considering form". In some of the DJ performances I analyze, I have made this distinction for analytical purposes by considering sound recordings as content and examining the other tasks of the DJ as a way of framing the performance, focusing particularly on the DJs' verbal communication with the audience.

However, I argue that a frame is also constructed within the content of a DJ performance in how songs are positioned against each other. The notion of a performative frame can be related to how genres function as musical categories. As Frith (1996: 89–91) notes, the appeal of a specific music culture cannot be detached from the appeal of an ideology, and a set of meanings attached to a genre. Liking a musical genre is about engaging in a taste community. By relating a piece of music to a genre, listeners are able to evaluate it by comparing it to a set of "genre rules" (Frith 1996). Similarly, DJ practices can be understood to construct a frame where individual recordings are interpreted within the context of a DJ set or a club concept. Indeed, as Frith (1996: 88) suggests, DJs have been more effective than journalists in "defining" new genres and markets. Perhaps one of the most famous examples is DJ Frankie Knuckles, who by mixing different musical styles and reconstructing old and new disco favourites contributed to the use of the term "house" music with reference to The Warehouse club where he performed in the late 1970s and early 1980s (see Rietveld 1998). As such, in the analysis of DJ performances, I maintain that we should not only consider relevant genre conventions, but also acknowledge how DJs create their own frames by rearranging music and construct their own

genre narratives, or taste communities.

In addition to investigating the DJs and the context of their events through the analytical lens of performance, I have also applied theories of performance in order to understand the audience's behaviour and the subversive power of the events. Here, I draw on performance theorist Richard Schechner's idea of "restored behaviour" (1985: 34), where behaviour is influenced or created as a process of repetition from a pre-existing performance model. According to Schechner (1985: 35), this model can be concealed or "distorted by myth and tradition", meaning that no accurate original source exists. Restored behaviour can in this sense be compared to the concept of performativity, as it has been discussed by Judith Butler (1990; 1993). In her influential work on gender, Butler (1990: 178) argues that gender as a category is constructed performatively as a "re-enactment" of "a set of meanings already socially established". As gender in this sense is citational, Butler (1993) also maintains how a gender act never precisely repeats an original source but both produces and destabilizes norms. I argue that people in their role as audience members, similarly, although in their behaviour they follow established social norms, are not repeating in precise detail an original source, but can subvert these conventions.

Regarding this subversive power of performance to construct reality, I employ in my research also Jacques Ehrmann's (1968) and Victor Turner's (1982) theories of play. As Ehrmann (1968: 56) suggests, play should not be measured against the background of a fixed reality; "Play, reality, culture are synonymous", and a "distinguishing quality of reality is that it is played". By taking various roles as patrons at a DJ performance, I conceptualize audiences as not merely stepping outside a reality, but through their playful engagement at the events also constructing a reality that has an impact outside the immediate performance space. The performance setting can in this regard be understood as a playful "liminoid" (Turner 1982: 47) site that consciously or by accident explores alternatives to existing conventional structures and contains the "germ of future social developments, of social change".

3.4. Cultural brokerage

Finally, I want to discuss the concept of cultural brokerage, which, although not explicitly discussed in all my articles, has remained an underlying theme in this dissertation as a whole. In my articles, I have also interchangeably used the notion of intermediation, depending on whom I have referred to. Although the concepts have been similarly used within different academic fields and although I draw equally on theorizations of both concepts, I have opted to use the term "cultural broker" as the overarching concept under investigation in my research due to its disciplinary affiliation, which resonates best with my own work. The concept of "cultural intermediation", which in academic discourse draws mostly on Pierre Bourdieu's (1984) pioneering work on the social stratification of taste, is today mostly used within economic sociology, whose

themes of “marketing” and “consumers” (see Matthews & Smith Maguire 2014) are quite distant from my ethnomusicologically oriented research. The contexts of “cultural brokerage” on the other hand, with its origin in postcolonial and cross-cultural anthropology (see Lindquist 2015) highlighting the performative skills of the broker, are more compatible with my own cases. Furthermore, as recent studies on cultural mediation both within sociology and anthropology have increasingly made use of actor network theory and my use of the concept also seeks to highlight the agency of the DJ, I wish to position my theorization in line with Bruno Latour’s (2005) influential work on the topic. In Latour’s (2005: 39) vocabulary, a “mediator” has the power to transform and translate meanings, whereas an “intermediary” merely transfers meanings without transformation. Although I do not make use of actor network theory, I acknowledge the distinction Latour makes between these concepts and align my own conceptualization here accordingly. With this background in mind, let us proceed to discuss these concepts in more detail.

In their introductory summary to a special issue on “cultural intermediaries in context” Jennifer Smith Maguire and Julian Matthews (2012: 552) outline three dimensions that characterize a contextual analysis of cultural intermediaries. These three dimensions – framing, expertise and impact – also resonate with my own conceptualization of cultural brokers, although the specific content differs somewhat from Smith Maguire & Matthews (2012) and in my model is more in consonance with the other theoretical themes of my research.

The first dimension, framing, relates in my research to the concept of performance. Here, I have focused more on the context of performance and similarly drawn on the notion of a frame within performance theory to analyze the environment of the brokered music. More specifically regarding strategies of brokerage as a form of framing, I am drawing on Christopher B. Steiner’s (1994) influential ethnography on the mechanisms of exchange that move art objects from Africa to the rest of the world. According to Steiner (1994) the cultural brokerage of art traders consists of the presentation, description and alternation of the objects, as well as a mediation of knowledge. All of the aspects of brokering are present in the DJ practices I am investigating, although to a lesser degree than in the work of Steiner’s art traders. Also, because DJs are not brokering single unique objects, but are concerned with the management of meaning on a more conceptual level, I maintain that these strategies can be abstract and that they often overlap.

The most significant mechanism of brokerage regarding framing in DJ practices is the mediation of knowledge, to which all the other aspects defined by Steiner (1994) contribute. Although music moves as a result of the new communication technologies more quickly than before and digital files can travel over long geographical distances instantaneously, knowledge about the music relocates less directly and, I would argue, requires a form of brokering sensitive to both the culture of origin and the destination. As Steiner (1994: 2) notes,

because the merchandise that the brokers trade is classified and evaluated through the Western concepts of art and authenticity, traders need to mediate and comment on a “broad spectrum of cultural knowledge”. Similarly DJs need to position the music they are brokering to meet local perceptions of music, or mediate new ontologies. Through their activities DJs are explicitly or implicitly communicating the role that performance and recordings have in the culture of origin. The reggae sound systems I analyze are for example not only relocating Jamaican music in their sets, but by using a particular performance form they are also communicating a particular ontology related to the music’s original context.

In order to successfully facilitate this mediation of knowledge, and have any influence on the local audience and culture, the brokers need to be perceived as professionals and embody a certain “expertise” (Smith Maguire & Matthews 2012). This relates both to acquired professional skills and to more subjective personal dispositions, although these components often intertwine (Smith Maguire & Matthews 2012: 556). An important aspect of the personal disposition is ethnicity. In my article about Afro-Cuban DJ and performing artist Norlan, I discuss how audiences find his ethnicity to be an important indicator of competence. Obviously, ethnicity in itself does not in any way equal actual expertise. It is, however, a visible trait that audiences perceive to symbolize an authentic cultural knowledge. Other personal and embodied dispositions that communicate expertise are language and movement, exemplified both in the work of Norlan and in reggae DJs who use Jamaican vernacular.

These last traits also border on professional skills, which in my cases are acquired in a variety of ways. Each musical culture investigated in my study value a different set of skills, which can also be conceptualized as the “cultural capital” (Bourdieu 1984) of the performers. In earlier research on these kinds of cross-cultural encounters, the act of travelling to the original location of the source culture has been emphasized as an important way of obtaining expertise (Sterling 2010). Although travelling is often perceived by audiences and the peer community of DJs in Finland as a form of capital, it should also be recognized that this is not always backed by complete consensus in the local community, as the conditions for the musical culture are negotiated among the local audience. As my analysis of a reggae audience’s online discussions reveal, a part of the audience can react against the idea that there is a group of people who supposedly know better how reggae should be experienced because they have encountered the culture in Jamaica.

Finally, following Smith Maguire & Matthews’ (2012) dimensions of cultural intermediation, I want to discuss impact, which in my research also relates to the concept of localization. Whereas I earlier theorized the process of movement in time and space and the reflexive relationship between the origin of the music and a new destination where it is placed, here, I wish to present how I have conceptualized the impact of this localization. Similarly to the studies in

Smith Maguire & Matthews' (2012) special issue on "cultural intermediaries in context", the DJs in my research have little agency in influencing the primary producers of the culture they seek to localize, although they can provide direct working opportunities by commissioning records directly from artists and, as part of larger international networks of DJs and promoters, influence which artist and what music receives larger global recognition. The most significant impact I am interested in is how they locally construct "categories of cultural legitimacy" (Smith Maguire & Matthews 2012: 558), meaning, how the culture they seek to promote is made acceptable and reasonable in the new context it is relocated to. This does not necessarily relate to the "success" (Smith Maguire & Matthews 2012: 558) of the brokers. The immediate goals of the DJs as performers and promoters are well-attended events, which will direct the effects that the activities will have. The DJs may seek an intended impact on how they want the culture they are mediating to be perceived in the local context, yet, as there are many factors involved in this process, the outcome can be something different from their original intention.

According to Steiner (1994: 156), the images of African art that African art traders fashion are constrained by the buyers' preconceived assumptions of what is being bought. Rather than creating a demand, brokers are here satisfying demand (Steiner 1994: 156). Although Steiner's statement is not directly applicable to DJ practices, the DJs in my research need to adapt their activities to a local demand and in doing so follow prevailing narratives about the music they are mediating. Jo Haynes (2005), who has studied the world music industry, suggests that although they challenge normative racialized identities, it is also in the interest of intermediaries within the industry to maintain a binary logic of cultural categories. This normally means a division between the "West and the rest" (Haynes 2005: 372), in order to portray world music as authentic and real. Similarly, in order to stay relevant, DJs, perhaps unconsciously, manage and maintain a difference to the culture they are mediating. As Steiner (1994: 130) notes, "the success of the middleman demands the separation of buyers from sellers".

This "moral ambiguity", as Deborah James (2011: 319) notes in her study on South African land reform, has been present many decades in scholarly discussions on brokerage. The risk here, as Keith Negus (2002) maintains, is that focusing on intermediaries reproduces rather than bridges the distance between production and consumption. In defining my research subjects as cultural brokers, there is an assumed bridge to be crossed between two categories. To avoid this, I have been mindful in my analysis about deconstructing binary categorization that informs the music under investigation and incorporating historical perspectives on the complexities behind these categories. Also, in my use of the concept of brokerage, I seek to highlight how new categories of cultural identity and authenticity are constructed. As Johan Lindquist (2015: 872) suggests in his encyclopaedia entry on cultural brokerage within anthropology, there is

a recognition that brokers are not solely mediating between existing cultures, but are active in “producing and encapsulating cultural authenticity”. James (2011: 318) similarly maintains that new forms of identification are produced when brokers mediate between “old ones”. DJs, similarly, have the potential to construct new musical categories as they mediate between cultures, as I have already stated with regards to the notion of framing.

4. Methods and materials

In some universities, particularly in the U.S., there tends to be clearly defined borders between musicology and ethnomusicology. In Finland, however, this difference has been far less significant. As professor of ethnomusicology at Helsinki University Pirkko Moisala (2013: 10, 19–20) suggests, the subjects of musicology and ethnomusicology can be considered different disciplines in terms of their historical development, research interests and methods, but they have also grown increasingly closer to each other, particularly in Finland where they have often been united under the same educational structures and programmes.

My institutional base, the subject of musicology at Åbo Akademi University (ÅAU), represents such a programme, where this kind of distinction has not been made – musicology at ÅAU has signified for me music research in broad terms. Already during my master’s studies, I became acquainted with a variety of tools ranging from traditional music analysis to historical methods and ethnomusicological fieldwork. As I proceeded to pursue a doctoral degree within the Doctoral Programme for Music Research in Finland (or MuTo, *Musiikintutkimuksen valtakunnallinen tohtorihjelma*), I was again exposed to a multitude of approaches. In MuTo, I shared classrooms and seminars not only with musicologists and ethnomusicologists, but also with historians, folklorists, scholars of comparative religion, as well as performing artists and music educators. This background is reflected in my methodological strategy, which has not been to distinguish between academic disciplines or limit myself to a single type of material due to a disciplinary allegiance. Rather, I have sought to apply methods and collected material that best serve to answer my research questions, regardless of any particular research tradition.

Although the multidisciplinary environment of music research in Finland is reflected in my choices of methods, my research has a more particular affiliation with the research tradition of popular music studies, as described earlier. Furthermore, as a popular music scholar oriented more towards contextual analysis, as opposed to text analysis (see Johnson & Cloonan 2009: 5), the methods in this study are mostly built around ethnography and also adhere in this sense to ethnomusicological research. Below, I will first discuss ethnography in broader terms and how I have conceptualized my field research to support my research question. I will then proceed to discuss my material in detail and how the data has been collected and analyzed. Throughout the discussion, I will also be reflecting on research ethical issues.

4.1. Popular music ethnography

Although I seek in my ethnography to interpret meanings behind the cultures under investigation, my research also goes beyond the form of “thick description” (Geertz 1973) favoured in traditional ethnomusicology. First of all, the

compilation dissertation format where each chapter of analysis is also a peer reviewed research article, does not offer sufficient space for densely detailed ethnographic descriptions. Each article will only contain the most relevant descriptions required for the analysis at hand. Secondly, whereas Geertz's (1973) thick description relies mostly on the researcher's own interpretations, I have sought to make the voice of my interlocutors and other representatives heard by including direct citations and references in my analysis (see also Titon 2003). Thirdly, while interpreting ethnographic experience is important in itself, interpretations become even more valuable when they are connected to theory. An "interrelation of theory and description", as Sara Cohen (1993: 133) notes, can add complexity and provide the research with more interpretative power. This interrelation of theory and description also serves my purpose of investigating several different contexts of DJ practices within varying genres. As I am more concerned with exploring a set of conceptual questions, than with describing and interpreting the particularities of one specific setting, linking the various contexts together with coherent theoretical analysis is pertinent. Also, as Clifford Geertz (1973: 29) points out, "[c]ultural analysis is intrinsically incomplete". Rather than striving towards an unattainable complete description of one musical community, I argue that it is more constructive to confine the research with more specific theoretical questions.

This attention to theory is also a way to avoid the methodological trap of defining through description a discrete musical culture where it does not necessarily exist. As Stokes (1994b: 1) notes, as a reaction to anthropology's neglect of music, ethnomusicologists have tended to overstate the significance of music and presented social worlds where "nothing exists outside of an overarching definitions of music". Similarly, Will Straw (1991) points out how this prominence of cultural totality and locality in ethnomusicology has also partly been maintained in popular music sociology as a reaction against a perceived disruptive economic globalization.

Having said that, and although I am not observing a discrete musical community, as my experience from "the field" is transformed into ethnographic text, I acknowledge that the field becomes a "metaphorical creation", as Timothy Rice (2008: 48) describes it. Whereas ethnomusicology in its early incarnations was mostly focused on the observation and collecting of material, increasingly more attention has been paid to the writing process. Fieldwork, as Jeff Todd Titon (2008: 25) suggests, is no longer viewed as observing and collecting, but as experiencing and understanding music. Following Michelle Kisliuk (2008), in this line of thought, I prefer to use the term "field research" over "fieldwork", because my study does not follow to the traditional ethnomusicological model of spending a long period in a remote location. Also, the actual field research, understood as observations and interviews, is only part of my ethnographic work. As ethnomusicologists Gregory Barz and Timothy Cooley (2008: 13–14), suggest, after recent fundamental structural changes in ethno-

graphic fieldwork, time spent in the field has often been extended digitally and as travel has become easier, “the field” can be visited over a course of several shorter visits. With this background in mind, I now want to turn to my empirical material, through which I will also discuss my methods in more detail.

4.2. Field research and interviews

In the process of this dissertation, I have drawn on a wide range of different empirical material, including interviews with DJs and promoters, observational field research in nightclubs, media discourses, artists’ promotional material, individual recordings and set lists from DJ performances. Additionally, one of my case studies revolves explicitly around the analysis of a single recording and another case study contains a music video analysis. This strategy of using different type of material, known as triangulation, has the benefit of providing different “angles” to the analysis (see, for example, Fielding & Fielding 2011). Relating to different sorts of data can also, as Hammersley & Atkinson (1983: 199) suggest, counteract threats to the validity of the analysis.

The primary source of empirical material in my research are naturally the DJs’ performances and the discourses that surround them. It should be noted that even before I started to work on this dissertation project, I had participated as an audience member in several reggae sound system performances in Finland, and as a DJ myself, I also performed with some of the interlocutors before and during the study. Although these occasions are not part of my analysis, they have influenced my perception of the cultures under investigation. They have also been important opportunities in building alliances within the local scene and gaining trust among fellow DJs in my role as a researcher. In this regard, my ethnography can be defined as “insider research” (Hodkinson 2005), as I have not had to spend a long period of time during my research gaining the trust that an ethnographic study requires. However, as Paul Hodkinson (2005: 132) suggests, although insider research can have significant benefits, it is far from automatic. Conducting ethnography with an initial cultural proximity also demands caution and awareness of this position, as well as an ongoing reflexivity (Hodkinson 2005).

The most significant risk I was required to take into account as an “insider” was my ability to disconnect from the perspectives of the participants and assume a “critical distance” (Bennett 2002: 457) to their ideologies. The risk here was also taking too much for granted and not being able to ask some of the most critical questions. My exact level of proximity, however, varied significantly from one respondent to the next, which required me to continually assess my position and adjust my behaviour accordingly. I also consciously sought to ask many elementary questions, framing them to respondents as obvious and for the purpose of my research. A method of triangulation was also beneficial here, as my arguments were supported from several perspectives. Also, as Hodkinson (2005: 144) notes, prior knowledge of the studied cultures afforded

me a significant pool of material, which I could compare and contrast with my field experiences.

Notwithstanding these unofficial prior relations, for this study I have formally conducted observations documented in field notes in two of my articles. For article IV, I mostly observed the work of the DJ, focusing on the repertoire of music. At the We Love Helsinki events studied in article III, I was not only witnessing the DJs' performances but conducting participant observation through couples dancing, during which I could also engage in small conversations with my dance partners. Although I did not document all of my informal conversations at the events, they were significant as experiences of being immersed in the social world of the events. As people at these events were celebrating a national holiday, this immersion also included socialising with people who were experiencing some form of intoxication. I mostly restrained myself from using substances in order to maintain an analytical awareness, but I also noticed to my surprise how I could nevertheless be carried away by the atmosphere of the events.

Scholars have approached the issue of legal and illegal substance use in very different manners. Rarely, however, as Bennett (2002) notes, for example in popular music and youth research with much attempt to reflect on the effects the experience has on the research process itself. Thornton (1995), for example, in her influential study on UK club cultures does not problematize her experience of taking Ecstasy beyond the mention of "experimenting in the name of thorough research". As no research ethics statement provides an exhaustive set of guidelines on the topic, researchers have to apply ethical considerations accordingly in each instance (see for example Kaufman Shelemay 2013). Although field research around intoxicated people can in some instances be considered exploitation of sensitive participants, I argue that in the context of my research, alcohol consumption was a mundane activity that did not position my informants as particularly delicate. As Moore (2003: 145) notes with regards to research on drug use, there is no inherent social danger in substances themselves, but it is always a "profoundly cultural matter". What is accepted and normal substance use in one context can be something completely different in another. Also, unlike Moore (2003), who opted to conceal her identity as a researcher in order to gain better access to the drug use of clubbers – a practice of questionable ethics – I stated my intent and position as a researcher every time I engaged in a longer conversation with an audience member. My research was also always met with enthusiasm among the participants. I have described some of these experiences in my field notes, although I did not get an opportunity to analyze them explicitly in my articles.

In addition to these informal talks, I have also conducted planned, recorded or otherwise documented interviews with the key people in my ethnographic fields. These interviews have, despite their informal character, according to standard field research methods (see Burgess 1984: 83) followed a set of pre-

agreed themes and topics. In comparison to more structured formal questionnaires, unstructured or semi-structured interviews are often, as Robert G. Burgess (1984: 87) notes in his handbook of field research, rarely conducted in isolation, but form part of a broader programme of research that draws on other knowledge in a particular social situation. My semi-structured interviews should also be understood in this regard. Although the interviews have been critical for my study, they are not the sole empirical material, but rather a forum through which I have had the opportunity to discuss and compare my own observations from the field with the performers and organizers themselves.

I started working on my dissertation in January 2012, but the first interviews used in this study had already been conducted as part of my master's thesis between 2008 and 2010, when I talked with six reggae sound system operators and promoters on five different occasions. Subsequent interviews for this dissertation were not done until four years later in 2014, after I had completed my participant observations at the We Love Helsinki events. At this time, after having observed and acquired a great deal of material through field observations, I interviewed five DJs affiliated with the events, including the event promoter. In 2015 for article II, I made use of one of my early master's thesis interviews from 2008, in addition to which I corresponded via e-mail with two additional sound system operators who were involved in the investigated case. Finally, in June 2015 for my last article, I interviewed Norlan and his manager wife Satu, which I also followed up via e-mail with some questions that needed clarification. Altogether thirteen people were interviewed on eleven occasions, with three additional e-mail conversations. I consider this number of interviews sufficient, due to my use of other research material, my knowledge of the scene and my prior relationship to many of the interviewees. In a short amount of time I could get to my specific interests, without having to spend much time establishing rapport.

All interviews apart from one were audio recorded and transcribed verbatim for easier analysis and overview. In one of my master's study interviews that was conducted at short notice, I typed notes on my laptop, which I completed directly after the interview. All interviews were conducted in Finnish, apart from the interview with Norlan and Satu, which was conducted in Finnish, English and Spanish. Although I could understand most of Norlan's Spanish responses in the interview situation, his Cuban accent was for me as a non-native speaker difficult to comprehend in detail and, in the process of transcribing our conversation, I consulted some friends with a better knowledge of Spanish.

All the interviews and field notes are archived at the Sibelius Museum in Turku, Finland (Sm Fält 0013, Sm Fält 0014).

4.3. Media, social media and audio-visual material

All my articles include some kind of media analysis of printed or online media. As anthropologists have often emphasized, the ethnographic method requires

thorough contextualization (see for example Thomas Hylland Eriksen 2004: 49). However, the contextualization of the performances has not only been a methodological challenge for me, but part of my main research question about how music is relocated and contextualized in a new setting. As such, the field research and its context have for me been mutually dependent and equally important materials. The media analysis has not only provided a context for my ethnographic accounts – the field research can also equally be understood to have provided insider insights into a larger context analysis.

In article I, I drew exclusively on online material for an audience perspective. Although subsequently a lot of virtual socializing has moved to Facebook's social media platform, during the period of this research 2009–2010, the most relevant and active virtual forum for reggae fans in Finland was the Fi-reggae.com message board. In articles III and IV, I make extensive use of Facebook pages, events and discussions where DJs and audiences interact. This kind of online ethnography or netnography can, as Kozinets (2010: 37) notes, reveal nuances in pursuit of understanding existing cultures and communities. At the same time, as ethnographers can remain relatively covert online, this demands a particular sensitivity regarding ethical issues, such as consent and anonymity (Murthy 2008: 839–841). Although I recognized many of the real people behind the online identities on the Fi-reggae forum, I chose to respect the anonymity of the virtual personalities. Similarly, although most people use their real name on Facebook, I have chosen to anonymize them. This is also partly because one conversation that I analyzed in more detail, was subsequently deleted by the original poster, implying that the user did not want to be associated with the debate.

In addition to online social media, I have analyzed a variety of printed and online newspapers and magazines. The most cited media in my research is *Helsingin Sanomat*, which as the largest newspaper in Finland fairly well represents the nation's public discourses. Other cited media include the local and smaller newspapers *Satakunnan Kansa*, *Metro*, *Hufvudstadsbladet*, *Kirkko & Kaupunki*, the tabloid paper *Iltalehti*, and the magazines *Finnish Music Quarterly*, *The Wire*, *Cluster Mag* and *Suomen Kuvalehti*, where issues of popular culture and/or music are discussed. Apart from these media cited in my work, the research process has involved browsing through many additional sources at the Sibelius Museum, Music Archive Finland, the National Library of Finland, as well as Cuban and Jamaican online newspapers that I do not explicitly refer to in my articles. Although I have not explicitly stated that I am conducting discourse analysis, my method of analyzing this material draws on Laclau & Mouffe's (1985) model of discourse analysis. Adhering to the language from performance theory and folkloristics, I have talked about narratives more than discourses, which essentially implies a similar presumption of a discursive construction of social knowledge.

Finally, all of the case studies contain some form of audio or video mate-

rial. Most of this material is analyzed in relation to its context and I have here also sought to identify larger narratives or discourses. I also want to single out article III, which is mostly a media analysis of one particular sound recording. In this study, the sound recording and its various media adaptations provide an entry point into a transnational musical dialogue between the recordings origin of production and its subsequent reception in Finland. As most of my audio and visual analysis use the material as this kind of entry points, I have opted not to transcribe the music and only refer to the music's structures in writing.

5. Summaries of the four substudies

5.1. Article I

In article I, I study how the particular performance practices associated with the Jamaican dancehalls that gave birth to reggae music can be considered to have contributed to the localization of the music in Finland. At the core of this culture is the concept of the sound system, which in its essence consists of a DJ, or selector, who selects the recordings to play, and an MC (master of ceremonies), who during a performance mostly through verbal communication seeks to interact with the audience and socialize the event in various ways. Traditionally in Jamaica and its diaspora, the customized sound equipment and speaker systems of each sound system have been material in their appeal to the audience. Although some sound systems in Finland maintain and operate their own elaborate speaker systems (see Järvenpää 2014), this study is concerned with sound system selectors and MCs as performers, with their cultural capital and their repertoire of music. In mapping this localization process in Finland, I draw on digital ethnographic material from audience discussions on an online reggae platform and on interviews with sound system DJs, MCs and promoters.

Employing Richard Bauman's theory of framing in folklore, I focus mostly on the MCs' use of both Jamaican English expressions and the Finnish language as a strategy to excite and guide the audience. Two aspects of Bauman's concept of framing are useful here. First, Bauman (1975: 295) maintains that framing is about employing "culturally conventionalized metacommunication" informing the audience how to interpret the text being communicated. Relevant for my article is how a "culturally conventionalized" form is transferrable to a different context or culture. Secondly, according to Bauman (1975: 297), verbal art as an interpretative frame can vary in intensity. Although art is normally conceived as an either-or phenomenon, "something either is or is not art", conceived as a performance, "in terms of an interpretive frame, verbal art may be culturally defined as varying in intensity as well as range" (Bauman 1975: 297). Here, Finnish MCs have to find a balance between a local everyday conversational style of performance and an imported Jamaican "richly expressive dramatic performance of everyday" (Henriques 2011: 8).

Some of the Jamaican expressions used by the MCs can seem superimposed when coming from white Finns. However, as Frith (1998: 209) notes, the speaking behaviour of African-American and African-Caribbean communities have been the most "significant linguistic source of performing conventions" for contemporary popular music. The ubiquity of these linguistic forms in urban popular culture have also made them familiar to the non-Anglophone audiences in Finland. Still, their absence in everyday Finnish speech emphasizes the performative aspect in the spectrum of intensity that Bauman discerns between conversational speech and performance. Whereas a performance in the Finnish language is easier to approach for a local audience that is not familiar

with the original Jamaican sound system culture, an English performance filled with expressions from the source culture requires an audience that appreciates the performance as part of its original performance context. Although the institution of the sound system did not become recognized in Finland until the culture was introduced to audiences in Finnish, as audiences have progressively become more familiar with the performance form, English has become the preferred language for MCs.

In analyzing the adaptation of the sound system performance form, I suggest that a particular ontological understanding of reggae is also localized in Finland. Tracing its historical development in Jamaica, I define this narrative of reggae as a primarily sound system derived culture as the “dancehall continuum”. I draw here on Reynolds’ (2009) description of the evolution of a musical continuum, where a particular sociocultural context gives rise to a variety of different musical styles. Although the formal and technical “genre rules” (Fabbri 1982) have changed within the dancehall continuum over the years since the emergence of sound systems, the music shares social and behavioural rules and a particular ontology of music. I contrast this localization of the dancehall continuum with how reggae initially arrived to Finland, as sonically and ideologically adapted to the global music industry.

I argue in the article that compared to the industrial dissemination of reggae outside Jamaica and its diaspora, the grass roots localization taking place in sound system performances engages the audience more effectively to participate in the creation of a local narrative about the culture. The music is filtered through the sound systems who together with the audience negotiate a local adaptation of sound system culture and dancehall reggae music in Finland. The performance of local sound systems in Finland is not about representing a replication of Jamaican dancehall culture, but about presenting the audience with an abstraction or an idea about the brokered culture and constructing a unique narrative about it on location.

5.2. Article II

Article II also deals with reggae DJ performance practices. More specifically, the study discusses the production and circulation of customized recordings called “dubplate specials”, which are already briefly considered in article I. A dubplate special is a customized one-off recording where, typically, a reggae artist is hired to re-record the vocals to one of his or her popular songs on the same instrumental backing track, but with new lyrics that praise the sound system that has commissioned the recording. Dubplates have traditionally been pressed on acetate discs, an intermediary format in the process of vinyl mass-production that only lasts a total of some fifty plays. Today, customized dubplate specials are recorded and performed using both analogue and digital technologies, and can be heard across the globe in sound system performances and mixtapes, personalizing the musical repertoire amidst otherwise fixed

commercially available recordings. The aim of the article is to conceptualize dubplate specials in a transnational musical dialogue between their origin of production in Jamaica and consequent reception in Finland. This goal is furthered through the analysis of one particular dubplate special of Jamaican reggae singer Max Romeo's song "Chase the Devil", commissioned by the Finnish MPV sound system in 2005.

Scholars have previously theorized dubplates using Walter Benjamin's (2007b) concept of aura, drawing attention to the exclusivity and uniqueness of these traditionally analogue recordings. However, considering the ambivalence of Benjamin's concept, I argue that merely suggesting that dubplate specials possess an aura does not present a sufficient conceptualization of the complex process of "mediatization" (Auslander 2008) involved in the production and reception of the recordings. In the article, I critically evaluate the application of aura as an analytical tool to conceptualize dubplate recordings and performance practices in international reggae sound system culture. What, exactly, does it mean to suggest that dubplate specials encompass a Benjaminian aura? Does the concept of aura have a similar meaning for sound system culture in Jamaica as it does in Finland, where an additional element of cultural brokerage is involved? By assessing the relevance of the concept of aura here, I provide new perspectives on a practice that has largely been neglected as a subject of research, and develop new theorizations around the concept.

Following both Benjamin's (2007b) original essay and various scholars' interpretations and applications (Assman and Assman 2003; Auslander 2008; Baecker 2003; Bolter and Grusin 2000; Hennion and Latour 2003), I discern three distinct aspects ascribed to aura – distance, cult value and originality – which serve as analytical tools in the article. My study shows, first, that understanding the aura of dubplate specials as a feature of distance is multi-layered and somewhat contradictory. While dubplates can reduce the distance between Finnish audiences and reggae culture in Jamaica, as a medium, dubplate specials have a distant material feature. Although MPV's "Chase the Devil" dubplate special exists primarily as an infinitely reproducible digital recording, I argue that the dubplate is in all of its various media adaptations treated essentially as a "remediation" (Bolter & Grusin 2000) of the dubplate's historical medium, as if each performance degrades the aesthetic value of the recording, as it would the material existence of an acetate disc.

Secondly, the ritual function that dubplates are mostly associated with is the "sound clash", where sound systems seek through their customized recordings to differentiate themselves from their opponents. The lyrics in the dubplate studied in my article are also altered to function in a competition against rivaling sound systems. However, a dubplate's cult value as "ammunition" in a sound clash does not solely derive from its customization and uniqueness. Drawing on sociologist Dirk Baecker's (2003) interpretation of Benjamin, I argue that the existence of commercially available versions that listeners are al-

ready familiar with enables the dubplate special's cult value in a sound clash. As Baecker (2003: 12) suggests "cult value essentially depends upon repetition".

Finally, in evaluating the originality of the dubplate, I maintain that a comparison cannot be made between a dubplate special and its commercial version. Rather, if a dubplate special can be identified as original in comparison with similar dubplates commissioned by other sound systems, only then can audiences arguably experience a sense of its aura. What is original in MPV's dubplate special, compared to other sound systems' similar specials, is that it has been commissioned by this particular sound system. Whereas MPV can be experienced as auratic through the dubplate they have commissioned, the process also works in the other direction – a dubplate special is original by its exclusive association with that particular sound system. We find ourselves here, in Auslander's words, in a "dialectical tension" (2008: 97), where the performances are perceived as auratic through the dubplate special while, at the same time, the dubplate special derives its originality from its exclusive association with MPV and the performance setting the sound system facilitates.

5.3. Article III

My third article explores Finnish *iskelmä* music (schlager, Finnish light popular song) and the associated pavilion dance culture as a retro phenomenon in an urban nightclub environment at the We Love Helsinki (WLH) events. Instead of live dance bands that have traditionally performed at the dance pavilions, DJs at the WLH events are responsible for performing old Finnish *iskelmä* music on record. A large part of the audience dresses up for the events – men in period style suits and women in long floral dresses. In the article I explore the DJs' strategies in recontextualizing *iskelmä* music into this new club environment and I discuss how the nostalgia for the music and culture is actualized in audience behaviour. The article is based on observational field research at four WLH events and on semi-structured interviews with the organiser and other DJs at the events. The field research is contextualized with additional analysis of media coverage of the events and material from WLH-managed Facebook pages. Theoretically, the article draws on tools from performance theory (Bateson 1972, Bauman 1975, Ehrmann 1968, Schechner 1985; 1990; 2003) and on the concept of nostalgia, as it has been discussed by Boym (2001) and Reynolds (2011).

Drawing on Bateson (1972: 188), I argue that the concept of *iskelmä* can be considered to "frame" the events, giving the audience "instructions" and aiding them to understand the content included within that frame. Moreover, within this larger frame, the DJs' verbal communication can be considered "frames within frames" (Bateson 1972: 188) that provide additional information about how the audience should approach the events. I discern four distinct themes in the DJs' work that contribute to the framing of the events. These are (1) creating conceptual connections intertextually across the selections within the

musical repertoire and contextually between the music and the spatial and temporal conditions of the events, (2) the symbolic legitimisation of the musical repertoire, which communicates a justification of the choice of music. Finally, the last two metacommunicative frames are about (3) creating a sense of community among the audience members through call and response, and (4) inciting a pursuit of romance and encouraging people to seek a partner.

This last aspect particularly has become a characteristic feature of the events. As the DJs seek to lower the threshold for dancing, they inadvertently or explicitly also encourage romance among the audience members. This incitement to romance can be understood in terms of Bateson's (1972) play theory. According to Bateson (1972: 180), for the phenomenon play to occur, participants should to some degree be able to exchange signals that carry the message "this is play". I argue that dancing at the We Love Helsinki events can be understood as playful signals that denote the pursuit of romance. The ambiguity of dancing makes it an apt activity to meet somebody without stating an explicit romantic desire. DJs increase this ambiguity by legitimising the musical repertoire, its romantic messages and connecting the music to the performance setting. As such, the DJs emphasise the possibility of romantic pursuit but do not place any expectations or demands, as it is all part of the play.

As the romantic content of the *iskelmä* records is actualized at the events, the audience also engages in a form of role-playing. The most visible aspect of this is dressing up for the events. Drawing on Schechner (1985; 1990; 2003), I argue that through their behaviour the audience is restoring a nostalgized conception of the Finnish pavilion dance patron, and reaffirming the myth of a time when men were "gentlemen" and women were "ladies". This revisiting of traditional gendered behaviour idealises women who conform to feminine norms. Although I argue that the roles are accepted in this context because most people involved are conscious of an element of play and performance that the setting evokes, not everybody is comfortable in assuming these roles. Audience members can to a varying degree be involved in the performance of restoring the source culture of *iskelmä* and pavilion dances, and participants interpret its values differently depending on how much they are involved in the play.

In conclusion, I argue that the audience behaviour should not merely be seen as a performance outside reality. Following Jacques Ehrmann (1968: 33), I maintain that play and reality are not opposing mutually exclusive categories. Through their playful engagement and performance at the events, the audience is also constructing a reality that has an impact outside the immediate performance space of the WLH events.

5.4. Article IV

In the last article, I investigate a Cuban DJ and recording artist who has been working in Finland for the ten years. Norlan Santana Leygonier, known also by

the epithet “El Misionario” (=the missionary), has actively sought to promote what he defines as “Latin” music in Finland, but both his own productions and DJ sets are also characterized by a particular hybridity. In his recordings, associated mostly with the Spanish Caribbean reggaeton genre, Norlan frequently references the Latin American carnival tradition, various Finnish rock icons and recent African dance trends. A similar fusion of styles can also be heard in his DJ sets, particularly at the “Sauna Caliente” (hot sauna) events, he was inspired to create based on his song with the same name. Considering the melange of musical styles, cultural references and discourses regarding aesthetic categories, Norlan’s work presents a unique case for investigating the widely debated concept of hybridity. Although several recent studies on the globalization of music have been critical towards the use of hybridity as a musical label (see Taylor 2004; Silverman 2014), as a theoretical concept, hybridity has the power to “question what appears natural and complete, to problematize naturalized boundaries” (Kuortti & Nyman 2007: 11).

Following Homi K. Bhabha’s (1994) theorization of hybridity, the main research question the article seeks to answer is how formations of hybridity in Norlan’s work are positioned against essentialist discourses of music as authentic, genuine and connected to specific locations and traditions. This question is studied with reference to Norlan’s “Sauna Caliente” club concept, recording and music video, drawing on ethnography and netnography from events, media texts and promotional material. The empirical material is, in accordance with Auslander’s (2004) methodological approach, analyzed as elements that construct Norlan’s “performance persona”. As such, a significant part of the analysis in my article is about positioning the material within relevant socio-cultural and genre norms that inform Norlan’s performances and influence his reception among audiences. Since Norlan is identifying as an ambassador of “Latin” music, I refer here particularly to studies on Cuban and Latin American music to contextualize the analysis.

I also assume a critical position towards earlier Finnish music historiography about popular music from Latin America that has been concerned with how directly the music is mediated to Finland and the accuracy of the representations of the music. What has often been left out of the equation is the “cross-pollination” (Marcuzzi 2013: 124) of music in the Americas. To understand the genre conventions that inform Norlan’s performance persona, we need to consider the musical dialogue between the Spanish Caribbean and the U.S, which is particularly significant in relation to the reggaeton genre that Norlan mostly associates with.

In my analysis of Norlan’s “Sauna Caliente” recording and music video, I identify exoticizing discourses of both the “Tropics” and the “North”, theorised respectively through the concepts of “Tropicalism” (Aparicio & Chávez-Silverman 1997) and “Borealism” (Kjartansdóttir & Schram 2013). I argue that the sauna is in several ways a manifestation of “Borealism” via its association

with nudity and nature, the extreme heat and the toughness one ostensibly needs to endure it. As Norlan is portrayed in the media as a sauna loving Cuban, while the lewd sexuality of his music is simultaneously questioned, representations of both Tropicalism and Borealism are simultaneously at play. The subtext is that Norlan might be a strange foreigner from an exotic location, but Finns are also exotic in their own way.

At the same time, the music and its accompanying video also problematize naturalized boundaries between cultures, creating new meanings around the Finnish cultural symbol of the sauna and compelling the audiences to rethink the culture that surrounds them. As the “Sauna Caliente” song introduced Norlan to a broader audience in Finland, I argue that it has also subsequently influenced audiences perception of his performances. The Sauna Caliente club concept draws on the aesthetics of the music video for the song, implying also a conceptual affinity in terms of the blend of musical cultures. Through the strategic use of the concepts of “exotic” and “urban” as descriptions for the club concept, Norlan aims to introduce “Latin” music to a mainstream club audience in Finland. “Latin” music is rendered familiar via its association with the U.S. mainstream, but also authentic as a representation of a new form of urban culture. Positioning the club as “urban” also emphasizes Norlan’s background as a rapper and foregrounds his verbal commentary during the club events. Rather than focusing on strict DJ practices, Norlan seeks through this performance style to create a welcoming atmosphere among the audience members and create an inclusive atmosphere where immigrant identities can be celebrated. Although it would be incorrect to define the club space in itself as a hybrid “third space” (Bhabha 1994), Norlan has the potential to instigate change through the Sauna Caliente club concept.

6. Conclusions and discussion

The overarching aim of this study has been to explore how recorded music travelling across time and space through various DJ practices is localized into a new socio-cultural environment in Finland. This main objective has been studied in four separate research articles, each with a specific theme and set of sub-questions. Articles I and II deal with reggae sound system practices, exploring the performance form, customized recordings, cultural capital of the performers and the narrative about dancehall reggae that is localized in Finland through sound system activities. In article III, I study the traditional Finnish *iskelmä* music and the associated pavilion dance culture as a performative resource in the We Love Helsinki (WLH) events. In this article, I am concerned with the DJs' strategies to engage with the audience at the events and to contextualize *iskelmä* music into a new urban nightclub environment. In the last case study, article IV, I discuss Cuban DJ and artist Norlan as an ambassador of "Latin" music in Finland by analyzing both his own music productions and his DJ sets.

In this last chapter of the introduction to my dissertation, I will summarize the main results of these cases with regards to the research questions presented in chapter 1 and discuss how each case has contributed to the main goals of my research and to the fields of DJ research and popular music studies in general.

6.1. Sound recordings and musical ontologies

One of the aims of my research has been to explore the role of discrete recordings in the mediation of musical cultures through DJ practices. My research shows how the function of records as a medium is under constant negotiation as they are positioned within different DJ performances and club concepts. Contrary to how sound recordings have been discussed within the philosophy of music as actualizations or representations of discrete works and performances, in club cultures it is essential to consider how records are reproduced and embedded into performances and the work of DJs.

I have explored the function of records most explicitly in articles I and II, where I discuss reggae sound systems practices. The long tradition and significant global impact of the Jamaican sound system practice makes it well suited to exploring how records are integrated into DJ performances. By using the sound system performance form, local actors also communicate to audiences in Finland a particular ontology of the music, and records in particular. When reggae initially reached a larger audience outside Jamaica and its diaspora, it needed to diverge from its inherent musical ontology revolving around the live performance of recorded music and adapt to the dominating genre ideologies of the global music industry. This included maintaining a distinction between the live performances of bands as collective audience experiences and recorded

albums as objects intended for isolated, domestic, private listening. I argue that sound system practices in Finland also question this distinction in the increasingly complex relationship between mediation and liveness, and introduce an alternative musical ontology to conventional Western music industry driven practices.

In my research I have also demonstrated how records can be altered and customized as part of a local adaptation, which additionally questions the authority of industry controlled commercially produced recorded works. In my analysis of the customized recordings called dubplates used in sound system culture, I provide new theoretical insights into the complex processes of mediation involved in popular music today. By deconstructing Benjamin's (2007b) famous thesis of the disappearance of aura in the age of mechanical reproduction and applying it as an analytical tool to understand DJ practices, I point to similarities in the concepts of aura and authenticity in popular music studies. Yet, whereas the concept of authenticity within popular music studies has been heavily theorized and is carefully applied in research, I maintain that the concept of aura is still widely used without sufficient rigour. Henriques (2011) and Eshun (1998), for example, by claiming that dubplates are unique and therefore auratic, reduce Benjamin's concept of aura to that which exists as a unique product. I hope that my theorizations here can contribute in developing the concept of aura further within studies of media and culture.

In addition to these analyses of recordings in sound system practices, I have also explored how an idea or concept can find various forms of expression in DJ activities. In my analysis of Norlan's work in article IV, I point not only to how his recording "Sauna Caliente" provided a club concept with its name, but also to how the ideology and aesthetics of the recording and its music video heavily influenced the club concept as a manifestation of a particular hybridity. This influence of the recording demonstrates how a similar idea and ideology can be expressed through different media. The concept of musical "work" is here fluid and can be expanded from individual recorded music to other forms of expression.

6.2. Localization

The second theme in my research has been the process of localization. This means, first of all, studying what kind of narrative about the culture of origin is constructed through the DJs' performance practices. Secondly, I have sought to identify how these constructions affect the local culture and are actualized in the new context of adaptation.

Whereas individual records can move across time and space with little effort, mediating the values and ideologies behind a genre to a larger audience is a more complex process. As my case studies have shown, genres and musical cultures moving to another cultural space will not maintain all their inherent features, values, and meanings. This includes a particular ontology of the mu-

sic as already discussed above regarding the role of records, but it can relate to any other element in the culture that is being mediated. Most apparently, the localization of meanings and values is reflected in the choice of repertoire of the music that is being transmitted. The records that a DJ chooses to play from a particular genre will have an effect on how the genre is interpreted and understood in the new context. Regarding the localization of dancehall reggae, my research demonstrates how songs that deal with current political themes in Jamaican society tend to be less valued among fans in Finland. The local audience in Finland is less focused on the lyrical content of the music and associates the music mostly with the dancing occurring at the local events. This means that the music becomes detached from its original socio-cultural environment, and although the music will have an effect on the local culture in Finland, it does not have the same reflexive relationship with society at large as it does in Jamaica.

As my research deals with both the temporal and spatial movement of music, there are also distinctions to be made between these two different “localization” processes. Most crucially, as the local audience’s prior knowledge of the music differs in the temporal and spatial migration of music, it will also affect their engagement with the music. In the case of *iskelmä* music investigated in article III, the audience already has a substantial prior understanding of the music moving across time and partially also from a rural to an urban setting. The localization is, thus, here not so much about being introduced to new musical material and cultures, but more about relocating through familiar reference to a national golden age. Although many patrons in my other case studies are also familiar with the performed repertoire, the settings do not have a similar majority of people who will recognize the music as nostalgic either from their own childhood or collective memory. Music travelling over a spatial distance also has the risk of easily being interpreted as an opposing “Other” to the national culture, as I demonstrate in article IV with regards to “Latin” music.

In all my case studies the audience is intimately involved in negotiating the conditions of localization. Although, the meanings and values in the mediated music are not uniformly understood by all fans and members of an audience in a performance setting. As my research shows, there are regional differences in Finland in the adaptation of reggae music and the process is in several ways very site-specific. Individual DJs performing regularly for a specific set of followers can turn an unknown record into a local hit among their own audience, which will not have the same significance for audiences in other cities. Similarly, the DJs investigated in article III at the We Love Helsinki events are required by audience demand to adhere to a particular interpretation of *iskelmä* music as the historical mainstream music of Finland. In my analysis I describe how a DJ attempting to play a more alternative form of *iskelmä* emptied the dance floor of dancers with his choice of music – concretely illustrating the audience’s agency in the localization process. Although the audience is heterogeneous re-

garding their tastes, some dominating narratives can also be identified for example in online discussions where regional and other ideological attitudes are debated and the conditions for the local adaptation of a music is negotiated. These online discussions do not only deal with taste preferences, but are often also concerned with values and meanings associated with the music. In my analysis of a Facebook debate around the We Love Helsinki events, I argue that audience members who are less engaged in the performance setting become observers of and outsiders to the unfolding drama of the events.

As new musical cultures are introduced into Finnish musical life, it has become increasingly problematic to differentiate between a discrete “local” culture and its global influences. Already in the beginning of the 20th century, popular music in Finland was influenced by Russian, continental European and American music (see for example Jalkanen & Kurkela 2003), and today musicians and listeners can easily identify with music associated with remote locations or with social, cultural and ethnic groups other than their own. As I maintain in my case studies, in order to understand how musical cultures travel through DJ practices, we also need, apart from a nuanced analysis of the respective music cultures and their global flows, to understand the details of cultural influences in Finnish music history, which my research in several ways presents in a new light.

6.3. Performance and brokerage

Finally, my research has been concerned with the strategies DJs employ to facilitate this process of localization. Here, I have drawn mostly on the concept of performance to analyze the DJs work as cultural brokers both inside and outside the club space.

I argue that as a general strategy DJs seek to include the music into familiar frames of reference, through which unfamiliar elements become meaningful in the new cultural environment. This means, for example, that a new record can be introduced by playing it in a set of otherwise familiar music to an audience. This repertoire of music where a new recording is included will affect how the audience perceives the new music. The repertoire constructs, as such, a frame within which individual records are made meaningful. Also, much of the brokering of the music happens through discursive and verbal communication. Apart from selecting and playing recorded music, all the DJs I have investigated in my dissertation are also verbally communicating with the audience. In article III, I discern four distinctive strategies in this verbal communication that in different ways frames the performance and gives the audience instructions on how to understand the music included within that frame. Most of the DJs in my study, as promoters and recording artists, also create visual and textual material to position their club events and the music included in them. All of these aspects are important in communicating a cultural knowledge about the music not innately available merely through experiencing the records themselves, and

aids an adaptation of the music to a new audience.

However, not all of these framing practices are in the hands of the DJs themselves. Visual and discursive associations are also constructed by newspapers and various online media, and the audience always has preconceived assumptions about the culture that is being mediated that need to be taken into account. DJs often have to satisfy a demand, rather than create a demand, which can also result in a form of self-exotification. However, as my analysis in article IV of Cuban DJ and recording artist Norlan's work demonstrates, exotifications can also be used to construct new hybrid cultures. Although Norlan's "Sauna Caliente" music video follows a tropicalized discourse of "hyper-eroticized" (Aparicio & Chávez-Silverman 1997: 101) Latinos, he is through the media discourses surrounding him also exoticizing the Finnish cultural symbol of the sauna. The subtext for audiences in Norlan's work is that he might be a foreigner from an "exotic" country, but Finns are also exotic in their own way. I argue that as a cultural broker, Norlan is here not only pointing to an external "Latin" music for a Finnish audience. By integrating the Finnish cultural symbol of the sauna into his work, Norlan reinterprets Finnish culture and compels audiences to change their ideas about the surrounding society. DJs have the potential power to challenge dominating cultural narratives and explore alternatives to established discourses.

6.4. Discussion

In my dissertation, I have studied how music travelling in mediated format as records is adapted by DJs to new socio-cultural environments. Whereas earlier studies on DJ culture have focused on music within the disco genealogy and its various adaptations of electronic dance music, my research enriches this body of research by studying genres not immediately associated with DJ practices. In addition, research on the movement of popular music has dealt with either the structures of a global music industry or with ethnographic accounts about performing artists. My research complements this research with ethnography about the movement of recorded music.

I have aligned this study within the larger framework of popular music studies, where my research can be considered to have contributed to ongoing debates about musical meaning and the social power of individuals and communities to decide over them. I have sought to describe how musical meanings as part of recorded music travel across time and space and examined the power of communities to alter and adapt these meanings. Here, my study follows a tradition within popular music studies reacting against traditional musicology, not approaching sound recordings as fixed objects or musical works as having predetermined meanings within a self-contained structure. My research demonstrates how, after their initial production process, records continue to acquire meanings in the context of their reproduction. More important than objects themselves as signifiers are the "signifying practices" (Hebdige 1979: 127) that

render the objects meaningful. As such, rather than only interpreting a meaning embedded in a recording which is transferred into a new context, I have placed weight on the genre rules, socio-cultural conventions, practices and historical context of where a recording is placed.

Regarding the agency of the new locale to decide over these meanings, we should recall the words of Simon Frith (1996: 208) who in his insightful and uncomplicated style suggests that the success of a performance “can, in the end, only be measured by the audience response”. This observation is echoed in my study on two levels. First, the DJs I am studying can be considered to represent an audience themselves, as fans of the particular music they are brokering. From a global perspective, DJs as a collective can contribute to the development of the music they are invested in. Secondly, and more importantly for me, the work of DJs as cultural brokers is subject to constant evaluation by an audience. This is most immediate on the dance floor where clubbers can “vote with their feet”, as Rietveld (2013: 3) notes. The localization of a music culture will always be dependent on how the audience responds to the music, although, as my research also shows, all members of the audience may not be involved with an equal intensity in the performance setting and will not understand the values that the music represents uniformly.

Nevertheless, my study points to the significant role local DJs have in adapting and mediating between the remote production and local consumption of a musical genre. In conclusion, I want to return to Walter Benjamin’s (2007a) essay on storytelling, which in several ways illustrates the DJ practices I have studied. Although DJs may not have experienced the culture they seek to transmit, they make the narrative of it the experience of those who are listening to their performance. And however truthfully a DJ seeks to transmit a remote musical culture to his own immediate surroundings, traces of the DJ will inevitably, in Benjamin’s (2007a: 89) words, cling in the music “the way the handprints of the potter cling to the clay vessel”.

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Fieldwork material

The fieldwork diaries and interviews of the project have been archived in the Sibelius Museum (Sm Fält 0013, Sm Fält 0014).

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