

MUSIC, DANCE, AFFECT, AND EMOTIONS IN LATIN AMERICA

Edited by **PABLO VILA**



Music, Dance, Affect, and
Emotions in Latin America

Music, Culture, and Identity in Latin America

Series Editors:

Pablo Vila, Temple University, and Héctor Fernández L'Hoeste, Georgia State University

Music is one of the most distinctive cultural characteristics of Latin American countries. But, while many people in the United States and Europe are familiar with musical genres such as salsa, merengue, and reggaetón, the musical manifestations that people listen to in most Latin American countries are much more varied than these commercially successful ones that have entered the American and European markets. The *Music, Culture, and Identity in Latin America* series examines the ways in which music is used to advance identity claims in different Latin American countries and among Latinos in the United States. The series wants to shed new light on the complex ways in which music provides people from Latin American countries with both enjoyment and tools for understanding who they are in terms of nationality, region, race, ethnicity, class, gender, age, sexuality, and migration status (among other identitarian markers). *Music, Culture, and Identity in Latin America* seeks to be truly interdisciplinary by including authors from all the social sciences and humanities: political science, sociology, psychology, musicology, cultural studies, literature, history, religious studies, and the like.

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Music, Dance, Affect, and Emotions in Latin America, edited by Pablo Vila

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Dedication

To Ramón Pelinski, my mentor, my friend. Ramón was responsible for many “firsts” in my academic career. He was the first person who:

- Encouraged me to pursue a career in the sociology of music (1982)
- Engaged me in a music research project (1983)
- Advised me on how to pursue a graduate education abroad (1984)
- Invited me to an international academic conference (1985)
- Was instrumental in getting my first fellowship to study abroad (1986)
- Published my first work in French (1991)
- Published my first theoretical endeavor regarding the relationship between popular music and narrative identities (1996)
- Was instrumental in securing my first teaching experiences in Europe (1996 and 2000)
- Fiercely criticized my narrative approach to music for its “rational” biases (1997)
- Encouraged me to pay more attention to the “embodiment” of music (1998)
- Refused to read one of my manuscripts because (due to its rational underpinnings) he “could not connect with it” (2011)

It took me almost twenty years to fully understand some of his teachings on how music impacts us affectively and emotionally. Ramón: I think that I finally got it! It is a pity that you are no longer with us to criticize this book!

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Introduction

Pablo Vila

Lately, the history of the social sciences and humanities seems to be characterized by “jumping” from turn to turn. In my academic career, I witnessed (and was highly influenced by) at least five such turns. Having been born a Marxist due to the influence of a father who forced me to read *Capital: Volume I* at the age of twelve, I became infatuated by the structural Marxism of Althusser in the early 1970s, above all with his concept of “interpellation.” The mid-seventies witnessed the rediscovery of Gramsci and the apogee of the Cultural Studies paradigm, which I rapidly adopted. Once in the United States, I became highly influenced by the “linguistic” turn until I discovered, in the late 1980s, the “narrative” turn, which highly influenced my work on the U.S.-Mexico border. The 1990s and early 2000s witnessed the development of yet another new turn, now called the “affective turn.” Highly influenced by the work of Deleuze and Guattari, this turn wants to “free” the social sciences and the humanities from the metaphor that “everything is discourse,” which seemed to characterize much of the work done under the influence of the discursive and narrative turns. In the last couple of years or so, I became very interested in this theoretical turn. I started to write under its sway, at first highly influenced by the exceptional guidance of Patricia Ticineto Clough (see Clough 2008), who was kind enough to read my (at first very, very elemental) inroads in this intellectual camp.

In terms of the scholarly work done on the sociology and anthropology of music, to date there are only a couple of books published on the topic and a handful of journal articles. In other words, it is still a field in its infancy and we want to contribute to its growth with this book.

Regarding the relationship between affect and music, the affective turn emphasizes the extent to which music cannot be thought about without an appreciation of its affective elements, as well as the extent to which this

dimension must be comprehended as bound up with the corporeal nature of musical experience. The idea is that music mobilizes bodies through affective transmission. The fact that musical practices are discourses that convey meanings with precise identitarian capabilities (the main tenet of the discursive and narrative approaches in music studies) does not mean that music does not also have physical effects that can be identified and explained but that are not the same thing as having meanings. In other words, music is always involved in a web of forces, intensities, and encounters that produce subjectivities, bodily capacities, and, at the same time, identifications.

The book we have written is a collection of essays that analyze different manifestations of Argentine music and dance, taking advantage of the new theoretical developments advanced by the current affective turn. In that regard, the different chapters of the book deal with the relationship between bodies and the fluctuations of feeling that shape the experiential in ways that may impact, but nevertheless evade, conscious knowing. The chapters show, in different ways, how music creates particular atmospheres, via the induction, modulation, and circulation of moods, feelings, and intensities, which are felt but, at the same time, do not belong to anybody in particular. Additionally, the chapters will show how, when researching issues of music and dance, it is crucial to attend to them outside the confines of meaning and representation and, in so doing, to try to explain what music and sound *do* rather than what they represent.

The different chapters of the book attempt to solve, to different degrees, the most important problems the affective turn has identified regarding how music and dance have been researched so far. We are talking here about the tendency, in representational accounts of music, to ignore the sensory and sonic registers to the detriment of the embodied and lived registers of experience and feeling that unfold in the process of making or listening to music.

NAVIGATING THE BOOK

In chapter 1, “Music, Dance, Affect, and Emotions: Where We Are Now,” I introduce the reader to the most important ideas and authors linked to the affective turn in general, and those related to the study of popular music in particular. This chapter is my first attempt to synthesize how the affective approach (or its British equivalent: non-representational theory) has modified the social sciences and humanities in general and the sociology and anthropology of music in particular.

In the chapter I point out the differences between the approach that put the emphasis on emotions (linked to the work of Tomkins), the approach that emphasizes affect (related to the work of Spinoza and Deleuze and Guattari), and the approach that claims that it is very difficult to separate affect, feel-

ings, and emotions (like the work of Wetherell, Anderson, and Ahmed). After a brief description of the central tenets of the approach (affect as non-representational, non-cognitive, a-signifying, non-conscious, non-intentional, a-subjective, which exist as intensity, or in intensive qualities), the text analyzes how affects work in face-to-face relationships, affective atmospheres, and structures of feeling, signaling the difference that exists between affects, feelings, and emotions. Additionally, I deal with the performative character of emotions and how using the concept of “habits” (in the plural) is a way in which many practitioners of the affective turn avoid the problems linked to Bourdieu’s “habitus.”

In the chapter I also enter into a dialogue with the most important tenets of the affective turn from the point of view of my identitarian articulation proposal. In that regard, I advance an understanding of how affect and emotions work in relation to popular music. My proposal, in a nutshell, is that if, on the one hand, music and dance are instrumental in the staging and circulation of particular affects and emotions, and those affects and emotions are, in turn, instrumental in the performative materialization of peculiar bodies and identities; on the other hand, the identitarian articulations people sequentially deploy in any music event (as mediated by the atmosphere of the events and the affects that circulate on them) always mediate those affects and emotions as well. My attempt behind this proposition is to show the continuous back-and-forth, or continuous processes of mediation, of all the elements that belong to a musical event understood as an “assemblage”—that is, a particular ensemble of bodies, objects, technologies, discourses, and the like, in a continuous process of becoming.

The last part of the chapter addresses how different affect and emotions’ theories have dealt with music and dance, such as DeNora’s concept of “affordances,” Witkin’s idea of “holding forms,” Anderson’s analysis of structures of music judgment, and Henriques’ theory of the affect of music as vibration.

In chapter 2, “The Embodiment of *Gozo*: Aesthetics, Emotion, and Politics in the Indigenous Song-Dances of the Argentine Chaco,” Silvia Citro and Adriana Cerletti analyze the music and dances of the Toba or *Qom*, one of the main indigenous groups of the Argentine Chaco. Starting from collaborative and interdisciplinary research among anthropology, musicology, and dance studies, the authors propose the analysis of music and dance as both performative processes and aesthetic objects. Citro and Cerletti focus on the comparative analysis of two Toba performance genres with circular choreographic designs: the *Nmi*, an old song-dance of the youth associated with sexual innuendo and mating pleasures, and the *Rueda*, a new Evangelical ritual dance performed mainly by young men and women, with the music of *coritos* (short Evangelical songs in Spanish and Toba sung by all the participants). Since the Christian conversion at the beginning of the twentieth cen-

ture, the Nmi was gradually abandoned and only in the 1990s did the Rueda begin to be performed in these indigenous churches. For some Tobas, the Rueda is a kind of “praise” that encourages the participation of youngsters in churches and their social control by adults; but for others, it is frowned upon due to its links to the old Nmi and shamanism. The Evangelical discourse created a strong dichotomy between the “world” of the “ancient indigenous culture,” associated with dance and drinking in festivities and shamanism, and the “new” Evangelical life without these “sins.” Thus, this has led to a strong opposition between the “old” Nmi song-dance performed by the non-Evangelical ancestors, and the “new” spiritual dances like the Rueda. The authors’ hypothesis is that despite the power of this ideological dichotomy in the current Toba Christian discourse and the conflicts that have been promoted between the adult and the young, the sensorial-emotional ways of experiencing these song-dances are not so different and these ways are closely related to their similar musical and choreographic structures. In this sense, Citro and Cerletti analyze how these dances are the main ways to embody “gozo” (bliss), a compelling ritual experience associated with “enjoyment,” “pleasure,” “health,” and “power.” Furthermore, they also examine the micro-politics of these performances and their paradoxical regimes of bodies’ control and resistance. Thus, Citro and Cerletti’s second hypothesis is that, through the Rueda dance, the young performers tried to confront and transform their hegemonic power relations with the elderly and adult leaders of the churches; and in this way, this dance became a dynamic field of disputes where processes of legitimation, empowerment, and contention took place.

In chapter 3, “Traditional Sonorous Poetics: Ways of Appropriation and Perception of ‘Andean’ Music and Practices in Buenos Aires,” Adil Podhajer focuses on theoretical and methodological reflections of a comparative nature about traditional music groups composed of migrants and Argentines (called *sikuris* or *sikus* bands), which form the map of the “Andean” identity of Bolivia and Peru in Buenos Aires, Argentina. To do so, the author problematizes the multidimensionality of the processes of musical production from two central perspectives. First, she addresses how these practices reproduce, create, and actualize in discourses and rituals, meanings, emotions, and bodily experiences related to “communitarianism” and “complementarity” as unit-visions of the Andean world. Second, she examines how the *sikus* performers perceive and solve micro-conflictive musical structures encountered in the experience of performance (particularly in the round/lap as an “icon” of this music) that appeal to meanings about traditional sounds. The goal of the chapter is to analyze how in the practice of “knowing how” to make “collective” music—understood as an experience of “liberation” and “well-being”—close emotional ties linked to shared values and beliefs are generated, alongside a state of active perception with “the other” and the round/lap.

In turn, the chapter reveals how this “interconnection” reached among the sikus performers produces bodily inscriptions that are lived differently depending on their artistic, cultural, and social paths, which, in turn, define the music groups.

Chapter 4, “Pleasures in Conflict: Maternity, Eroticism, and Sexuality in Tango Dancing,” was written by Juliana Verdenelli and is the outcome of ongoing ethnographic research that tries to analyze the processes of construction of body movements, sexuality, and morals for men and women dancing tango in the circuit of “relaxed” *milongas* (tango dance halls) of Buenos Aires. Verdenelli’s aim is to explore some linkages between maternity and sexuality brought into play in the context of this social dance. To do this, she takes as empirical evidence the case of her own pregnancy, considering that the questioning of her subjectivity may become an instance of anthropological knowledge. Verdenelli also proposes a brief journey through some of the transformations that have occurred in recent decades in the field of everyday life associated with how sexualities are experienced—just to mention a few: autonomy of sexuality in relation to their reproductive purposes; changes in affective and sexual relationships; visibility of sexual minorities; diversification of sexuality, and so on—venturing that it is there that the plurality of discourses and practices about motherhood that have flourished in recent years are inscribed. Starting from there, the author focuses her analysis in a series of discourses that set the subjectivities of many young women who are heterosexual mothers, of the middle class, and tango dancers.

Subsequently, Verdenelli reflects on how the staging of a reproductive sexuality challenges the erotic practices and sexual liaisons that characterize “relaxed” tango scenes. In the last part of the chapter, the author discusses some changes in the “rules of the game” within the circuit of relaxed milongas in the city, particularly in relation to the process of visualization of maternity in these contexts.

Chapter 5 is entitled “Self-Expression through Self-Discipline: Technique, Expression, and Losing Oneself in Classical Dance” and was written by Ana Sabrina Mora. In this chapter, based on ethnographic research done in the different disciplines of the Escuela de Danzas Clásicas (Classical Dance School) of La Plata, Argentina, Mora deals with the practices, representations, and experiences put into play during training paths in performing dances at that school. In particular, she focuses on one issue that was prominently present in the different disciplines: even though the effectiveness of representations could not be avoided (and the practices based on such representations) for the construction of particular experiences, there was “something else” about those experiences that seemed to overwhelm these representations eminently transmitted during educational practices.

What appeared prominently was a tension between the need to work hard over time to incorporate a technique of movement, and the existence of

feelings of pleasure and fulfillment associated with the expressions associated with dance. Relations between technique and expression were understood from different interpretive frameworks according to the different types of dance, which gave different meanings to these relations. Thus, the career of Creative Dance, a type of dance that interprets itself as being constructed from self-knowledge of the body and one's inner self, manages technical knowledges (which are intelligible) to be transmitted within frameworks of meaning about the body and the subject. Especially in the line of work of Classical Dance, but also in Contemporary Dance, it is understood that it is not possible to express oneself through dance without having incorporated the techniques that make up the vocabulary of those dances.

The bulk of Mora's chapter is dedicated to the case of Classical Dance. From what happens in the training process in this type of dance, it is possible to determine that even in conditions where agency appears to be deleted, it is still present; establishes a dialogue to what seems to constraint it; and, moreover, is produced by the same conditions of disciplining in a particular way. This analysis, which departs from the question about the links that exist between technique and expression, aims to understand the mechanisms and possibilities for the construction of agency in relation to a practice commonly associated with a strong disciplining of the body, and the way in which it controls, chronometrically and to the very inch, bodies within an extremely strict and "unnatural" code of movement.

What the chapter seeks to understand is what possibilities of agency are actualized in dance training, and how these possibilities are concretely manifested, in an attempt to propose a look at the construction of agency that overcomes the resistance-compliance dichotomy.

Chapter 6, "Did Cumbia Villera Bother Us? Criticisms on the Academic Representation of the Link between Women and Music," was written by Malvina Silba and Carolina Spataro. Encouraged by lyrics like *Pamela* ("Pamela has a problem / [she] cannot stop sucking [my penis]") and others in the same vein, the authors pondered in an article written in 2006 how women were portrayed in the lyrics of cumbia villera (cumbia from the shantytowns) and stated, without hesitation, that cumbia villera built an image of women as objects to be consumed by heterosexual males, and that women were denigrated and treated as "easy" girls. Pamela "liked" it very much, but that passed unnoticed in front of their eyes at that time. Nowadays, the authors ask: what kinds of ideas do emerge from this way of interpreting the cultural industries in general and music in particular? Their provisional answer: on the one hand, it would be more appropriate if the aim were women's autonomy; on the other hand, that the only purposes of the social uses of music were uncritical consumption, or conscious complaint; and finally, that music meanings were universal.

The past ten years, and much ethnographic research done in the Buenos Aires metropolitan area, have not only modified Silba and Spataro's starting points, but also their analytic premises, adding complexity. From a methodological approach based on an ethnographic method, the question ceased being what these songs meant for them as social scientists and emphasized instead the meaning of this music for its listeners and the ways this type of music is inserted in their social, cultural, and affective life.

The aim of the chapter by Silba and Spataro is to perform a theoretical, methodological, and epistemological reflection on the ways in which the links between music and society have been studied. In order to do so, the authors start their contribution mapping the paradigms that informed music studies, then evaluate the contributions of each of those investigations, and finally conclude with a reflection that allows them to problematize the findings of the article they wrote ten years ago from the point of view of their new understanding of the role of desire and feminine agency in the consumption of popular music. Thus, the purpose of the chapter is to account for the ways in which certain analytical positions can seal the study of popular phenomena when hypotheses, concerns, and discomforts are generated from common notions that also inhabit the social sciences.

Chapter 7, "Peronism and Communism, Feelings and Songs: Militant Affects in Two Versions of the Political Song in Argentina," by Carlos Molinero and Pablo Vila is about how affects and emotions were mobilized and circulated in the Militant Song Movement that flourished in Argentina in the third quarter of the twentieth century, with a peak in 1972–1973 (when democracy was recuperating from a military dictatorship). As the authors point out, it was a complex movement, with at least two differential variants that distinctly colored the way in which music and musical performances mobilized and materialized their audiences. To characterize them, besides presenting a brief historical account of how the songs of both ideologies evolved over time, the chapter analyses two integral oeuvres staged as musical theater shows in 1973. These oeuvres display the historical and emotional routes that, eventually, would lead to the different political proposals they wanted to advance—one of them of a Marxist lineage, the other one of a Peronist creed.

As it is explained in the chapter, the circulation of affect always happens alongside processes of expression (feelings) and qualification (emotions). Both shows allow for an analysis of how "hope," for example, worked in a completely different way in each case. In one of them hope appears as an anticipation of a future that is "scientifically guaranteed" by the interpretation of history given by the great Marxist theorists. In the other one, that hope in the future is actually a "nostalgia" of what was actually experienced in the period of the first Peronist government (1946–1955), something much closer and more concrete than the Marxist utopia.

Both variants of the Militant Song Movement use the condemnation of the social situation to provoke anger and sometimes anguish, but also here they do so with notable differences. A key point perhaps, because it belongs to both world-views, is related to how they account for social injustices. In that regard, the leftist variant denounced present inequalities (indignation is the most present emotion), and promised a better future (hope). The songs of the Peronist branch also denounced the past and showed indignation, but from a present of hope, not only a future of hope: they are going to be (or already are) part of the government inaugurated in 1973.

The authors also point out in the chapter the difference in the specific role that music held in both segments of the Militant Song Movement—that is, a very central role (“the leadership of the song”) in the case of the leftists, and marginality (“mobilizing accompaniment”) in the case of Peronism. That is why the evolutionary processes previous to the period of radicalization (exemplified by the integral oeuvres analyzed in the chapter) have, in the Marxist variant, an early specific musical movement (the New Song of 1963); and foster musical outcomes of very high quality that could guarantee suitable results and strong transmission effects. In the Peronist variant of the movement, such high-quality musical products were absent and only very basic *cantitos* or carnival *murgas* were in charge of keeping alive and bringing the popular flavor of music to the political action of the Peronist movement.

The different durability over time of those musical creations (greater for the Marxists) was also an outcome of the role, use, and circulation of affects in music, something that Molinero and Vila analyze in great detail in their chapter.

In the final chapter of the book, chapter 8, “Music, Dance, Affect, and Emotions: Where We Can Be,” I enter into a dialogue with the other chapters of the book in order to advance some ideas on how new developments linked to the affective turn can illuminate novel (and, I think, very interesting) facets of the musical cases analyzed in the book. Regarding Citro and Cerletti’s work, what their chapter allows us to show are two very important tenets of the affective turn. On the one hand, how signifying apparatuses meditate how affects circulate in assemblages and in relation to different identitarian articulations; that is, their chapter makes quite clear the mechanisms by which affect is complexly transformed into a “namable” emotion, explaining in their case study why the young Tobas end up using only one name for the charge of affect they experience dancing the Rueda: bliss; while the Toba elders claim that two different names should be used for what they consider two distinct augmentations of the body charge of affect of the youngsters.

On the other hand, their chapter is a very good example of how emotions are performative and end up materializing the bodies (in this particular case

the community as a collective body) that they “feel,” showing how different circulations of affect construct, in fact, two very different cognitive and emotional versions of community.

Looking for the types of affects and emotions mobilized by the *ronda* of sikuris, what I see in Adil Podhajcer’s chapter is that while a couple of groups of sikuris mobilize some sort of “technical satisfaction”—that is, the satisfaction of feeling that the *ronda* is “playing well” as linked to the proper enactments of the skills that the genre requires—in other sikuris’ groups, the main emotion that circulates and materializes the different elements of the *ronda* as an assemblage is a feeling of “well-being,” which is not a “technical satisfaction” at all. In this case, satisfaction is achieved in relation to how close or how far the group attained a good inter-corporal connection through the instruments.

Additionally, Adil’s chapter allows us to see how particular identitarian articulations are responsible for living the same musical experience of performing “the Andean” in different ways. In that regard, even if the *ronda* is instrumental in the staging and circulation of particular affects and emotions, and those affects and emotions are, in turn, instrumental in the performative materialization of peculiar bodies and identities, the identitarian articulations people sequentially deploy in the music event (as mediated by the atmosphere of the events and the affects that circulate in them) always mediate those affects and emotions as well.

In her chapter, Juliana Verdenelli is telling us that her pregnancy (a body inhabited by another body) triggered a complete change in the systems of relationships her body was involved with: its relationship with space, movement, objects and other people in that space, technology, and the like. The assemblages she participated in while pregnant were completely different from the similar assemblages she was engaged in before (and after) her pregnancy. Of course, she was a “different” Juliana while pregnant, but her being part of the assemblages she belonged to, by default, not only transformed people in the assemblage into “other kind of people” (her tango partner, for instance, had to exercise different capacities than the ones he exercised as dance partner before Juliana’s pregnancy), but also transformed material things habitual in the “dancing tango assemblage” into different things, inasmuch as they acquired new capacities to affect (and being affect in time) Juliana’s pregnant body.

What a pregnant body introduces into the scene is not only a different woman’s body but also another actor who inhabits that body. Juliana, in her chapter, is well aware of this fact and, in different sections, tells us what “dancing in a trio” looks like and obviously changes how bodies affect and are affected in the scene. However, we can go beyond that and claim that still another body (a fourth one) is present (as an absence) in the “three” dancing “couple.” I am referring here to the “absent father of the child,” who, some-

how, through the echoes of his absence is present in the scene modifying the systems of relationships habitually linked to the affective practices called “seduction” and “sexual encounter.” In this way, an absent body has, in this case, the same capacities of affecting and being affected as the present ones.

What the chapter by Ana Sabrina Mora allows me to think is how different the identitarian articulation enacted by the dancers is when practicing, learning a new play, rehearsing it for a ballet concert, and, eventually, showing their students how to dance when they become dance teachers. The systems of relationships in relation to which those different identitarian articulations are performed are completely different, leading to a completely different circulation of affects, feelings, and emotions. My point here is that the incompatible emotions Sabrina identified among her interviewees (pain and frustration as students while practicing; pleasure when dancing) perhaps are not at all incompatible if we think about them as emotions being triggered by different affective practices and associated with diverse identitarian articulations (dancer as student, dancer as rehearsing, dancer as performer, and dancer as a professor of dancing).

What I also think is that in Sabrina’s account there is an emotion that is not mentioned explicitly in the testimonies she heard in her field work but that, I think, is working as a kind of “hinge” between particular affective practices/assemblages linked to the identitarian articulation centered on the “student/rehearsing” character, and those other affective practices/assemblages related to the identitarian articulation that is anchored on the “professor of ballet” character. That emotion, if I am not mistaken, is “hope.” I think that “hope,” as an emotion, is a crucial component of the affective scenario to understand why the students endure such a strict training to begin with. In other words, without the “hope” that they, as students, eventually will master the technique in order to, in the future, fully express themselves as performers and professors (using such a technique), it is impossible to understand why they put themselves through the ordeals of training, with all the dissatisfaction, discomfort, and pain that is involved in such a training.

The chapter by Malvina Silba and Carolina Spataro allows us to apply the idea of “affective atmospheres” quite easily. In that regard, the most important emotion that is mobilized most of the time in the dance hall atmosphere is “joy.” If emotions are performative as I believe they are, the bodies that are materialized by the affective atmosphere of the dance hall are bodies that relate, in different ways, to “joy.” Obviously, those bodies, “joyfully differentiated,” enter into a complicated choreography with the different identitarian articulations the participants on the dance hall scene bring about and sequentially deploy there through the night. In that regard, joy is experienced differently (and in turn helps the differential materialization of those distinct identifications) by the different identitarian articulation of the dancers in

terms of their different assemblages of age, gender, sexual orientation, age, body ability, dancing skills, social class, and the like.

However, I want to pay attention to another emotion (not explicitly mentioned in Malvina and Carolina's chapter) that is quite present in the everyday lives of these young people and that, I think, has a lot to do with the almost "desperate" search for joy these youngsters look at while planning to dance cumbia villera every Saturday night. What I am referring to here is "boredom," and the way boredom, as an emotion with capacities to affect and be affected, performatively materializes particular bodies and not others. Everyday life for many of these young people (males and females alike) is quite boring: they go to schools that usually do not challenge them, work in tedious jobs that they know will lead them nowhere, and have family obligations that they endure as an insurmountable burden. These everyday situations, among other things, compose daily affective practices in which the diminishment of the charge of affect is more often the rule than the exception. The exception is precisely the joyful atmosphere and affective practices of the dance hall that they eagerly plan on going to all week long, while enduring the boredom of their weekly routine.

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Chapter One

Music, Dance, Affect, and Emotions

Where We Are Now

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BRIEF OVERVIEW TO THE AFFECTIVE TURN

In the last half century or so, the history of the social sciences and humanities has been characterized by several “turns.” The “linguistic” turn, beginning in the 1970s, influenced (and still influences) both the social sciences and the humanities, and many of the most important works in anthropology, sociology, cultural studies, musicology, and the like were inspired by the discursive turn. My own work has been mostly developed under the auspices of this turn.

Starting in the mid-1990s we have been witnessing the development of a new turn, now called the “affective turn.” This particular turn has been developed into two (sometimes unrelated) approaches, based on two alternative connotations of the word “affect.” The first is a familiar, psychologized, notion whose main focus is on “the emotions” as these are usually understood in common parlance. The second connotation refers to “a ‘wilder’ more encompassing concept highlighting difference, process and force in more general terms” (Wetherell 2012: 2). As Seyfert (2012: 29) points out, “affects are often related to dynamic relations of bodies and their encounters out of which affects emerge (Seigworth and Gregg 2010). Affect Studies captures the situational nature of affect as emerging at the moment when bodies meet, affecting the bodies involved in the encounter, and marking the transformation/s of the bodies.” While the approach that emphasizes emotions relates affects entirely to human bodies, the so-called “affect studies”

tends to address the conceivable relevance of any kind of bodies (organic, inorganic, artificial, imaginary, discursive, etc.).

This affective turn aligned itself, in complex ways, with already existing trends within cultural studies attempting to understand the role of the body (often linked to phenomenology) and emotions in relation to culture in general, and different cultural artifacts in particular. From these quite different perspectives, and as a common reaction against the exaggerated emphasis on meaning that characterized the linguistic turn (which usually led to a rationalist bias, a focus on meaning, and verbal communication), a new interest sprung up on embodied phenomena and the non- or precognitive realm of experience (DeNora 2010: 159).

Traditionally the key themes for the sociological study of emotions revolved around the question of how culture may be said to inform emotional experience. Under the constructionist credo, culture “mediated” any emotional experience. Such a stance was, step by step, criticized by the affective turn. From the psychology camp the most important work on emotions was done under the influence of Tomkins. Tomkins uses a “quasi-Darwinian definition of affect, whereby affects give name to neuro-physiological processes and mechanisms that function as a basic and more or less universal ‘primary motivator’” (Thompson and Biddle 2013: 7). These included interest-excitement, enjoyment-joy, surprise-startle, distress-anguish, fear-terror, shame-humiliation, contempt-disgust, and anger-rage, each presented with expected facial inflections (Anderson 2014: 84–85). Tomkins’s list was not fixed and he recognized (1995: 73) that “there is today no consensus on what the primary affects are, how many there are, [and] what they should be called.” As a matter of fact he later on added a ninth affect: “dis smell,” a concept developed by Tomkins to differentiate between disgust expressed through the mouth and disgust expressed through the nose.

In Tomkins’s proposal these emotions are different from each other because they provoke very distinct neural firings, both in terms of gradient and intensity. And while always in interaction with other instances of human functions (such as drives, cognition, and perception) they remain distinct, with affective states potentially becoming thoughts, feelings, or emotions that are more complex and personal (Thompson and Biddle 2013: 7–8).

Social psychology has extensively engaged with emotions as well, more recently highlighting its relational character. For instance, Burkitt “emphasises that an emotion, like anger or fear, is not an object inside the self, as basic emotions research assumes, but is a relation to others, a response to a situation and to the world. . . . Affect is never wholly owned, always intersecting and interacting” (Wetherell 2012: 24; see also Burkitt 2014). If this is so, emotions in actual social encounters look quite different from how they look for the proponents of the basic emotions approach quoted above. In these encounters, affect is not easily distinguished as a separate category of

experience and basic emotions portray many variants on themselves. The categorization and labeling of affect take place as a social activity in situ (Wetherell 2012: 98).

Undoubtedly, the more radical stance of all the new proposals on affect and emotions is linked to the theory of affect and affection developed by Deleuze and Guattari from the work of Spinoza. Here the weight is placed on affect as a way to emphasize the fugitive, the fleeting, the sensual; in this version, affect is a never-ending unfolding activity. As Wetherell points out (2012), Deleuze and Guattari's imperative that we "go beyond," meaning to detach affect from the taming and neutering effects of discourse, is particularly compelling.

Even though there are significant differences between the "emotions" approach and the "affect" approach, there are also some important parallels between them. As Seigworth and Greg (2010: 6) point out, there is some sense of opposite movement, "a certain inside-out/outside in difference in directionality: affect as the prime 'interest' motivator that comes to put the drive in bodily drives (Tomkins); affect as an entire, vital and modulating field of myriad becomings between human and nonhuman (Deleuze)." As Thompson and Biddle comment (2013: 7): "Both lines of enquiry recognize affect as a transformative force, a process of modulation that inevitably goes beyond that which is consciously captured as feeling. Subsequently, in both lineages, affect is intimately involved with, but nevertheless distinct from, feeling and emotion. What remains different, however, is where this line between affect, feeling and emotion is drawn; how these things are differentiated from one another." Regardless of all these differences, we can say, following Grossberg (2010: 192), that both approaches agree that affect names a complex set of mediations/effects that are: "a-signifying (although they can produce signification), non-individualized (although they do produce individualities), non-representational (although they can produce representational forms), and non-conscious (although they produce various forms of consciousness). Affect refers to the 'energy' of mediation, a matter of (quantifiable) intensity. Affect operates on multiple planes, through multiple apparatuses, with varied effects."

Thompson and Biddle (2013: 8–9) give us a very good account of what affect means in the Spinozan version of it, reinterpreted first by Deleuze and Guattari and more recently by Brian Massumi. For Spinoza affect (*affectus*) is not the same thing as affection (*affection*), and neither one refers to emotions and feelings. Affect (*affectus*) captures for Spinoza what we would call today modifications and the flow of causality more broadly—that is, affect as movement, and as change as a result of encounters. In Massumi's words, affect is "a pre-personal intensity corresponding to the passage from one experiential state of the body to another and implying an augmentation or diminution in that body's capacity to act" (Massumi 2004: xvii). On the other

hand, “affection, or affectio, by contrast, refers to the affective encounter of a body with other bodies, the state of the body as it affects and is affected. . . . The capacity of a body to affect and be affected shapes and is shaped by the ways in which it affects and is affected by other bodies” (Thompson and Biddle 2013: 8–9). In that regard affect is always two sided: it consists of bodily capacities to affect and to be affected that emerge and develop in concert: “Straight away a body is always imbricated in a set of relations that extend beyond it and constitute it. Capacities are always collectively formed” (Anderson 2014: 9). Here the central idea linked to this theoretical approach on affect is the idea of “relationship.”

However, the most important question for this theoretical framework is not really what affect means but what it does. In this regard, as Anderson (2014: 10) correctly points out, affect is not an assessment of body properties, but of its capacities. It is thus focused on what bodies do in social situations, and because capacities are dependent on other bodies they can never be completely specified in advance. This line of thinking has influenced diverse authors, such as Bruno Latour (2004), who has linked the problem of affect to a reformulation of bodies as processes rather than entities, and summons us to consider not “‘What is a body?’ (as if the body can be reified as a thing or an entity), but rather ‘What can a body do?’ Therefore, a turn to affect also entails a rethinking of the concept of embodiment, and places work within body-studies in an important position in en-fleshing and embodying affect as a particular kind of process-in-practice.” (Blackman and Venn 2010: 9).

Here is where the work of Simondon is usually referred to, especially his concept of “individuation”; a concept that clearly reformulates the problematic of subjectivity, radically de-centering “the individual in that it considers the individual to be the product of a process of becoming rather than a starting point from which everything else is accounted for” (Blackman and Venn 2010: 20). In other words, bodies are always being undone and remade in the context of different events, and they are never separated from the assemblages they participate in, which provide “the medium and practices (corporeal and sociocultural) that allow or afford the potential for bodies (individual and collective) to take form or move” (Blackman and Venn 2010: 21).

The other important idea stressed by the turn to affect is relationality. As Blackman and Venn point out (2010: 10):

If we start from an assumption of singularity and separation, then this frames the question of relationship as an “interaction effect” between pre-existing entities, rather than the conjoining of thoroughly entangled processes. . . . This paradigm of co-enactment, co-emergence and co-evolution assumes from the outset that we are dealing with thoroughly entangled processes that require a

different analytic and conceptual language to examine . . . and explore the co-constitutive processes that produce and enact bodies in all their diverse materialities.

In this understanding, what the affect turn suggests is that while some experiences are quite tangible they do not function through the structures of language, discourse, and meaning. Consider the case of common concepts such as aura, charisma, or presence. These notions usually refer to an indefinable quality of people or things that is felt rather than seen. As Featherstone (2010) points out, it refers to a sense of energy, of a force, of a change of register—an intensity. “It is an unstructured non-conscious experience transmitted between bodies, which has the capacity to create affective resonances below the threshold of articulated meaning” (Blackman and Venn 2010: 24).

It is important to mention here that work on affect frequently shuns the concept of the “unconscious” (and with it, its psychoanalytical pedigree). Instead, researchers in this tradition prefer to use the notion of the “non-conscious,”¹ which is tied to a bodily unconscious understood through the concept of habit. These are practices of bodily memory that, most of the time, are independent of a subject’s conscious reflections and deliberations and “are often en-fleshed within the processes of the central nervous system or proprioception” (Blackman and Venn 2010: 18). Using “habit” instead of “habitus” is a way to differentiate the affective turn approach from Bourdieu’s sociology, which is considered too static to address the constant mobility proposed by the affective turn. This is a move that has been mirrored by the “emotion/affect” approach (i.e., by those theoreticians who do not want to separate affect from emotions—more on this below) advocated by people like Ahmed, Anderson, and Wetherell.

For Wetherell, for instance, habits are affective practices that stabilize and solidify over time. In those solidified affective practices, according to Bourdieu, the body cannot stop itself from repeating what the French author depicts as a “universe of ready-made feelings and experiences” when driven by a familiar situation. Therefore, emotions are the non-conscious aspects of habitus, leading to embodied enactments we cannot control (Wetherell 2012: 107).

The main problem the affective turn (as well as authors not related to the affective turn, like Judith Butler) has with Bourdieu’s habitus is its reproductive character—that is, how Bourdieu does not take into account the potentially disruptive quality of affects and emotions. Additionally, people like Wetherell (2012: 105) critiqued the “singular” character of habitus as proposed by Bourdieu, claiming that affect and habitus should be understood in the plural, and that our behaviors are not predetermined by them, because while habitus has automatic features, we are not “affect automatons.” While we agree with Wetherell that we have affective habits (in the plural) and not

a singular habitus, we do not agree with her “intersectional” approach that, for us, congeals in “sections” what we see as much more dynamic identitarian articulations without clearly demarcated “sections” (see Vila 2015).

Nonetheless, what is important to rescue from Wetherell’s (2012: 111) proposal is the idea of habits linked to “affective styles,” in which particular identitarian articulations deploy a combination of peculiar affects and emotions. This maintains the plural habits with plural emotions of Wetherell’s proposal, but these are “bundled up” in relation to a particular identitarian articulation (more on this below). Criticizing Bourdieu’s main concept, Wetherell (2012: 116) asks: “Is my habitus, and its characteristic affective practices, singular but a particular, partly idiosyncratic, partly shared composite or amalgam of my diverse range of social locations? . . . How fragmented and heterogeneous can a habitus get and still count as a habitus?” What Wetherell (2012: 117) calls attention to is the way in which different habits and their affective repertoires are linked to specific regularities in positioning (such as workplaces, peer groups, and the like) and “not just those based on the standard identity categories.” Wetherell (2012: 118) points out that, “[An] . . . intersectionality for affective practices and social formations will involve recognising that people are likely to be able to mobilise (and be mobilised by) quite wide-ranging and diverse repertoires of affective practices closely linked to context.” These contexts will grant individuals access to particular affective repertoires at some times and not at others. While advocating for an “intersectional” approach to affective practices, Wetherell is fully aware of the limitations of such a concept (for the same reasons that we advocate “identitarian articulations” instead). The concept is too static to account for affective fluctuations and diverse subjectivities in constant movement (Wetherell 2012: 118–19). In the pages that follow, we will be developing how our idea of identitarian articulations can solve some limitations of the intersectional approach, allowing us to understand better how affects and emotions work in everyday life situations.

AFFECT, FEELINGS, AND EMOTIONS

The literature on affect points out that one of the ways in which the general movement of affect (in which affect is understood as the mediation par excellence) is specifically expressed is through “feelings.” Movements of affect are expressed through those proprioceptive and visceral shifts in the background habits (and postures) of a body that are commonly described as “feelings.” Examples include the blush of a body shamed or the heat of a body angered. As Anderson (2006: 736) points out: “Feelings are literal impressions of the emergence and movement of affect on bodies (i.e., corporeal expressions of affect); bodies that are not passively ‘waiting’ to be

affected (and concurrently ‘feeling’ something), but, on the contrary, ‘feel’ something depending upon the affected bodies’ existing conditions to be affected.” Feelings, for Burkitt, are examples of practical consciousness, “a kind of intuitive ‘know how’” (Wetherell 2012: 24; see also Burkitt 2014); they are often difficult to name and exist as an ineffable meaning structure or schema that guides action.

Within this theoretical framework, affect, however, also comes to be “experienced through those intimate, distinctly personal, ways of being that are retrospectively named as ‘emotions’” (Anderson 2006: 737). As Anderson points out (2014), several processes of qualification translate the advent of affect, and the expression of feeling, into emotions linked to subjectivities and identities—that is, affect and feelings made cognitive and turned into narratives. Or, in Massumi’s words (2002: 28), “An emotion is a subjective content, the sociolinguistic fixing of the quality of an experience which is from that point onward defined as personal.” Thus, emotions are considered processes of qualification that mediate the movement of affect and the expression of feelings. Emotions qualify affect into “semantically and semiotically formed progressions, into narrativizable action-reaction circuits, into function and meaning. It is intensity owned and recognized” (Massumi 2002: 28).

We should note, however, that instead of affect and emotion existing in separate unconnected levels, there are multiple relations between emotion as a “subjective content” and affect as bodily capacities. However, affect always exceeds its expression or qualification in feelings or emotions (Anderson 2014).

Following this line of thinking, some affect theorists point out that the relation between the three modalities is not one of a movement from affect through feelings to emotions—that is, there is not an a priori direction of causality. As Anderson (2006: 737) points out: “Through the processes of enactment hinted at above (movement, expression, and qualification) the three modalities slide into and out of one another to disrupt their neat analytic distinction. Diverse feed-forward and feedback loops take place to create such hybrids as ‘affectively imbued thoughts’ and ‘thought imbued intensities.’”

As Anderson reminds us (2005), for a long time William Connolly (1999) has argued that techniques of thought are always “affectively imbued,” and “before, and after, the enactment of deliberative judgements are incorporeal-corporeal background feelings and emotions that act as proto-thoughts situated in culturally formed moods, affects, and situations” (Anderson 2005: 648). In other words, different affective charges help to move thinking and judgment in some directions rather than others (Connolly 2002: 27).

For all these reasons, different authors (Anderson 2014, Wetherell 2012, Ahmed 2004a, 2004b, etc.) have argued that affect, feeling, and emotions

should be treated as always in relation to one another. As Anderson points out (2014: 83), emotions that become qualified personal content continuously feed back into affect's emergence and organization. At the same time, however, emotions are the most powerful expression of the capture of affect. "Depending on the apparatuses through which emotions are qualified, some of these processes of qualification may involve the many ways in which some subjects may recognize, name, understand and reflect on emotions" (Anderson 2014: 83).

However, even for these authors, affects always exceed their expression in feelings and their qualification in emotions. Why? Because "emotions and feelings are produced through actualizations and can never coincide with the totality of potential affective expression. Movements of affect are always accompanied by a real but virtual knot of tendencies and latencies that generate differences and divergences in what becomes actual. The expression and qualification of affect (in feelings or emotion) never coincide with the totality of affect" (Anderson 2006: 740).

In his most recent writings Anderson (2014) advances on his idea that the three modalities slide into and out of one another to disrupt their neat analytic distinction. Now he proposes to treat affect, feeling, and emotion pragmatically. Instead of looking at them as separate levels, with no chance of communication between them, processes of expression and qualification are seen as constitutive parts of the encounters in which bodily capacities are formed. And this means that, in practice, it will often prove impossible to distinguish between affect, feeling, and emotion, with each always being entangled with the others (Anderson 2014: 84). What Anderson proposes, then, is a pragmatic approach to affect as a bodily capacity evolving from encounters (mediated, but not determined by those encounters), which is always patterned in particular ways in events that include discursive and non-discursive elements that cannot be separated in practice.

This approach is also advocated by another prominent affect theoretician, Sara Ahmed (2004a: 39), who points out that she is

departing from the recent tendency to separate affect and emotion, which is clear in the work of Massumi (2002). For sure the experience of "having" an emotion may be distinct from sensations and impressions, which may burn the skin before any conscious moment of recognition. But this model creates a distinction between conscious recognition and "direct" feeling, which negates how what is not consciously experienced may still be mediated by past experiences. I am suggesting here that even seeming direct responses actually evoke past histories, and that this process bypasses consciousness, through bodily memories. So sensations may not be about conscious recognition, but this does not mean they are "direct" in the sense of immediate. Further, emotions clearly involve sensations: this analytic distinction between affect and emotion risks cutting emotions off from the lived experiences of being and having a body.

With Ahmed we have a fascinating account of affects and emotions as performatives—that is, the idea that the surfaces of people and things are always being constructed or impressed upon by the circulation of affects and emotions: emotions “surface” and materialize subjects, objects, textual figures, social relations, and the like. She points out that, although affect and emotions continuously circulate, they also, sometimes, “stick” around people and things. Thus, when a complex practice of “sticking” emotions to people goes on, what we have is a process of subjectification that goes beyond the traditional performative (discursive) approach (i.e., discourse as creating the things that it names); people are “created” not only through descriptions, but also through how we “feel” in relation to them (Wetherell 2012: 83).

According to Ahmed (2004a), affect is a relation constituting both its objects and its subjects. Her position is well summarized by Wetherell (2012: 156–57):

Affect . . . is a relation constituting both its objects and its subjects. As I move into hate, for instance, I become shaped in various ways. I could become subjectified as an accuser, or take on the subject position of a moral agent stuffed full of righteous indignation. . . . All of these subject positions are possible. . . . I acquire a psychic life and a particular kind of surface as a body for other bodies. The same thing happens to the object of my hate. No object, Ahmed argues, is inherently or intrinsically hateful or detestable. . . . It is the presence of my hate that materialises someone or something as hateful. If my hate . . . turns into love . . . the appearance and surface of the object will be transformed. . . . As emotions circulate . . . surfacing individual and collective bodies, tracing and forming their shape, . . . they sometimes “stick.”

Thus, different figures (the “asylum-seeker” in the UK in the 1990s, the “welfare queen” in the United States in the 1980s, etc.) become “sticky surfaces” that different affects (fear, denigration, feelings of invasion and of being taken advantage of, etc.) nestle on, adhering to form the objects of hate. Summing up her position, Ahmed writes (2004b: 120): “Affect does not reside in an object or sign, but is an affect of the circulation between objects and signs (the accumulation of affective value over time). Some signs, that is, increase in affective value as an effect of the movement between signs: the more they circulate, the more affective they become, and the more they appear to ‘contain’ affect.”

Ahmed allows for a much more comprehensive way of understanding how performativity works, introducing the idea of affects and emotions as also being performative (and opening up the possibility of thinking the socio-material as performative as well). However, her approach has been criticized by people like Wetherell, who argues that Ahmed’s proposal (suggesting that the linking of one sign to another is the driver that leads to the accumulation of affect) misses how “affective practices” (Wetherell’s favorite concept),

and not the mere circulation of signs, should be the focus of analysis when trying to understand how affect and emotions work in everyday life:

I see affective practice as a moment of recruitment and often synchronous assembling of multimodal resources, including, most crucially, body states. It is the participation of the emoting body that makes an assemblage an example of affect rather than an example of some other kind of social practice. I agree with Ahmed that this assembling and recruiting is onto-formative, meaning that it constitutes subjects and objects. . . . But we also need to locate affect, not . . . in endless and mysterious circulations, but in actual bodies and social actors. . . . The concept of affective practice, then, encompasses the movement of signs but it also tries to explain how affect is embodied, is situated and operates psychologically. (Wetherell 2012: 159)

Thus, for Wetherell (2012: 19), in an affective practice, body possibilities and routines are entangled with meaning-making processes and other social and material figurations. In this sense, for Wetherell (and for Ahmed and Anderson as well) affect and discourse cannot be disentangled; they must be thought of as jointly participating in assemblages or *agencements*.² Affect and discourse continuously intertwine in the patterning of affective assemblages operating in diverse scenarios in everyday life to varying extents and in different ways (Wetherell 2012: 52). In other words, affect has conscious and non-conscious, bodily and cognitive, elements articulated in extremely multifaceted ways. According to Wetherell (2012: 62), and contrary to Massumi and Thrift, affect is an assemblage of embodied responses and actions, both known and unknown to the experiencer: autonomic bodily responses, other body actions, subjective feelings, cognitive processing, firing of neural circuits, verbal reports, communicative signals such as facial expressions and the like. “An emotional episode, such as a burst of affect like rage or grief, integrates and brings together all of these things in the same general moment.”³ As we can see, according to this account, affect is anything but “autonomous,” as Massumi and Thrift claim affect to be. On the contrary, the picture offered by Wetherell is one of a highly intertwined process linking the body to affective and pre-conscious states that are always in motion (Wetherell 2012: 67). Therefore, for Wetherell (and I tend to concur with her), a crucial part of any affective practice consists of accounts and narratives of affect linked to bodies, where any episode of situated affect is usually some “ordered combination of body actions, discursive actions, and narratives” (Wetherell 2012: 94).

Thus, affects emerge, circulate, and evolve everywhere. Understood as a process of mediation, there is nothing that escapes affect. However, from a pragmatic point of view advocated by scholars like Anderson, Ahmed, and Wetherell (with whom I agree), affect has to be tackled out differently in the sites in which it appears, circulates, and develops. Some of those sites/places/

times are, following Anderson, personal encounters, atmospheres, and structures of feeling.

AFFECT IN PERSONAL ENCOUNTERS

Regarding personal encounters,⁴ Anderson (2014: 82) points out “Life is made up of innumerable encounters across and between different types of bodies.” Thus, a body’s charge of affect is itself the assembly of its historical encounters, sometimes repetitive, and this past is a part of new encounters (i.e., encounters are made through accumulated relations, dispositions, and habits), though unique in their own ways, not fully determined by that past. As we have already noted, affects are intensifications or attenuations of a body’s “force of existing” expressed in feelings and qualified in emotions (where emotions/affects become indistinguishable in actual experience). If this is so, personal encounters are prime events in which affects develop and organize, where processes of mediation are central components of encounters. As Anderson (2014: 85) points out, affect is thus “mediated” and “shaped” by the congregants in a scenario, intermingling with their respective embodied histories, both involving and exceeding discourse. Anderson describes this process as always involving “repertoires” and “dispositions,” and this is crucial for us because we think that among the many repertoires and dispositions a body brings to a social encounter with other bodies, sketches of narrative identities play a very important role. People arrive at encounters with some ideas of who they are in relation to their different social identifications, identifications that they know the other participants in the encounter will rapidly recognize (their visible ones), or eventually they will discover as the encounter evolves. I conceptualize “some ideas of” as “sketches” to take into account that those ideas can (and many times do) change in the course of the actual encounter. But, in any case, those sketches are a very important part of the repertoires and dispositions a body brings to an encounter with other bodies and material things.

Narrative identities and the way we play them in encounters, through characters and via the habits we have developed around them (I walk as a male, not as a female; but I also walk as an Argentine male, not like my dear friend Tony, who is Dominican, and walk-dances as a Dominican male; additionally, I walk as an Argentine straight male; and so forth), and the attitudes, motivations, and systems of knowledge we bring about to those encounters are crucial in establishing the circuits of reciprocity that any encounter requires to follow through. In tandem with my “reading” of their bodies and “understanding” of their utterances, people do the same with my own body stances and my words and, concurrently, we practically achieve a common action. In other words, identitarian issues are always at stake when

bodies encounter one another in everyday life, bodies that arrive with some identifications “stuck” to them but also with many emotions stuck to them as well. Even the most non-conscious manifestation of affect (and, of course, feelings as well) like the blush of a body shamed for instance, cannot be disentangled from the identitarian articulation that was being deployed when such a blush colored my (or other participants in the encounter) face: it was in relation to a particular identification that I felt ashamed, not to my body in general; there was something that I did or uttered that was incongruent with the habitual repertoire and dispositions expected from that particular identification, which was the origin of the other’s reaction that triggered my shame (or, even without a direct reaction by the other, my own awareness of such mistake or incongruence can trigger shame and make me blush). Obviously, in the course of the encounter some identifications can disconnect from some bodies (due to an “erroneous” reading, for instance); and others will stick in turn (identifications that are not quite visible and need some kind of verbal exchange to appear, or a peculiar habit to be performed). But, in any event, identitarian issues will be important.

We firmly believe that among the things that, coming from past encounters, are somehow repeated (but never exactly in the same way) are not only sketches of narrative identities, but also the identitarian articulations (the peculiar way people combine their different identifications) people deploy at different times in an event. And this deployment of particular identitarian articulations during personal encounters (visible identifications—such as gender, race, age, ethnicity, etc.—articulated with identifications that have to be explicitly deployed during encounters, if they require such a disclosure, because they are not quite visible—such as sexuality, nationality, class, and the like) is the reason behind the kind of habits, repertoires, and dispositions that people actually perform in those encounters. In other words, personal encounters, as particular kinds of assemblages, require the sequential deployment of different identitarian articulations that follow the trajectory of the event. Every time the particular identitarian articulation changes, a different set of habits, repertoires, and dispositions appears on the scene, on any side of the social encounter. They were there before as capacities to be deployed, but they only become actually deployed when the particular identitarian articulation that is necessary to answer the requirement of the personal encounter at stake “asks” them to “affect and be affected” by the event.

For instance, as I enter a scene in which I can eventually interact with other people, my visible identifications (race, age, gender, perhaps class) are “read” by others as being an average American senior citizen who happens to be male. I affect and I am affected by the encounter and deploy my habits and dispositions (while people deploy theirs in turn) from the point of view of this particular identitarian articulation and my own reading of theirs. As soon as I open my mouth and utter a single word, my heavy Argentine accent

(part of my habits and dispositions), regardless of the semantic content of the word uttered, adds a new component to the identitarian articulation I am deploying at the encounter. From that point in time, my accent (sound as a materiality emanating from my body) becomes one of my body's capacities that affects and can be affected by the encounter.⁵ That new component can be read by others as "race," "ethnicity," or "nationality," depending on the habits and dispositions with which they arrive at the encounter at stake. But, in any case, it will heavily affect how the encounter proceeds further. Moving from a particular identitarian articulation to another one activates new habits, dispositions, and repertoires (mine and theirs) that were not being performed before, showing how those habits, dispositions, and repertoires are linked to peculiar identitarian articulations, not to "people" participating in the event, beyond the particular identitarian articulations they eventually deploy. What we have here is a pairing of affective positions that continuously change in encounters, modifying the capacities to affect and be affected concurrently. And while it is true that social relationships, many times, arrive with the affective slots for actors already sketched, it is also true that the peculiar articulation of the different identifications people deploy in a particular social relation continuously messes up any strict coherence between a subject position and an affective position.

AFFECT, STRUCTURES OF FEELING, AND AFFECTIVE ATMOSPHERES

If that is the way in which affect works in personal encounters, particular collective affects may condition life. They may have a longer duration than affects or emotions, and come to frame the world (or a very important part of it) or a site, rather than only attaching to certain objects or people. Here we are dealing with the "transmission" of affect among many people. As Wetherell points out, affective transmission cannot be understood as something one "catches" but, instead, is a process that one is "caught up" in. It is a very complex process that always connects the body to other bodies, practices, energies, judgments, and so forth that are relationally embodied. It belongs to the realm of affect because we clearly "feel" a kind of pull as our bodies embody the affective or emotional state (Wetherell 2012: 141). Furthermore (142), the circulation of affect involves understanding a bundle of processes working in conjunction, such as the capacities of bodies to reenact the actions of others, the power of discourses, the affective discursive genres available to different people, attention of the cultural and social limits on identification and empathy, and the like. We can see nothing "simple" or "unmediated" here, nothing resembling a direct body reaction to an affective atmosphere, as implied by many advocates of the affective turn. To the raft of processes

mentioned by Wetherell we want to add “identifications.” As we mentioned above, people arrive at encounters with several sets of identifications they know they have and that other people in the encounter will be able (at the beginning of the encounter or later on) to eventually “read” (and, as we will see below, “feel”). Those same identifications (and their articulations) also play a crucial role in understanding how affects circulate collectively. Again, Wetherell (2012: 148): “Social identity . . . is the clue to the limits of affective communication in crowds and to understanding the forms and directions crowd action takes. Shared identification makes actions and affect intelligible . . . [and] also guides the crowd’s affective action, the way it flows, the objects it takes, the kind of affect displayed, and so on,” combining with social processes that influence who and what we might engage with, “whose affect we are open to, and whose experience becomes our experience” (Wetherell 2012: 150).

In this regard, what Wetherell is proposing is that, in relation to the transmission and circulation of collective affects, how identitarian articulation relates to affect takes a particular twist, such as *one* particular identification prominently taking center stage and almost unilaterally guiding the affective process at stake. Thus, while in mundane personal encounters people constantly combine different identifications according to the requirements of the task at stake, choreographing their appearance and disappearance as necessary, when we deal with processes of collective affect, one particular identification not only never disappears from the choreography, but also performs a dominant role that never shares with any other identification in the identitarian assemblage.⁶

Structures of Feeling

The literature on the affective turn mentions two ways in which collective affects condition everyday life: through *structures of feeling* and through *affective atmospheres*. Both are ways in which affective relations and capacities come to be mediated by collective moods.

The term *structures of feeling* was introduced by Raymond Williams, for whom structures of feeling mediate life by exercising “palpable pressures” and putting “effective limits on experience and on action” (Williams 1977: 132):

We are talking about characteristic elements of impulse, restraint and tone; specifically affective elements of consciousness and relationships: not feeling against thought, but thought as felt and feeling as thought: practical consciousness of a present kind, in a living and interrelating continuity. We are then defining these elements as a “structure”: as a set, with specific internal relations, at once interlocking and in tension. Yet we are also defining a social experience which is still in process, often indeed not yet recognized as social

but taken to be private, idiosyncratic, and even isolating, but which in analysis (though rarely otherwise) has its emergent, connecting, and dominant characteristics, indeed its specific hierarchies. These are more often recognizable at a later stage, when they have been (as often happens) formalized, classified, and in many cases built into institutions and formations. By that time the case is different; a new structure of feeling will usually already have begun to form, in the true social present.

We are talking here, in general, about collective moods, as a shared “dispositional relation to the world logically prior to any sustained cognitive engagement or incidental affective experience” (Pfau 2005: 9). Individuals may be aligned with that collective mood, or out of sync. Collective moods have real effects and are irreducible to other non-affective determinations and can be sensed through how they mediate capacities to affect and be affected (Anderson 2014).

The idea of structure of feeling is an important refinement over the idea of collective mood. What Williams was attempting to do with the introduction of this concept was to focus on those features of affective life that exist “at the very edge of semantic availability” (Williams 1977: 134) yet form a set of “pressures” and “limits” on life as lived. Here we have a much more complicated appreciation of the organization of collective moods that are themselves elements within life rather than reducible to signifying systems:

One that starts not from two separate worlds that are then drawn together—lived experience and the ascription of meaning to that lived experience—but from learning to attune to what Williams (1977: 128) described as “forming and formative processes” that involve but are not reducible to signifying processes and systems. . . . Structures of feeling exert pressure and set limits on how encounters can be felt. . . . Structures of feeling are not only mediated through signification and representational devices. Collective moods are both mediated and themselves an active form and force of mediation.” (Anderson 2014: 115).

To talk about forming and formative processes that involve but are not reducible to signifying processes and systems is to understand structures of feeling as rooted in practical consciousness and customary, routine streams of activity (Wetherell 2012: 104).

Of course, as we stated above, there is no straight connection between affect, feelings, and emotions. Therefore structures of feeling are usually expressed differently in personal feelings and emotions, and people may be totally or partially aligned with those structures of feeling, or even totally out of sync, but they exercise a force on life as it is lived and delimit what can be experienced. As mediating mechanisms, they enter both personal encounters and affective atmospheres as well, and are processed through the different identitarian articulations people enact in those settings. In that regard, the

different identitarian articulations enacted by the same social actor in a particular encounter at different times of the encounter will relate differently to the same structure of feeling (which applies as well to the relationship between identitarian articulations and affective atmospheres). Thus, a structure of feeling is a group-based “mood” that relates to the group’s way of life, but is not reducible to it (Anderson 2104: 116).

If we are interested in what structures of feeling do, instead of what kind of entity they are, we have to say that they are provisionally congealed processes (or “social experiences in solution”—the preferred Williams conceptualization) that have a real mediating effectivity in their capacities to affect and be affected. And if we think of structures of feeling as being collective, it is not only because they are shared between people, but also because they are distributed across diverse sites and places. In their mediating capacities they come to condition, but never determine, emotions and feelings (Anderson 2014).

As we mentioned above, Williams’s preferred concept for his structures of feeling is “social experiences in solution.” Williams’s theoretical move is aimed at providing a way to think of the social as always in process and ongoing, in a continuous becoming—that is, a social composed of entities that are not fixed and explicit, yet still have palpable effects on how life is lived, felt, and organized (Anderson 2014). In other words, a structure of feeling is an expressive unity in which an affective quality both crosses between and is produced through the interaction of a multiplicity of elements (practices, events, or processes).

It is important to clarify here that the term “feeling” as used by Williams does not refer to “emotions” in the way that psychology usually talks about them. As Anderson (2014: 119) points out, the word “feeling” describes “a particularizing, shared, affective quality” that, emerging alongside some kind of collective, works as a disposition toward “oneself, others and the world,” delimiting how people, groups, and things “appear and can be related to and valued.” In that regard we can say that structures of feeling are major mediating actors in a kind of description of how life goes on in which everything is mediation, mediating, and mediated. In the particular case of a structure of feeling, its mediating function is related to its role in conditioning how things “appear” by organizing the way in which those things come to be “felt” in particular sites and events.

But what about the term “structure” in structures of feeling? Williams’s attempt here is to keep some conception of “order,” very flexible, but still with some specific arrangement of particular relationships, never a mere flux. In order to do so he uses the idea of “social formation in solution,” emphasizing the systematic and transient together: “We are then defining these elements as a ‘structure’: as a set, with specific internal relations, at once interlocking and in tension” but “still in process, often indeed not yet recognized

as social but taken to be private, idiosyncratic, and even isolating” (Williams 1977: 132). This means that the structure of feeling is not an organic whole (whose elements are seamlessly integrated), but is a social formation “in solution” (i.e., a complex whole with elements interlocking and in tension), “made up of ‘forming and formative processes.’ . . . Emphasizing structure as a term of activity, reminds us to focus on the dynamism of the dispositional affective quality that is a structure of feeling” (Anderson 2014: 122). They are emergent and in process because they are continuously mediated by signifying apparatuses, affective atmospheres, personal encounters, and their identitarian articulations, and by other structures of feelings as well. At the same time, structures of feeling also mediate all these other processes, bringing affective conditions to life. They are always articulated with diverse actors and are one of the ways in which “bodily capacities are organized and mediated,” having palpable effects in lives and on bodies (Anderson 2014: 126).

Going back to the idea that structures of feeling are always mediating and being mediated, there is a continuous back-and-forth between different processes. Thus, if on the one hand signifying apparatuses mediate affects and feelings, on the other hand structures of feeling are themselves mediating processes, effectively mediating the way in which people relate to signifying apparatuses. At the same time, space, place, objects, and history will impact the way in which a structure of feeling is expressed in feelings, “qualified in emotions or otherwise attuned to and sensed” (Anderson 2014: 135). Here, one more time, we want to emphasize how identitarian articulations work in this continuously mediated/mediating scenario. Our idea is that structures of feelings (and this also applies to the affective atmospheres we will analyze in the next section of this chapter) are mediated by the different identitarian articulations people deploy in their everyday life; that is, the same structure of feeling will differently affect diverse identitarian articulations (of different people of course, but also of the same person moving from one choreography of their different identifications to another one, following the requirements of the encounter), and people will relate differently to those structures of feelings depending on the peculiar identitarian articulation they are performing. We may here go back to the example of my utterance of a single word that completely changes the identitarian articulation I am deploying in a personal encounter, consequently affecting the further development of such an event (because, obviously, the people involved in the scene will change their identitarian articulations in turn). If we relate that scene to “fear” as being a very prominent structure of feeling working on the United States post-9/11, for many people involved in the scene my foreign accent can activate the mediating effect of “fear” as a structure of feeling that was not notably working before me opening my mouth. In this regard, it is not that “fear” as a structure of feeling was not “out there,” it was; but its capacity to affect and be

affected was actualized only when it was mediated by the performance of an identitarian articulation that included the element “foreign” to the mix. The mediating effect of the structure of feeling of “fear,” as triggered by the identitarian articulation that added to my visible identifications the not-so-visible “foreign” identification via my uttering of a word, also mediated other elements already present in the event that, from now on, acquire a new meaning and a different capacity to affect and be affected, for instance my beard. From then on, my beard can add some “thickness” to the fear introduced by the actualization of the structure of feeling “fear” into the scene.

In addition, the emotions triggered by how my identitarian articulation (now including the “foreign” element on the mix) performed in the scene rematerializes my beard from what could have previously passed as a “grand-pa” beard to becoming a “potential Muslim terrorist” beard, showing how the elements of a scene are materialized differently by the emotions depending upon how those elements are “felt” (my beard started to be “felt” as dangerous only after “fear” appeared in the scene through me uttering a word).

Therefore, it is quite possible that the structure of feeling linked to “fear” was instrumental in how my beard moved from “grand-pa beard” to “potential Muslim terrorist” beard. However, as soon as the choreography of my identitarian articulation changed one more time with the discursive introduction of my Argentine Catholic identification, it is also quite possible that my beard moved back to its initial “grand-pa” role in the encounter at stake, showing how even sedimented, wide-spread, and forceful structures of feeling are always processed by the identitarian articulations people enact in personal encounters.⁷

As Wetherell (2012: 89) reminds us, affective routines such as the one I am referring to here, are always “multimodal,” requiring “the recruitment, assemblage and entanglement of huge social, cultural and material infrastructures.” As this takes places across time, affects, practices, and meanings will change. “This interweaving displays various peaks and troughs of diverse modes of the semiotic, the material and the natural,” with some aspects becoming more or less important.

In my example above, this multimodality and sequential importance of one of the modes over the others is shown when the identitarian articulations I was deploying in the scene were dependent upon visual identifications first, the materiality of sound second, the materiality of my beard third, and the semiotic content of my utterance when I pointed out that I am neither from the Middle-East nor Muslim. That physical appearance (to have a white skin and European facial features is usually “read” as being Western), sounds uttered (accents have to be decoded), material features of the body (beards have to be read) as well as sentences all have clear representational implications shows how difficult is to disentangle affect from representations. As Wetherell (2012: 74) points out, emotion appears and is engaged with inter-

subjectively, and affect is always a relational and social event, “and the ‘dialogic’ activities involved need to be at the forefront of attempts to understand affective meaning-making.” Even though Williams’s “structures of feeling” has proved to be extremely fruitful to understand how affect works, we can witness in Anderson’s comments above that the term “structure” rings some undesirable rigidities that the affective turn desperately tries to avoid. Anderson’s move to think about “structure” as a term for processes, emphasizing structure as an expression of activity, is an initial attempt to rescue the dynamism that usually is obfuscated by the traditional use of “structure” in the social sciences. Wetherell (2012: 104) undertakes a different route for the same goal, instead using “practice.” Trying to add flexibility and mobility to Williams’s “structures of feeling” concept, Wetherell (2012: 116) points out that the affective canon characteristic of any social grouping “is likely to be a mix of different manifestations of affective practice as well as varying in content and in typical distributions.” Some of what composes a habitus may work through aspirations, involving dramatic displays. Some other components may include playful affective routines, while many habitus’ “affective practices will just operate in the expected, taken-for-granted, unarticulated and self-evident ways.”

Affective Atmospheres

If structures of feeling are one way in which collective affects mediate people’s experiences, affective atmospheres are another one. Here we follow the work of Dufrenne ([1953] 1973), as discussed by Anderson (2014), which is very pertinent for our subject matter because he deals with atmospheres in relation to artistic artifacts. Dufrenne’s basic point is that aesthetic objects’ effects on people cannot be reduced to their representational content. According to him those objects have certain qualities that words cannot express but which communicate themselves anyhow. How? By arousing a feeling. Obviously, those feelings won’t be aroused homogeneously in all the participants of the encounter with the aesthetic object: different people will “feel” different things regarding such an object. If they will eventually feel differently regarding the same aesthetic object, it is due to the diverse dispositions they bring with them to the event (not all dispositions will be able to “feel” the non-representational quality in the same way) and because they will bring to the event, as part of their dispositions, different narrative identities that will somehow filter how they “feel” the event. Here it is pertinent to bring about Ahmed’s discussion of how we carry a history of feelings to the encounter as well and how the “feeling” that is aroused in the event materializes objects and actors through the creation of surfaces and borders.

Through our bodily dispositions, history of feelings and narrative identities (among other things), the affective qualities of objects remain “open”

(i.e., atmospheres are uncompleted because of their constitutive openness to being expressed and qualified in particular encounters) (Anderson 2014: 145). In that regard, atmospheres condition, but never determine, capacities and emotions. They are “out there,” yes, but they always have to be “completed” via the particular attunement of bodies to them. And those bodies do not arrive at the encounter of the atmosphere “out of the blue.” On the contrary, they come to its encounter with a history of previous affective encounters with them (or similar ones); with sketches of the diverse identifications they are used to perform in those types of encounters; and with an initial articulation of those different identifications, based on previous encounters with similar atmospheres as well (which will be modified by the choreographic entrance and exit of diverse identifications as the encounter with the atmosphere requires). As we explained before when talking about structures of feelings, depending on the different identitarian articulations that are successively deployed as the encounter between those bodies and the atmosphere evolves, the affects and emotions triggered by the affective atmosphere are going to be felt differently (bodies are going to affect the atmosphere and be affected by it in varied manners). The reverse is also true: how affects and emotions impinge on the atmosphere will ask for a rearticulation of the identitarian mix, completing the image of a process in constant emergence.

The previous account about how atmospheres develop and are transformed by, among other things, the ways in which people interact with them means, according to Anderson (2014) that they are not reducible to an individual experience (“atmospheres are ‘revealed’ by feelings and emotions but are not equivalent to them”). This prompts us to ponder how atmospheres embody a tension between the subjective and objective. As such, there is a multiplicity of experiences of atmospheres being differentially translated into idiosyncratic experiences for different individuals (147). In the particular case of music-related events, atmospheres, as affective powers of feeling and spatial bearers of moods, are intensified by creating patterns of affective imitation in concert halls (Anderson 2014).

We agree, in principle, with Anderson (2014) that atmospheres “gain being” from the multiplicity of the shared dispositions and habits of those who enter the scene where the atmosphere is emerging because of the very entrance of those who enter, among other things. We also think, though, that those shared dispositions are complexly related to the identitarian articulations those entering the scene bring about, sequentially, to the encounter at stake. Our point is that while those dispositions and habits belong to the actors of the encounter, they have to be actually activated by the atmosphere. In other words, it is not mandatory that the atmosphere does so; those dispositions and habits can eventually never be activated, remaining only as capacities, unless the scene calls for them. As Wetherell (2012: 146) reminds us,

affect may be transmitted but have no significant consequences, failing to excite others. And many times the proponents of the affective atmospheres idea do not really explain why and how different bodies are affected in different ways by the same atmosphere. That is the reason why Seyfert (2012: 30) points out that

we suggest disaggregating and de-stabilizing the notion of the individual or subject of affect, or rather acknowledging the continual fluxes in bodily composition and constitution, which arise in part from an inherent receptivity of bodies. A fluid and expanded conceptual field of bodily existence goes hand in hand with the reconceptualization of the transmission of affects between bodies. The transmission of affect is no simple influence or impingement of an external force upon a human body, but rather describes the different affective frequencies modulating the diverse ways in which various types of bodies interact (through tactile, olfactory, gustatory, electrical, etc., modes). Conceptualizing bodies as fluid compositions also bars us from assuming that every human body reacts or is affected the same way, irrespective of circumstance, temporal experience, or variations across individuals. Affects not only vary according to time and circumstance—that is, they are historically and culturally different—each affect is also never solely a part of a body to begin with. It is always a part of an encounter.

In Seyfert's account, two concepts (usually considered monolithically by many advocates of the affective turn) are disaggregated: the individual or subject of affect, and affect itself. The first one is now understood to be associated with bodies that are continuously in flux. The second one is then understood in terms of the different affective frequencies that modulate the encounters among bodies. At the same time, Seyfert stresses the relational character of affect: "A composite body emerges as an individual body at the moment it becomes affectable by outside influences or has an impact on other things as an individual body. . . . This in turn points to the continuous mutual determination of bodies and the effects of their encounters, for each encounter results in a change of the body's capabilities—a change of the powers of acting and perceiving." What Seyfert (2012: 35) wants to stress is the co-presence and simultaneity of manifold bodily and affective modes through which we move:⁸

The shift from the inner body as the source of affects to the assemblage of heterogeneous elements implies that transmissions vary depending on the composition of each assemblage. Thus, transmission refers to the particular channels, frequencies, timbres and tonalities in the process of mutual affecting by those bodies. Consequentially, the frequency range might in principle be infinite, always depending on the variety of bodies present and their specific historical and cultural sensibilities and capabilities.

We tend to agree with Seyfert's position, above all with his ideas of disaggregating the notion of the individual or subject of affect, and his understanding that transmissions vary depending on the composition of each assemblage. We have been proposing a particular way of "disaggregating" the individual—that is, the idea of identitarian articulations. In that regard, we propose that if dispositions and habits are actually activated by an affective atmosphere (that is, moving from virtual capacities to real affects) it is, apart from the effect of other elements present in the atmosphere, due to the particular identitarian articulation the actors enacted in their encounter with the atmosphere at stake. In other words, it is not the case that the atmosphere acts "automatically" upon the disposition and habits brought about by the actors of the encounter, triggering them by its mere presence. Atmospheres act upon those dispositions and habits as they are arrayed by the particular identitarian articulations the actors deploy at different times of the encounter with the atmosphere. Obviously, those dispositions and habits, once actualized from mere capacities to real affects, have the capability, in turn, of eventually modifying the atmosphere.

When talking about atmosphere's effects, Anderson highlights their "overall effects" (Anderson 2014: 154): "Materials reinforce and strengthen one another producing a type of sympathetic coordination between elements and a type of 'total effect' that cannot be decomposed." We agree with him in this regard, but we want to emphasize that the identitarian articulations people deploy when they encounter and feel enveloped by an atmosphere should be considered of primary importance among atmosphere's "elements."

The causality behind the appearance of atmospheres is quite complex, because it involves many elements, some of which have no relation to each other. This is the reason why Anderson (2014: 155) claims that, "other modes of causality might be at work as atmospheres form and deform, becoming part of the conditions for encounters before intensifying to emerge as objects of thought. It is at this point that atmospheres come to be named: an act that may itself intensify, enhance or otherwise change an atmosphere as intentions, ideas and beliefs are layered into it." Here again we see the mediated/mediating character of atmospheres. In this particular case the way in which signifying apparatuses can be instrumental in the further development of a particular atmosphere. If Anderson stresses the mediating process that goes from signifying apparatuses toward atmospheres, then we can say that, eventually, atmospheres can mediate the way in which signifying apparatuses evolve as well.

The mediated/mediating character of the relationship between atmospheres and signifying apparatuses also extends to how they interact with personal encounters, because atmospheres can be, at the same time, an effect that emanates from a gathering (in which the personal encounter precedes the atmosphere) and a cause that may itself have some degree of agentic capac-

ity. Anderson points out (Anderson 2014) that atmospheres are revealed as they are expressed in bodily feelings, and qualified in emotions and other actions. Thus, when going back to the example of my own experience regarding the deployment of my different identitarian articulations and how they affect the capacities that are actually arrayed in events, affective atmospheres, in their mediating capacity regarding structures of feelings, could be instrumental in bringing back the “Islamic extremist beard” to a “grand-pa beard” (even before I disclosed discursively that I am neither from the Middle East, nor a Muslim) if the fictitious encounter I was referring to occurred in the middle of a music concert in which I actively showed my enjoyment of the music. My body stance, showing my joy in regard to the music being performed within an affective atmosphere of plenty of other people’s joy is adding another identification to the identitarian articulation being deployed (white, old, male, foreign, but also a fan of the music other people in the scene are fans of). This, one more time, not only re-signifies my beard, but also (and more important to my argument for this chapter about affects and emotions) recharges with affects and emotions that same beard, factually materializing a completely different beard.

Therefore, we have here two different types of “collective moods” that mediate and are mediated by personal encounters and signifying apparatuses. But if both are collective moods, what are the differences between them? According to Anderson (Anderson 2014: 156), it is structures of feeling that place “limits and pressure” how encounters and apparatuses form. On the other hand, atmospheres operate as a kind of proposition or offer of how to “feel a situation, site, person or thing,” which, eventually, may condition encounters. Again, if we agree with Anderson in this regard, we also think that it could be better explained if we introduce the mediating effect of the identitarian articulations that are deployed in events. Thus, structures of feeling do not set limits and pressure how encounters form, in general, but only in relation to the different identitarian articulations that are performed in those encounters (as shown above when I pointed out that the structure of feeling “fear” only started mediating a particular event when the identity “foreign” unexpectedly entered into articulation with the already articulated identities that were working there before: white, old, and male). At the same time, affective atmospheres work as affective propositions, unfinished lures to feeling a situation, that can affect encounters, if we understand them working differently in relation to diverse identitarian articulations, where some of them “finish the lure” while others do not. This is so because the capacities that structures of feeling and affective atmospheres have to affect and be affected by do not belong to any body in particular, but still have to be mediated by real bodies in actual encounters to actually affect. And those real bodies in encounters (when we restrict our analysis to human bodies) always appear in some sort of identitarian articulation that becomes highly instru-

mental in the way structures of feeling and affective atmospheres “move” bodies (human and nonhuman).

Another important difference, Anderson notes, is that what differentiates structures of feeling from affective atmospheres is endurance: affective atmospheres are much more fragile than structures of feeling; “minor changes, such as a missed note or an out-of-place word, can cause atmospheres to fall apart or fade away or otherwise change. Atmospheres may slowly dissipate or may be abruptly brought to an end” (Anderson 2014: 159). On the other side of the spectrum we find structures of feeling, which are much more durable than atmospheres. A minor change can attenuate the effect of a structure of feeling upon an encounter, but it won’t cause that structure to disappear. A third major difference between structures of feeling and affective atmospheres pointed out by Anderson is their extension. Structures expand across space and time, while atmospheres exist in particular “ensembles” and accrue around certain bodies (Anderson 2014: 160).

However different, both structures of feeling and affective atmospheres mediate the affective conditions of how personal encounters take place. Here the word “condition” is crucial. As Anderson (2014: 161) points out, conditions are not determinant. Instead, the structures and atmospheres condition by affecting and being mediums for certain things outside of themselves. As they do this, the structures and atmospheres may be in a state of flux relative to apparatuses, discourses, and so on, all the time mediating encounters as well as apparatuses. “They are always in the midst of encounters, emerging and changing as they mediate life, shaping how the world is disclosed, related to and felt, and becoming inseparable from affects and emotions” (Anderson 2014: 161). Thus, structures of feeling and affective atmospheres condition personal encounters and affective practices, while, at the same time, are conditioned by those encounters and practices. This gives us a good picture of the continuous movement of affect that this new theoretical turn wants to advance. As with my fictitious example of my shifting identitarian articulations materializing, through different affective charges, different elements of the encounter (my accent, my beard, and the like), it is important to wrap up this section of the chapter by pointing out that, in the continuous movement of affect we are trying to understand here, affects and emotions not only materialize elements of the encounter in different ways, but also materialize particular identitarian articulations.

Thus, if my beard moved back and forth from “grand-pa” beard to “potential Muslim terrorist” beard, and back to “grand-pa” beard, materializing my beard in very different ways (charging my beard with affect differently), the identitarian articulations people “read” from those different assemblages of my beard with my other bodily capacities present in the event also “materialized” differently, for both them and myself; and the charge of affect linked to those different identitarian articulations changed as well. My different identi-

tarian articulations were not only “seen” differently, but were also “felt” differently, where vision was influenced by affect in the same way that affect was conditioned by vision.

In the continuous back-and-forth from identitarian articulations to affects, and vice versa, particular identitarian articulations are materialized as such by peculiar affects, while the same affect is related, in a completely different way, to diverse identitarian articulations (of different people of course, but of the same person at different times of the event as well). This occurs to the point of being felt as a completely different affect. This is one of the reasons why, while we tremendously admire the work of Margaret Wetherell, we do not agree with her when she tends to assume only one affective position being actualized per affective practice. We think, instead, in terms of several affective identitarian articulations being actualized per affective practice.

POPULAR MUSIC, FEELINGS, AND EMOTIONS

Music and Emotions

In terms of the scholarly work done on the cultural study of music, to date there is only one book published on the topic of affect and music à la Deleuze and Guattari: *Sound, Music, Affect: Theorizing Sonic Experience* (published in 2013), which actually deals much more with sound than with popular music.

From the point of view of the approach that equates affects with emotions, music is conceptualized as a device for the constitution of emotive action in and across a range of social settings. Here the different works of Tia DeNora (2000, 2010) are exemplary and deal with emotion construction through musical practice. As such, it is well attuned to the affective turn and its concerns with those dimensions of action that are non-cognitive.

As DeNora reminds us (2010), work on music and emotions did not start with the turn to affect and emotion that occurred in the mid-1990s; it was well established much earlier. She cites the work of Paul Willis (1978) in that regard, reviewing and revaluing it from the vantage point of her major (and path-breaking) contribution to the sociology of music—that is, music “affordances.” In that regard, for DeNora (2010), Willis showed how actors took music as a resource for emotional experience; that is, music “afforded” them a particular emotional experience.

As DeNora correctly points out (2010: 165), we do not have to confuse “affordances” with “stimulus.” The way she uses the term emphasizes affordances’ relationality: “Objects do not inherently provide affordances but rather their affordances are constituted through the ways they mesh with many other features of a setting and actions directed to them. With regard to music, affordances for emotional experience emerge from the interactions

between actors, materials (musical and other), and conventions of use.” If Willis’s work can be understood as pioneering in terms of musical affordances, another important topic in the sociology of music and emotions attends to the social distribution of emotions. DeNora (2010) characterizes this trend as trying to comprehend music’s relationship to emotional experience and to models of how to be an emotional actor, as characterized by diverse social identifications in terms of race, ethnicity, age, class, gender, sexuality, and the like. As DeNora points out (2010: 166), this line of work attempts to explain how music not only portrays or embodies values: “It portrays music as active and dynamic, as constitutive not merely of ‘values’ but constitutive of trajectories and styles of conduct, pointing to the ways in which music . . . may serve to organize or ‘configure’ its users. As a cultural form . . . music models categories of emotion, which in turn provide candidate forms of experience for recipients, which then impact back on musical forms.”

DeNora’s own work has been at the forefront of current sociology of music trying to understand how music may be used—with varying degrees of conscious awareness by actors—as a resource to create and sustain a variety of feeling states. According to DeNora (2010: 168), in this kind of research endeavor the concern is how music helps people to develop “styles of feeling and emotionally laden postures,” in which music acts as “a means for self-interpretation and self-constitution, for the doing, being, and feeling that are the matrix of social experience.”

DeNora cites the work of Gomart and Hennion (1999) as belonging to this style of inquiry as well. These authors are particularly interested in the mechanisms people use to produce “dispositions.” They believe that actors engage in techniques of preparation to produce particular forms of attachments. Of particular interest for the French authors are the mechanisms by which people “abandon themselves” to sensations and emotions triggered by music. They suggest that such an “abandonment” is not a passive department; on the contrary, it requires a lot of work: “active work must be done in order to be moved.” As DeNora (2010: 169) comments, “Listeners are by no means simply ‘affected’ by music but are rather active in constructing their ‘passivity’ to music—their ability to be ‘moved.’ The music ‘user’ is thus deeply implicated as a producer of his or her own emotional response, and is one who . . . strives tentatively to fulfill those conditions which will let him be seized and taken over by a potentially exogenous force.”

Gomart and Hennion’s work has a clear connection to DeNora’s, as both stress the relational character of music’s affordance—that is, “music’s powers to instigate emotion” (DeNora 2010: 171):

[People] are routinely engaged in various practices of “tuning in,” of producing a musical event that would be capable of “moving” them, and this produc-

tion of passivity in the face of music, and its subsequent emotional “effects” is usually achieved through an assemblage of musical practices: the choice of specific recordings, volume levels, material cultural and temporal environments of listening . . . ; and the pairing and compiling of musical works, memories, previous and current contexts of hearing such that people could often be conceived as—and spoke of themselves as—disc jockeys to themselves. . . . [Thus,] music can be seen as a medium or device for achieving “emotional work.” . . . [People] use music both routinely and in exceptional circumstances to regulate moods and energy levels, to enhance and maintain desired states of feeling and bodily energy . . . and to diminish or modify undesirable emotional states.

This is a superb characterization of the emotional effect of music to which we would add the ways in which identitarian articulations are also related to (and constitute a part of) the assemblages of practices that end up conditioning how people use music to affect and be affected. We firmly believe that the various practices of “tuning in” mentioned by DeNora should include the effect of different identitarian articulations on them. In other words, different identitarian articulations influence the way in which actors end up, first, selecting and, once selected, performing those practices. Our point, as fully developed in the first part of this chapter, is that dispositions are only actualized when particular identitarian articulations “ask” them to enter the event at stake. Not all the habits and dispositions the actors brought with them to the encounter with music will be finally actualized; only the capacities linked to the particular identitarian articulations sequentially deployed by the actors in the event will. If the identitarian articulation, for whatever reason, changes (and more often than not they do change), it also changes the set of dispositions that are actualized in the event, and, consequently, how music is used to manage emotions. Additionally, some musical elements (sound, lyrics, performances, etc.) can be themselves instrumental in the appearance (and disappearance) of particular capacities in the scene brought about by the identifications that are asked to participate (or to stop participating) in the event at stake.

In this regard, the metaphor used by DeNora (people as disc jockeys of themselves), should be replaced by something like “identitarian articulations” working as disc jockeys of themselves; continuously changing the musical practices DeNora mentions in connection to the habits and dispositions (identifications’ capacities) that different identitarian articulations sequentially actualize in any event, showing, by the way, how the identitarian articulations are a continuous “doing” instead of a fixed “being.” And, as we said above, those musical practices have their own effects on the identitarian articulations (and their differential capacities) playing a role in the scene, eventually conditioning the appearance of new identifications on the choreographic mix and the exit of some others; or, perhaps, being instrumental in

the actualization of some identifications' capacities of the identitarian articulation currently working in the event that were not used in it before.

As we can see this is a very complex picture of identifications, identitarian articulations, habits, dispositions, and capacities that are in a continuous back-and-forth process of conditioning in accordance with music materials (understood in very broad terms). This is a *process* whose end result is the attunement of particular bodies to certain emotions, underlying the word *process* to continuously emphasize the emergent character of what is going on.

DeNora is correct in pointing out (2010) that people can perfectly describe how music's specific properties such as rhythms, harmonies, genres, and styles afford them with referents or representations of "where" they wish to "be" or "go" emotionally. However, we think that they do not do so from a centered and unchanged position, "the actor," but from the diverse identitarian articulations they deploy in different events, or sequentially in the same event. In that regard, distinctive identitarian articulations will want to "go" or "be" "somewhere" emotionally, and will use music affordances accordingly; while other identitarian articulations will want to go or be elsewhere and, for that purpose, they will use musical affordances differently. And this can occur, sequentially or even simultaneously, in a single event, resulting in affective ambivalence, cognitive dissonance, and the like.⁹

For the process of connecting identitarian articulations to emotions via music to work properly, people have to have some idea of what music can afford them to do. According to DeNora (2010: 172), people perceive what music can afford them in relation to a range of different matters: "Among these are previous associations people have made between particular musical materials and other things (biographical, situational), their understandings of the emotional implications of conventional musical devices, genres, and styles, and their perceived parallels (articulations/homologies) between musical materials/processes and social or physical materials/processes."

The work done by Middleton (1990) more than twenty-five years ago is still mandatory for trying to understand how these associations work, above all his distinction between primary (music's internal references and relationships, and arrangements of structural components) and secondary signification (music's connotative level, its capacity to summon or symbolize emotions and ideas). Middleton's work allows us to appreciate the importance of music's material specificity in relation to emotions and their production in social encounters.

All these new moves in the field of the sociology of music basically avoid thinking about music as being a "stimulus" for the production of feelings and emotions. Instead, the stance nowadays is to consider music "as providing a resource for emotional states and their achievement . . . providing a candidate simulacrum or contrast structure against which feeling may be formulated.

To speak of music in this way is to speak of it as a material against which ‘how one feels’ may be identified, elaborated, and made into an object of knowledge” (DeNora 2010: 173).

We once again want to slightly reformulate DeNora’s formulation from the point of view of our proposal about identitarian articulations working on particular events. In that regard, it is true, as DeNora states, that “one may, for example, say in reference to a musical example, ‘This is how I feel,’ and thereby grow tense or relax as the music does, when the music does, or in ways that are modeled, often without conscious awareness on the music.” However, on the other hand, we have to ask who is the “I” of the utterance. If we want to avoid the trap of the centered and unique self, as well as the imprecision of talking, without qualifications, about “multiple identities,” we have to advance the idea that the “I” of the utterance is nothing else than the particular identitarian articulation that is working at the moment of encounter with a particular piece of music. In other words, the “this is how I feel” is the utterance coming from, for example, me listening to a melancholic Argentine folk song of the 1960s, because (for different reasons linked to the moment I decided to listen to that piece), my male-Argentine-senior citizen identitarian articulation “felt” that way. But that feeling can suddenly change if something in the material and symbolic elements of the encounter (which may include something in the music itself—and which may be very difficult to disentangle from each other), thought as an assemblage in continuous movement of becoming, requires a change in that identitarian articulation. Such a change can imply several different things. On the one hand, there may be the actualization of some identitarian capacities of the male-Argentine-senior citizen triad that were not working until that point in time of the encounter. On the other hand, there may also be the entrance into the choreography of the identitarian articulation of some other identification(s) that one or more of the several elements of the assemblage were “asking for” the entrance of (for instance, the addition of “son” to the previous triad, which due to my conflictive father-son relationship with my father that some parts of the song suddenly evoked, moved the feeling from “melancholy” to “anger”). Finally, some elements of the encounter (and here we are reducing that possibility to what music was affording to the encounter, but it can really be any element, beyond music) can directly ask for a dislodging of some of the identifications of the initial choreographic triad, reducing it to a mere duet, for example, male and senior citizen, when, for instance, the song stopped evoking my Argentine identification at all, moving my feelings from “melancholy” to “awe” for the formidable performance, regardless of musical content (and, perhaps, the exit of my Argentine identification—alongside its concurrent habits and dispositions, its capacities—allows the entrance of another of my identifications—alongside its peculiar capacities—such as that of a “music connoisseur”).

What I am describing here corresponds to how Anderson (2005) understands feelings' work in relation to music; that is, the bonds, the different relationships we establish between our different identitarian articulations and the musical materialities, are always formed, responsively, from within a given situation. Every change in the identitarian articulations triggered by music emerges out of the demands of the here and now.

According to DeNora (2010) this connection between music and emotions is not only a post-factum achievement, but can also be somehow "programmed" when people intentionally use particular musical materials to help in the production of particular emotions—that is, when people employ music for structuring feeling trajectories. In that way music can be a resource actors turn to in order to regulate themselves as feeling beings in their everyday lives.

But DeNora also directs us to another way in which music is related to emotions, beyond its role as a template for the formation of emotional states. According to her (2010: 174),

Many times actors want to structure both the grammar and style of intimate interaction through musical means and also to reproduce feeling styles and forms by using music that had served as the soundtrack on prior intimate occasions. . . . Getting the music "right" is simultaneously a way of trying to make the action "right" . . . as a way of prospectively calling out forms of emotional and embodied agency that are comfortable and preferable, that "feel" right in emotional and embodied terms.

Another line of research quite promising in the sociology of music mentioned by DeNora in her excellent chapter on music and emotions is linked to the idea of music as a particular "holding form." As DeNora (2010: 177) points out:

Within music's structures, its perceived connotations, its sensual parameters (dynamics, sound envelopes, harmonies, textures, colors, etc.), actors may "find" or compose themselves as agents with particular capacities for social action and emotions. In other words, music is being considered as what Robert Witkin (1974) calls a "holding form"—a set of motifs that proceed, and serve as a reference point for, lines of feeling and lines of conduct over time. Viewed as such, music plays a role that is similar to that of memory artifacts: musical motifs are oriented to for the ways they encapsulate and provide a container for what might otherwise pass as momentary impulse to act, or a momentary identification of some kind. Holding forms thus provide a touchstone to which actors may return as they engage in collective expressive activity. They are the templates within which agency takes shape and to which actors may refer to renew themselves as types of agents and emotional agents.

What is important to consider from the point of view of this line of research is music's role as affording a structure or container for feeling, one whose particular characteristics contribute to the shape and quality of feeling as it is articulated by actors in social encounters.

Music and Affect

Under the auspices of the approach that stresses affect instead of emotions, the extent to which music cannot be understood without an appreciation of its affective elements is emphasized, stressing how this dimension must be comprehended as bound up with the corporeal nature of musical experience (Gilbert 2004). To this approach, music's specific physical qualities, its action on and through the body must be crucial to the understanding of musical meaning (Revell 2000). The idea here is that music mobilizes bodies through affective transmission. The fact that musical practices are discourses that convey meanings with precise identitarian capabilities (the main tenet of the discursive approach in music studies) does not mean that music does not also have physical effects that can be identified and explained but that are not the same thing as having meanings. In other words, music is always involved in a web of forces, intensities, and encounters that produce subjectivities, bodily capacities, and, at the same time, identifications.

The issue at stake is the relationship between bodies and the fluctuations of feeling that shape the experiential in ways that may impact upon but nevertheless evade conscious knowing (Thompson and Biddle 2013). In that regard, music creates particular atmospheres, via the induction, modulation, and circulation of moods, feelings, and intensities, which are felt but, at the same time, do not belong to anybody in particular (Thompson and Biddle 2013). The crucial point for those who work under the umbrella of Deleuze and Guattari's understanding of affect is "to move away from hermeneutic strategies, away from issues of representation and cultural meaning, and towards questions regarding the uses and functions of sound and music as an affective force: the question shifts from 'what does music mean?' to 'what does music do?'" (Thompson and Biddle 2013: 19).

According to the advocates of the affective turn, in order to understand how affect works in relation to music, the initial task for the analysis is to attend to the different "capacities to affect and be affected" that work in particular scenarios, encounters, and the like: hope, pain, disgust, and so on (Anderson 2014). In the following chapters of this book we will deal with, among others, bliss, satisfaction, well-being, panic, fear, freedom, love, infatuation, joy, boredom, hope, anger, and euphoria. "The second task is to trace how affects emerge from and express specific relational configurations, whilst also themselves becoming elements within those formations" (Anderson 2014: 11).

As mentioned before, this approach shows that, when researching issues of music and dance, it is crucial to attend to them outside the confines of meaning and representation and, in so doing, to try to explain what music and sound *do* rather than what they represent. In much research on music,

sensory and sonic registers are frequently neglected and this is to the detriment of the embodied and lived registers of experience and feeling which unfold in the process of making or listening to music. When attending to musical or sonic practice as a process (rather than a product) it seems vital to acknowledge that the textual methodologies historically used to study music and sound do not allow for the many entanglements of practice and performance to emerge. (Anderson, Morton, and Revill 2005: 641)

A very important point of departure for the proponents of an affective approach to music is to ask “How to think through the relation between music/sound and the fleshy dynamics of embodiment given that it is on and through modalities of emotion/affect and the senses that the materialities of music and sound achieve effects?” (Anderson, Morton and Revill 2005: 643)

Due to the emphasis on processes and relationships that characterizes the affective turn, neither bodies nor music’s properties are unchanging and universal in this approach. If bodies are the product of the “intra-relations” that occur in events, sound and music are continuously produced by the performative relations of making music. In other words, musical meanings are intimately and indissolubly bound into the spatial formations, practices, and processes by which music is performed (Revill 2000). And “sounds take on meaning from their performative location as the practices of making music engage and enroll social, economic, and political practices into active networks with cultural meaning” (Revill 2000: 608).

The possibilities allowed by the use of the affective turn to understand the complex relationship people establish with music and sound are endless (and some of them were explored in this book). I want to finish this (already too long) chapter by showing two very good examples of the affective turn “in practice”—that is, applied to particular topics and/or scenes. The first example is the wonderful work done by Anderson (2005) on practices of judgment about music. The second example is the path-breaking research done by Henriques on Jamaican music and the circulation of vibrations.

According to Anderson (2005: 650), practices of judgment (music described as good, bad, relaxing, innerving, soothing, and the like)

are bound up with thought-imbued *feelings and emotions* that enact the inscription, or modification, of value to a range of music. It is this form of spontaneous immediate judgment, mixed into the incorporeal-corporealities of the body, that is most critical to understanding how judgement is of everyday life. Feeling a song in evaluative terms is not based on an already decided

preference, or taste, but instead is bodied-forth without deliberation from within the ‘immediacy of a given situation.’ . . . Making a judgment does, of course, extend out from the immediate now into incipient feelings that remember both latencies of what-has-been and tendencies of what has not-yet come to be.

What Anderson is provocatively proposing here is that values about music are not only cognitive evaluations of the music at stake, but that *feeling a judgment*, embodying an evaluative stance that produces value, works through certain modifications of the body (Anderson 2005). In this regard for this author (Anderson 2005: 652), “both positive and negative judgments about the relation between music and the immediate situation begin from the same place: the affection of music, as sound, on the (im)-material body by virtue of the enveloping function of the senses.” And this occurs *before a deliberative judgment* is made: “Before the moment of deliberative judgment, understood as a decision, the body enacts an uncertain, complex, ethics of affection based on how bodies compose with other bodies (where music is also a ‘body,’ see Deleuze 1988). Produced, as an affective overflow, is a form of visceral *belief* that feelings and emotions express an evaluative stance that is ‘natural’” (Anderson 2005: 653).

Interestingly enough, even though, according to Anderson, people firmly believe in such a visceral feeling about the judgment value they have made about a certain piece of music,

[many times people] found it hard to describe “*why*” their belief was right. It stands behind, as a sort of limit to speech acts of legitimization and justification, expressed through a range of habitual acts that accompany the practice of making a judgment: playing music, turning off an album, skipping through a song, or adjusting the volume or tone while listening. Embedded within practices of judgment are therefore a whole series of habitual practices of remembering based on specific forms of know-how. (Anderson 2005: 653).

Additionally, according to Anderson (2005), making a value judgment about music is not the product of an individual practice made in isolation from a more extensive set of relations. Instead, practices of judgment take place as one type of practice within a complex assemblage of other practices: “From within different composites of practices, that produce patterns in daily life, making a judgment always occurs from within a specific organization of affect. Practices of judgment, the ascription and modification of value, are dependent upon how the organization of space-time is felt in the affective tenor of the event” (Anderson 2005: 653). In other words, the capacity to make a judgment is conditioned by the interplay of relations that produce the atmosphere of different events, and different sets of relations often call forth divergent judgments of the same music, in the same way that different identi-

tarian articulations (as a particular kind of relation) do so. Consequently, judgment is always emergent from a complex assemblage of affective and non-affective relations that express broader flows of affect (Anderson 2005).

Therefore, to the question of how a judgment that music is “good” or “bad” comes to feel right as it takes place Anderson’s brief answer is that “a visceral lived belief in the naturalness of the judgment made is constantly produced as the embodied background that thereafter enables other practices of listening and hearing” (2005: 656).

Another very good example of the affective turn working in relation to music is the work of Henriques on Jamaican music. Henriques draws from the work of Brian Massumi (2002), where affect is produced as intensities. These intensities, Henriques suggests, can be transmitted and embodied through vibrations. In this way, Henriques advances an understanding of wave propagation for analyzing the dynamic and energetic character of affective processes. According to Blackman and Venn (2010: 16):

The act of listening combines all the senses and is oriented towards the “event” of the scene. The three elements of vibrations that Henriques identifies, frequencies, amplitudes and timbres, provide the methodological basis for understanding affect. Henriques provides an interesting visualization of these elements in his Frequency Spectrogram, which . . . include the blood and lymphatic system, heart rate, pulse rate and synaptic activity in the brain, being brought into relation with the circadian rhythms of day and night, the materiality of the turntables and records, the longitudinal soundwaves, rhythms and beats, the light waves, calendars of events, the motility of the crowd between sessions and the role of the MC with his or her call and response, to name just some of the elements brought into exchange and interchange. This ecology of elements, Henriques suggests, is part of the complex apparatus that allows or affords affect *to move*.

In this way Henriques (2010) introduces a notion of movement where what is transmitted is not an object or a vague intensity, but rather a repeating frequency or energy pattern. As Blackman and Venn (2010: 17) point out, “this materializes affective transmission through analyzing the specific conducting channel or frequency, as well as emphasizing that it is not movement per se but the movement *relationship* between processes that should be the focus. As Henriques (2010) suggests: ‘it is the dynamic pattern that moves, not a thing.’”

Now that I have laid out the basic tenets of this quite appealing theoretical turn and advanced some provisional ideas on how to use it to understand how affect, emotions, and feelings relate to popular music, it is time to go to the different case studies that will put some “flesh” to many of the abstract considerations of this chapter.

NOTES

1. As Wetherell (2012: 22) points out, affective practice usually implicate non-conscious assemblages of “association, habits, ingrained . . . patterns and semiotic links.” Wetherell, however, argues that these non-conscious components are poorly explained by psychoanalytic theories of the unconscious and that non-representational theories do not solve the problem either.

2. In *A Thousand Plateaus*, Deleuze and Guattari (1987) introduced the word *agencement*, usually translated as *assemblage*, which connotes several meanings at the same time: “arrangement,” “laying out,” “putting together,” and so on. As Wetherell (2012: 14) points out, the common English translation as “assemblage” fails to capture the fluidity of *agencement*, with *assemblage* implying something more like a noun.

3. Wetherell (2012: 13–14) describes the intense patterning of affective practice in another chapter of her outstanding book, pointing out that, during affective practices bits of the body get patterned together with feelings, thoughts, “interaction patterns and relationships, narratives and interpretative repertoires, social relations, personal histories, and ways of life.” All of this and more become assembled in interacting and recursive “practical methods,” constantly forming and reforming. “Somatic, neural, phenomenological, discursive, relational, cultural, economic, developmental, and historical patterns interrupt, cancel, contradict, modulate, build and interweave with each other.” Some affective practices may come and go quickly, while others may be “densely knotted,” making them durable; furthermore, some pieces may come and go while others stick around.

4. Wetherell (2012: 23) claims that “affective practice” is a better concept than affective encounter because it builds in “ongoingness” and makes one think about patterns in process. While I agree with her in this regard, I will not replace social encounter with her preferred concept because I am not only talking about affect in encounters in this chapter.

5. Even though I cannot completely control my accent, I have some possibilities of managing it. In familiar and relaxed situations I relax the control of my accent accordingly. When, for whatever reason, I feel that my accent is problematizing the encounter I am having, I put my accent under heavy scrutiny and try to sound as American as possible. In that regard, my accent not only affects the scene, but also has the capacity of being affected by the scene as well.

6. I have to express my profound gratitude to Gustavo Blázquez, who, reading my work on identitarian articulations (Vila 2015) criticized my use of the “dance” metaphor and proposed to use the metaphor of the “choreography” instead. ¡Un millón de gracias, Gustavo!

7. Reading an early version of this chapter, David Spener asked: “Okay, but what about the role of power in all this? . . . How are perceptions and labeling of individuals ‘powered’ in a society stratified by race, nationality, language, religion, age, etc.?” My brief answer is that power is everywhere in the assemblage! In other words, the ways in which assemblages emerge and develop cannot be understood without the consideration of how power works in particular scenarios.

8. Summarizing his position, Seyfert points out: “The theory of social affect suggested here differs from existing ones insofar as it does not directly locate affects within sensual bodies or in affective atmospheres, but instead sees them as the result of (social!) encounters (of various bodies)—they emerge in transmissions, interactions, encounters. Then, affects are situational phenomena, irreducible to the individuals among whom they circulate or to ‘atmospheres’ through which bodies move. The body is relevant insofar as the emerging affect corresponds to the continuous intensive changes in the capacities of a body. In contrast, the remaining trace of an affective event is understood to be affection or the mode of a body (the trace that signifies the previous presence and inter-change with other bodies)” (Seyfert 2012: 42).

9. I want to thank Ed Avery-Natale (personal communication, July 2016) for pointing out this possibility.

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Chapter Two

The Embodiment of Gozo

Aesthetics, Emotion, and Politics in the Indigenous Song-Dances of the Argentine Chaco

Silvia Citro and Adriana Cerletti

INDIGENOUS MUSIC AND DANCE: AN INTERDISCIPLINARY CHALLENGE

In the last decade or so, some musical and dance studies, inspired by Phenomenological approaches, have remarked that these expressions should be understood as “lived experiences” in which human bodies are the existential conditions necessary to make them possible; they cannot be reduced to static aesthetic objects isolated from their “embodiment”—the “intersubjective ground” of all cultural experience (Merleau-Ponty [1945] 1993; Csordas 1994)—emotions and meanings. Nevertheless, such lived experiences also involve musical and choreographic codes whose structures and rules can remain relatively stable through different performances, giving each genre its identity. As Schechner (2000: 13) points out, this is the “paradox” of the performance; it is a “twice behaved-behavior,” but no repetition is basically the same, for systems are in constant flow. We think that our approaches must pay attention to these two key features of all performative arts; thus, we try to analyze music and dances as aesthetic structures and performative processes. On the one hand, music and dance are considered cultural units that can be drawn from the mainstream sociohistorical process; hence, they can be registered, transcribed, analyzed, and compared in their musical and choreographic internal structures. On the other hand, these units are embodied, re-signified, and transformed by performers and audiences every time they are performed; therefore, this dynamic process requires an ethnographic

analysis of the social practice—including consideration of the perceptions, emotions, meanings, purposes, and social relations among the performers and between them and the audience—that is, their sociocultural context and history. Performance studies have demonstrated how music and dances are the complex result of human creativity in the context of particular social processes; and also how these expressions can operate as means to reinforce, transform, or even create emotions, cultural knowledge, meanings, and values, as well as social identities and power relations (Béhague 1984; Blacking 1985; Kapferer 1986; Seeger 1987; Frith 1987; Vila 1995; Mendoza 1999; Reed 1998; Henry, Magowan, and Murray 2000; among others).

Nevertheless, following Qureshi (1987), we think that one of the main challenges in this field is how to reach a synthesis between these “sound-oriented” and “context-oriented” approaches, that is: how the contextual dimensions are indispensable for understanding music and dance, but also how the meanings inherent in sounds and body movements give music and dance “the power to affect its context in turn.”

Since 2005, our work at the University of Buenos Aires has tried to address this challenge through a collaborative and interdisciplinary research between an anthropologist (also a dancer specializing in dance and body studies—Citro), and a musicologist (also a musician—Cerletti). We have focused our research on indigenous music and dances of the Argentine Chaco, especially those from the Toba or *Qom* and *Mocoví* groups (belonging to the *Guaycuru* linguistic family), and, in different papers, we have explored their relations with the natural, mythical, and social world. The Argentine Chaco region, a subtropical plain with low forests and savannah formations, is one of the most important indigenous areas in the South America lowlands. It was inhabited mainly by seminomadic hunter-gatherers, like the Toba and *Mocoví*. In the seventeenth century, these groups adopted the horse and developed a strong resistance to Spanish colonization.

We should point out that in Argentina, indigenous music and dance have been overlooked for a long time. During the construction of Argentina as a nation, especially in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, European-derived societies and cultures were the privileged models in our country. In that period, the national government sponsored a massive wave of European immigration and, at the same time, the military persecution of indigenous peoples and their forced assimilation to “Western Christian civilization.” One of the consequences of this history, mostly in the cultural imagination of the urban middle classes, was the pervasive thought that “Argentines are descendants of the ships”—a popular saying referring to the ships that brought “our grandparents from Europe,” mainly from Spain and Italy.

In the mid-twentieth century, under the nationalistic policies of President Juan Domingo Perón’s government, there was a growing attention to “the

popular classes,” including protection policies for some indigenous peoples. Thus, the Toba and other indigenous people were incorporated to elementary education and military service.

In this context, musicologist Carlos Vega ([1944] 1998) began the documentation of “Argentine folk music and dance,” but only a few of these forms were considered to have “indigenous” roots: those from northwest groups related to the “Inca’s Empire.” In the 1970s, ethnomusicologists Jorge Novati and Irma Ruiz began the study of different indigenous music (Ruiz 1985), including the expressions of the northeast groups like the Tobas. Nevertheless, it should be noted that it was only in 1989, after long years of military dictatorships, that a democratic government recognized the ethnic and cultural preexistence and rights of indigenous peoples, with the Indigenous Policies Bill (National Law #23302). Probably because of this late recognition, there were very few researchers interested in indigenous music and dance in our country. Therefore, at present, our research at the University of Buenos Aires intends to continue the unfinished task of documentation and analysis of both old and new indigenous music and dances.¹

In this chapter, we focus on the comparative analysis of two Toba performance genres² with circular choreographic designs: the *Nmi*, an old song-dance of the youth, associated to sexual innuendo and mating pleasures, and the *Rueda* (the word means “wheel”), a new Evangelical ritual dance performed mainly by young men and women, with the music of *coritos* (diminutive of “chorus”). Since the Christian conversion at the beginning of the twentieth century, the *Nmi* was gradually abandoned, and only in the 1990s did the *Rueda* begin to be performed in the indigenous churches. As we will see, for some Tobas the *Rueda* is a kind of “praise” that encourages the participation of the youngsters in the churches and their social control by adults; but for others, it is frowned upon due to its links with the old *Nmi* and shamanism. The Evangelical discourse created a strong dichotomy between the “world” of the “ancient indigenous culture” associated with dance and drinking in festivities and shamanism, and the “new” Evangelical life without these “sins.” Thus, this has led to a strong opposition between the “old” *Nmi* song-dance performed by the non-Evangelical ancestors, and the “new” spiritual dances like the *Rueda*. Our hypothesis is that despite the power of this ideological dichotomy in the current Toba Christian discourse and the conflicts that have been promoted among the adult and young people, the sensorial-emotional ways of experiencing these song-dances are not so different, and these ways are closely related to their similar musical and choreographic structures. In this sense, we analyze how these dances are the main ways to embody the “*gozo/ntonaGak*” (bliss), a compelling ritual experience associated with “enjoyment,” “pleasure,” “health,” and “power.” Furthermore, we also examine the micro-politics of these performances and their paradoxical regimes of control and resistance of the bodies. Thus, our second

hypothesis is that through the Rueda dance the young performers tried to confront and transform their hegemonic power relations with the elderly and adult leaders of the churches; and in this way, this dance became a dynamic field of disputes where processes of legitimation, empowerment, and contention took place. In the next section, we summarize the main keys of our methodological framework to analyze these performances.³

STRUCTURAL ANALYSIS AND PERFORMANCE APPROACHES

As we mention before, we propose to explore music and dances in a double way. On one hand, as relatively stable aesthetic products. So, we try to identify the features that distinguish the musical and choreographic “dialect” of a particular performance genre from “the common musical ‘language’ background,” in terms suitable to their properties and structure, especially in cultures without explicit music or dance theories (Qureshi 1987: 67). The analysis of these musical and choreographic patterns generally leads to inferences about relational meanings at the internal levels of their structures. On the other hand, we analyze these expressions as dynamic performances that can be changed and strategically used by performers and audiences to legitimate, reshape, or change their experiences in social life.

In order to grasp how music and dance can affect the identity of performers, their social relations and cultural meanings, different authors have focused on the links between embodiment and emotion, and the symbolic and political dimension of these expressions. The works of Feld (1994), Turino (1999), and Qureshi (2000), among others, show the capability of musical languages to create and re-create iconic and indexical links to some key cultural practices and meanings, not as ideals or representations but as embodied experiences. We will introduce briefly this perspective, which oriented our approach.

Starting from the Peircean model and its adaptation to music by Turino (1999), a sign is defined as something that stands for something else to someone in some way. Therefore, we have a three-fold model where it is possible to distinguish the sign, the object, and the *interpretant*: “the effect created by bringing the sign and objects together” in the perceiver (Turino 1999: 222; italics in original). Here, the concept of meaning is “pragmatically simplified by defining it as the actual effect of a sign, that is, the direct feeling, physical reaction, or language-based concept inspired in the perceiver by a musical sign” (Turino 1999: 224).⁴ Regarding the Peircean classification of sign modalities as symbol, icon, and index, Turino remarks that “symbols are *signs about* other things, whereas icons and indices are *signs of* identity (resemblance, commonality) and direct connections,”

and recognizes that musical sounds and body movement that function as signs usually operate at the iconic and indexical levels (Turino 1999: 228; italics in original). Hence, “the affective potential of signs is inversely proportional to the degree of mediation, generality, and abstraction . . . , lower level signs are more likely to create emotional and energetic interpretants, whereas signs involving symbols are more likely to generate language-based responses and reasoning” (Turino 1999: 234).

The potential of iconicity in music and dance has been studied more than indexicality (Turino 1999: 228, 234). Feld (1994: 150) has especially examined how musical icons work, not just as “metaphoric equivalents, but as felt iconic wholeness.” More recently, Qureshi (2000: 811) has also remarked that music works as a potent icon of social practice as well as personal experience and can become “as much a political tool as it is a language of feelings.” Nevertheless, according to Turino (1999: 227), music and dance can also act as indices whose power derives from the fact that “the sign-object relations are based in co-occurrences within one’s own life experiences, and thus become intimately bound as experience.” These expressions developed their own special potential for producing emotional responses and social identification, since the “indices continually take on new layers of meaning while potentially also carrying along former associations—a kind of *semantic snowballing*” (Turino 1999: 235; italics in original).⁵

In common with these authors, we assume that the experience of performing/perceiving music and dance usually create meanings through the combination of two complementary ways: (a) linking their formal aesthetic structures to sociocultural and personal experiences, cultural meanings, and values through iconic relations, and (b) attaching that music and that dance to the emotions and meanings embodied in previous performances through indexical relations.

Furthermore, by reformulating the concepts of *intertextuality* (Bajtin, [1952] 1985) and *textuality* (Hanks 1989), we highlight that performance genres are usually built in relation to other genres coming from ritual, artistic, or daily practices; thus, we can analyze how certain sounds and movements are de-contextualized from one genre and re-contextualized in another one (Citro 2003, 2009). We propose that sounds and movements usually take their iconic and indexical meanings and performative powers from these genealogic and contextual connections that arise time and time again. In these continual quotations and iterations, those discourses, movements, and sounds may be reproduced and legitimated, though also altered or even subverted: this is the source of their ability to construct identitarian positions.⁶ Therefore, when we examine the ways in which a group of performers appropriate these discursive, musical, and bodily traits, reshaping and re-signifying some, concealing or denying others, it is possible to detect subtle hints—as they are not usually spontaneously verbalized nor are they the subject of

conscious reflection—that reveal their broader social positions as well as their attempts to modify or legitimate them.

In the next section, we analyze the social contexts of the Nmi and Rueda and some general aspects of their performances. After that, we will transcribe two songs belonging to these genres in order to make a more detailed analysis of the articulation between music and dance.

SOCIAL CONTEXTS AND PERFORMATIVE PROCESSES OF THE TOBA MUSIC AND DANCES

The Nmi and Other Performance Genres among the “Ancient Toba”

The contemporary Toba people usually refer to their ancestors as the “ancient Tobas.” They had a social organization based on matrilineal exogamic bands that, in turn, conformed larger endogamous units or tribes (Braunstein, 1983). That is the case of the Toba Takshik of eastern Formosa with whom we did our fieldwork, mainly in the rural communities La Primavera and Misión Tacaaglé. These tribes celebrated yearly meetings that took place during the ripening of carob pods (*Prosopis alba* or *nigra*), one of the main fruits of this region that were gathered by women. The traditional gender relations involved the activities of hunting, war, and leadership for the men, and gathering and domestic activities for the women, as can still be seen in figures 2.1 and 2.2.

In those old meetings converged different ritual practices: the *pi’oGonaq* or shaman’s songs played with a *ltegete*, or marrow rattle, for taking care of the fermentation of the carob wine, the ritual drinking by adult men as a way to dispute and legitimate their leaderships, the celebration of battle triumphs through drinking and songs, and sometimes the female initiation rites of leaders’ daughters.

Additionally, during afternoons and nights the young people performed the Nmi, and in this way, alliances between bands were strengthened through marriage agreements. These dances could be performed the rest of the year in their own villages as well, sometimes replacing the carob wine with others alcoholic beverages. In turn, when the Tobas were incorporated into new work places, such as plantations or sugar mills ruled by the *doqshi* (White people), they continued performing the Nmi at the end of their workday.

Before the dance, and with the intention of convoking dancers, the young men usually played musical instruments like the *kataki*, or water drums. Moreover, sometimes they played the *nviqe*—a kind of tin fiddle, with a single string made of horsehair—and the *nashere*, or flute, which were associated with states of love and courtship (Ruiz 1985).



Figure 2.1. Toba women gathering. Ingeniero Juárez, 2000. Photo: Mariana Gómez.



Figure 2.2. Toba women gathering. Ingeniero Juárez, 2000. Photo: Mariana Gómez.



Figure 2.3. The *Itegete* of Carlota Washoe. La Primavera, 1998. Photo: Silvia Citro.



Figure 2.4. Guillermo Muratalla, cacique of Misión Tacaaglé, playing *nvike*. 2001. Photo: Silvia Citro.

Figure 2.5 is an undated old photo of the Nmi taken in a sugar mill where the Toba and other Chaco peoples usually went to work. Some features of this picture like the diurnal scene and the presence of several White people observing the dance, probably indicate that this performance was prepared in order to take a picture.

In figure 2.6 we have another photo of the Nmi. In this case, it was taken in the old Catholic mission, “Misión Laishi.”⁷ This picture belongs to the Toba teacher and singer Ema Cuañerí. She told us that her father lived in that Misión around the 1930s.



Figure 2.5. San Martín de Tabacal (undated). Source: Archivo General de la Nación.



Figure 2.6. Photo: Family Archive of Ema Cuañerí.

As shown in the photographs of Nmi above, the men formed a circle with their bodies slightly bent, and held hands waist high with alternate partners. There was always at least one “captain” in the ring, an adult man who knew a lot of song-dances, a knowledge mainly received from powerful nonhuman beings in dreams. These “powerful beings,” mostly “fathers” or “mothers” of different animal species, are central to different myths and are involved in foraging practices and shamanism. Through dreams, the shaman receives his songs from these beings and they become his “fellows” or “helpers” for healing and other ritual practices. Although the Nmi captains were not necessarily identified as *pi’oGonaq*, or shamans, they usually were remembered as “people with *haloik*,” or power.

The captain initiated each song and later joined the rest of the performers; the men stepped together with the same foot while the women stood around them and watched. When a woman tapped her chosen man, the men broke up their chain to allow her to join the circle. The song-dance continued without interruption as each of the women joined in. The knowledge of different song-dances gives “prestige” to the old captain of Nmi, legitimating his role. Thus, the length of the sequences probably varies according to the prestige of each captain.

The Toba said that the “old songs” of Nmi generally had no lyrics—unlike Evangelical and *criollo* folk songs. The Tobas’ White neighbors deri-

sively called the Nmi *Baile Sapo* (toad dance) because, they said, “the aborigines sang at night like toads . . . without lyrics.” These comments certainly favored disparaging aesthetic evaluations about these expressions.

Usually dancers wore the typical clothes of indigenous rural workers and were barefoot. Nevertheless, when these dances were performed in their own places, the captains in particular wore headbands and ankle rattles, and the young dancers also added traditional ornaments to their attire to seduce women. The Toba usually said that through dance the men “tried to make women fall in love,” and after that, they “went to sleep together,” implying sexual intercourse. As the elder Toba Alberto Muratalla explained: “The old dance was started by men and later the women chose their boyfriends. . . . Women enjoyed seeing the men dance.”

Through our conversations with elders, we began to learn that Nmi was not a single, simple, and traditional choreography that was replaced in the 1960s by Evangelical ritual forms as existing research would seem to suggest. It was rather a performing genre that developed several creative variations. In other works (Citro 2003; Citro et al. 2006), we described these variations in detail: The First and The Second, The Nasote, The Snail, and the Shanawan were created by Agustín Chamorro, a “captain” whose renown reached several Eastern Toba settlements. Through these variations, the Tobas incorporated new movements like hopping and jumping or spatial designs like spirals, but in all cases, the musical structure, the circular design, the way of holding the partners, and the roles of young men and women were similar to those described earlier. So these shared stylistic traits became signs of the Nmi.

One of the more striking variations introduced by youths was the use of Toba words. The Toba began to learn folk songs and play the guitar at work places, in the army, and from the radio. Thus, the introduction of lyrics in musical structures inherited from their ancestors operated both as a differentiated identity mark and also a keeping with the aesthetics favored by the elderly. In the words of Muratalla: “to enliven this singing, we made them uttering words . . . , we boys my age, we liked them with words, to be different from the old folks.”

Mainstream clothing and shoes were other ways to differentiate youngsters from the elders. Benancio Yabaré remembers that “when we had no shoes to go to Nmi, we painted our feet with flour as if we wore espadrilles.” Anyway, the young people also added indigenous ornaments to their criollo clothes in order to seduce women, and some captains continued to wear traditional headbands and ankle rattles.

These and other variations of the circular song-dance reveal the adoption of some criollo cultural practices—garments or lyrics resembling popular music—but also show the creative transformation of their indigenous performance traditions made by the youngsters. As Taylor (2003) pointed out,

performers reproduce and also change their “inherited codes,” transforming aesthetic traits and cultural meanings that come from a “collective archive” of memories embodied in gestures, movements, words, and sounds.

The Rueda and Other Performance Genres among the New Evangelio

Although some Toba groups were incorporated into Catholic missions during the first half of the twentieth century, the most important Evangelization process began in the 1940s with the arrival of North American Pentecostal missionaries. In 1959 the Toba created the “United Evangelic Church,” the first indigenous church in Argentina (Miller 1979; Wright 1997; Citro 2003, 2009), and together with other denominations it constitutes a movement called Evangelio. It is the result of a complex and dynamic interaction among the Pentecostal religion, the previous Toba beliefs and rituals, and since 1954 the assistance of Mennonite missionaries for administrative organization and religious teaching.

Evangelio rituals have played a key role in social organization and ethnic identification. Today most of the Tobas identify themselves as Evangelical people and their churches are the sites of the only rituals practiced. Furthermore, the religious leaders of churches, the elder *pastores*, usually are political leaders too, mainly linked to the Peronist movement,⁸ and generally the people that congregate in their churches are relatives belonging to the same extended family. This partially evokes the traditional leadership of caciques, since they were elder men that combined political and religious powers. Despite this long process of colonization and evangelization, the Tobas still preserve some of their territories, but foraging practices have been severely curtailed and replaced by rural labor, and in the last thirty years, by state assistance policies. In addition, some women commercialize their handcrafts or work as house helpers in the White villages. Since 2005, some Eastern Toba groups began to participate in more autonomous political actions to defend their indigenous rights and to protest against the corruption of White local authorities.

Today, in each Evangelio church there are regular weekly rituals and some special celebrations like birthdays—including the girls’ “Sweet Fifteen”—that continue some features of the old female initiation rituals: weddings, baptisms, and yearly church anniversaries that resemble the old tribal meetings, since they are the main way to gather different kin groups and make marriage alliances. Furthermore, one or two months before these special celebrations there are daily rituals called Praise Movements.

In the 1970s, when ethnomusicology studies began in Argentina, these churches banned the Nmi as an expression of the “world’s sins and vices.” So, our first recordings correspond to the last Nmi performances, and they

were recorded in 1971 by the ethnomusicologist Irma Ruiz. With the growth of Evangelio churches, new musical genres and dances began to be performed. The “hymns” sung a cappella were the oldest genre, brought by the first missionaries to the churches. But in the mid 1960s, the young Toba men incorporated the guitar and drum of the hegemonic Argentine folk music, and began to compose their own religious music, called “coritos.” Besides the coritos, since the 1970s the young Toba have composed other Evangelical “songs” that follow different folk and popular musical genres, according to the media fashion. Finally, since the end of the 1990s, the young musicians have incorporated other genres from popular music such as *cumbia*, played on electronic keyboards, and furthermore, they began to record their own CDs and sell them in their musical tours in different indigenous churches (Citro 2003, 2005, 2009). Musicians usually said that their songs were inspired by their dreams, in a way that resembles the old Nmi captains and shamans, although the old powerful beings are now replaced by Christian figures.

The coritos have short Evangelical lyrics in Spanish and Toba sung by all the participants, while the guitar is played just by the young men. At first, only the old people danced with the coritos, mostly alone with the short steps typical of the old song-dances. Since the mid-1990s, the young people began to perform the Rueda during the coritos and they acquired a faster rhythm, since this dance consists of a circular continual running.



Figure 2.7. Toba musicians in churches of La Primavera and Mision Tacaagle, 1999. Photo: Silvia Citro.



Figure 2.8. Toba musicians in churches of La Primavera and Mision Tacaagle, 1999. Photo: Silvia Citro.



Figure 2.9. Toba musicians in church of La Primavera, 2005. Photo: Silvia Citro.

Many Tobas link the circular design of this dance to the old Nmi, despite important stylistic differences: running instead of walking steps, the absence of body contact between the sexes during the dance, and the exclamation of short Evangelical expressions in Spanish (such as Halleluiah or Praise the Lord) instead of singing.

The attire of this dance is a handmade creation of the youngsters with a large back pocket on the back to hold the Bible. They recycle the white coats provided by the public schools, cutting them into strips. This attire combines some elements of the shamanic costumes, with different images and words belonging to the Evangelical iconography and discourse.

Usually for the Tobas, the Evangelical music and dance are considered a way to reach the state of “bliss”—that is, a close contact with the Holy Spirit in which the body is filled with his “power,” producing feelings of enjoyment and strength. Lots of people usually describe how, by participating in music, dance, or free inspired prayer, they obtained relief and sometimes could recover from illness or pain. Nevertheless, the Rueda has become a source of debate in indigenous churches, because some people had strong doubts about the type of bliss that the youngsters can reach through this dance. To understand these conflicts, we introduce a brief scene of one of our first fieldworks in the Toba community of La Primavera, Formosa province, Argentina.



Figure 2.10. The Rueda dance in a Toba Church, La Primavera, 1998. Photo: Silvia Citro.



Figure 2.11. The Rueda dance in a Toba Church, La Primavera, 1998. Photo: Silvia Citro.

In 1998, Silvia started her research about Toba ritual dances and embodiment. As a recently graduated anthropologist, and a dancer as well, she was very interested in these neglected topics in Argentine cultural anthropology. Following the recommendation of her postgraduate director, she was kindly hosted by Lucas, an old Evangelio and Peronist leader who knew him. Lucas and his family lived on the national route across from the community and near White villages. A few days after her arrival, there was an Evangelio celebration in the church Lucas's family attended. They invited Silvia to their church, also located on the national route. She was eager to participate in a ritual and see the dances. However, all she listened and observed that day were speeches in Toba and Spanish that combined Bible readings, preaching, and prayers, as well as songs with Christian lyrics in the regional folk music styles. Most of the time, people remained seated in their chairs. Furthermore, during the ceremony the secretary wrote the names and alms of all present persons, and at the end, read it aloud. It was a slightly frustrating disappointment: no ritual dances and a bureaucratic church organization.



Figure 2.12. Readings in the churches. La Primavera and Mission Tacaagl , 1998. Photo: Silvia Citro.



Figure 2.13. Readings in the churches. La Primavera and Mission Tacaagl , 1998. Photo: Silvia Citro.

Next morning, while Silvia was having breakfast, sharing *mate* (a traditional hot beverage) and chatting with Luis, Lucas’s young son, she asked him about dances. So he told her, in confidence: “If you want dances, you have to go to back there, there are none here.” The “back” is the part of the community farthest away from the White villages. So, next day, they walked the five kilometers of dirt road to the other churches “back there.” In those churches, although people also read the Bible, sang, and prayed, the main performances were two kinds of energetic dances: the *gozo* (bliss) of the adults and elders, which we knew from earlier bibliographies, and the *Rueda*, which had not been documented yet.

Most of the old and adult church leaders from the front of the community, like Lucas, deride and even forbid the *Rueda*. They link this dance to the old *Nmi*; thus, they consider that in the current times the young *Evangelio* go to the *Rueda* just for “fun,” like in the old times. Besides, they suspect the link of *Rueda* to shamanism because of the dance’s “uncertain” origin (“it isn’t in the Bible,” they said) and also because of the dancers’ shamanic-like clothes, especially headbands and strips crossed on their chest.

In contrast, for the church leaders of the back who legitimated the *Rueda*, it was a kind of religious “praise” that “encouraged” the participation of

young people in the rituals. Moreover, they considered this dance a way “to keep the youths in the churches and far from the canteens . . . away from alcohol and tobacco,” since the Pentecostal beliefs forbid them. These behaviors are considered very dangerous not only due to the health consequences but also because they waste the little money that is available. Thus, they are seen as a threat to the socioeconomic well-being of the group (Citro 2003, 2009).

The relation of the Rueda to the old Nmi is based not only in their similar aesthetic features but also in the use of the music and dance to attract the other sex. In our fieldwork, we began to perceive some hints in the performance of the Rueda that revealed the persistence of mating intent, such as gestures, gazes, and smiles that conveyed joy and seduction between the sexes. Later on, in our talks with some dancers, we confirmed that music and dancing were associated with sex appeal, and that sexual encounters might take place after the evening Evangelio services, as it used to happen with old Nmi. And yet, the young people who admitted having these sexual desires did not think of them as contradicting their religious beliefs and intentions. They experienced bliss in the Holy Spirit, as well as strength and healing while dancing. The religious and sexual bliss, the power to heal or grow stronger and to seduce were all perceived as part of a single experience of bliss (*ntonaGaq* in Toba) and power (*lañaGaik*). However, these confluences in the lived experience of dancers were contradictory and therefore unacceptable for those adults who embraced the Evangelic discourse and their rigid symbolic oppositions.

In conclusion, when we began our fieldwork and for several years thereafter, the Rueda was a source of debate and social dispute. Fronting the community there were no dances and the churches emphasized the Bible discourse and the legal and bureaucratic logic of Western modernity. But “in the back,” there were dances that partially resembled the “old” indigenous culture. However, since 2005, the Rueda and other new choreographies initiated by young people have spread all over the eastern Toba communities. So, for the time being, the dances of the young have won the dispute and achieved legitimation: these aesthetic expressions “from the back” have become hegemonic in Toba rituals, producing a new provisional cultural synthesis that preserves and at the same time overcomes previous tensions. As an old Toba leader who in the mid-1990s criticized the Rueda explained to us ten years later: “We do not know if the Rueda is from God or another thing (alluding to the evil world), but it doesn’t matter, when Jesus comes, on Judgment Day, he will decide; now we cannot tell anything, and we accept.”

Now, we will move to the comparative analysis of the musical and choreographic structure of the Nmi and the coritos of the Rueda.

A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF MUSICAL AND CHOREOGRAPHIC STRUCTURES

First, we identify some of the features that characterize the common Toba musical language background: the binary rhythms and three-pitch melodies equivalent to major or minor triads with intervals of fifths, thirds, and unisons, with descendent directions, the use of recitations, and glissandos. In addition, as the Toba usually say, the traditional Toba music were “songs without lyrics,” referring to the lack of lyrics or to the repeated iteration of the same word or short phrase. As we will see, these general parameters are present both in the old Nmi and the coritos of the Rueda. Other important features that Toba music shares with other indigenous peoples of the South American lowlands is “variation” through “repetition” as the main procedure for composing musical pieces, as Menenzes Bastos (2007) recently pointed out; probably this way of composing is also common among several oral musical traditions.

In order to analyze the features that distinguish the Nmi and the Rueda, Adriana transcribed and analyzed the existing corpus of twelve Nmi song-dances, recorded by Irma Ruiz in 1972 and some of the most popular coritos performed during our fieldwork since the late 1990s, in both cases in Eastern Toba communities of Formosa province. We show here two of these transcriptions, using a model based on Ruwet’s “paradigmatic analysis” (1990), which best represents the properties and structures of these genres that base segmentation on repetition.⁹ To study the melodic profile we follow La Rue’s typology (1970), especially when he analyses “the small dimension,” suitable for these types of music.

NMI
(Toba song dance '72)

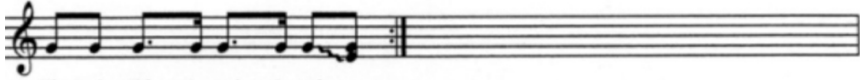
7 times

The musical score is written in bass clef with a key signature of one flat (Bb). It consists of ten staves. The first staff begins with a double bar line, followed by a sequence of notes: G2, A2, Bb2, C3, D3, E3, F3, G3, A3, Bb3, C4, D4, E4, F4, G4, A4, Bb4, C5, D5, E5, F5, G5, A5, Bb5, C6, D6, E6, F6, G6, A6, Bb6, C7, D7, E7, F7, G7, A7, Bb7, C8, D8, E8, F8, G8, A8, Bb8, C9, D9, E9, F9, G9, A9, Bb9, C10, D10, E10, F10, G10, A10, Bb11, C12, D12, E12, F12, G12, A12, Bb13, C14, D14, E14, F14, G14, A14, Bb15, C16, D16, E16, F16, G16, A16, Bb17, C18, D18, E18, F18, G18, A18, Bb19, C20, D20, E20, F20, G20, A20, Bb21, C22, D22, E22, F22, G22, A22, Bb23, C24, D24, E24, F24, G24, A24, Bb25, C26, D26, E26, F26, G26, A26, Bb27, C28, D28, E28, F28, G28, A28, Bb29, C30, D30, E30, F30, G30, A30, Bb31, C32, D32, E32, F32, G32, A32, Bb33, C34, D34, E34, F34, G34, A34, Bb35, C36, D36, E36, F36, G36, A36, Bb37, C38, D38, E38, F38, G38, A38, Bb39, C40, D40, E40, F40, G40, A40, Bb41, C42, D42, E42, F42, G42, A42, Bb43, C44, D44, E44, F44, G44, A44, Bb45, C46, D46, E46, F46, G46, A46, Bb47, C48, D48, E48, F48, G48, A48, Bb49, C50, D50, E50, F50, G50, A50, Bb51, C52, D52, E52, F52, G52, A52, Bb53, C54, D54, E54, F54, G54, A54, Bb55, C56, D56, E56, F56, G56, A56, Bb57, C58, D58, E58, F58, G58, A58, Bb59, C60, D60, E60, F60, G60, A60, Bb61, C62, D62, E62, F62, G62, A62, Bb63, C64, D64, E64, F64, G64, A64, Bb65, C66, D66, E66, F66, G66, A66, Bb67, C68, D68, E68, F68, G68, A68, Bb69, C70, D70, E70, F70, G70, A70, Bb71, C72, D72, E72, F72, G72, A72, Bb73, C74, D74, E74, F74, G74, A74, Bb75, C76, D76, E76, F76, G76, A76, Bb77, C78, D78, E78, F78, G78, A78, Bb79, C80, D80, E80, F80, G80, A80, Bb81, C82, D82, E82, F82, G82, A82, Bb83, C84, D84, E84, F84, G84, A84, Bb85, C86, D86, E86, F86, G86, A86, Bb87, C88, D88, E88, F88, G88, A88, Bb89, C90, D90, E90, F90, G90, A90, Bb91, C92, D92, E92, F92, G92, A92, Bb93, C94, D94, E94, F94, G94, A94, Bb95, C96, D96, E96, F96, G96, A96, Bb97, C98, D98, E98, F98, G98, A98, Bb99, C100, D100, E100, F100, G100, A100, Bb101, C102, D102, E102, F102, G102, A102, Bb103, C104, D104, E104, F104, G104, A104, Bb105, C106, D106, E106, F106, G106, A106, Bb107, C108, D108, E108, F108, G108, A108, Bb109, C110, D110, E110, F110, G110, A110, Bb111, C112, D112, E112, F112, G112, A112, Bb113, C114, D114, E114, F114, G114, A114, Bb115, C116, D116, E116, F116, G116, A116, Bb117, C118, D118, E118, F118, G118, A118, Bb119, C120, D120, E120, F120, G120, A120, Bb121, C122, D122, E122, F122, G122, A122, Bb123, C124, D124, E124, F124, G124, A124, Bb125, C126, D126, E126, F126, G126, A126, Bb127, C128, D128, E128, F128, G128, A128, Bb129, C130, D130, E130, F130, G130, A130, Bb131, C132, D132, E132, F132, G132, A132, Bb133, C134, D134, E134, F134, G134, A134, Bb135, C136, D136, E136, F136, G136, A136, Bb137, C138, D138, E138, F138, G138, A138, Bb139, C140, D140, E140, F140, G140, A140, Bb141, C142, D142, E142, F142, G142, A142, Bb143, C144, D144, E144, F144, G144, A144, Bb145, C146, D146, E146, F146, G146, A146, Bb147, C148, D148, E148, F148, G148, A148, Bb149, C150, D150, E150, F150, G150, A150, Bb151, C152, D152, E152, F152, G152, A152, Bb153, C154, D154, E154, F154, G154, A154, Bb155, C156, D156, E156, F156, G156, A156, Bb157, C158, D158, E158, F158, G158, A158, Bb159, C160, D160, E160, F160, G160, A160, Bb161, C162, D162, E162, F162, G162, A162, Bb163, C164, D164, E164, F164, G164, A164, Bb165, C166, D166, E166, F166, G166, A166, Bb167, C168, D168, E168, F168, G168, A168, Bb169, C170, D170, E170, F170, G170, A170, Bb171, C172, D172, E172, F172, G172, A172, Bb173, C174, D174, E174, F174, G174, A174, Bb175, C176, D176, E176, F176, G176, A176, Bb177, C178, D178, E178, F178, G178, A178, Bb179, C180, D180, E180, F180, G180, A180, Bb181, C182, D182, E182, F182, G182, A182, Bb183, C184, D184, E184, F184, G184, A184, Bb185, C186, D186, E186, F186, G186, A186, Bb187, C188, D188, E188, F188, G188, A188, Bb189, C190, D190, E190, F190, G190, A190, Bb191, C192, D192, E192, F192, G192, A192, Bb193, C194, D194, E194, F194, G194, A194, Bb195, C196, D196, E196, F196, G196, A196, Bb197, C198, D198, E198, F198, G198, A198, Bb199, C200, D200, E200, F200, G200, A200, Bb201, C202, D202, E202, F202, G202, A202, Bb203, C204, D204, E204, F204, G204, A204, Bb205, C206, D206, E206, F206, G206, A206, Bb207, C208, D208, E208, F208, G208, A208, Bb209, C210, D210, E210, F210, G210, A210, Bb211, C212, D212, E212, F212, G212, A212, Bb213, C214, D214, E214, F214, G214, A214, Bb215, C216, D216, E216, F216, G216, A216, Bb217, C218, D218, E218, F218, G218, A218, Bb219, C220, D220, E220, F220, G220, A220, Bb221, C222, D222, E222, F222, G222, A222, Bb223, C224, D224, E224, F224, G224, A224, Bb225, C226, D226, E226, F226, G226, A226, Bb227, C228, D228, E228, F228, G228, A228, Bb229, C230, D230, E230, F230, G230, A230, Bb231, C232, D232, E232, F232, G232, A232, Bb233, C234, D234, E234, F234, G234, A234, Bb235, C236, D236, E236, F236, G236, A236, Bb237, C238, D238, E238, F238, G238, A238, Bb239, C240, D240, E240, F240, G240, A240, Bb241, C242, D242, E242, F242, G242, A242, Bb243, C244, D244, E244, F244, G244, A244, Bb245, C246, D246, E246, F246, G246, A246, Bb247, C248, D248, E248, F248, G248, A248, Bb249, C250, D250, E250, F250, G250, A250, Bb251, C252, D252, E252, F252, G252, A252, Bb253, C254, D254, E254, F254, G254, A254, Bb255, C256, D256, E256, F256, G256, A256, Bb257, C258, D258, E258, F258, G258, A258, Bb259, C260, D260, E260, F260, G260, A260, Bb261, C262, D262, E262, F262, G262, A262, Bb263, C264, D264, E264, F264, G264, A264, Bb265, C266, D266, E266, F266, G266, A266, Bb267, C268, D268, E268, F268, G268, A268, Bb269, C270, D270, E270, F270, G270, A270, Bb271, C272, D272, E272, F272, G272, A272, Bb273, C274, D274, E274, F274, G274, A274, Bb275, C276, D276, E276, F276, G276, A276, Bb277, C278, D278, E278, F278, G278, A278, Bb279, C280, D280, E280, F280, G280, A280, Bb281, C282, D282, E282, F282, G282, A282, Bb283, C284, D284, E284, F284, G284, A284, Bb285, C286, D286, E286, F286, G286, A286, Bb287, C288, D288, E288, F288, G288, A288, 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"Coritos" de LA RUEDA

(Toba song-dance '99)

Instrumental Prelude



Glo - ria a Dios A - mén A - mén__

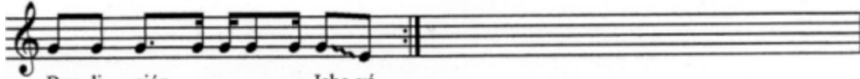
Glo-ry to God



Glo- ria a Dios A - mén A - mén__

Glo-ry to God

Instrumental Interlude



Ben - di - ción ... Jeho - vá

Blessing...



Ben - di - ción...

Blessing...

Instrumental Interlude



Sal - va - dor Sa - na - dor__

Saviour and Healer



Sal - va - dor - y Sa - na - dor

Saviour and Healer

Instrumental Postlude

Figure 2.15. Transcription by Adriana Cerletti

We found that there is a structural principle characteristic of the old Nmi as performance genre that continued in the new Rueda: the articulation between repetitions with slight variations in musical discourse (primarily due to the loss of motifs), and the collective repetition of the same movement in a circular formation in the choreographic discourse. In addition, we also iden-

tified five other specific features related to this structural principle, features that we will analyze alongside their variations in the Nmi and the Rueda.

(1) Minimum differentiations in the performance acts: all sing a similar melody and repeat a similar movement together, although with some gender and age variations.

In the Nmi, the main difference in terms of roles lies in gender: the women join the dance gradually and usually do not sing, while the men dance together and join in the song initiated by the captain from the start. In this sense, the beginning of the song by the captain, generally an adult man with more experience, shows how age relations also operated in the constructions of this aesthetic leadership. Some dancers are also remembered for their personal styles, generally linked to minimal variations in their way of doing the same step, such as in movements of the neck or waist (Citro 2003, 2008). These variations probably were an effective way of catching the attention of women, since the dance was the main way for men to be chosen by women. In sum, aside from these minimal differentiations, all men sing the same melody and men and women repeat a similar movement together.

In the Rueda, the roles of musician and dancers are strictly separated, a typical feature of Western modern artistic performances. Each leader initiates the song and the dance, followed by the rest of the performers. There is no gender difference in the Rueda choreography, though it is stressed in the musical roles of coritos: only men play guitars and lead the singing, while the women can accompany with drums and hand tambourine, following the songs. Thus, this gender division has similarities with the Toba traditional music, since women only played some water drums (*Ikataki*) and rattle sticks (*nasotaGalaqte* or *nasokiaGanaqte*) in their old initiation rituals (Ruiz 1985). It should be noticed that in the most popular groups of traditional folk music usually there were no women playing instruments, since most of them were singers, sometimes accompanied by percussion instruments like drums.

Finally, in the coritos we also found gender differences in the singing styles: women use a more nasal and sharp timbre similar to the old Tobas, while the men's skull resonance is more like the Western style, since they have been more open to the influences of White traditions through their work and political relations. Usually the emphasis (or attack) of the female voices is produced by the use of the upper section of the larynx, which results in a particularly loud and penetrating sound in the high range. It is important to note that a similar type of attack is also found in the phonetics of Toba language, where the use of consonants with uvular and laryngeal articulation points—such as in their *qom* ethnonym—is very common.¹⁰

(2) Strong articulation between music and vocalizations or short lyrics.

In the Nmi, there is a strong articulation between music and vocalizations without meaning, and this is linked to the right and left steps that beat the pulse. Since the Nmi is a collective dance, in most cases without instruments, these features were the main way to maintain coordination of the dancers' movements. However, dancers sometimes lost the rhythm, and had to pay some "token penalty," such as leaving the dance.

In the Evangelical coritos, the articulation between music and lyrics is strictly syllabic, (except in some final closes) but the choreographic steps of the Rueda follow the faster binary rhythmic subdivision and not the pulse. Since the dancers run without body contact and without singing, there is hardly any need to coordinate the steps.

(3) Fixed relation between pitch and intensity: the higher the pitch, the greater the intensity; as pitch decreases, so does intensity; and this is how every phrase and song-dance concludes.

Since there are no silences between musical phrases, or even between one song and the next, the pitch-intensity relation, combined with the unison, especially in the Nmi, is not just an expressive device, but rather a structural feature to distinguish phrases and songs.

In the case of the coritos, this feature is combined with other closure devices such as the instrumental interlude and the fixed number of repetitions of each lyric (eight times).

(4) Articulation among intensity, tempo, and the direction of sound-movement

In the coritos we noticed a tendency to sing louder than in the Nmi. They consider it a demonstration of the power of the Holy Spirit and a way to drive off the bad spirits. However, this tendency to high intensity is now shared by much of contemporary popular music, especially by the use of amplifiers. In the Nmi, the lower intensity of sound and the slower steps in a closed circle seem to reinforce the centripetal direction of this performance. In contrast, in the Rueda, the louder intensity of sound and the faster running in an open circle seem to reinforce the centrifugal direction of this performance.

(5) Construction through alternating two rhythmic-melodic structures: the first more static, characterized by unisons, and the second more dynamic, characterized by an undulating melodic movement with a predominance of intervals of thirds.

As it is shown in the Nmi transcribed above, the repetition of a particular sound characterizes the first structure, generally in very sharp crotchet pulses, repeated several times in a vibrating voice, with low and deep resonance. In the coritos of the Rueda the repeated sound also characterizes the starts, but the final cadence closes sometimes with a glissando descending in thirds. Throughout the phrase there is a syllabic relation of music and lyrics with the same utterance and rhythm as in the second phrase.

In both dances, the second undulating phrase usually alternates a repeated sound and thirds, which together with the first phrase conforms to a structure similar to a Western major chord. In the Nmi the pitch of the second phrase rises, creating a greater tension, since as we pointed out before, pitch is linked to loudness. In the Rueda, instead, the repeated sounds of the first phrase (G) are higher than the sounds of the second phrase (C-E), and thus the first produces an effect of suspenseful precedent, and the second complements it inversely with a relaxing effect.

Although in both cases the phrases complement each other, the repeated sound in each of them has different functions. In the Nmi, it tends to grow faster before the start of the undulating movement, operating as a way to match the rhythm, and only when it has been reached, do they begin the second formula. So the length of these repeated sounds probably depends on each performance event. In the Rueda, the instrumental prelude is the actual introduction, and therefore, the first phrase sounds like a question to be answered, like the “antecedents-consequents” of Western music. It should be noted that there is no speeding up in the instrumental prelude of the Rueda, since there is no imperative to match the rhythm among the performers who are not holding each other.

In sum, repetition is the organizing principle in both expressions, though there are some structural differences. In the Rueda, music seems to serve mainly the repetition of the Evangelic lyrics that determine the structure. It is, then, a repetition that reinforces a single idea, because the smallest rhythmic variations aim at stressing the Bible text. In the Nmi, instead, the lack of lyrics and a marked choreographic regularity allow the music to explore more resources to produce small variations. On one hand, there are variations in the number of repetitions of the two alternating phrases. On the other, the way each phrase repeats also varies—variations in the rhythmic figures of the initial repeated sound and others due to loss of motifs in the undulating phrases. It is then a form that turns into itself but repeated with slight variations.

TOWARD THE SYNTHESIS: AESTHETICS, EMOTIONS, MEANINGS, AND MICRO-POLITICS

In this final synthesis, we explore how the Nmi and Rueda, through their iconic and indexical links, produce specific “meaningful effects” as sensorial and emotional experiences, and also how they operate as a mean for sociopolitical processes. In this way, we will try to demonstrate our two initial hypotheses.

The Paradoxical Continuity of an Aesthetic and Affective Experience of “Bliss”

Despite these changes and variations, we showed that there is continuity in the structural aesthetic principle that organizes both the Nmi and the Rueda: the deeper articulation between the circular and repetitive character of the choreography and the iteration through minimal variations of the musical discourse. This aesthetic principle usually evokes, through iconic and indexical links, meanings of “community” and “permanence”: the experience of belonging to a common group that persists through time. These “meanings” not only imply symbolic ideas in the interpretants, but also result in a fully felt embodied experience. Dancing in rings, with the simultaneous repetition of the same movements and similar musical units, usually promotes fraternity and closeness. So these aesthetic forms could have induced the experience Turner (1982, 45–48) calls “spontaneous *communitas*”: “an unmediated relationship between historical, idiosyncratic, concrete individuals” that becomes “totally absorbed into a single, synchronized, fluid event.” According to Turner (1974: 54), this experience, opposed to social structural relationships, has a direct, egalitarian, and undifferentiated character, a predominance of emotion, play, and creativity. Both in the old Nmi and new Rueda, feelings of camaraderie were especially related to the group of young people that organized these night ritual meetings. Only gender and age relations set the performers momentarily apart: in the Nmi, just at the beginning of the choreography in the different roles of an adult captain and his young followers, and men and women; and in the Rueda, in the different roles of men and women during the musical performance but not in the movements of dance. It is also important to notice that the circular design usually operates as an index of indigenous identity for the Toba and other *Guaycuru* groups, since it differentiates their own aesthetic forms from other criollo folk genres, characterized by couple dances. As one of the old dance leaders commented to us: “indigenous dances were always in rings.”

Another important shared characteristic of the performance of the Nmi and the Rueda is their organization in sequences of continuous performances made up of several brief song-dances, without their interruption by silence or

lack of movement. We propose that this is a way to reach an energetic intensification in terms of sound, movement, and emotion. This continuity seems to promote an embodied experience of pleased increment of the stimuli, since some perceptions and feelings are strengthened through their iteration. As the Toba usually said: “more songs, more dances, more bliss.” This embodied experience of bliss is culturally interpreted as an increasing power: power to seduce in the Nmi, probably reinforced by the centripetal direction of sounds and movement in the closed circle; and power to attract the spiritual beings in the Rueda, probably reinforced by the centrifugal directions of this loud music and fast dances. In this sense, seduction does not appear on the Rueda during the running movement in itself, since the refraining from body contact between the sexes during this dance is proof of control of sexual expressions characteristic of Pentecostal Evangelism. Nevertheless, seduction emerges in the gaps among each sequence of performances, through gazes, gestures, and brief comments among the dancers, and between them and the musicians.

So, through the gozo experience in the Rueda, young Tobas transcend the ideological opposition between the sacred and the secular that pervades the Evangelical discourse. George Bataille (1985), in his well-known book *Eroticism*, focused on the erotic dimension of different religious experiences. For this author there is a kind of continuity in the love of the bodies, the hearts, and the spirits. Since Toba music and dances have traditionally embodied the human power to attract both the other sex in the Nmi and the powerful spiritual beings in shamanic practices, it is not strange that today the same genre can contain these apparently different meanings and social uses. Nevertheless, we also show how this ambivalence has generated social disputes, since the indigenous peoples in Latin America underwent the strong pressures of the complex processes of coloniality/modernity. Through the bliss of the Rueda, the youngsters perform a highly emotional aesthetic experience where attempts to resist the hegemony of the Christian discourses are manifest: an embodied resistance to the dualistic tradition that opposes the body and the spirit as the secular and the sacred. Thus, the micro-politics of this performance constitute a paradoxical and ambiguous regimen of control and also of resistance of the bodies: the contact bodies are keeping out of the dance in the churches, but they are present in the subsequent sexual relations in the bush. This leads to our second hypothesis.

The Paradoxical Micro-Politics of These Genres: Legitimation, Empowerment, and Contention through Music and Dance

As we have shown, in the Rueda, young people adopted a circular pattern that operates as a strong iconic sign linked to the Nmi, and this pattern also refers, in an indexical way, to the sexual intentions of the old dance, so it was

frowned upon by some elder and adult leaders. But at the same time, the biblical contents of the corito lyrics operate as an index of the Evangelical praise, so other leaders legitimated it. Furthermore, we described other features of the Rueda that operate as indices of the strong influence of Western aesthetics in the young people, like the separation between music and dance, the use of Western musical instruments, the introduction of lyrics, and more regular structures. In other works we also analyze how the current preference for running movements over other dance steps closer to the Nmi evidence the impact of the disciplinarian processes of the body at the schools where these young people were socialized (Citro 2003, 2009). These institutions encourage sports practices where running predominates (like soccer) and exclude exploration of the expressive movements of dances, as very seldom are dance genres part of the curriculum. In a similar way, the more regular musical structure linked to the repetition of biblical lyrics seems to operate as a kind of disciplinary control that limits the improvisation possibilities (so characteristic in the small variations of the Nmi but also in other oral musical traditions) and probably is also related to the transformation these societies underwent when they moved from an oral tradition to writing. Thus, these more regular music and dance forms become an index of that disciplined body promoted and legitimated by the White society and their schools.

In sum, the Rueda, through the iteration and reformulation of contrasting aesthetic signs, led to contradictory and conflicting interpretations among performers and onlookers. As Thomas Turino (1999: 237) states, different parameters can “function as discrete signs that compliment, chafe, or contradict the other signs sounding at the same time—contributing to the power of a particular meaning, to new insights, or to emotional tension, respectively.”

Finally, we want to underline that through these different aesthetics and interpretive conflicts youngsters, adults, and elders also dispute their ritual roles and the legitimacy of their powers. In earlier works we analyzed how in the history of the Nmi variations and the Evangelio music and dance, there have been different disputes between the young males and the elders. That is what happened in the 1960s, when some young dancers introduced variations in the Nmi dance. Later on, in the 1970s, the younger males started to introduce folk music in the church services and organize their own “music bands,” performances, and recordings, and in the mid-1990s, when the young males and some of the girls started to dance the Rueda (Citro 2003, 2009). Finally, also in the mid-2000s, the young women created their own dance groups led by adult women, and some years later, the young men initiated their own groups, incorporating new choreographies (Citro 2013).

In these different relationships, young people, and especially men, have been more open and receptive to incorporating new practices from the hegemonic society, and yet each of these “novelties” involved conflicts with the established power of the elders, who initially resisted and opposed the music

and dance innovations. Even so, young people have kept on creating their own aesthetic forms, trying to imbue the ritual with their own meanings and ends—like religious bliss and healing together with seduction and aesthetic pleasure.

This process of empowerment of the young people in the rituals has also influenced the structure of their social roles. For instance, some of them are on their way to becoming professional musicians, trying to overcome the harsh economic conditions and following their calling, and in the next years, one might expect a similar process in women's dances. In addition, some Evangelio musicians and dancers have become pastors, while others become members of the new indigenous political movement that we mentioned before. Such is the situation among the people from the "back of La Primavera," who participated in the roadblocks and rallies that began in 2005 and continued with an important march and demonstration in Buenos Aires in 2011. Felix Díaz, the leader of that movement was, when we met him in the late 1990s, a relatively young pastor of an indigenous church.¹¹

In conclusion, we have tried to demonstrate how these forms of music and dance have become a dynamic field of aesthetic and also political disputes, where processes of empowerment and contention take place. Through these sounds and movements, and the emotions and meanings that they provoke, Toba people also construct and reshape their identitarian positions and social roles in this conflictive and paradoxical postcolonial context.

NOTES

1. These and other research studies about music and dances are part of our team of Anthropology of the Body and Performance (www.antropologiadelcuerpo.com), at the Institute of Anthropology, University of Buenos Aires.

2. Following the seminal works of Turner (1987), we propose to understand the Nmi and Rueda as "performance genres," due to the difficulty of separating music, dance, gestures, lyrics, and other aesthetic expressions. So, we define the performance genres as those involving relatively stable performances—with kinetic; musical; discursive; visual; and, sometimes, tactile; smell; and taste resources—characterized by prototypical stylistic features, a recognizable processual structure (time-space organization and relationships among the participants throughout the sequence of events), and a set of shared emotions and meanings induced by the performance on performers and different observers (Citro 1997, 2003).

3. A more extended version of this methodological perspective can be seen in previous works (Citro and Cerletti 2009; Citro 2009).

4. This model focuses on processes and changes, because the important thing is not the "sign itself" but the "semiotic chaining": "how sign-object relations at one stage create a distinct effect (interpretant) which becomes the sign at the next stage in the chain. . . . [A] sign is not a self-evident idea or entity but is the catalyst for an effect" (Turino 1999: 223).

5. "Indices signify through co-occurrence with their object in real-time situations. Once such indexical relations have been established, however, actual co-presence of sign and object is no longer required; the index may still call to mind objects previously experientially attached. But when former indexically related objects are not present, or even when they are, new elements in the situation may become linked to the same sign" (Turino 1999, 235).

6. Here, we try to lay a bridge between the discursive performativity based on Butler (2002) and the kind of embodied and musical performativity inspired by Peirce's semiotic and followed by Feld (1994) and Turino (1999).

7. In 1911 the military began an advance on the Toba lands of Formosa province, and some state and Catholic reservations were created, as in the case of Misión Laishi and Misión Tacaaglé.

8. The Peronist movement has been ruling Formosa province since the return of democracy to Argentina in 1983.

9. In this model we can appreciate that musical motifs are placed in vertical and horizontal columns in order to make a clear-cut distinction between similarities and differences. Ruwet applies this analytic system to medieval monophonic music. However, it has also been used by ethnomusicologists, since in both cases music is mostly based in oral traditions (cf. Cámara de Landa 2004: 161)

10. In another paper (Citro and Cerletti 2013), we also propose that this kind of sound resembles the timbre of the two melodic string instruments adopted by the Toba: the *trompa*, a kind of birimbao or jew's-harp, and the mentioned *nvike*. Despite their Spanish origin, these musical instruments became the most characteristic of traditional Toba music. Following Feld's proposals of the role of iconicity among different sonorous expressions, we consider that the pervasive presence of this timbre feature in language, singing, and instrumentation has become one of the indices of the traditional Toba music.

11. About this conflict, see <http://www.laprimaverablogspot.com>.

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Chapter Three

Traditional Sonorous Poetics

Ways of Appropriation and Perception of “Andean” Music and Practices in Buenos Aires

Adil Podhajcer

THEORETICAL AND METHODOLOGICAL ASPECTS

Different authors (Gavazzo 2005; Grimson 2005) have stated that since the late 1980s and particularly during the 1990s there were “changes in the way ethnic differences became visible” (Grimson 2005: 15) regarding Bolivian, Peruvian, and Northern Argentine migrants, particularly during migratory processes from the outskirts toward the capital city of Buenos Aires. At the same time, from then on—migration patterns became rural-urban and even urban-urban, rather than between rural areas, as was the case during the first migration stage toward Salta and Jujuy. New strategies have been developed by the migrants to improve their possibilities of getting jobs and legal documents (due to the 1993 amnesty), and to reconstruct their identities while living far away from their countries of origin (Benencia and Karasik 1995; Grimson 2005, 2006). The impact of migration from national borders and peripheral areas toward the capital, and its new visibility, coincided with the increase in unemployment rates between 1992 and 1994, which influenced the discourses that accuse migrants of “taking jobs away from Argentines” and of being “illegal” (Caggiano 2005).¹

While this visibility acquired relevance in the city of Buenos Aires, new identifications with “native” symbols and ethnic identities emerged, since, to an important group of these immigrants from Bolivia and Peru, it implied the “recovery” of their traditional celebrations and *fiestas*, with music and dances from their different regions of origin. In 1992, in the framework of a

demonstration to commemorate the five hundredth anniversary of the European Invasion of America, these groups took a stance strengthening and creating the first Andean music and dance groups, currently known as “*bandas de sikuris*.”² The inclusion of migrants and the development of these cultural expressions in the city of Buenos Aires converged in a process that transformed intercultural relations and enhanced Bolivian and Norteña (from the north of Argentina) cultural identities, as well as the recognition of the “native peoples” and of a certain “Latin American identity.” The inclusion of migrant communities eventually implied the arrangement of relationships and practices in relation to what is “new” and “original,” the musical projections in the city and the regional traditions of their people.³

In this context I started in 1995 to take part in workshops in order to learn how to play the *siku*, the *quena*, and the *charango*,⁴ and have joined since then different “bandas de sikuris.” These experiences, which I gained while studying cultural anthropology, constitute my own perception—both as performer and researcher—of the ethnographic experience, which produced “inscriptions” in my own body.

That is why, as Merleau-Ponty as well as Jackson point out: the subject is not divided from the body, but is rather a “bodied subject” in a “bodily practice” (Jackson 1983: 340), as “thinking and communicating through the body comes before, and to a great extent always remains longer than what is said” (Jackson 1983: 329); therefore, body movement is by itself that reality and does not necessarily symbolize another one. This experience-based approach that stems from the acquisition of social guidelines and behaviors and their mimetic perception parting from one’s own body has been a vital source of analysis for this chapter.

In terms of the methodological approach, among the twenty main bands of the sikuri’s universe in Buenos Aires, I performed an ethnographic work with five of them that were selected based on certain distinctive characteristics: one of the bands is mostly made up of young people of Bolivian and Peruvian descent, many of them belonging to the popular sectors; another one is made up of young people of Argentine descent belonging to the lower classes; the third one is made up mostly of older people, mainly Bolivian and Peruvian; and the last two are made up of people from different origins, mainly of Argentine descent, young and old, coming from the lower classes with professional credentials in Western music, a variable that in the other groups is almost nonexistent. These latter two bands aim to accurately reproduce the music of Bolivian communities, while the others consider the musical product as a bridge and mediator toward addressing other mythical and political aspects historically linked to the cultures of the Central Andes. These differences and similarities are part of the processes of re-signification of Andean musics within groups that involve intercultural relations among Bolivian and Peruvian migrants, their descendants, and Argentines (who de-

scend from European migrants), which lead toward different artistic-cultural paths.

MUSICAL PERFORMANCES

Experience and Emotion

Emotion is an aspect that has not been much looked into in the bibliography on Andean music, even though participants continuously evoke sensations and feelings that go through them while playing it. Whether we conceive it a linguistic, physiological, and/or corporal aspect, emotions, as anthropologists may consider them, compose a cultural category that comprehends all of these elements in a different manner according to the specific case at stake. Even though I am aware of the concept of “experience and expression of emotion not always fitting in explicit categories,” (Leavitt 2007: 12) it must be noted that, “If emotions, although not just their signs, are understood as meaning/feeling experiences that are organized and measured by a system of signs, then at least one attempt of translation should be possible between the meaning and feeling system being studied and the system that the ethnographer shares with the reader or listener of the ethnography” (Leavitt 2007: 21–22).

Since they share common experiences and a unifying history (those of their own musical group and the time they have been playing together), the sikuris (siku players) can feel the same experiences with similar emotions, which can be understood as ritual practices expressed in discourses and beliefs that gather them together, on the one hand, and unifying community feelings that join them, on the other. In spite of this empathic and collective premise, some players express their feelings more spontaneously, while others (mostly belonging to more traditional or “native” groups), mask, divert, or mitigate them (Podhajcer 2009). The different paths—migration experience, musical orientation, role within the group, ideological positioning, ethnic and gender differences, and even social situation—lead to different ways of living the same experience. Therefore, as emotions are neither universal nor transcultural, they also do not appear in the same manner at a certain moment to different people, even though the flow of the performance may make it seem that way.⁵

Also, this work complements previous writings in which I argue that through a utopian Andean social imaginary expressed as the vision of the Andean world, participants produce, renew, and update senses and emotions linked to “communitarianism.” The different ways they perform and the significance to the dynamics of each group have an impact on each musical performance, the subjective perception they promote, and the ways each ensemble uses them to signify their music. Thus, the main interest of these

groups is to generate close ties between musical practice, the emotions it allegedly creates, and the values and beliefs that back them up, aiming to produce new ways of living “the Andean thing.”

The music performance enables players to live the Andean sound and imaginary, both linked to an established Andean musical structure, which is based on an intersubject dialogue that articulates music and corporeality. By means of this intersubjective dialogue, sensorial modalities are lived and relived in each performance as a deeply reflexive process (Goffman 1959: 114). Within the depth of sound, players attribute meanings to their practice, generating creative processes, innovating and elaborating a repertoire, a different way of performing music, a new way of using the body, and new guidelines and strategies to defend its specificity. That is why, even though the inner world of the *ronda sikuri* presents aesthetics and musical differences that derive from social status differences—a level of execution of the different voices—the collective and “communal” behavior of the musical performance transmits “egalitarianism” and “emotivity.” In fact, the construction of this external shield, legitimated during the performance, is reflected toward the audience as an image of corporatism and solid group constitution (Goffman 1967: 24).⁶ The *ronda*, the dialogue and “playing together,” constitute the iconic-indexing character as icon of what is communitarian, and it gets “loaded” with emotions in every encounter, every performance. This social unit is also a musical strength that the audience perceives. According to Blacking (1979: xvii) the *ronda* constitutes a “culture-driven feeling” based on emotions and creative ways that take place during the performance, thus being inherent—and therefore specific—of the *sikuri*’s performance itself. As a female *sikuri* told us, “The concrete thing is music, being there. No one is more important than anyone else. I needed something like this, an egalitarian community” (Interview with a *sikuri* member of “Sartañani Ayllu”).⁷

Sikuri groups are defined by a communicational effectiveness that is unfolded in a performance characterized by intertwined music, whose main drive is self-regulation among all the players while creating harmony. These premises also develop other fundamental elements that indicate the place of feeling and emotions during the performance. According to Bauman and Briggs (Bauman and Briggs 1990: 70) the axes that are functional for the performance depend on some variables whose reference framework is a legitimated authority that decides what discourses will be executed and enforces the continuity of traditional values. The musical directors’ leadership in the *sikuri*’s ambience emanates mainly from their knowledge and research capacity but also from their charisma and prestige.

Particularly during the performance, the director leads the process of production of the sound being sought in each style, intertwining sounds and observing changes of sound. This self-regulated collective work is personal-

ized by punctual instructions to each player, who adopts different identities that provide him or her with a social ranking. Next, we will analyze what a sikuri performance is made up of, how musical elements are put at stake and intertwined structurally, and finally the cultural conceptions players have of the music.

RONDA, MUSIC, AND BODY

Dialogical conception of displacement and the mode of performing the sikuri depend on several variables beyond music, including gestures and use of the body. In these corporal appropriations of the music, re-elaborations (such as cultural translations of relocated cultural traditions) take place, happening in real time, during the corporeal movements and the ways of playing (how the “cane is blown,” the gaze toward the partner and the group, and the strength or energy of the execution), but also in the ways of narrating the experience itself. This conception of “complementarities” within the ensemble, which always depends on the answer and question of the other(s), is built on the action of the practice itself, which according to Voloshinov is “the active perception of the discourse of the other” (my translation), where the author delimits the tendency of the dialogue, such as orientation, elaboration, and one’s own experience of the dialogue, that take place socially, according to the context (Voloshinov 1992: 157). There is within this kind of execution a wide display of efficiency in which musical talent and its effectiveness have a primary role in the formulation of discourses (see Bauman and Briggs 1990). Moreover, during the intensification of the music discourse, the repetition of the musical phrase (as we will see next), contributes to create an “exclusive perceptive space” that enables us to experience the flow of the event and reassert the main musical unity by updating it (Qureshi 1994: 520). That is why repetition is not the reiteration of the semantic unit but rather its reformulation, which allows each “part” of the melody to be unique and unrepeatable. In that sense, music enables another temporal dimension, and its acoustic articulation is a key and effective creative element within the structure of the performance (Qureshi 1987, 1994).

Different types of circular displacements occur during the execution, which compose certain choreographies. That is why teaching and learning methods acquire an important role in the construction of corporal, discursive, and visual levels beyond what is strictly musical.⁸ We found that in the relationship between musical and corporal language (linked by the dialectics of transformation between the Andean and the quotidian worlds), not only does each melody correspond to a type of dance, but also the sikuri improvises different displacements in each case. These different displacements are promoted by the context (whether the sikuris are located on a stage or not, the

type of public, etc.) and by the connection and mimesis among participants. The twirls at the end of each song are also not casual, as they involve again the dual conception, being *arka*, the clockwise twirl, and *ira*, the counter-clockwise twirl.⁹

In the city of Buenos Aires, musical performances are similar to each other because the groups share common features, based on social and cultural guidelines transmitted by the guides. Some melodies begin with a sequence of simultaneous *bombo* drumbeats coming from all present drums, generally not more than three, depending on the intensity of the sound of the bombo drum. At the end of this sequence, there is a silence pause that lasts a few seconds. The couple of “zankas”¹⁰ look at each other and at the drummers, who will begin the melody with them. In other cases, depending on the musical style, everyone begins at the same time.¹¹ Every melody is made up of several sections or fragments that players call “parts of the song.” A *vuelta del tema* (turn of the song) means to play the whole melody one more time. The *performance* of the set is based on repeating the melody at least six times. Each repetition has a different energy, because the movements of the musicians and the bombo players that “mark the rhythm” bring a different intensity to each “part” they play. So, in the performance the musicians adopt a musical role and a place in the *ronda*. Bauman is right in pointing out that beyond whether an execution is good or bad, it is important to point out that if a group defines their practice as an execution (which includes a performance and preparation facing an audience) it must be defined as “variable in intensity as well as in spectrum” (Bauman 2002: 130).

The moment of collective execution is “the deepest one.” It begins with the first “round” or “*tocada*” of the melody on the spot, without moving and with a greater energy stimulated by the action of starting to blow. It is a moment with much musical interconnection, as musicians recognize each other again within the *ronda* and “communicate” with the instrument, feeling it as “a part of them.” The three following rounds consist of a 180° pivot toward the left, thus beginning a round along with all the musicians. Conversely, the fourth “play of the song” implies certain preparation. It takes place with a still *ronda*, just as it was at the beginning. This last “playing” precedes the final “playing.” The collective *ronda* “knows” that always the last playing is lighter and requires more energy from the players. This is why, at the end of the fourth playing, those groups who were more “rested” or “relaxed” join in with more muscle tone and stare at the guides and “*bombistas*.” Then everyone stops abruptly at the last note, in order to lead to the final “playing.” This requires more precision and attention from the *sikuris* who must “rush” without making mistakes. Body, sensorial, and perception languages are essential, as the bodies that are blowing must follow a collective rhythm that depends largely on a musical interconnection. I believe that this instant, which lasts very few minutes, is a key moment for the *perfor-*

mance, as it marks a change in the musical rhythm that initiates the melody. That is why, as Citro points out, it is important to note “the fact that these [festive rituals] imply the perception of intense and marked sensory stimuli as well as the use of corporal techniques that are different from those used in daily life” (Citro 2001: 22).

This moment of greater interconnection has been defined by Turner as *communitas*, a state that prioritizes unity as a kind of experience (Turner 1992). Therefore, the choice of playing collectively resides on the collective experience of well-being and liberation. From this concept, we can develop certain associated meanings that reveal essential elements for the development of the performance. First, the notion of “attention” that each sikuri develops with his or her instrument partner and toward the rest of the musicians that favors listening over seeing, which explains why many sikuris say that they prefer to play with their eyes shut. However, whether they play with their eyes shut or not, it would seem that participation through sounds allows the passage of light and visual participation (Ingold 2000). The experience of listening and seeing sounds, sonorities, vibration, sources of sound, modulations, and “appearances” or ghosts of other people enable the loss of position, opening the “me” inward and outside the ronda. Therefore, and in a second term, the “personal predisposition” of each musician causes each personal sound to belong to him or herself and to the other musicians, enabling the appearance of behaviors that are neither established nor rigid, but rather undifferentiated from each other (Jullien 2013).

As Ingold points out, ears are “imagined topologically, as openings in the head that actually allow the sound to seep in and touch the innermost surfaces of being” (Ingold: 2000: 245). The sensations of “being able to touch” sound and even that the sounds “can touch” each other, grazing, caressing, entering a spectral dance, create the vision of the musical world, explained as a “complementary” and “collective” world. This world is the musical ronda, which in each performance is sown again and reborn with a new body. Ingold underlines it when he mentions the historical rejection of “vision” by classical Western scholars, while “listening” was always considered “inward, communicative and with solidarity” (Ingold 2000: 247). Perception is a way of staying in the world that goes beyond reason, the body, and the world itself but, that at the same time, is all of them, constituting a strategy of durability of the musical ensemble as it moves across the group in an intersubjective and inter-corporal manner. The preference of the sikuris for their practical knowledge feeds on their belonging and the recovery of an attention based on images and sounds.

The incorporation of musical techniques, choreographic movements, corporal codes, gestures, and postures make up the sikuri practice. Jackson says in this regard, “In this sense, body techniques can be compared to musical techniques as both of them take us to the daily world of verbal distinctions

and categorical separations, a world where limits are blurry, and experience is transformed. Dance and music move us to participate in a world beyond our usual roles and to recognize ourselves as members of a community, of a common body.” (Jackson 1983: 338). According to Qureshi, in these practices discourse is not separated from corporeality, to the point where the ways of experiencing corporeality in the collective marks “corporal feelings” from which we may understand how others experience and confirm their position within the group, as well as outside their musical circle (Qureshi 2000: 812). In fact, music multi-referentiality constitutes a “negotiation” of senses between musical production and the power music exerts to produce this multitude of experiences.

So, why do more traditional groups claim that interconnection takes place when the instruments are “well played,” while other groups consider that the connection takes place anyway as though it were an ad hoc state of musical practice?

INTERCONNECTED OR “SOUNDING GOOD”?

“Hippies,” “Natives,” and a “Community World”

Another significant factor we ponder is in what way—through the emotional power of music—can music signs be understood as sonorities that are the direct result of the playing of the instrument, without requiring previous mediation or symbolizations. In this way, musical language is similar to body language, because through corporal attitude or facial expressions (as well as when making sounds) emotional and energetic effects are produced.¹² These analyses by Thomas Turino on Andean music encouraged him to explore several expressive practices: music, dance, and propositional languages. According to him, “It is my thesis that the power of music to create emotional responses and to realize personal and social identities is based on the fact that musical signs are typically of the direct, less-mediated type. Music involves signs of feeling and experience rather than the types of mediational signs that are about something else” (Turino 1999: 224). The author defined symbols as signs about other things, based on Peirce’s semiotics, while icons and indexes are signs of identity (similarity, communality) and of direct connections (Turino 1999: 228).

Sounds operate on these levels, and are the most effective in producing emotions. Through time or along with specific symbology and a verbalization of the relationship between a particular sound and an image or feeling (as when the lyrics or the music of a song enables us to evoke the Andean landscape, for example) they can convert the song into a symbol of the landscape at sunset. This is how there are emotions that are awakened by the link established between the player and a particular melody. But, on the other

hand, the melody can itself be used to create imaginary bonds, becoming an ethnic and political icon. This is how a sikuri puts it:

[When we play JachaLaquitas]¹³ things happen. There are different emotions. There are parts that trigger things that one has, maybe good, sometimes bad. Sometimes they bring an emotion, others they don't. It depends on what you are putting into the song. On how you open yourself to be touched, like this, inside. And on how you are, the things that happened to you. Your life, I don't know. . . . You can't expect someone else to feel the same things. They are not going to feel the same things; they are going to feel their own things. They are living their experience with their things. It isn't like in this part we all feel this. It starts, and we all start hard because it is like we are going up a hill and then when it finishes, the return finishes down "like when you go down the hill." I have heard it many times. Yes, like "how to understand music." One doesn't have to understand music. You have to play it well, nothing else. You have to exercise your listening, practice the part and try to perform it in a similar way. Afterwards if you want to travel or if you are interested in getting to know, that's great. But in that way, traveling and knowing, you are going to feel your things, even if you play with the locals. They are going to feel their things, and you are going to feel yours, your life, and your work, whatever. With the same melody. Maybe things will happen, there are twenty players and twenty different things happen. Or eighteen and some players don't get hooked (interview with Diego in 2009, sikuri, ex music guide).

The indigenous discourses mentioned by my interviewee produce a legitimated report of the feelings Andean music in particular must or can produce. We may therefore deduce that music is a great promoter of identity and can create emotions, but can also enable us to imagine them.

In this utopian construction of the outline of sounds, different conflicts of interest produce ideological and political breaches that play an important role on musical and festive events, as well as in public rallies. They are poles of significance—that is, a symbolic matrix—that we understand as position or identity signifiers (Citro 2000). Even though these identity signifiers fluctuate among the subjects, they evidence traditional breaches of the musical field

This is how, a dispute emerges between more traditionalist or "native" people—generally migrant workers or employees of different nationalities¹⁴—and those less traditionalist, the "hippies"—who are usually Argentine university students or teachers of different nationalities¹⁵—over the public space and the domain of musical "wisdom." The other groups, neither "native" nor "hippies," are made up of young people and adults of popular classes, employees, and professional musicians. They share with the rest the objective of recovering native music and defending sikuri music. However they also seek musical perfection, rejecting any "political" discussion on that matter. This last factor is what locates them "in between" the other two

groups mentioned above: they do not agree with the “politics” the “hippies” do or with the secrecy and clear ethnic marking highlighted by the “natives.” This group also opposes their migrant experience to that of the rest of the Argentine population (a characteristic shared by the other two groups). These “professional musicians” who tend to be “more traditionalistic” have created several groups and, even though within them people do not necessarily sustain this same discourse, the group displays a kind of performance that is more “authentic.” For example, they play a music style with the “traditional garments” and a “traditional” choreography. This is something that does not happen with the “hippies” (because they do not wish to “look Andean”), nor with the “natives” who seek a group authenticity (belonging to a music group in Buenos Aires rather than to a city or town in Bolivia). The differential identity is built, in any case, on ethnic (Aymara or Quechua) and regional origins, instead of on national ones. This discourse on ethnic identity is what positions a “native” group in the milieu.

I call “natives” and “professional musicians” the “more traditionalist” groups. For them, “blowing well” means “filling well the cane” in each player’s particular way, while correctly performing the style, without adding or “extending” the notes. Leaders or musical directors state that the instrument is well blown when players “know” the instrument, which implies: good use of the diaphragm, making the most of the strength and air put into the cane, perceiving variations in melody and rhythm (“listening to the music well”), “not getting lost” (in the canes), and knowing the styles, among others. When this happens, a unification in the playing known as “connection” takes place. Even though each member plays differently (directs the air within the cane in a way different from everyone else), the concepts provided by the leaders appear and the performance flows with each player’s personal way of blowing. On the other hand, “not sounding well” comprehends a musical failure that is related to a lack of knowledge and special interest on learning these types of music, highlighting its differential indigenous origins.

For “hippies,” however, “blowing well” is linked to musical interconnection and is described as a “feeling” of physical well-being. Emphasis is not on improving the sound or achieving more harmony, but rather on intercorporal connection through the instruments. This is why some directors say things such as “We are not listening to each other,” emphasizing the musical dialogue over the way of performing. What follows are three quotes from sikuris, the two first ones are “traditional,” and the last one belongs to a more intercultural or “hippy” group:

In some groups, the ideal thing is for all the voices, the “malta,” “chullis” and “zankas” to vibrate in a similar harmony. [. . .] If there are already “malta” blowing and “zankas” blowing less, then there is a discrepancy that is what happens in almost all of the bands we see around here, or even in La Paz [. . .]

it is very difficult, that all the voices play the same harmonics, that they are up to the task. The idea is to listen to a sound that you don't notice, meaning you don't differentiate between the *tayka*, the *malta*, the *zanka* and the *culli*, [. . .] but this is already more difficult.

A: This has to do with the blowing, the attack.

R: Right, that everyone has a similar attack, more than cutting.¹⁶ In this way, we achieve harmony in unison, meaning in only one cane" (interview with Ruben in 2013, guide at *Wayramanta*).¹⁷

The melody has to sound outside, the rest happens within. The outside hears the music . . . "pan, pan, pan, look what a nice *poncho*." But something else is happening within. The player has liked it, played it . . . it's good, got connected. He got connected. This is what we look for, to get connected. Doing something moved him. He wasn't doing it and suddenly he felt like it. He got connected. For best or for worse, I don't know. In that moment he tuned and fitted into the railway and it took him away, music took him somewhere and then let him go. With his own thing (interview with Diego in 2008, *sikuri*, former guide).

When playing I always feel a connection. I don't know if it is because of the way we breathe. . . . It takes me to a level, like taking things seriously. It connects you to the ground. All the *sikuris* make me feel elemental, basic things. Does that happen to you? Because I think we all feel it. . . . Because when I started, it is like the wheel makes you dizzy, it seems dense; you must wait for someone else's tempo and do it again and again. I don't know, afterwards you start playing and can't stop. But first you have to go through this process (interview with Angélica in 2008, a legendary *sikuri*).

Less traditionalist and more intercultural groups referred frequently to concepts such as "community" and "complementarities." The different projections and motivations of the groups result in solving micro-conflictive musical structures understood as "musical combinations that make something sound good or bad;" that is "if someone is playing too high, in a melody line, how much lower is the other voice with relation to that melody, or if the accompanying instrument has bad timing or a silence, or makes a variation or a change in the rhythm that is being played" (interview with Diego, *sikuri*, former guide).

These variations are solved through the self-regulation of the *rondas*. Within them, different kinds of blows and attacks, harmony, inflections when blowing, taps, errors, improvisations, and others elements that make up the performance are explained through imaginary discourses on "what is the Andean." These stem from the need to "listen to each other," take group

decisions, and generate a more productive verbal dialogue. In fact, according to a sikuri, "If a group is not feeling well, it sounds bad," and for the director of a band, a melody that is played faster than it should be has the influence of the city's rhythm. Micro-musical structures are solved with skill and musical perception (mentioned in expressions such as "we must listen"), which at the same time creates a "non-Western" hearing, or at least enables the acquisition of tools to develop a hearing that is different from that of the West. This is why improvisations are, for some groups, isolated situations that always imply some kind of fault, a mistake or error or "it should not be done," meaning that it does not correspond because "it alters the melody" or "it doesn't fit." I remember that once, many years ago, I chose to "hold a note" at the end of a melody (where this does not usually occur) and the director of my band let me now I should not do it again. I realized that what I had done was to transfer some clichés from other genres (maybe pop or folklore) to these traditional styles and that meant that I was altering the style. It wasn't the first time I did it, or that I proposed musical "arrangements." However the proposals were taken naturally while spontaneous variations were discarded. That is how I learned that variations in the intensity or blow (like "holding a note" when "you mustn't") should be decided and coordinated previously with everyone in the rehearsals as part of the "arrangements" we "can" introduce in our performances. Unexpected sounds, conversely, are "mistakes," errors that can or not be repaired, depending on the interconnection the group is having at that particular time, and the energy of the performance. In these cases, the band continues playing the song as it should be played, rather than making individual decisions that may affect the general musical sound. Therefore, improvisations such as unexpected sounds are situations that affect the sound and "confront" the hegemonic signifiers on "the correct way" of playing a song.

In fact, we may differentiate two dominant field negotiations. The first one links the performing in a ronda with "collective" traditional principles and precepts. This is why we propose that "community" and "complementarity" are visions of the sikuri musical world in Buenos Aires. Second is the emphasis on skill and performance of the sikuri and the knowledge of the musical style(s) each group plays. The genres performed in a way that differs from the traditional way are considered degradations "or bad performances" of the genre. Even though there is permeability of both signifiers in both traditionalist and nontraditionalist groups, and "hippies" and "natives" agree on the fact that "community" objectives are essential. For the rest of the groups (to a lesser extent), motivation lies instead in "a correct performance," based on thoroughly working the music style.

SECRECY AND POWER

It must be noted that the ethno-musicological search for an original source has become a permeated discourse on the sikuri musical universe. This has fed the traditional hypotheses on Andean secrets that have not yet been uncovered. That is why common beliefs in a hidden knowledge of musical styles—as well as on their origin—has been re-signified as a channel toward the “real Aymara music.” “Hippies” and “Natives” claim that leaders and guides create the idea of a secret that cannot be revealed or attained, which makes the experience of “making sikuri music” even more mysterious and challenging. The secrecy of the leaders works through power relations, discipline, “traditional” rituals, and a sustained and self-regulated interest in traditional discourses. At the same time, all of the above have an impact on the self-regulation, legitimation, and reproduction of the secrets, as well as on the resolution of micro-conflictual musical structures. The weaving of these factors imposes intense emotional effects that link the real and utopian historical memory of the “native peoples” to their musical expressions. Thus, a micro-musical intersubjectivity is created by the players’ motivation and intention of unraveling these secrets, as an act to remain in and belong to the circle established by the sikuri ronda. These secrets are strategies of preservation of the musical groups as well as of the musical roles themselves, which must be rightfully interpreted according to the group’s specific “discipline.” Therefore the secret may be revealed as the skills are acquired and, in spite of this, it is feasible that one may not “overcome the hinge” and make it (Interview, May 2013).

The sikuri musical microcosm constitutes a particular and unique vision of the world. Interconnection is experience based to some and takes place as a result of the “community” type of music. For others there is only connection when “we play well.” Thus, my hypothesis is that the ronda and playing together work as an icon of the community, the Andean utopia, shared by everybody. Through different sikuri performances of different groups this icon acquires other indexical signifiers. What follows is the account of “la flaca” Angélica in 2008:

What I value the most of the siku’s music is that you must play no matter what . . . since it is not a verbal agreement, which you and I have to agree. But if you get accelerated, you arrive tired from work and I am slow, isn’t it? Until we start breathing the same and until . . . it is elementary, we must have an energy that flows in the same direction. And that is something that physically involves learning, because your body has to get accustomed; it isn’t that your head understands what you must answer. . . . Your body has to breathe the same as the rest. For me it is one of the tools of cultural transmission because it comprehends all of the elements.

Our interviewee—who has been part of different sikuri groups—believes that while repeating the song our body must “breathe just like the others” and it is within this corporal and musical interconnection that intersubjectivity is woven. According to Merleau-Ponty, our perceptions always come from the same exact place in time and space, from the same perspective and personal history. Our “body scheme” is a summary of our corporeal experiences but is not limited by the affective contents that are associated with the path of our experience by chance, but rather, in certain way, precedes them and makes their association feasible (Merleau-Ponty 1945: 116). Also, this perception takes place from our body along with other bodies. By moving, we extend toward the surroundings, toward the objects and toward what we want to do, as “the corporeal scheme is a global awareness of my position within the inter-sensorial world” (Merleau-Ponty 1945: 116). This means that, finally, each person’s corporeality does not face an unexplored universe; instead, it is from the beginning intertwined with the world (Aschieri and Puglisi 2010). We understand this as the capacity to summarize interpersonal experiences and affections. The musical ronda—a round, closed unit—strengthens this relations between the subject and the world. Thus, the musical performance enables some subjects to seize certain experiences linked to their history and even allows them to change certain habits and take on new ones. This musical cross-embodiment constantly places new subjects (personal and collective) that are constructed during the “musical contact” with the partner, as though ira and arka—both instruments of the *sikus*’ music—were physically glued, besides being in a musical harmony. This “feeling” that the ira-arka duality is based on “a musical glue” turns the instrument into an extension of one’s own body, mainly for two reasons. The first one, because blowing creates a physical state, different from our everyday state, where corporeality is altered. As a result of the creation of this physical state, a sonorous network and an inter-corporeal language is built.

Finally, the body is musically intertwined through the mission of the blow, understood as the blower’s own voice. This is not a minor thing taking into account that the siku is used when claiming rights, or protesting against violent aggressions toward minorities. In the same way, it facilitates a positive visibility of the migrants when they are “silenced” by exclusive cultural policies, or in daily conversations, when their Quechua or Aymara accents are looked down on. This leads us to an understanding of the conception of “person,” where musical, pictographic, and similar human expressions enable the perpetuation of cultural memory and traditional kinships (Gruzinski 1991).

By placing music in dialogue with other dimensions typical of the musical horizon, musical practice can be analyzed from an anthropological perspective that combines the study of corporeality with emotions. The musical experience provides sikuris with a “community” space to be in the world, as

they feel they can change or transform their ways of knowing and living: “For some, [the music] is a privileged site for retaining cultural memory, but for others, it becomes a contested site for reconstructing the past—for ‘living other people’s memories,’” as quoted by Qureshi (Lipsitz 1990 in Qureshi 2000: 827). By recovering subjectivity along with studying collective abstractions embodied in a music instrument as a “concrete” tool and, on the other hand, its particular proper sound, we get access to an agency built on the constructions of the past and in the political and affective changes that comprehend the situation of migration and crisis of 2001.¹⁸ In fact, we may introduce ourselves in the universe of affective communities, where music and its performance contexts are also reinvented (Qureshi 2000: 830).

FINAL THOUGHTS

This work aimed to address the practices of sikuris’ music based on its performance, the signifiers and hegemonic discourses, and how these aspects could be interpreted starting from both the corporeal and musical interconnection achieved. First, I aimed to capture the depth of the states of perception musically embodied in a collective way. For that, I proposed an experience-based approach that stems from the corporeal inscriptions I acquired during my previous experiences and my participatory ethnography. Second, I focused on how this body-related musical language, can be understood just as are techniques learned by mimicking specific patterns in the use of the body. These are determined by one’s own body and the bodies of others, in a constant tension to produce and experience sensations and feelings. Third, we observed how these corporeal variations model and transform each performance, producing new behaviors, physical movements, and mimetic codes in the music ronda and, in broader terms, in the sikuri music of the city.

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NOTES

1. In this context, among Bolivians, the “ways of migrating” also implied the strengthening of the personal ties of mutual aid, based on “kinship, peasantry, and neighborhood” (Benencia and Karasik 1995; Mugraza 1985). This *ayni* that numerous Bolivian families share has not spread to the Peruvians, who, having migrated alone and not having interwoven parental networks, in many cases remain illegal and without possibilities of social mobility or other less precarious labor. Both regional migrations constitute a culture of experiences that the adults and young women immigrants interpret as a process of “reconstruction” of their social and cultural life, in which the music constitutes different dimensions of these experiences.

2. The “bandas de sikuris” are composed by blowers of the siku, a wind instrument whose origins are situated in the current countries of Bolivia, Peru, Ecuador, Chile, and the north of Argentina. Depending on the region, it receives different names and final tunings, conforming to families of instruments that determine styles or rhythm-specific genres.

3. We agree with Turino (2003) who considers these relocated cultural communities within a cosmopolitan and capitalistic perspective with its own place and regional particularities and, therefore, not necessarily global or globalized. In that sense, we sustain the idea that “identity does not stem from having a common territory but rather that identity generates, establishes the territory” (my translation) (Segato 2007: 87).

4. Traditional instruments from Bolivia and Peru accepted in Argentina as part of the folklore of the North of the country.

5. *Flow* or *flux* is a scientific term that refers to the kind of process of an event or a performance.

6. This social corporatism enables the musical groups to be constituted as a community with its own specificities, internal roles, projects, and so on; and, on the other hand, what is known as “to save the *piñadas* (individual mistakes),” since the variations in some canes used in the making of the siku do not alter significantly the general sound, producing harmonics that complement each other. The final performance of the musical sound resides essentially on the sonorous unit that the group can achieve as such.

7. The interviewee was a young woman sikuri of European aspect from the capital of Buenos Aires. She is one of the bass drum musicians and is a professional pianist who has been with the group for ten years. She and her boyfriend take part in rallies.

8. This transfer of knowledge is a privileged space for the artists and, especially, for the musicians, since reciprocities are generated (related to the *ayni*—Andean reciprocity), and therefore solidarity, forming part of the same worldview and of the modalities of these artistic expressions.

9. These pivots can be opened toward outside or inside the group. See Baumann, 1996. Although this dualistic conception is valid, many sikuris discuss its veracity nowadays, arguing that these pivots were “invented” by the musical group “Ruphay,” and never present in the practice of the traditional groups of Bolivia.

10. *Zankas* in Quechua means “adult” or “major” and refers to the big and long canes generally executed by the guides or the musical directors. For more detail see Podhajcer 2011.

11. The first modality characterizes the musical ensembles of Puno, while both characterize the ensembles of Buenos Aires. In those melodies where the bass drum does not begin the melody, the guide realizes a double peal; they all look at him and with a corporal gesture they begin to blow simultaneously (see Podhajcer 2011).

12. The sound would be central to “give sense” and to “know,” leading to living the world within certain sonorities (Qureshi 2000: 810). In this regard, Feld concluded that the kawali were expressing their experiences within the senses of their own music, based on what he called “sonorous landscape” (Feld 1986, 1988), a space that identified them and that they have as their natural and real environment. Because of it, those melodies that “sound like” other sounds of our experience come to shape this emotive memory of the closest, most familiar and communal things.

13. Musical genre that comes from the region of Niño Corín, District of La Paz, Bolivia.

14. Most of them are immigrants that came from Bolivia, as well as their children. Nevertheless, there are also immigrants that came from Peru and Argentines of European descent.

15. Mostly they are Argentines of European descent, whose ancestors migrated to Argentina at the beginning of the twentieth century.

16. Ruben refers to the cuts or measures of the canes.

17. Bellenger notices the same in “the Allinphuku or the art of blowing correctly” in Taquile’s Island: “The principal intention that comes from the community execution of the sikuri is to blow correctly, in a simultaneous and constant way in the pipes of the instruments of the different (musical) registers to encourage them provoking the appearance of harmonics. To achieve that, every participant must master extremely well his breath in order to be able to increase briefly, after the first attack, the air pressure blown in every pipe. When everything develops well, the fluency of the “dialog” between the instruments *ira* and *arka*, associated with the stacking harmony generated by the different registries, engenders a very particular and global sonority resembling the song and the singing voices of the siku. This effect is searched to resemble the manifestation of the presence of the telluric forces to *Apu*, invoked by the sikuri during their performance” (Bellenger 2007: 141).

18. Different authors such as Castel (1998, 1999) and Grassi (2003), among others, have analyzed the processes of increasing economic and social exclusion—decline of the welfare state in the 1970s, neoliberal politics initiated in the 1990s, and the deep crisis our country was involved in late in 2001—that have provoked the crumbling of the social protection systems based on the incorporation of the individuals on the labor market, excluding them from the systems of collective regulation. Precisely in this context a series of nongovernmental projects and programs of “art and social transformation” emerge, that focus on excluded and vulnerable sectors of the society, and include in their proposals performative arts arising from diverse cultural traditions.

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Chapter Four

Pleasures in Conflict

Maternity, Eroticism, and Sexuality in Tango Dancing

Juliana Verdenelli

Translated by Elliot Prussing

I came to dance tango eight years ago when I decided to do my professional thesis on the transformations that this type of dancing has undergone in the dawn of the present century. Since then I have experienced, albeit intermittently, diverse tango classes, professors, styles, and dance venues.

Toward the end of the year 2013, when I was in the second trimester of my first pregnancy, I learned that I had been chosen for a doctoral fellowship for the realization of a project entitled *Sexualities and Moralities in Movement: Tango Social Dancing in the Contemporary Context*. This news triggered a great deal of anxiety and worry on my part about how to reconcile my academic responsibilities with those of raising my unborn daughter. Clearly, it would be necessary for me to design a work schedule that was compatible with the demands of this crucial moment of my life, and consequently I faced an intense period of fieldwork before the birth of my baby. However, for reasons that were not clear to me, I resisted the idea of going to a *Milonga* (an event which revolves around the dancing of tangos, Milongas, and waltzes).¹ In the middle of this situation I decided to start by taking some private classes in order to initiate myself in the role of “conductor” or “leader” of the dance.

I have put the words “conductor” and “leader” in quotation marks because I am talking about categories proposed by natives. Thus, before going into the particulars of my experience and the specific theme of this chapter, I

consider it necessary to briefly outline some of the characteristics that new pedagogical research presents with reference to disputes over the desexualization and deheteronormativization of dance roles.

First and foremost it is indispensable to point out that in the tango that is danced on a social level there are no established choreographies but rather a codified system of figures and possibilities of movement that allow for improvisation and that are utilized, combined, created, and eliminated in accordance with the music, the “style,” the knowledge, and the personal taste of each dancer. To be able to do this the dancers have ineludibly to go through a process of apprenticeship in which they acquire the competence on the dance floor implied by the phrase “know how to dance tango.”

Now then, over the last decades the way in which this knowledge and ability have been transmitted, learned, and produced in tango has varied considerably. This has been studied by María Julia Carozzi (2015), who analyzes the multiplication of mixed collective workshops and classes between 1980 and 1990 in Buenos Aires and the renovation of the teaching methods and pedagogical systems that gave rise to a “didactic revolution” in which dancers proliferated and “styles” of social dance were redefined.² According to this author, this was a time when women assumed a central and fundamental role in repopulating the Milongas and in the perpetuation and codification of the ways in which the old “milongueros” danced. That

they planned and executed this teaching task was possible because middle-class women in Buenos Aires had at that time joined the labor market in massive numbers and embraced egalitarian ideas [. . .] To have a voice and teach the role of the man meant a change in the roles that had been assigned to women who danced tango in the fifties. However, this transformation had its limits. (Carozzi 2015: 173)

Without doubt one of these limits was configured by the distinction between two roles in tango, both assigned and fixed according to gender.³ While men were in charge of “carrying” or “marking,” women had to limit themselves to “following” or “being carried away” by the man. In the same way, Carozzi uses such terms as “passivity,” “superficiality,” or “ignorance” to discuss the problem of the lesser role “of the woman” in tango dance, a role that in the prevailing rhetoric appears to have been relegated to a secondary status or one that was less demanding than that of the man.

Nevertheless, this relationship between sex, gender, and role in tango dancing has been increasingly weakened since the first decade of the present century. It is now more and more common to observe same-sex dance couples (both men and women) and women “carrying” men on the dance floor. According to Mercedes Liska (2012, 2014) these new bodily experiences have developed within a wider context of social transformations, mainly those related to changes in public state policy for the sexes. The author holds

that such changes ushered in a new age in tango dancing, one that modified the relationship between gays and heterosexuals in public and nocturnal gathering places and favored a growing deheteronormativization of the dance thanks to such new proposals as queer tango⁴ and gay tango.

Both expressions hold that the teaching of tango must not presuppose any erotic-affective orientation in a person and both promote the desexualization of roles, the freedom to choose which role to dance in, and with whom to do so in accordance with one's own personal desire and not with a preestablished norm. In queer tango the exchange of roles during the execution of the dance—that is, the possibility of dynamically rotating the roles of conductor and follower in the same musical composition—is also encouraged.

As for the Milonga, more flexible and egalitarian teaching and apprenticeship dynamics are also explored in many practices or “relaxed Milongas” of predominantly heterosexual populations, and here I refer to the distinction proposed by Carozzi (2011, 2014, 2015) between “orthodox Milongas”⁵ and practices and “relaxed Milongas,”⁶ differentiating these into new, queer, and gay.

In these spaces many men and women wish, for different reasons, to learn and practice both roles, and instructors have found themselves confronted by the need to rethink their teaching methods and nomenclature. One example of this is that they have stopped referring to “the man's role” or “be the man” and “the woman's role” or “be the woman” while at the same time they have started using terms like “conductor,” “guide,” and “leader.” The last term began to be used in dance halls attended by many foreign students, having been taken from English, and though this word has clear connotations of power and subordination in that language, it does not therefore follow that here in Argentina it is used to express superiority in a hierarchical relationship. Rather, it constitutes a way of desexualizing roles and facilitating verbal communication with students during bilingual group classes (Spanish/English) attended by people from different parts of the world who want to learn both dance parts.

As can be observed, these and other transformations have given rise to a collection of increasingly varied, segmented, and “personalized” spaces and proposals in social tango that coexist, not without conflict, in a complex framework composed of distinct dance circuits that are barely connected or hardly interact with each other.

Going back to my own experience, it is interesting to note that even though I was always convinced of the importance of learning both dance roles as a way of doing ethnographic exploration, I postponed doing so for years on different pretexts. Liska (2014) relates something very similar from her own life, observing that, upon entering the queer tango circuit, it was very difficult to learn the role of conductor even though her preference for the “traditional” role of the woman in dance was the source of

feelings of guilt since she viewed that role as a practice that imposed norms of femininity.

During my pregnancy, and for the first time as a tango dancer, I began to enjoy the possibility of “conducting” movements and dancing with other women, moving my body, which was inhabited by another being that at times moved with me and at others within me, while at the same time I proposed sequences of movements to a third person.

However, I can say that dancing while pregnant became a source of pleasure and well-being, one that raised my consciousness of the transformations my body was going through and of modifications in my body’s rotational axis. It allowed me to relieve pain, muscular tension, and even certain apprehensions that I was a prey to at this stage of my life. Within the tango embrace, my pregnancy acquired, without doubt, great centrality. Not only because of the difficulty of calculating the distance between my body and that of my dance partner and also of foreseeing the possibilities of movement in my body, which changed daily, but also (and mainly) because the communication between the torsos in the embrace,⁷ which is fundamental for the execution of the dance, generated a permanent interaction between that other being inside of me and gave rise to a dialogue “in threes,” something very new in the inter-corporal relationships that make up the history of my experiences.

Now then, a short time after I began taking “conductor” classes, a friend proposed that I accompany her to a tango practice in which we could dance together. The name of the proposal seemed to promise a “feminine” atmosphere (I even thought it would be a queer tango practice), while at the same time the daytime schedule—from 4:00 PM to 7:00 PM—was very “friendly” for me and I was already familiar with the location since I had attended other events there. For all these reasons I accepted the invitation. Upon arriving at the practice, I was surprised to observe only dance couples made up of men and women and these, only dancing the roles traditionally associated with each. For a few eternal seconds I felt that all eyes were on my abdomen; at the same time an intense sensation of heat came over me and I searched in vain for a familiar face in that hall (my friend had still not arrived and I didn’t know anyone there). At this precise moment something happened that somehow was already unfamiliar to me: I felt completely out of place. For the first time in many years, a place where I had been comfortable before seemed strange and completely foreign to me and I didn’t know how to act. In the following months the looks and attitudes toward my pregnant body would be intertwined with a series of words which, thanks to the attentive listening of other women,⁸ would become a part of my study. I was pushed to ask new questions and to see things that until then had happened to me without my being aware of it.

In line with the thinking of Pablo Wright (1994), I believe that my pregnancy enabled me to experience an ontological displacement that was crucial for my ethnographic exploration given the fact that during this type of work, “The subject displaces his Being-in-the-world (Dasein) to a different place—or remains in his place, but with a different ontological agenda. It is the Being-in-the-world of the ethnographer, his ontological structure, which undergoes modifications in his contact with people” (Wright 1994: 367).

This ontological displacement allowed me in turn to clearly observe the dialogue between bodies and spaces in a process of mutual constitution (De Abrantes and Verdenelli 2015). That is, even though spaces are made up of social relationships replete with power and are structured on the basis of a series of categories (sex, gender, and class, among others) they are also found in a continual process of transformation. As Doreen Massey (2005) points out, we make space all the time. And we do it *with* and *from* our bodies, in the middle of different textures and topographies, among experiences that can be contradictory or at least ambiguous.

FROM ONTOLOGICAL DISPLACEMENT TO NEW QUESTIONS

After this first experience of attending a tango practice while I was pregnant I went home thinking that I had never seen a visibly gestating woman in a Milonga, while the occasions on which I had shared classes or practices with pregnant women were few and in all such cases the women had been professional dancers who were accompanied by a man with whom they danced exclusively. At that moment many questions came to mind. What, for example, were the reasons why a gestating body should be so disruptive in such places? What were the different logics or sentiments regarding maternity that that body challenged? In what way did such intense and vital experiences as pregnancy and puerperium interact with desire, sexuality, class, age, or other categories in this social dance? These were only some of the questions. I resolved then to do an intense period of fieldwork in practices and “relaxed Milongas,” mostly with a heterosexual population, in the conviction that I would find information that would be very valuable for my study.

Taking all the above as a point of departure, I propose to orient this chapter with a brief summary of the changes associated with sexuality in everyday life that have taken place in recent decades. To mention just a few, these include the distancing of sexuality from reproductive ends, transformations in sexual and affective connections, the increasing visibility of sexual minorities, the diversification of sexuality, etcetera. To my way of thinking, it is in the interweaving of these historic processes where we can find the plurality of discourses regarding maternity that have flourished in recent

years. After this summary I will focus my analysis on a series of discourses that, as I see it, represent the subjective feelings of many middle-class heterosexual women—mothers, young women—and tango dancers within the “relaxed Milonga” circuit of the city of Buenos Aires. Finally, I will propose some interpretations of how the presence of a reproductive sexuality represents a possible challenge to the established erotic practices and sexual bonds in such places.

BETWEEN SEXUAL REVOLUTIONS, ACQUIRED RIGHTS, AND MATERNITIES 2.0

The questioning of maternity as a woman’s destiny formed part of a theoretical model inherited from Simone de Beauvoir and gave a sustained boost to the second wave of feminist political strategies, which, beginning in the seventies, advocated equal rights for the sexes based on the idea that there was no difference between the two while denouncing maternity as a form of subjection and oppression of women (Mora 2009). During this period the commercialization of new contraceptive methods also made a definitive contribution to the separation of sex from procreation, encouraging a progressive autonomy for certain women, mainly those of the urban middle class, who thereby achieved greater control over their own bodies.

Though in Argentina hormonal birth control began to be commercialized in 1960, Isabella Cosse (2010: 176) analyzes how, in 1974, within the context of debates over birth control and the demographic explosion, the government passed a decree that, in agreement with the position that prevailed within the Catholic Church following the *Humanae Vitae* encyclical, limited the commercialization of contraceptives and prohibited activities linked to the control of human reproduction. Not until the end of the last civil-military dictatorship and the return of democracy in 1983 would sexual and reproductive rights begin to be incorporated first into the public agenda of feminists and social organizations and later assimilated, slowly, into the national political agenda.

At the same time, in a world context of growing demand for a feminine work force, modern birth control allowed for the liberation of labor and its placement at the disposition of the marketplace. For these reasons, Mario Margulis (2003) calls attention to the important contradictions that drove the historic process of the so-called “sexual revolution,” going on to say that “among the numerous questions that come before this explosion can be mentioned the alarm that the demographic explosion generated and the tendencies toward the limitation of reproduction, which contributed in different countries to an explicit change in the traditional population models” (Margulis 2003: 39).

In Argentina, many women in the sixties and seventies (mainly middle-class women, married or living with a romantic partner, and with a high level of formal education) entered the labor market⁹ at the same time that the percentage of women gaining access to higher education increased.¹⁰ Diverse authors who have analyzed the processes that took place during the sixties in the “intimate” sphere of Argentine life appear to agree that many practices came to be permitted that until then had been prohibited by traditional morals or social conventions. They refer to the development of a “sexual revolution” or a “moral revolution” (Bartolucci 2006; Gallo 2011; Margulis 2003; Pujol 2003) in certain sectors of urban youth reflected in a transformation of customs, practices, and lifestyles of broad sectors of the population and that gave rise to a reformulation of the traditional boundaries established between genders and generations (Gallo 2011). Nevertheless, Cosse observes that these transformations evidenced serious limitations and that these “were clear upon observing the persistent centrality of the heterosexual norm, the inequality of the genders, and the importance given to uniting sexuality with love” (2010: 71–72). Cosse thus prefers to talk in terms of the development of a “discrete sexual revolution.”

Though the emergence in public of the processes portrayed here was limited by periods of dictatorship, some authors agree in asserting that these processes followed their course just the same, albeit underground (Carozzi 2014, 2015; Míguez 2012), erupting later in the public sphere during the democratic period (Míguez 2012) and leading to profound social transformations in moral and sexual issues in recent decades (Semán and Vila 2011).

One of the landmark events of recent transformations took place on July 15, 2010, when Argentina became the tenth country in the world and the first in Latin America to recognize the right of same-sex couples to contract civil matrimony.¹¹ Only two years after this “egalitarian marriage” was sanctioned and enacted, the Law of Gender Identity¹² was passed. In continuation of these judicial advances in civil equality and broadening the recognition of sexual and reproductive rights sanctioned by different laws from 2002 to 2015,¹³ the law of Medically Assisted Reproduction was passed on June 5, 2013.¹⁴ This law guaranteed access to techniques of assisted reproduction for all adults, regardless of their sexual orientation or civil status. Finally, on October 1, 2015, the Law of Humanized Delivery was enacted,¹⁵ thereby establishing the legal framework for ensuring a list of rights before, during, and after giving birth. These included the mother’s rights to clear information, to choose her position during delivery, to respect for her biological and psychological time cycles, to participation in interventions by professionals in the delivery, and to choose those who will accompany her.

Though it is not within the scope of this essay, it must be pointed out that there are numerous perspectives from which to analyze the diverse processes that interacted with each other to create the present-day context and the

consensus for the passing of these laws. Among others: a broad process of secularization, the creation of new individual and collective subjects, and the emergence of particular forms of politicization. For the purposes of my argument here, it will be worthwhile to explore a dimension of the present historic process that Semán and Vila (2011) have denominated *dimension of activation, objectivization, and intensification of the production and visibility of sexual discourses and practices*; given that such an exploration should afford us a record of the multiple discourses and practices in maternity that have flourished in recent years.

In any discussion of the maternity of young, heterosexual, middle-class women who dance tango in the city of Buenos Aires, it is important to call attention to the fact that the experiences already described have been observed to be affected by the growing process of individualization that characterizes late modernity and that, according to a number of authors, permeates the different spheres of our everyday life (Bauman 2001; Giddens 2001). As in the analysis of Victoria Castilla (2009), the ambivalences, the dangers, and the decisions of maternity, which for a long time were defined in great measure by the family group or the community and became the subjects of clear rules, have at present been the subjects of greater ambiguity and uncertainty. In the context of this process, mothers have a broader margin for questioning and at the same time a wider array of possibilities from which to choose, and for this reason “they have inevitably been transformed into actresses in the creation of their own maternal biographies and identities, of their practices, beliefs, and knowledge” (Castilla 2009: 344).

To Castilla, one way in which these women give coherence to the experiences of their individualized maternity is to couch them in terms of liberty. This is an idea that I will come back to later; suffice it to say here that it is one that allows these women to meditate on their own lives and build their own model for being mothers, thereby turning maternity into a contemplative experience, which, however, is by no means free of limiting structural components.

At this time, when sexuality in the media has become a cult as well as a topic of concern while maternity has, at the level of the individual, turned into a contemplative experience, a framework has been created for the rise and proliferation of blogs and Facebook pages where many mothers share their lives and circulate information of all kinds: from sexuality in such vital periods of life as pregnancy and puerperium (including giving birth) to the quality of attention at different institutions, or to data on professionals who perform home deliveries or advocate respectful deliveries. At the same time, they also promote child-rearing groups, recommend “doulas,”¹⁶ lactation groups, yoga for mothers and pregnant women, etcetera.

Now, then, in the middle of this multiplication of websites that share experiences, information, and knowledge about pregnancy, puerperium, and

early child rearing, one personal blog has become a successful online fiction series, “Según Roxi,” (According to Roxi)¹⁷ in which Julieta Otero, actress and creator of the blog, acts the part of Roxi, a “progressive and upset mami” who shares her dilemmas, anxieties, excesses, and daily objects of ambivalence in her capacity of working, middle-class mother in Buenos Aires. Upon entering her Web page, we can read that:

“Según Roxi” in no way accepts responsibility for any damages occasioned by its visualization. It is not a replacement for a psychotherapist, clinical professional, or astrologist. It has no scientific basis; it comes to no conclusion nor proposes any sustainable theory nor makes mothers and children happy. In case of questions consult a doctor.

In my fieldwork, Roxi has been no less the subject of mention than therapy sessions, child-rearing groups, home deliveries of babies, yoga classes, healthy diets, reiki, or astral cards. In one interview, Romina¹⁸ observed that this greater visibility also constituted an opportunity to break with certain stereotypes and “ideal” models:

Now it is easier because maternity is more visible. I don’t know, I have a pile of books about maternity and a sitcom, one that is now being made for television. I don’t know if you are familiar with “Según Roxi.” Well, that is where you can see all the situations and all the misery that maternity brings, because being a mother is not always so nice. And then that leaves you in a situation where you don’t face so many demands. Like, you can let yourself go a little too. (Romina, age thirty-eight)

Among the multiple discourses (medical, judicial, religious, academic, etcetera), in coexistence that present conflicting ideas of maternity, I have in the course of my fieldwork been able to distinguish certain elements that are specific to some of them and these are what I propose to focus my analysis on here.

ON EMPOWERED AND SPIRITUAL MAMMALS

While we were talking about their experiences in maternity, many women laughed and remembered some scene from “Según Roxi.” They shared the wonderful story of a friend who gave birth to her baby at home and regretted not having done the same. They spoke of the importance of sharing with other women and complained that they were commonly left with all the responsibilities of childcare. They said they felt proud of their ability to bear and feed children and recommended “fulares”¹⁹ to me. They talked of the importance of raising children with affection, worried about reconciling the demands of work with those of child rearing, described with wonder the

feelings of connectedness and fulfillment that they experienced during their pregnancies, and reflected on the profound transformation that took place within themselves when they became mothers along with the self-confidence they achieved in the process. A series of discourses, intertwined and connected with each other, influenced in diverse ways the practices and feelings of these heterosexual, middle-class dancers.²⁰

In general terms I think that the experience of maternity as transforming and liberating has as many parallels with the so-called feminism of difference as with the religiousness of the New Age:

understanding this as a cluster of representations, practices, and institutions that prioritize the values of individual autonomy, the criticism of dualism and occidental rationalism, and the vindication of the holistic character of human experience and, in its symbolic universe, the continuity between the “I” and the unconscious and divinity, and the immanence of that which is sacred. (Gallo and Semán 2009: 131)

On the other hand, the feminism of difference holds that, given certain conditions, like the choice of being a mother as well as of the moment and the way in which to be one, maternity can be “an experience of opening, of knowledge and of growth” (Mora 2009: 28). Maternity is not conceived of as a destiny, and being a woman is not synonymous with being a mother, but theoreticians of this feminism observe that when a woman becomes a mother by choice, “she is not mutilated, and abides passionately by a part of herself” (Agacinski 1999: 68). In the same way, maternity, being exclusive to women, implies the possibility of achieving a type of strength that, given the freedom to choose not to be a mother, can become the practice of freedom, inasmuch as it represents “the freedom to transcend one’s own subjectivity towards another that is not a means but rather an end” (Agacinski 1999: 64).

In one interview, Carla commented to me that in various conversations among friends the question came up of how maternity was reflected in their own dancing. She believes that in her case this bodily experience was expressed in the form of a dance style that was “safe,” with both feet on the ground and more stable:

Because you have something that is very mature, something that life made you carry to maturity, which to me is clear. This favors you a great deal since it gives you a lot of personality. Later she says to me, my friend says: there are other women who can dance carefree, who don’t have to carry the weight of a life that you have to live with. (Carla, age twenty-eight).

On the other hand, as Gallo and Semán (2009) also observe in electronic music spaces, I believe that many of the practices and discourses on maternity that circulate in such spaces maintain a dialogue with the same cultural

sediment that is present in the religiousness of the New Age. To María José, maternity was an opportunity to connect with herself and her surroundings, to know that she was a “complete and unique being” and that she didn’t need another person to realize herself, since everything was within her.

According to Carozzi (1999) there is a close connection between the religiousness of the New Age and certain contemporary social and cultural tendencies that emphasize autonomy. As this author says,

The affirmation of absolute individual autonomy is made possible by the creation of an ahistoric and asocial interior that is wise and healthy and that becomes responsible for individual choices and transformations [. . .] The interpretative framework of the New Age makes individual autonomy sacred and conceives of it as a contact with a non-socialized part of the interior that is divine or perfect and energetically connected to a whole that is also sacred and asocial: nature, the planet or the cosmos. (Carozzi 1999: 31–36)

All these elements are present in the evolution narrated by María Jose. Though she knew how to dance both tango roles and gave classes before getting pregnant, this experience that so profoundly changed her life translated itself into a consciousness of her own autonomy and of the need to create a new space in which to share the lessons of her life with other women and show them that they too might enjoy tango without depending on anyone, thereby “liberating” themselves from the suffering implicit in depending on the desire of another person in order to be able to dance:

I had already learned both roles, but at that point I didn’t want the other to suffer any more. After my pregnancy what changed me is this level of perceiving myself in relation with the other. A strength or a power that is born within you and it no longer matters which role you take. It has nothing to do with the role. It has to do with the fact that everything you do to give birth and have a child, to give life, revolves around having great strength. And you believe that if you can do all that, you can do anything, whatever you set out to do. That you can handle whatever life throws at you. So I no longer worried about roles, I didn’t care. Everything I did starting at that moment, I did with confidence, with affirmation [. . .] you feel all powerful. Like man and woman. You feel both. (María José, age thirty-two)

Now then, in commentaries that call attention to “the strength of giving birth,” “giving birth at home,” “natural child rearing,” “affection,” “feminine power,” “conscious maternity”—to name just a few such phrases—it is also possible to find traces of those discourses born in the heat of challenging the biomedical point of view and that, incorporating diverse contributions from the feminist and new age movements, criticize the medicalization and hospitalization of such vital moments as pregnancy, giving birth, and puerperium.

In specific terms, the medicalization of giving birth refers to the process in which this vital act that before had been restricted to the sphere of women—grandmothers, midwives, and family members (Schallman 2007)—and to their knowledge and practices, was little by little expropriated by Western medical science, which also came to be institutionalized as the only legitimate science; a medicalized delivery consists of many medical practices and techniques.

The demands of diverse groups of women seeking to de-medicalize and de-pathologize giving birth has been the occasion for the development of new discourses that promote, among other things, “respectful” or “humanized” delivery (recently regulated by law) and vindicate the woman’s role of protagonist in giving birth at the expense of the medical professional’s authority. Those who hold such positions often make such claims as “women know how to give birth,” or “it’s in their genetic memory,” or “it’s natural.” Michel Odent (2011), one of the most important exponents of this way of thinking, claims that: “more than humanized, giving birth has to be mammalized.”

Something similar can be seen in those who advocate “natural child rearing.” In his book *Kiss Me Lots: How to Raise Your Children with Love*, the pediatrician Carlos González (2003) asks what is natural in child rearing, given that customs and practices have varied among different cultures at different moments of history. He proposes, then, that we observe the behavior of our closest animal relatives: primates. Reasoning thus and in light of his pediatric experience, González deems as “natural” a series of practices, like carrying the baby in the mother’s arms as much as possible, breastfeeding them on demand without any predetermined time limit, weaning the infant at the pace they want, and allowing them to sleep in bed with their parents or in the same room, also for an undetermined time, among others.

As Carozzi suggests in a study of the new age and alternative scene in Buenos Aires, this type of “naturalist” argument tends to obscure the historic and social dimensions of the transformations in question: “Once social influence has been disposed of, ideological, practical, and rhetorical similarities and modifications are all treated the same and explained as the result of processes or even as natural—the evolution of mankind—or even supernatural—energies that vibrate as one, the coming of a new era—but are never social” (Carozzi 1999: 36–37).

While I recognize the importance of the challenge to the hegemony of the biomedical viewpoint and of the vindication of reproductive rights, I am also interested in critically analyzing the recourse of appealing to “nature,” as opposed to “culture,” for legitimacy and authority. This is because, on the one hand, the materiality of our bodies is inexorably pervaded with culture; and on the other, because these discourses that align the idea of “correct” with that of “natural” do not adequately recognize our bodies’ historical and

social character and become powerfully normative while failing to acknowledge any type of contradiction or ambivalence, thus generating a series of imperatives, of feelings of nervousness and tension (and even guilty pleasures) in certain women that, despite being in agreement with these norms on an intellectual and ideological level, do not in practice achieve all such precepts for different reasons: “I didn’t feel like it,” “I couldn’t,” “I was afraid to,” “I didn’t enjoy it,” “I couldn’t afford it,” etcetera.

As can be observed up to this point, all the discourses mentioned here coexist and overlap heterogeneously in the feelings of these women and mothers that dance tango, mixing together like a cocktail of senses that configure practices and subjectivities in the same way that they give rise to a series of very particular reinterpretations and acts of agency.

MOMS JUST WANNA HAVE FUN: REPRODUCTIVE SEXUALITY VS. RECREATIONAL SEXUALITY

Writing on gender, sexuality, and queer tango, Liska (2011) comments in passing that during her pregnancy she stopped attending her tango classes. Similarly, the majority of women interviewed in my fieldwork mentioned that during gestation and puerperium they modified their everyday activities and the uses that they made of their bodies: “I stopped going out at night,” “I stopped taking tango classes,” “I began to stay home a lot more,” “I didn’t feel like dancing anymore,” “I didn’t dance anymore until my son was two years old,” were some of their comments. However, when these women were asked again why they had stopped dancing tango or going out at night, the majority spoke of this vital period of their lives as a time of great intensity, of redefining their personal quests and needs, though they also said things like “the possibility never even occurred to me,” “I felt embarrassed,” “I didn’t want to go alone,” “I didn’t want anyone to see how I looked after giving birth,” “I didn’t feel like going out at night while pregnant,” “I tried a couple of times, but I didn’t dance once all night,” etcetera. One woman said:

I was in a different place because my priority at that time was maternity. So dance and tango were relegated to a secondary level. Besides, with my belly, the boys didn’t ask me to dance. Either they were afraid of my belly or it made them feel funny. Since my partner was not a tango dancer, I couldn’t dance with him because he didn’t dance tango. He went to take a couple of classes but he never learned to dance. And with my belly I was dying to dance. I asked everyone I knew, I drove them crazy, always asking them to dance. “Dance with me!” “Dance with me belly and all, it’s just the same!” And they said that they were afraid and I said “Come on, don’t worry, nothing’s going to happen to me.” Because my belly frightened them. (Florencia, age thirty-five)

In agreement with the comments of these women, I wrote down in my personal notebook a great number of words that expressed a range of emotions and unpleasant feelings (shame, rejection, frustration, uneasiness) that I experienced as an ethnographer and as a pregnant heterosexual woman. In my fieldwork, I similarly noted that it was most common to hear questions about the father of the intra-uterine baby, questions such as “Does the father dance tango?” or “Where is the father?” and “Are you separated?” or “Doesn’t the father want to come with you?” and even “What does the father say about your being here?” To repeat only some of them. These different questions about the father were pronounced with certain inflections of the voice, with certain tones, not only of the voice but also of the muscles, and some movements that conveyed distinct types of information. While some people displayed surprise or curiosity or were disconcerted by my presence at the dance place, others appeared to judge my participation in moral terms as something “inappropriate,” “careless,” or “irresponsible.” In these latter cases, their questions were often accompanied with commentaries like “You’re going to have the baby here”; “What does the obstetrician say?”; “What’s a future mother doing dancing tango?”; “I don’t know if you noticed, but you’re very pregnant”; “The father lets you come here?”; “Are you thinking of dancing until the baby drops out?”; “How long do you think you’ll keep coming?” among others.

The mere presence of my gestating body was enough to signal the absence of a man, father, and partner, since it was systematically assumed that I was heterosexual. From an androcentric point of view, my body was not seen as my “own” but rather, occupied as it was by another being, it bore the signs of a man whose absence made the majority of the people there uneasy. This body erupted on the scene as something both novel and menacing, something that in some way subverted certain rules of play and eluded the capacity of many people’s understanding. It challenged their feelings about maternity and above all about what a mother can do or how she should behave, feelings that were widely shared in that context.

In this sense, entire repertoires of moralistic gestures, movements, silences, and words were mobilized with a view toward disciplining this body that didn’t know its place and thus reestablish the lost equilibrium. In the same way, the feeling of “shame” experienced by myself as well as by other women can be interpreted, to paraphrase Semán and Vila (2011), as the possible effect of a complicated commitment, given that it implied a contradictory relationship with a determined, shared morality that represented a limit that we all knew was being violated. It was the same limit that was evident in practices of voluntary self-control and in the self-regulating looks on the part of women who commented that “The possibility never occurred to me,” “I didn’t have the courage to go alone,” “It’s not appropriate to go

out at night when you're pregnant, or "I stopped going out at night." Florencia comments that, during her pregnancy:

I felt an energetic thing; nobody even said anything because they didn't know how to tell you that they didn't want to dance with you. That's another problem. The silence. A space where you don't understand what's happening. And that's when you begin asking questions. Why? What's the problem with a belly? Why can't I dance? Why can't I continue? Why am I isolating myself? (Florencia, age thirty-five)

It becomes indispensable to ask: what, in these spaces, are the limits that a gestating body must confront, and what is the way of thinking that is in dispute or being questioned? To my understanding, this "disruption" exposes a series of sexual mandates that makes it possible for me to outline a partial first conclusion: among the multiple possible sexualities that are currently visible in "relaxed Milongas" or practices—queer, gay, heterosexual—reproductive sexuality does not have, at least not now, a place.

Maternity appears to "close" not only the possibility of eroticism and seduction in dance but also, and above all, that of a possible subsequent sexual encounter. This is what Florencia experienced after the birth of her first child:

It was difficult for me to dance again. But what did I feel, every time the guy in the Milonga said "So, hey, you had a baby?" I felt like I was no longer a woman who was suitable for dancing, not even for . . . I felt like this guy must be thinking "What am I going to ask her to dance for if I can't do anything with her? If the girl's got a kid, she's got a guy. What for?" That was the feeling. (Florencia, age thirty-five)

As Carozzi (2014) says, to ask how, in every dance context, the explicit exhibition of overtly erotic dress and movements is articulated together with the creation of bonds that include those of having a family, "also obliges us to inquire into the repeated practices that, in each one of them, appear to produce distinct regimens of perceptibility and imperceptibility in relation with the sexual practices originated and developed there" (Carozzi 2014: 109).

In a detailed ethnographic investigation carried out in Milongas of a predominantly heterosexual population in the center of the city of Buenos Aires, Carozzi (2014, 2015) analyzes how in these spaces there is a coexistence of the generalized exhibition of apparently erotic contacts and movements along with the initiation—carefully hidden from the public view—of relationships that extend beyond the boundaries of those spaces and include co-genital sexual relations with selected male and female companions. According to this author, these bonds, developed simultaneously and succes-

sively with distinct individuals, turn these spaces into contexts that challenge the principle of monogamy. Carozzi goes on to say that “the secret seems to consist in avoiding the feelings of jealousy that have appeared in Anglo-literature on sexuality as obstacles to the development of consensual, non-monogamous relationships and reducing the tensions and conflicts that such feelings could provoke” (Carozzi 2014: 105).

Carozzi’s comments make me wonder if it is precisely the “limit” brought by a gestating body to the spaces we are analyzing that has something to do with the violation of the rules of play that the same author describes, and if the women who do this are, as a consequence, visibly excluded from the possibility of initiating sexual relations with dance partners and made to feel, given the regimens of perceptibility and imperceptibility developed in such spaces, that they are not suitable for the men. In accordance with this line of thought, I perceived during my own pregnancy a climate of greater closeness, collaboration, and sympathy on the part of other women, something quite unusual in my history as a dancer and that probably was linked to the fact that I was no longer, at least not at that time, a possible rival in the competition for relationships with men. At the same time, I found in the course of many conversations with mothers that the night was incompatible with pregnancy, puerperium, and the rearing of infants: “I prefer to go places during the day”; “At night you don’t feel comfortable”; “At night people are thinking more about picking someone up”; “The night lends itself to other things”; “At night the atmosphere is different; it changes a lot,” et cetera.

If we consider the reasons why a pregnant woman’s participation in a Milonga is sanctioned in moral terms or experienced as “out of place,” it is suggestive to think about the dialectic—object of so much attention in analyses of tango songs—between the “milonguita” and the mother, two very relevant feminine figures in the musical compositions of the first half of the twentieth century.

On the one hand, the “milonguita”²¹ embodies a young woman who abandons her lower-class neighborhood and domestic life and submerges herself in the nightlife and *cabarets* of the center of Buenos Aires. Corrupted by her dreams of rapid social mobility (Cosse 2010) the “milonguita” “falls” or becomes a “flower in the mud,” receiving diverse luxuries, presents, expensive clothes, or champagne in exchange for false love or romantic lies. In these stories there is typically a third life stage, generally associated with old age or life after the *cabaret*, in which these female characters find themselves condemned to a sad life of loneliness, poverty, and sickness (Carozzi 2013).

Different social scientists have analyzed the “milonguita” as a masculine reaction to transformations in the regulation of feminine sexuality (Archetti 2003) or as a pedagogical and moral constructs for women (Campodónico and Gil Lozano 2000; Armus 2002). According to Carozzi:

If tango lyrics about “milonguitas,” as came to us, do not talk explicitly about the exchange of sex for money, it is probably because they have gone through a filter that was inspired by the bourgeois morality before they were printed as sheet music or recorded on records. The *sainetes* [musical comedic theatrical plays] in which those tangos were first played are more explicit in defining their fall in these terms. (Carozzi 2014: 110)

The counterimage of this “milonguita” is represented in tango lyrics by the figure of the mother: a good woman who confines herself to the domestic world, dedicates herself to her family, to caring for others, who loves unconditionally, and who above all else is completely asexual. In the words of Gustavo Varela,

The epitome/highest expression of good is the mother, the ideal, an image that is timeless, that has almost no history nor appetites and who is, of course, totally asexual. She is like a girlfriend/bride who was born a saint. Hardly does tango begin when her figure rapidly imposes itself as an example of abnegation; all the mothers in tango are the human incarnation of the Virgin Mary who conceives without sin, who knows nothing of the evil of the world but who is capable of understanding and forgiving the greatest of excesses. (Varela 2005: 84)

To sum up, the “milonguita” and the mother are two antagonistic feminine figures in tango and present a rigid, well-defined limit between the morally incorrect and the morally correct, good and evil, temptation and control, or flesh and spirit. Both figures typically appear completely separated from each other, except for the lyrics of the tango “Los cosos de al lao”²² (“The People Next Door”) by Marcos Larrosa and José Canet, which narrates how a group of neighbors dance and celebrate the return to the neighborhood of a “milonguita” who has become a mother (and has perhaps been redeemed as a result): “The girl that left / before she was fifteen / has come back again / and now she has a baby / and they’ve baptized him.”

On the other hand, it is notable that in these spaces the gestating body is generally perceived as unfit or poorly suited for dancing. It is here that another interesting tension appears between the idea of the body that is unfit for dancing and the potential many of us experience when we move during pregnancy. In the interviews and informal conversations, some women pointed out that the experience of dancing while pregnant constituted an opportunity to better know themselves, to raise their consciousness of their own bodies, of their emotions, and to connect themselves with the transformations inherent in this vital time of their lives. By contrast, other women remarked that they had experienced their pregnancy as an obstacle to dancing and to physically connecting with others because they felt that the changes in their bodies brought on by gestation deprived them of technical, aesthetic, expressive, and even erotic abilities.

In light of all the above I think it is reasonable to say that, in a context in which sexuality is progressively more autonomous and diversified (Semán and Vila 2011), reproductive sexuality has hardly begun to exercise its right to enjoy itself. Vital times in a woman's life-like pregnancy, puerperium, and raising infants continue to be strongly associated with maternal abnegation, dedication, sacrifice, self-denial, and reclusion in the private world of the mother-and-child dyad. In one tango class I commented, while practicing some dance steps with another woman, that I was the mother of a baby. She immediately broke loose from our dance embrace, took a few steps away and said: "What are you doing here? My body didn't let me, I didn't have the heart to separate myself from my son until he was two years old. I don't understand how some women can be so disconnected from themselves."

Apparently, if we are concerned about being "good mothers" and we physically and emotionally "connect" ourselves with the experience, we will "naturally" lose all desire of separating ourselves from our children for even a second and will not want to do anything more than suckle and take care of them. Such a total commitment like this leaves no room for individual interests, for ambivalent positions or feelings, and even less for the enjoyment of personal leisure time or recreation.

Though feminism has for decades occupied itself with dismantling the ideological framework that sustains the feminization of caring for the family and of reproductive work, the contemporary consolidation of the discourse of "natural child-rearing," with its exaltation and naturalization of "maternal love," presents a series of theoretical challenges and gives rise to different questions that will probably become topics of future studies. Of particular interest is the rigidity that some versions of this discourse present, understood as the legitimate expression of "correct child rearing" and mobilizing, in this sense, a series of moral repertoires that, as I see it, reformulate a patriarchal and domestic logic in "acceptable" terms.

SOMETHING NEW UNDER THE SUN

I would like to call attention to the fact that in recent years there have been signs of a series of transformations and disputes concerning the visibilization of maternity and reproductive sexuality in the "relaxed Milongas" and practices of a predominately heterosexual population in Buenos Aires. As one of the dancers I interviewed said:

Maternity was integrated more into tango, and that is something very new. When I had my daughter I didn't notice that. Later I really did. And she is about to turn nine, and is a very little girl. Maybe there is a thing more than tender that is pretty recent. Women talk more about their maternity, they share more. That thing about more baby friendly and that the others also . . . like

there's a community that accompanies you in that. And you don't feel so alone and isolated. Let's say that Cecilia went with her baby and was with her husband, but also was with all of us who are mothers and we grabbed the baby and we told her, I don't know, leave him for a while and dance. And that, I don't know if that happened at other times before. At least when I started dancing I never saw it. And that has to do with a change in society, and not in tango. (Romina, age thirty-eight)

To Romina, the transformations related to maternity that have taken place in recent years belong to the broader historical process that was delineated at the beginning of this chapter—the conquest of sexual and reproductive rights and the production and visibility of sexual discourses and practices. In this context, many young, middle-class, heterosexual dancers choose to be mothers and want to reconcile the responsibilities of raising their children with the development of a professional career as a dancer or tango dance teacher.

According to María José, the personal transformation that she experienced during her pregnancy and puerperium (together with not being able to dance as she would have liked during that period) turned into the driving force for her creation in 2009 of a new daytime proposal “just for women.” In her blog on this practice she says:

La María arises from the desire to create a space that contains the diversity of tango, to achieve the inclusion of every person who may be interested by promoting an accessible approach [. . .] in the beginning, it was focused on the new role of women; many women work, teach, do research, dance, compose and share tango, in addition to many other things, like being mothers.²³

Although *La María* is no longer “just for woman,” it does promote the exchange of roles in its classes. I observed on diverse occasions that many women came with their children for different reasons (they couldn't find anyone else to take care of them, classes had been canceled or the child hadn't gone to them, etcetera). In those situations, the children were integrated into activities in different ways: they drew pictures, they ran about the dance floor, read stories, tried some tango step at the side of the dance floor, talked to others, ate snacks, played board games, used technological devices, or watched their mothers dance. In the same way, other spaces in the “relaxed Milonga” circuit of the city of Buenos Aires call themselves “baby-friendly” or “kids-friendly.” For example:

It is not that *El Motivo Tango* is a place that is, let's say, open to the family. It's kids-friendly. Or rather, there are people who for some reason have to take their kids with them and come with the kids. Imagine, three ladies that organize and all three of us are mothers. You can imagine that children are more than welcome in this space. This is also a place with earlier hours and that is more inviting. I don't know, there are Milongas that open at three in the

morning. And this place closes at one, which is better for coming with kids. (Valencia, organizer of El Motivo Tango)

Sherry Ortner (2006) says that agency goes beyond opposition to mechanisms of domination. This author sees agency as a universal property of social subjects, unequally distributed and culturally constructed, and analyzes it to distinguish two types (which in practice are inseparable): one is agency as intention and the other is agency as resistance to power. While the latter is oppositional and an exercise of power against power, agency as intention (in which relations of power are also present) is understood

as a “cognitive and emotional action oriented towards a purpose,” that is not necessarily conscious, but which is differentiated from routine practices (notwithstanding the existence of a *continuum* between both) given the fact that it is an intentional action. Not all the consequences of these actions are intentional; as a result of these actions there may be unexpected consequences in which the possibility of transformation, of producing a “change in the game” may be present. (Mora 2008: 8)

As I see it, these “friendly” spaces for mothers and children can be identified as the culturally situated actions that Ortner denominates “agency as intention” and are beginning to generate new dynamics and transformations in the “rules of the game” of the “relaxed Milonga” circuit in the city of Buenos Aires. Nevertheless, as we have seen in the course of this brief tour, these changes are pervaded by a series of contradictory or at least ambiguous discourses in which disputes over the public space converge with the mobilization of a series of moral repertoires and with a discourse on “natural child rearing” that vindicates a hyper-present maternity and provokes feelings of uneasiness, tension, conflict, and even guilty pleasures in many of these young, middle-class, heterosexual mothers and female tango dancers.

FINAL COMMENTS

In her doctoral thesis, Carolina Spataro (2012) asserts that a tendency exists among feminist thinkers to underestimate the resources and abilities of “normal” or “ordinary” women to develop some degree of autonomy. She points out that these women are generally portrayed as “cultural dummies” and questions the idea of a coherent subject constructed as a political horizon. Spataro thus goes on to make a criticism already formulated by Angela McRobbie (1999) of certain feminist postulates, among which is the rejection of the connection between pleasure and the consumption of politically “incorrect” cultural products, favoring the production of a puritanical culture and giving rise to a series of “guilty pleasures” along with a “false conscience.”

In a study of scenic dances in the city of La Plata, Sabrina Mora (2011) wonders about the relationships between discipline, subjection, and pleasure associated with the state of dancing. This author digs into the cracks of these experiences that appear to be a result of the effectiveness of certain relationships of power, or conversely, of others that take the subject by surprise and seem to surpass the power that enables them.

The cracks, the excesses, the pleasures, and the tensions that these authors invite us to analyze have been, with the exception of the writings of Liska (2012, 2014) and Carozzi (2014, 2015), largely ignored in studies of gender, sexuality, and tango dance. Although many studies have made substantial contributions to our thinking on the connections between dance, ideology, and gender identities (Saikin 2004; Lucio and Montenegro 2012), it seems evident to me that in focusing on regulations for the body and on the idea of a sociopolitical horizon in dancing, they have failed to see other aspects, aspects that are probably more contradictory, silent, ordinary, or opaque but that are not for this reason any less important in life or in the configuration of the sexual-generic identities of many women.

With regard to this question Semán and Vila remind us that “emancipation and pleasure have a dialogue that is much more complicated than that which is sustained by emancipation and gender relations” (2011: 39). And for my part, I feel that it is indispensable to take this difficulty into account if we are to analyze in all their complexity the ways in which pleasure, desire, power, and sexuality (to name only a few) are interwoven and maintained in a state of tension in dance.

In one interview, the organizer of La María told me how she had experienced some of these tensions:

They had a lot of interviews with me and asked if I was doing it so that women would go to dance with each other. I don't know. The whole thing about sexuality never occurred to me. La María was conceived as a tool for women. [. . .] There is also all that stuff about how I started the thing about women dancing tango with each other. I love it. You can say anything you want, I started something and got a lot of criticism. All kinds of criticism. Some women criticized me because I was encouraging women to dance the male role before they even knew the woman's role. So? Let them dance the way they want! It doesn't matter. Besides, if there's something I like in my life it's when a man takes me to the dance floor. I like it much better. To tell you the truth, I feel much more pleasure, because I'm a woman and I'm heterosexual. I like it better, it fills me with a lot of things when a man takes me out on the floor to dance. And with another woman the connection is different. The experience, the connection. It's different. (María José, age thirty-two)

María José finds no contradictions in teaching the exchange of roles, in the struggle for desexualizing the roles in dance, and in her own enjoyment

of dancing in the “traditional” role with a man. She understands, and maternity made it very clear to her, that often experience cannot be confined to rigidly established categories. She frowns when I use the word “heteronormative” and replies categorically: “Let people dance the way they want.” Once more a feeling of pleasure overcomes us and we smile, remembering how much we liked to dance when we were pregnant.

NOTES

1. People in Buenos Aires refer to Milongas in accordance with the day of the week and the space where they take place, and this generally coincides with the person who organizes them (Carozzi 2014).

2. Morel (2010) and Carozzi (2015) analyze the process of consolidation of three stylistic variations on the dance floor or of social dance: “Milonguero,” “Urquiza” and “Nuevo (New).” Nevertheless, both call attention to the existence of numerous disputes over the correct denomination and boundaries of each style, and even over whether or not it is appropriate to differentiate between styles of social dance.

3. With the exception of the “shared proposal” taught by the Dinzel school (2012), in which an ideal of “confusion” was presented with the aim of blurring the roles of the dance couple.

4. This style of tango has its theoretical and philosophical roots in the queer movement, which had its origins in the United States in the early 1990s.

5. “Orthodox Milongas” is a term that designates tango dance events that are generally in the center of the city of Buenos Aires and strictly regulated by “codes” of interaction considered orthodox, connected to rules that were used to organize the dance dynamic in the 1940s and 1950s. Among these “codes” can be mentioned: elegant attire and leather shoes, music organized into groups of four pieces denominated by “tandas,” the invitation to dance given by the man with a movement of the head called “cabeceo,” etcetera.

6. Their main characteristic is that many of the orthodox codes are broken. They are usually located in the neighborhoods of Almagro, Palermo, and San Telmo in the city of Buenos Aires. The population is commonly observed to be younger, on average, than that of the other Milongas and is generally found in the form of mixed groups that have originated in classes. This population presents many departures from codes considered to be conventional or orthodox, particularly in aesthetics, dress, dance style, norms of interaction, and relations between the sexes. The “practices” are dance events similar to “relaxed Milongas,” and generally are developed after a tango class. Originally they were for dancing in less demanding contexts and were more informal than the Milongas.

7. In the tango embrace the person who “guides” or “conducts” or “leads” puts their right arm around the other person’s waist while bending the left arm to hold the right hand of the partner to be guided. This person in turn places the left arm over the right arm, shoulder, shoulder blade, or neck of the dancer who is the “guide” (this will determine the distance between the two dance partners), thereby forming a circular embrace. The way in which the embrace is executed varies according to the type of movement, the tango style, the dance couple, or their bodily characteristics.

8. I particularly remember a chat over coffee with María Julia Carozzi and Ana Sabrina Mora. When I laughingly told them about some of the things that were happening to me in the field, they recommended that I take notes on these experiences.

9. According to Gallo (2011: 76) the census of 1947 shows that of a little more than six million people who were economically active, only about one and a quarter million were women (approximately 20 percent). In 1960, the proportion of women in the total population of economically active people was 22 percent, and in 1970, 25 percent. This increase was basically due to the entrance into the labor market of married women who had middle and, above all, high levels of education.

10. I read in an article by Mariano Ben Plotkin (2003: 122) that the percentage of women registered at the Universidad de Buenos Aires climbed from 14.51 percent in 1941 to 18.03 percent in 1951. In the early 1980s this percentage rose to 43 percent.

11. Law 26.618 made some changes in the civil legal code. It was passed in Congress on July 15, 2010, and issued on July 21 of the same year.

12. Law 26.743 was passed on May 9, 2012, and issued on May 23 of the same year.

13. Of particular interest here are Law 25.673, which created the National Program of Sexual Health and Responsible Procreation; Law 26.130, Surgical Contraception; Law 26.150, Comprehensive Sex Education; and Law 26.485, Comprehensive Protection for the Prevention, Sanction, and Eradication of Violence against Women.

14. Law 26.862 was passed on June 5, 2013; issued on June 25, 2013; and enacted on July 19, 2013. Coverage for these procedures has been included in the *Plan Médico Obligatorio* (PMO) (Obligatory Medical Plan).

15. Law 25.929, Humanized Delivery, was passed on August 25, 2004, and issued on September 17, 2004.

16. According to Wikipedia, a doula, also known as a birth companion and post-birth supporter, is a nonmedical person who assists a woman before, during, and/or after childbirth, as well as her spouse and/or family, by providing physical assistance and emotional support.

17. Julieta Otero's blog was turned into a series in the year 2012. It was an online fictitious story in eight episodes. Following its success on the Internet, its creators published a book and signed a contract for the filming of new chapters for a Latin American cable television channel for women. The website is <http://www.segunroxi.tv/serie/>.

18. In accordance with the norms of anonymity which prevail in anthropology, we will use pseudonyms instead of the real names of the persons interviewed. The exception to this rule is the excerpt *Something New under the Sun*, in which we have seen fit to use the real names of practices and their organizers in view of the fact that these are public information.

19. "Fulares" are made of fabric and are wrapped around both mother and baby together so that the former can carry the latter on her chest and thereby keep the baby warm.

20. Here I am referring to heterosexual, urban, middle-class women with middle and high levels of formal education and who dance tango. That is, these experiences absolutely cannot be generalized and require the satisfaction of a series of objective and structural conditions if they are to be possible.

21. Carozzi (2014, 2015) holds that the reference to the "milonguitas" in theatrical sketches and tango songs is related to the appearance in Argentine literature of the idea that tango originated in houses of ill repute and was refined in Paris. Carozzi observes that the biographies of these feminine characters invert the consequences of the geographic and social ascent of tango.

22. A version interpreted by Luis Cardei can be heard at: <http://www.todotango.com/musica/tema/683/Los-cosos-de-al-lao/>

23. María José, *La María Tango* (blog), accessed August 2, 2015. <http://lamariatango.blogspot.com.ar>.

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Chapter Five

Self-Expression through Self-Discipline

*Technique, Expression, and Losing
Oneself in Classical Dance*

Ana Sabrina Mora

Translated by Elliot Prussing

The city of La Plata is the capital of the province of Buenos Aires in Argentina and home to one of the most important universities in the country. A medium-sized city in terms of its population and geographic size, it is also the scene of a thriving cultural life that can be seen in its numerous galleries, festivals, independent dance and theatrical companies, musical groups, and so on. The Escuela de Danzas Clásicas de La Plata (EDCLP) (La Plata School of Classical Dance), which trains both dancers and professors of dance, is part of this life. Prestigious in both the city of La Plata and in all of Argentina, this public and tuition-free institution is funded and administered by the Dirección de Educación Artística de la Dirección General de Cultura y Educación de la Provincia de Buenos Aires (Direction of Artistic Education under the General Direction of Culture and Education of the Province of Buenos Aires). It was founded in 1948 as the Profesorado en Danzas Clásicas (Teachers' College of Classical Dance) in what had formerly been the Escuela de Danzas del Teatro Argentino (Argentine Theater School of Dance). At present the school offers a seven-year program in interpretative dance and an eleven-year program for students who wish to graduate with the title of professor. Another program in Contemporary Dance that was added in 1994 granted students an intermediate title of interpretive dancer after their com-

pletion of the first five years. In 1999 the school launched the College of Creative Dance with a five-year study plan. The time spent at any one of these three programs of the Escuela de Danzas Clásicas, together with other formative experiences in dance, both within and without the city, rarely fails to be the theme of repeated allusions among those individuals who make up the dance circuit of La Plata.

In my doctoral thesis (Mora 2011a) I inquired into the practices, representations, and experiences that come into play in the training of students of scenic dance in an ethnographic study carried out within the different programs of the EDCLP. From 2005 to 2010, I went to the institution and did participant observation and interviews with teachers and especially with students who were in the performance and teaching programs of classical, contemporary, and creative dance programs. I worked with a multidimensional focus that encompassed practices, representations, and experiences as well as the complex relationships between these three dimensions. In order to understand how the training of dancers and dance teachers affects the construction of bodies and subjectivities, I considered a series of approaches: the reasons for the origin and the evolution of the types of dance being taught; the characteristics and the situation of the formative institution; training and formative practices; representations of dance, movement, and the body; and embodied experiences, processes of subjectivization, and possibilities of agency. All these approaches taken together led me to ask how, for example, the current representations (about dance and the body, among others) at the EDCLP are connected to the way these arts of movement are transmitted and to the uses of the body effected by teachers and students. How are the reasons for the origin and the history of each type of dance translated into the context of the different classes, given the mediation of the institution, of the teacher staff, and of the local translations of these reasons and histories? What are the relationships that can be identified between the differential conceptions proposed by the distinct types of dance and the everyday conflicts that take place within the institution? In what ways do class activities (and other types of training) impact on representations of one's own body, of the bodies of others, and of the body for dance, and what are the processes of subjectivization that take place? How are current, everyday representations related to experiences that are expressed in the bodies of the students? What are the possibilities and the potential for agency within the formative framework that each dance and each way of transmitting it and of incorporating it propose?

The main focus of my inquiry in this chapter will be on those experiences that can be said to surpass representations and will be based on the testimony of dancers with whom I spoke in the course of my fieldwork and, also, on my observations as an anthropologist and participating ballerina. I will begin by reviewing the connections between representations and experiences so as to discuss cases in which the experiences present aspects that appear to surpass

the representations. I will then go on to orient my analysis toward the question of the connections between those representations that guide the way a technique is to be understood and expression in classical dance. My purpose here is to better understand the mechanisms and the possibilities of construction of agency in a practice that is famous for its strictly codified technique, its discipline, and the chronometric and millimetric control over the body that it demands from dancers. As in any social space, the EDCLP is ruled by a coherent, but not unified, body of representations, many of them divergent and conflicting, which guides its practices and constructs subjects' sense of their experiences, and is interwoven into the selection of episodes that subjects choose to mention when they talk about their lives, about who they are. In the same vein, I will then relate the conflicts, divergences, and discrepancies between representations within the framework of the different dances taught at the EDCLP, in particular in connection with the ways in which technique and expression and the relationship between them is understood. In classical dance (ballet) above all, technique and expression appear as coinciding elements, in the understanding that the incorporation of technique is the condition for being able to express and feel oneself when dancing. This raises the question that I will address near the end of this chapter: the relationship that discipline and subjection have with pleasure, particularly the pleasure that is associated with achieving the incorporation of technique and the act of dancing with the means that this technique makes possible. I will emphasize that even in conditions in which agency appears to disappear or appears to exhaust itself at the limits of subjection, it is present in diverse ways and in multiple dialogues with the very elements that only appear to constrain it.

MOVING TOWARD OVERFLOW: EXPERIENCE AND REPRESENTATION

In previous studies (Mora 2006, 2011b), I asserted that young students of dance are constructed as subjects in systems of representations (Jodelet 2006) that characterize the dance they learn and are transmitted and updated during the training process at the EDCLP. In those studies, my analysis addressed the complicated relations between experiences and representations. The representations to which I am referring are found within a framework of specific artistic traditions and include different conceptions of the body, of the dancer, of the dance, of the way this is transmitted, of which bodies are adequate for its assimilation, of the implications for the apprenticeship process of different attitudes, and others. The most global representations, those that delimit the boundaries between one type of dance and another (for example, those that distinguish between classical dance and nonclassical

dance) function as matrixes of other, more concrete, better defined representations. Those who learn and practice dance are connected with artistic traditions that imply certain visions that are in agreement with philosophical traditions and views of the world that can be traced back to the historical context of their origin and development and that have a validity that is not limited to the time when they first appeared. Although their meanings have evolved within changing contexts, they are still potent and effective, they are re-created in dance classes, and they are modernized in concrete practices and in the narratives that teachers and students tell about their lives and their dance careers. Such representations, which are socially created and shared and products of the specific historic contexts in which the dances have been developed, constitute ways of understanding a dance and the body in the context of that dance and have an impact on the particular ways in which dance students see themselves, their bodies, and their possibilities within the type of dance that they learn. Even when the meaning of these representations has been adapted to a new context, they continue to be potent and effective, to be re-created in the present day and modernized in concrete practices. The transmission of these representations occurs above all in a practical way, in concrete situations like classes, rehearsals, and evaluations, by way of innumerable and minute interactions, reiterated over time, that vary from oft-repeated instructions dictated over many years of classes to passing commentaries made by teachers on the bodies and abilities of students. Over time, given the fact that the agents and institutions where dance is transmitted have a positive value and great meaning in the lives and the projects of the students, these representations are internalized and assimilated.

In the study I am referring to here, elements appeared repeatedly that led me to think that even though it is impossible to escape the effectiveness of representations (and of practices based on such representations), in the construction of particular experiences, there is something from these experiences that appears to surpass, to exceed the limits of, to overflow these representations that are transmitted, above all, in teaching-apprenticeship practices. In the contemporary and creative dance programs, this surpassing or overflow appeared to be present in experiences that the students said they could not explain or put into words. They characterized it as moments of intensity, of something vibratory, manifest in states of the body that they said they could not explain or make intelligible through words. Yet in ballet the impossibility of capturing experience in language or making it explicit did not appear to be a problem. Here this surpassing or overflow appeared to take another form; there were words to talk about the most intense sensations; there were shared terms like “pleasure,” “fly,” and “freedom.” Here the difficulty of narrating one’s own experiences appeared when trying to logically connect the explanation of the type of training proposed by this type of dance with the sensa-

tions produced when executing the dance. In other words, ruptures in the narration appeared when in the course of answering my questions the subject tried to explain why he or she felt a certain way. It was exactly this dimension of what they felt that was evoked by students of classical dance when referring to the way in which students in the other two programs saw them and the type of dance that they practiced; they perceived that the other students saw them as machines for reproducing a technique that was absurd, and that these other students could never understand what ballet dancers felt when dancing because the former didn't feel what the latter felt when they danced with classical technique.

When I started the field work for this study, my first interview was with an advanced student of classical dance who spoke at length and in detail about the student hierarchy, based on individuals' physical attributes (a combination of anatomical, biomechanical, and aesthetic characteristics that made a body "suited for dance"); the strict discipline and the millimetric and chronometric control of the body that was sought after in classes; the continual feelings of inadequacy and frustration in the constant presence of highly restrictive ideals and models of the dancer's body. After listening to this and a succession of other stories of a similar nature, I asked the subject another question: "And what about you, what do you feel when you dance?" At this moment her expression changed, a broad smile appeared on her face, she sat up straight, her muscles relaxed, she expanded her shoulders and she said something that I was to hear many more times in other interviews: "I feel great pleasure, I feel as if I were flying, I feel free, I feel that I am myself."¹ This type of statement was usually followed by others that reaffirmed the passion these individuals felt for classical dance. How could they feel this at the same time they experienced so much pain, exhaustion, and fatigue, and all this within such a strict disciplinary regimen? The usual answer was to dismiss this question saying, "I don't know why."

For something that happens in life to be recognized as an experience, it must in some way be narrated. This implies that an experience that does not include those who are recognized as others is not possible. An experience constructs a shared meaning. It is generated being with others and occurs in life as something intersubjective and plural (Hlebovich 2014). At the same time, intersubjectivity is part of another ineludible dimension of experience: narration. The others are not only part of the experience as part of the medium in which it takes place but they also play a part in this experience as those who listen to the narration of such an experience, a story that allows the experience to be such. Experience, then, is constituted in language—that is, language is more than just the place where experience is reflected (Vila 2000). We assume a first person that is produced discursively and that "is experienced not as a single, completed identity but as multiple, incomplete, partial identities" (Vila 2000: 228), an integration of unstable, contradictory,

and always-in-process elements. What narratives do is construct an order that gives sense to particular actions, a series of facts, a body of reasons and motivations. This process of selection, ordering, and definition turns what happens in life into experiences within the framework of the most general process of constructing identity: "Social events are constructed as 'experience' not only in relation to discourses that confer meaning on them in general, but also within plots that organize them coherently" (Vila 2000: 245). It is precisely narrative identity that guides the process of selection that is concomitant with any construction of identity. The students and teachers I interviewed reiterated key moments in their dance lives with a narrative order of events, which was undoubtedly constructed, with sequences and value judgments that were part of the work of training. In the same way, the same descriptions, characterizations, and value judgments on technique and expression were reiterated within each dance program.

Even if we recognize the effectiveness of the training process in the transmission of certain representations (which facilitate the construction of certain experiences and not others) it is possible to ask about planes of dislocation (those gaps that make students say on occasion that "they can't express in words" something they have felt or experienced) and about the cracks through which new experiences arise, which happenings take the subject by surprise (those situations experienced as moments of rupture, illumination, and even epiphany, which lead people to establish new connections of meaning about who they are). Even so, what we experience in life is never identical with the concepts that we use to capture it and represent it (Jackson 1989). This is the concern that more than anything else this chapter addresses.

On the one hand, experiences are constructed in relation to social representations and categorizations and assume meaning from them, given that the global system of representations provides the recourses and the tools for interpreting experiences and mediates in the production of knowledge about oneself, about others, and about the world. Narrated experiences are impregnated with incorporated representations that are shared in society and that imply the transmission of representations and interpretative frameworks. On the other hand, however, experience must be recognized as a deed, as an action on the world, which, like any process of internalization within the framework of a culture, necessarily includes the possibility of transforming, of modifying the same medium that has constructed it, of creation. Experiences reinforce, actualize, and sustain the available social representations, but they also can have a creative character by structuring in novel ways the representations that nurture them or by serving as the basis for a transforming practice. Experience, then, is part of the process in which subjects modify the world around them (which makes this experience possible) at the same time that these modifications impact the subjects. These dislocations between

available representations and new experiences can cause a situation of imbalance, of questioning, which, as we shall see, can lead to an ordering process that reinforces the available interpretative framework or that can initiate new connections and new transformations in the subjects.

In the pages that follow, I will address the question of planes of dislocation and the cracks in the processes of subjectivization, where agent experiences occupy a space that cannot only be understood as representations that are transmitted in a determined context. I will center my inquiry on the bodily experiences of students of classical dance to which I have already alluded, in the understanding that they have raised a series of questions about those studies that are centered only on representations and that do not acknowledge anything in experience beyond representation—that is to say, that experiences only exist inasmuch as they are represented. As I said before, it is not possible to think of experiences without a process of selection, sequencing, and definition that gives them order and sense. But this does not imply that there isn't a vital moment in which experiences occur, even though these experiences are found within available representations when they are transformed into plausible experiences that can be shared with others. I am interested as much in understanding what the conditions are that allow these experiences to occur as in how certain experiences can help us ask about that which defies our powers to define it.

To begin the analysis, I will put myself in what I believe is the place of those subjects that I have interviewed in my field work. I have no reason to doubt that these individuals have experienced the immense pleasure, the sensations of freedom, and the special connections with their own bodies that they spoke so much of. What I will do, however, is inquire into the particular process of subjectivization in which they have been produced, the logic to which they correspond, the models of the body and of dance with which they maintain a dialogue, as well as the aspects in which they surpass that which is transmitted in teaching-apprenticeship contexts.

ATTRIBUTES, TECHNIQUE, AND EXPRESSION IN A DANCE OF CERTAINTY

In my field work at the EDCLP, a problem emerged that will be interesting to discuss here: the tension between the necessity of working arduously over time in order to incorporate a highly codified, strict, and unchanging technique, and the feeling of sensations of pleasure and of fulfillment associated with expression. This, which analytically can be delineated as a tension between opposing elements that act together, was not experienced as a contradiction by students and teachers. On the contrary, it appeared within the same interpretative framework, on the understanding that it is not possible to ex-

press oneself by means of dance without first having mastered technique. In the accounts that were constructed in interviews and informal conversations, both the terms “technique” and “expression” appear articulated. These terms appear separately—that is, distinguished as two things that are distinct from each other—and an analytic tension could be noted between them, but this tension was not experienced as such; rather, one of them, technique, was perceived as a necessary condition for the other (expression). This occurred in the same way that no contradiction was perceived between criticizing the strict codes, the parameters of exclusion, the disqualifications, and the constant frustrations of ballet on the one hand and the feelings of passion and enjoyment in this type of dance on the other.

The discussion about the connections that are possible or desirable between technique and expression pervades those discourses that explain the way in which performing dances are taught and learned. The tension between both is present at the moment of evaluating the quality of a dancer, of a dance piece, of a dance form, of a way of dictating classes, and is routinely expressed in a series of assumptions that I heard often in my field work. The extremes of this series of assumptions can be summed up in two statements; the first of these was voiced by a student of creative dance and the second by a student of ballet: “technique constrains us when we dance; sometimes I see ballerinas who have a lot of technique but who express nothing, they convey nothing to me, they move like little robots.” And “the moment you have incorporated a technique to the point where you no longer have to think about it, that’s when you can relax and feel and express yourself with dance.”

Within the field of dance, and without as well, ballet is usually singled out as an extremely structured type of dance in which training, considered to be necessary starting from infancy, tends to incorporate a technique that is constituted of a limited repertoire of steps and codified movements. In this type of dance there exists a sort of hegemonic matrix of representations that revolves around what defines legitimate dance (the existence of a technique that is rigorous, strict, difficult, and anti-natural, and that seeks the harmonious and ethereal beauty of bodies and movements), what bodies are suitable for such dance (those that have the anatomical and biomechanical abilities that make it possible to realize the prescribed positions and movements, which are characterized by expansion and elongation and that on top of that have an almost indefinable quality of having “grace”), and how the technique is to be learned (strict discipline, intense and constant training, exercises for increasing millimetric and chronometric control, and the engraving of the smallest detail of technique on the body). Discourses that are products of traditional thinking on ballet generally reproduce and justify restrictive ideas concerning what bodies are suitable for this type of dance and distinguish classical dance as “true dance” as opposed to other forms of dance, which are

considered lesser forms with “little technique” and are therefore not difficult to learn and perform.

The logic behind the training of a ballet dancer can be summed up as follows: The intrinsic and ineludible presence of certain qualities and anatomical characteristics, apprenticeship of a specific and rigid technique, and finally, expression through movement based on those characteristics and that technique. In the same way, then, that characteristics and abilities constitute a type of determinism, body-technique and technique-body give rise to a double determinism. A technique is developed in accordance with certain ideals, and this determines which body shall be adapted to both the technique and the ideals. This technique is conceived for such bodies at the same time that it shapes them. The idea of the perfect body and that of technique feed on each other reciprocally.

The appearance of academic dance in history coincides with the appearance of disciplines. To form the body of a classical dancer, rigorously trained, explored from a geometric perspective, and dominated by reason, movement has become the subject of a disciplined control that defines forms, spaces, and times. This discipline consists of a micro-physics of relations of power that takes root in and pervades the bodies of dancers, making them progressively more useful and efficient within a determined framework of action and progressively more docile (Foucault [1974] 1989). A particular form of minute rationalization of the body and its movements, a political technology of the body is expressed in the logic of the body and of movement that is actualized in every ballet class. Dance apprenticeship and training are pervaded with disciplining mechanisms, given that the goal is to obtain a dancer with a constitution that functions within a determined framework of action, with methods and techniques oriented toward shaping body and behavior. To the degree that classical dance disciplines, it imposes norms, it defines a way of doing things, and by way of the teacher pervades the individual bodies of the dancers as well as the collective and uniform body of all the dancers taken together. The body is educated to improve its performance and increase its capacity, its ability, its efficacy. It is dominated by routine in a regulated and millimetrical relationship with its fragments and in the mastery of every one of its parts.

A disciplined body is a cellular body, with a space (a body that has been assigned a place in space together with other bodies that are distributed in a grid while at the same time observing a hierarchy) and a time (a body divided into segments and into repetitions that are necessary for complying with a time limit, with a result). Disciplinary individuality is an organic individuality (the discipline is oriented toward bodies, and on the basis of this, toward activities, experiences, and behaviors) and at the same time combinatorial (discipline seeks to combine strengths, series of bodies, and chronological series, and to adjust one body to others). These mechanisms and these inten-

tions could be applied to the distribution and the behavior of bodies that move in a class or in a ballet choreography. This results tangentially in bodies that are commonly recognized on sight as formed by classical dance, even when they are not dancing. The posture, the position of the head, the rotation of the hip, the particular form that the toes assume, are signs that remain after the rigorous training that leaves the body with a posture that is not one of everyday life.

Classical technique is the product of a group of principles that organize bodies and movements. To achieve the optimum way of transmitting and internalizing classical technique, it is considered desirable and even indispensable to begin training starting at infancy, before the body “hardens.” The adaptation of the body to technique begins to be noted early on; in the words of one professor who gives classical dance classes to children in the first years of their lives, “you see a little girl who just begins and already at the end of the year how she has changed! Her body has changed, it has become slender, a lot more slender. . . . Later you already begin to stand differently, you walk like a penguin.” In order to assimilate technique, hours and hours of routine practice are necessary. Daily, constant, sustained, graduated, systematic, and rigorous training is offered and demanded. In classes not only are steps and combinations of steps incorporated, but also an exact and minute relationship with the different parts of the body, with space, and also with time by way of rhythms and regular, almost chronometric repetitions. From classes for beginners to those for professionals, the same structure is maintained: the first part on the bar (for balance, warm-up, and stretching exercises), a second part in the center (where balance and alignment exercises are done and students work progressively on the quality of both slow and fast movements and finish with rotations and leaps), and a final farewell. Some of the classes are different for men and women. In general terms, there are two types of teaching: one of them, the most traditional, is based in great part on imitation and copying forms, steps, and movements; the other, of more recent origin, is based on a knowledge of the biomechanics of movements and the recognition of one’s own body. Both types, however, share the same objective of achieving the incorporation and correct execution of a specific technique. As for the material resources used in classes, all that is necessary is a wood floor, special mats, bars, mirrors, and music (preferably live piano music, otherwise, recorded music).

After long hours of practice, a technique is progressively engraved on the dancers’ bodies. This incorporation is visible not only when these individuals are dancing ballet, but also when they are trying to learn other forms of dance and even in everyday situations. For example, in contemporary dance classes that are part of the curricula of the Teacher’s School of Classical Dance, the students observe that it is difficult for them to follow the indications and adopt the positions and movements that are required of them. . . . “For us, the

students of classical dance, it was really difficult to de-structure ourselves a little, or we did everything, everything modern really classical; we had to rotate and we all rotated completely straight, whatever, you had to raise your legs and your arm was put on your side here and then up, and that is classical until you do it more or less well. It was a little difficult for us, and it was difficult for us to understand what they meant, too. They said ‘Do this from here, from the center,’ or whatever, but the thing is, they always said, ‘Do this because I say so.’ And not ‘Why, why?’ ‘Forget about that. Because I say so.’ You do this and you do it just because.”

Another sign of the pervasive influence of technique and the construction it effects in bodies can be seen in the ways dancers stand and walk. In the words of one student of classical dance instruction: “I go to a function and you’re outside at the buffet during the intermission and you look at the people and you know who went to see the performance and are dancers and who are common spectators. . . . You can tell by the attitude they have or by the posture. . . . They’re more upright, you know, they have, or they are. . . . They have movements that are maybe more delicate, the men have movements that are maybe much more delicate or finer.”

Strict technique, the product of arduous training that makes it possible to exercise great control over the body, exists for the purpose of executing smooth and delicate movements performed by bodies that seem to be weightless. Teachers and students of ballet and of contemporary dance define classical dance in terms of its striving to express that which is ethereal, romantic, magical, slender, delicate, sober, beautiful, lineal. For example, a teacher of contemporary dance told us that “the dancer is expected to be slender, ethereal, languid, like with a long figure, the line . . . I would even say that I imagine her with her hair in a bun,” or, in another testimony, a ballet professor told us, “What it means [to me] to see a dancer suspended over her ballet shoes or lifted into the air by her partner, and held there by him, or the rotations, or the leaps—there are so many things in classical dance that I believe [. . .] show magic. . . . You remain there like that, as in a sigh. . . . I believe that, that magic is always going to exist.”

Classical technique proposes an idea of expression that implies as an ineludible condition the internalization of that technique. Those who practice this type of dance say that technique is what makes it possible to express oneself. The possibility of forgetting about this long enough to enjoy a dance is subordinated to the internalization of technique: “What is difficult to do is stop thinking a little about technique. . . . You’re always going to be a little obsessed about technique . . . but it gets better over the years . . . until you have all the mechanical memory that that type of dance needs . . . until you have everything incorporated, clean, and polished. . . . That’s when you can more or less relax, but before that it’s a job you’re thinking about, half and half.” Although in ballet repertoires what each character feels is established

in accordance with the plot of the ballet and thus what each dancer must express at each moment (by way of acting), explanations like that which has just been quoted make it apparent that within this framework of technique, discipline, and strict codification, there is a place for the expression of emotions. According to one ballerina, “I feel so free when I dance, I feel so much pleasure . . . and you express so many feelings.” She is referring to a joy that is not only linked to the pleasure produced by the applause and the admiration of the public, but rather includes the belief that dancing, even when dancing with movements that have been codified by others, is a way of expressing oneself.

Many of the bodily expressions that are produced in the practice of dance (as can be noted in the examples that I gave when discussing experiences within the distinct programs of the EDCLP, examples that contained some experiential elements that might be characterized as difficult to put into words) contribute to the so-called “affective turn” that was a product of the 1990s and the first years of the present century. From this point of view, the study of affections is fertile ground for the exploration of dimensions of social life that need more than an analysis of discourses and representations in order to be understood. Although my work has had more to do with the idea of experience than with that of affect, my understanding, like that of Ben Anderson (2014), is that affect is a type of experience, and in accordance with this, that those types of experience that have led me to consider them as surpassing representation are, in a sense, affects. The link between the analytical perspective that I have delineated up to now and the proposal of the affective turn are also compatible in another way. As Ben Anderson (2014) says, representations are a constitutive part of the collectives from which all affect emerges, and therefore, to pay attention to affects does not exclude paying attention to representations. In the same way, while the affects exceed deliberative thought, they are not nonrepresentational; we may wonder, by contrast, how representations function in terms of affect and how the life of affect is imbued with representations.

Another important consideration to keep in mind when we analyze affects (and, in general, experiences) is the fact that affect is a collective condition: affects emerge from specific configurations of relationships and become a part of socio-spacial relationships; these configurations act as mediators and modulators of affective life (Anderson 2014). The experiences that I am interested in analyzing here, be it that we opt to call them affective (including their bodily character, like any aspect of social life), corporal (involving their capacity for affecting and being affected), or even tonic-emotional (Tabak 2012) emerge from a network of relationships in the context of a specific practice, realized by subjects that find themselves connected and committed to this practice and that have been produced by it. In the same way, affect is a

corporal capacity on which the ability of the body, an ability that is constructed collectively, leaves its mark that it might affect and be affected.

Dance, like all bodily practices, takes the body as its object and in the process constitutes it as a body (that is, as the body of that practice and not of another). In the same movements, the practice of classical dance constructs bodies, constructs experiences, mobilizes affects and emotions. The affects are not autonomous; they do not come from a supposed truth of the ahistorical and a-social body. They are produced within the framework of determined material conditions. But this does not imply that they are reduced to only those conditions; on the contrary, they may exceed them—that is, they have the potential to exceed the order from which they have emerged (Anderson 2014). The forms of thinking, doing, and speaking (to use the perspective of Foucault) that characterize such a practice are dynamic and mutable precisely because they are collective and are produced in a network of intersubjectivity and inter-corporality.

CONFLICTING SENSES IN A COMMON SPACE

The complex relations between technique and expression that we have discussed in the case of classical dance also appear in the contemporary and creative dance programs, albeit within different interpretative frameworks that give distinct senses to these relations. These distinct interpretative frameworks enter into a dialogue because they form part of the same field and, in a more concrete sense, part of the same social space and even the same material space. In the EDCLP distinct representations about dance are expressed every day and are reciprocally constructed. Thus, in order to understand the bodily affective experiences that will occupy my attention in the last section of this chapter, it is useful to delineate these reciprocal visions that construct the relational configuration in which these experiences emerge.

As much in classical as in contemporary dance, the body is defined as an instrument for work. Thus the crux of these types of dance consists of controlling the body so that this can realize all its potential for movement, be this a vocabulary of preestablished steps or a personal language of movement. Though pain is present in training (as when pointed dance shoes are used, or when stretching the muscles, or continuing despite muscle cramps, impacts, burns, sprains, and exhaustion), control of the body is associated with something pleasurable, with the pleasure of listening to the body, using it and creating with it. In the case of the contemporary dance program, the descriptions of the experiences that take place can be summed up as the intention, the effort, and the pleasure of knowing and taking the body beyond its limits, in broadening the concept of “what my body can do,” while bearing in mind that the limit is set by each body in particular. The main experiences that

students and teachers of contemporary dance talked about in their interviews were connected to “feeling what happens inside the body, in terms of the musculature, the joints, the bones, the spinal axis”; to feel the body in movement, discover how to use it, how to position it, how to find enough strength for the movements, challenging oneself, and overcoming those challenges. The emphasis placed on knowing one’s own body, comes together with the sensation of knowing *from* and *with* the body, “forgetting everything,” “silencing the head,” paying attention to the energies of the body that have been put into movement.

Many students single out the possibility of freedom that contemporary dance gives them, given that it allows them to constantly create new movements. They contrast this with what would happen in ballet, in which movements are structured and even described as “anti-natural” and devoid of any possibility of innovation or leaving one’s own personal mark. Even so, the discipline, the rigor, and the effectiveness of the training redeems classical dance in the eyes of these students, who show great admiration for the technical efficacy of ballet dancers. Partisans of contemporary dance also value the possibilities ballet creates in terms of managing the body and in particular of rotating the legs from the hip. It is considered a good base for incorporating other techniques, which in spite of presenting breaks and differences from classical technique are often based on it, or on the preexistence of a body formed by classical technique. It is not that training in classical dance is necessary or indispensable, but rather that it facilitates the process of apprenticeship. In the words of one ballet professor I interviewed, “the discipline in classical technique is so complete and it gives you so many things, in terms of your body, that it, it creates possibilities that can help you later. For example, you can develop distinct techniques of contemporary dance very well.” The other side of this coin is the difficulty that those who have been trained exclusively in classical dance have in modifying what they have incorporated into their bodies. For example, it may be problematic for them to dispense even temporarily with the rigidity of the torso, or the arching of the foot, or the five positions of the feet and arms. In contemporary dance, classical technique is seen as a tool, one of a number of tools, but one that is useful, if for nothing else than subverting it, developing it, or taking it to an extreme.

One characteristic of classical dance that is seen negatively by people in the different programs (though in the case of the classical dance program, only by those who demonstrate openness to the influences of other bodily techniques and to changes in teaching methods) is that it is rigid, strict, and structured, as much in its teaching methods as in its technique. Those who make this criticism think that a ballet dancer should be capable of “dancing everything” but without leaving any sign of their technique, able to be aligned but free of tension, capable of observing the line of technique but

without failing to express, project, and mobilize the spectator with movement in a “pleasing and delicate” way.

In classical and contemporary dance the assimilation of technical resources is positively valued. But it is understood that the optimum is to incorporate technique to the point where one can stop thinking about it and thereby achieve a connection with one’s own body and with one’s surroundings, transmitting or projecting something to the spectator, “constructing senses” while experiencing the pleasure of the body in movement. Within the EDCLP, the creative dance program offers a way of explaining things that is in marked contrast with that of the ballet program. Technique and expression are seen to be in conflict, that is, the assimilation of a technique of restricted movement, as in ballet, limits or restricts expression, which comes from the exploration of the interior of the dancer, from the search for “one’s own dance,” for a unique way of moving, for one’s own body language. Creative dance has, ever since its origins in the 1950s, taken it upon itself to try to reform the official educational system by introducing itself into school curriculums (even of children) in the conviction that this type of dancing is a good way to develop and deepen a relationship with one’s own body, with the bodies of others and with the environment. It has also shown an interest in dance as therapy. A great part of the work that is carried out in classes at the teaching school aims to produce a sensitive raising of consciousness of one’s own body, one that leads to the recognition and appreciation of one’s own capacity to use one’s personal history, to use one’s relationship with others and with the environment to generate images and movements. The focus of the work done in each class is to gain access to a way of expressing oneself; of changing thoughts, emotions, and sensations into movement; of becoming conscious of one’s own body’ valuing it and exploring its potential for self-expression. This perspective puts dance and creation into a language that is within the reach of the diversity of bodies that exist, and not only of those few with a certain bodily constitution that permits them to internalize a determined technique.

In creative dance, the body is seen as an instrument, but above all as a means of expression, one on which life’s experiences leave their mark and that is the basis for transformations that can be produced inside of each person. Emphasis is placed on introspection, on investigation, and on expression by means of the body in movement, with the intention of increasing the dancer’s creativity and power of expression. In this way, the experiences of pleasure associated with that which one’s own body can do in creative dance have nothing to do with the ability to assimilate a technique as in the other two types of dance, but rather with exploring the abilities that one’s body may have and that no other has, with getting to know this body and expressing oneself through it.

Within the ranks of creative dance a negative vision of ballet prevails; at EDCLP the creative dance program includes only one year of classes on classical technique and this technique is generally not used in student productions since its movements and positions are seen as anti-natural, artificial, harmful, and constrictive within strict parameters that do not correspond to the supposedly natural possibilities of human movement. In certain cases, ballet has even been referred to as ridiculous and outmoded. If anything in classical dance is seen as positive, it is the flexibility that is obtained from training or the rigorousness of the latter, but there is above all a critical stance toward the prevalence in ballet of a single ideal of body and movement and also toward the apprenticeship that is based on copying this model.

When classical and contemporary dance are judged from the point of view of creative dance, the technical load of these two types of dance is often reason for discrediting them. On the other hand, from the point of view of contemporary dance (as well as from that of some minority positions within the ranks of creative dance, above all those persons who have gone through both programs), the assimilation of distinct techniques broadens the possibilities of self-expression through movement and a technique is only destructive and implies risks of lesions when it is not taught correctly, when biomechanics are not taken into account, when there is no prevention of injuries, and when there is not due caution for the particularities and possibilities of each body. In the words of one teacher of contemporary dance that I interviewed, "Technique allows us to inhabit our body, and it is precisely that which is pleasure, knowing our body and feeling that it is no longer utilitarian in order to put it at the service of the intangible, be it to transmit emotions or to produce feelings." Technique is understood, then, as a tool, and for this reason it has been requested that more hours of classical technique be included in the contemporary dance program.

Those within the ranks of creative dance compare their art with contemporary dance and find that they dance using less strength, that they have less muscle tone, and hardly ever execute leaps or falls. They also point out another difference between contemporary and creative dancers: that the latter compose choreographies only in the most advanced years of the program.

They perceive contemporary dance as putting more emphasis on the assimilation of techniques, on repeating sequences of movement that the dancers themselves usually do not create, and they cast a critical eye on the continued existence in this dance of traditional models of physical beauty. Creative dance, working from explorations into movement carried out by each dancer, rejects the copying of models. When talking of contemporary dance productions, students and teachers of creative dance say they can see sequences that are performed and that these are repeated. To their way of thinking, the emphasis on technique and on the exhibition of skills impoverishes expression. For example, one student of creative dance has said that in

contemporary dance productions “you say, ‘what beautiful form, hey, look what she did, wow, great, look at how flexible that dancer is,’ but since . . . you already begin to be distracted, it seems to me that in that sense it is empty, it’s like movement for movement’s sake and it doesn’t hit home with me.” While those in creative dance recognize that students of contemporary dance train hard, they also recommend that these dancers acquire more consciousness of their own bodies. They say this consciousness allows for a minute investigation of movement: “moving from the bones, moving the big toe, to move feeling the seventh cervical.”

On the other hand, students of ballet and contemporary dance indicate that they see a lack of substance in creative dance productions and perceive a lack of training (to be understood as technical training) on the part of performers. However, those in creative dance say that there are certain things in these dances that are the result of an apprenticeship in technique that they have achieved by means of other mechanisms, in particular those of searching, of knowledge of the body and its potential, and improvisation.

Depending on the type of dance, more emphasis will be put on technique and the discipline necessary to acquire it, or on the sole expression of the emotions in order to achieve expression through the body in movement. But the articulation between these two dimensions is always present. The mechanisms of that discipline for constructing bodies for expression vary in accordance with the type of dance. They can be more or less strict, more or less formalized, more or less rationalized, more or less coercive, but they do not cease to exist. It is impossible not to see the relationships between these ideas that are constructed on an everyday basis at the EDCLP. They can be in a dialogue between two subjects who share the same building, who practice distinct types of dance, who dispute meanings within the world of dance and who see the body in different ways. What happens in classical dance is usually taken as a counterpoint for other types of dance that have come out of that dance and that discuss its principles and methods (like contemporary and creative dance), which beyond their particularities present a shared view of ballet that describes it as a type of dance in which there is only technique and nothing more than technique. This characteristic, cited in other types of dance when referring to ballet, makes this type of dance an interesting case in which we can see how meanings are constructed about the relationship between technique and expression that, more or less visible, also work their effects in other types of dance. However, even the dances that are said to be constructed on the basis of a knowledge of the body itself and of one’s interior self use technical knowledge that is transmitted and based on frames of reference of senses of the body and about the subject that are eventually shared.

FINDING ONE'S WAY WITH A FOOT ON THE BAR

Especially in ballet, technique and expression, which appear to be distinct qualitative dimensions that could only exist together in conflict, appear as dimensions that coincide, as elements that exist together and are associated with one common objective: to know the body, to move it, to feel, to dance. The exploration of the links between technique and expression were a point of departure for another theme of investigation within the general question about the ways in which dance is transmitted: the relations, on the one hand, of disciplining, and subjection with pleasure on the other—in particular, that pleasure that is associated with dance. We find pleasure in a double bond: it is bonded to the assimilation of technique and to the act of dancing with the means that this technique makes possible.

At first sight, it would seem that the apprenticeship of a technique like that of classical does not leave any room for expression, and that it does not produce more than subjects bound to that technique. However, even within a strict framework of assimilation of technical mastery, with disciplinary technologies like those that I have described, elements appear that reveal other possibilities. In the ethnographic study carried out at the EDCLP, one of the questions that formed part of the individual interviews was “What do you feel when you dance?” Together with this, and after the first answers I received, other related questions came up, such as, among others: What things can you express when you dance? In what way can you express them? What is the origin of what you express, where does it come from? What is it that you like most when you dance? Are there circumstances in which you feel that there are obstacles to this expression? The answers to these questions gave rise to other questions: Is it possible to have experiences of pleasure and of “being yourself” in a process of training that constructs subjects bound to a technique of movement? What is the margin of freedom that disciplinary methods allow? How does this margin function within the disciplinary methods of classical dance? What experiences can be understood as overflow in the process of subjectivization? Can we speak of overflow when a determined experience makes it possible for regulation to function?

During the process of training a dancer, diverse mechanisms act on the body and shape it so that it functions within a determined scope of action. But this practice not only results in the creation of bodies trained in this practice and of subjects bound to these bodies, it also results in the construction of experiences that are based on those devices and, at the same time, surpass them. Subjects are created and pervaded by these disciplinary mechanisms, but this pervasion is not complete and total. As I have already commented, when students of ballet, who are supposedly constrained by a strict technique that leaves no room for expression nor for personal styles of movement, are asked what they feel when they dance, they answer that they feel as

if they were floating or flying, that they feel something magic, that they feel free, that they feel pleasure, that they feel that they are themselves.

To understand these questions, it is necessary to note the subtle difference between feeling pleasure because one is taught to do so when learning to dance and feeling pleasure beyond the constraints of disciplinary practices. That is, sensations of pleasure and of freedom can be produced as the result of the effectiveness of certain relationships of power, but experiences can also be produced on its edges. Experiences that evoke feelings of freedom and pleasure are the result of the effectiveness of a methodology of power that seeks to control the body and confine it to parameters and a sphere of action that are extremely strict—that is, the pleasure is produced by the maximization of control over the body. In this sense, many of the pleasurable experiences evoked are the result of achieving things that in previous classes could not be achieved (for example, greater elongation or a movement that was not possible before) or things that were visualized in earlier stages of training and observed in dancers who were more advanced. Besides, these students are taught to enjoy pain and effort because these are the things that will allow them to dance.

Before addressing the question of whether or not there is something in the experience of dancers that is produced within the cracks of disciplinary methods that make up the education of the body proposed by this practice, I will give some attention to questions that in spite of appearing disruptive for these methodologies, can be considered as products of their effectiveness at the same time that they are producers of that effectiveness. In other words, these are experiences that are produced in and by the effective incorporation of classical technique and that, at the same time, are experiences that lead to the reproduction of the practice of this dance and the way it is taught.

Experiences identified as positive are diverse: to feel that one is getting to know one's own body and what it is capable of doing; to achieve an objective that represents a challenge; to feel that the body is "freeing itself of bonds"; that the possibilities of movement, of elongating, of making the body do what the dancer wants it to do, are expanding; to feel one's control over the body increasing; among other and similar experiences. These experiences occur in relation to small moments, small achievements; the leg can be lifted higher and held there longer; a movement is achieved with greater ease; a step is connected with another with greater fluidity. Although all these things have something to do with achievements within a specific proposed technique, they are experienced with great intensity, loaded with pleasure, like overcoming oneself and like steps toward the technical perfection that this type of dance proposes. To spin around and around over the tip of one's toes is in part an exhibition of technical virtuosity and the result of years of exercising disciplinary practice over the body, but to the person who does

this, it also represents the experience of “defying the law of gravity,” of knowing and managing one’s own body, of creating, of making art.

These experiences linked to pleasurable sensations are impossible to understand outside of the specific practice of ballet, of its technical codification, and the way it is transmitted. “To know one’s own body and that which it can do” is to know it within the knowledge system that this type of dance proposes; to know a body as this type of dance understands it and tries to construct it; to broaden and become familiar with its possibilities in accordance with a technical regulation that determines what it is which must be sought after and what types of movement should be hidden or eliminated. “To defy limitations,” “to expand the limits of the body,” to meet objectives that before appeared distant, is to achieve objectives defined by what the technique says can be done and must be done, it is to expand its possibilities of movement in the direction that technique assigns it. “To control one’s own body” is to control it within the parameters of that which technique says can and must be controlled. “To free the body from all bonds” is to take it progressively closer to the model that technique proposes. The way of narrating these experiences always occurs within an interpretative framework where the body is only one, the expansion of its potential is given in only one sense, the control is positive and has a clear objective, and liberation takes place when this technique enters the body. Thus it is in the very effectiveness of technique that the possibility of agency is to be found, and while this agency clearly allows subjects to do things, it only allows them within the boundaries of what a determined practice produces and makes possible.

At this point we find ourselves faced with a notion of agency that is based on the concept of power developed by Michel Foucault, inasmuch as a collection of relationships do not only dominate the subject, they also create the conditions for its existence. We always participate in relations of power and these relations must inevitably include the possibility of agency. Foucault has said that the production of subjectivities (in one sense, de-subjection) can be produced within the framework of the exercise of relations of power itself, a process that “not only ensures the subordination of the subject to relations of power but which also produces the means by which he is transformed into a self-conscious entity and into an agent” ([1982] 1996: 121). In this way, agency would also be a product of relations of power.

Judith Butler, taking up Foucault’s proposal, recognizes that social agency must not be conceptualized as “always and solely in opposition to power” ([1997] 2001: 17). On the contrary, agency can be constructed within structures of subordination, which create and make agency possible; practices of agency can be constructed without abandoning a framework of action in which a subordinate position is occupied. There can be agency within norms because norms can be performed, inhabited, and experienced in diverse ways and not only consolidated or subverted. Thus, agency can be said

to exist in the way a given norm is followed, in how its assimilation is carried out and experienced. This follows from the fact that “in order to be able to persist, the conditions of power have to be reiterated, the subject is precisely the place of this reiteration, which is never a merely mechanical repetition.” ([1997] 2001: 27). Now then, if agency is defined as a series of abilities and skills required to carry out a certain type of action, then the basis for this agency is to be found in a process of constituting subjects that in the framework of relations of power are constituted to develop these abilities and skills.

In agreement with this proposal, power is the condition that makes our existence possible; it is that which makes us subjects. This implies that subjection does not only include the process of coming into being subordinated to power, but also it is the process of coming into being as a subject (Butler [1997] 2001). This is referred to as a paradox of subjectivization, because the conditions and processes that subordinate the subject are the same that convert that subject into a social agent that is conscious of itself. At this point of her argument, Butler asks, “How is it possible that the subject, which is considered a condition and instrument of potency, is at the same time an effect of subordination, which is understood as the privation of potency? If subordination is understood as the condition which makes potency possible, how can we conceive of this as being in opposition to the forces of subordination?” ([1997] 2001: 21). This is possible precisely because power exercised over a subject is at the same time power assumed by a subject, that is, adopted by a subject as an instrument. Subordination and potency, then, are not two antagonistic processes, but rather potency presupposes a subject that has been constructed in relations of power, that is, a subordinated subject. Thus subordination, or obedience, does not preclude the possibility of agency or the potency of transformation, but rather “the subject derives its potency precisely from the power that he opposes” ([1997] 2001: 28). As I pointed out in previous paragraphs, the agent experiences of ballerinas appear to exceed the disciplinary construction that makes classical technique enter their bodies and then trains these in classical technique; they are precisely experiences made possible by their conditions of subordination, that is, by the relations of power that constitute them as ballerina subjects. Pleasure is evoked by them as a tangential effect, as something that occurs beyond (or in spite of) strict technical disciplining, but which at some point is the result of having gone through this.

Even when we maintain ourselves in this alienated version of agency, there is room for possibilities of transformation, of subversion. Butler puts the question this way: “How can we adopt an attitude of opposition to power when we acknowledge that all opposition is involved with the same power it opposes?” ([1997] 2001: 27). This is because “when power modifies its statute, going from being a condition for potency to changing itself into the

subject's 'own' potency (constituting an appearance of power in which the subject appears as the condition for his 'own' power) a meaningful and potentially enabling inversion is produced" ([1997] 2001: 23). Though Butler dedicates considerable attention to the question of the possibility of opposition, of a resistance that goes against power, in the apprenticeship of ballet we do not find a resistance that goes against power in the course of its reiteration. Subjection to classical technique can have undesirable effects, things occur that do not appear to be part of what was sought after, but this is not an effect that leads to the subversion of the conditions of its production; rather, it is one that makes the continuity of these conditions possible. That effect of pleasure, of feeling free, of feeling that one is oneself, and so on, is an unintended effect not expressly sought after in the codification of technique and is not strictly necessary for such a technique to be assimilated and continue in existence. But it is an effect that is taken into consideration at some levels of the transmission of that codification, ranging from some teaching texts (such as the one we chose for the epigraph) to the things that teachers say in class ("the more it hurts the better, because that means that you are closer to achieving your goal"). The power relations established in the transmission of technique make these experiences possible.

Michael Jackson's proposal concerning the possibilities of transformation that are present in the overlapping of body-mind-world (1983) or body-mind-*habitus* (1989) can add one element more to this analysis. Though creative or interpretive freedom in one's actions is always circumscribed by the habitus, it is possible to intervene and effect changes from any one of these points since the human *praxis* not only conserves but also surpasses the situation from which it has arisen. The habitual relationships between ideas, experiences, and bodily practices can be broken, and in this way, patterns of using the body can induce new experiences or trigger new ideas. Jackson's argument is that a disruption in the generative structures of the habitus opens possibilities of behavior to people that they embody without always being inclined to express them. In dance, the somatic component of patterns of using the body that are put into play during practical classes and over the course of the process of training allows for the awakening of experiences and ways of acting that previously exist only as possibility. In dance, the possibility of agency is opened by way of a bodily apprenticeship, by ways of using the body; a body-mind put into action in connection with a practice. In this sense, freedom should be seen as a question of recognizing and of experiencing one's own potential inside a given universe, and not above or beyond it (Jackson 1989).

Another element of this analytical perspective that I consider especially appropriate for understanding the process of training in classical dance is the necessity of the existence of a "passionate bond" (Butler [1997] 2001: 18) with the subjects we depend on to become subjects. In the training process in

ballet, this “passionate bond” is not found in subjects of devotion whose role in this practice is to exercise the power of subjection, but rather directly in the practice. The dance students desire the conditions of their own subjection. They desire to be taken more and more by that technique which subjects them. In this process, the subjects that ballerinas in training depend on in order to become subject-ballerinas occupy more than anything else the role of mediators between them and the practice. Subjection to this practice makes them what they are, and since they are these subjects and they are what they are within the framework of this practice, constructed by and in these relationships of power, they construct reality, they do things with that which they are, they exercise agency. Subordination can be sustained in order to dance, to improve within the parameters of the practice, to learn, to do what one likes, but even so, that subordination does not completely affect the subject’s way of relating to the practice (we find multiple subversions, for example, in class attire, in what is done outside the EDCLP, in thought, and in reasons for submitting to the norms).

On the other hand, the potency of the subject is ambivalent: although it is made possible by its conditions of subjection, it is not found indissolubly tied to the conditions of emergence of those subjects. Although they are experiences constructed in a relationship of subjection, the types of possibilities that open these experiences are multiple. In the case of classical dance, the experiences that we have evoked have distinct derivations, pervaded by the contexts and trajectories of the subjects’ lives: some develop life projects that include ballet in their future; others decide to switch to other dances where the pleasurable experiences linked to the movement of the body itself are not laced with experiences of frustration and inadequacy, among other possible adverse feelings. These decisions are linked, without doubt, to networks of affection, especially friendships, which influence the subjects’ decision to remain in one or another dance circuit.

To conclude, I will take an example from my own relationship with dance. Recently, I wrote a brief text (Mora 2015) in which I revealed my thoughts about a recurring sensation of being out of place in social spaces that apparently were spaces where I belonged. After this mental exercise—taking especially into account how small situations and words of others affected me profoundly, and above all, making the connection between these distinct things that affected me and helped me make sense of these sensations of being uncomfortable—I noticed that the feeling of being out of place was at the same time one of being uncomfortable in my body—that is, in my body in the state in which it was at that time, after being pregnant more than once, after deliveries, puerperiums, and long periods without dancing, or only dancing other types of dance in which the things that had happened to me in ballet didn’t happen. My body seemed strange to me and I found myself looking for ways to occupy it with greater comfort. I realized that these

situations and words that affected me (due as much to feeling uncomfortable as to identificatory issues) connected me with myself in the same way as I had felt when dancing ballet. Taking ballet classes again reconnected me with a state of my body, with being in my body, with a feeling of being in the world, with that which other things failed to connect me. To me, dance class was a kind of heterotopia, a counterspace of transformation and of regeneration, a place outside of all places, a place that can eliminate, compensate, or neutralize other places, which are nullifications of the space in which we live (Foucault [1966] 2008). Classes of an untimely, anti-natural, strictly codified dance that even today makes my body a space that I enjoy being in. Spaces where everything finds an order, where what is happening and what has to be done and for what purpose is all very clear. Spaces where everyday things are suspended. Spaces that, after I have inhabited them, allow me to go back to my habitual life in a more comfortable and pleasurable way. With my body, with my head, with how I feel and see it, with all their substance and all their history.

The exploration of the resonance that this dance has on me, on the ways in which this dance affects me, was nothing less than an exercise of thought on the thinking that had thought me, in order to think of other forms of being thought and of thinking of the world; an exercise that to Michel Foucault ([1994] 2015) has great transforming potential. To Foucault, thought is that which initiates the play between the true and the false, which establishes a relationship between subject and object, constitutes the human being as an object of knowledge, and establishes relations with itself and with others. For an object to become part of thought it must be seen as a problem; that is, there is no thought without the perception of a problem, and with this perception the contingent attributes that have constituted a subject become visible. This process in which a certain contingency becomes visible as the object of thought begins when something makes it uncertain, makes it strange, unnatural. Thus, in the exercise of thought a transforming and regenerating potential is found. The power of transformation from the exercise of thought that I have barely delineated did not reside in the transformation of the practice that had thought of me and had made me be, but rather resided in the transformation of myself, evoking the way in which that practice affects me and the way in which this impacted on my being in the world. The transformation, then, was not to be found in the subversion of a technique but rather in the recognition of the way in which this technique affects me and the way this can allow me to establish new connections, more comfortable and pleasurable, between my body and the world.

The pleasure of dancing with classical technique is the product of a determined technology, one that permits dancers to remain within that technology and that makes it possible for classical technique to perpetuate itself and its form of transmission. But it is not only that. This pleasure makes it possible

to face the immense difficulties of classical technique in another way, in a way that is more concrete, more true to itself. It allows expressive abilities to grow. It permits a control of the body that has its correlative in an empowerment that serves to enter situations where the body escapes our control. It permits us to increase the intensity of the connection with practice, with one's own body, with that which the body can do. To allow oneself to be pervaded by classical technique is not only to allow oneself to be shaped by it; it is also allowing oneself be affected by it. And in this allowing of oneself to be affected by it, "agency exceeds the power by which it is enabled" (Butler [1997] 2001: 15).

NOTE

1. Quotations that appear in this chapter without bibliographic references have been taken from my field notes or from interviews recorded in my fieldwork.

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Chapter Six

Did Cumbia Villera Bother Us?

*Criticisms on the Academic Representation
of the Link between Women and Music*

Malvina Silba and Carolina Spataro

Translated by Federico Álvarez Gandolfi

In a very well known *cumbia villera* (slum cumbia) song (“Pamela,”¹ by Los Pibes Chorros,² an emblematic cumbia villera band that began a mass distribution circuit in Argentina by the year 2001), it is stated that Pamela has a problem because she cannot stop sucking penises. Accusing her of being an addict and worried because she can get sick, the lyricists points out that “*She grabs it and sucks it with enthusiasm . . . you are going to gorge yourself on it.*” Additionally the last portion of the song claims that Pamela is so obsessed with penises that if you take them away from her, she begins to cry and “*She asks me with enthusiasm to give it to her immediately.*” In an article written in 2006 (and published in 2008), inspired by that and other lyrics, we wondered how women were portrayed in cumbia villera songs, and without hesitation we stated that cumbia villera built an image of women as objects to be consumed by heterosexual males, and we affirmed that in those lyrics women were denigrated and treated as “easy girls.” Pamela “liked it,” but that went unnoticed for us. However, we began to see that young women could find in the dance a space for enjoyment, through the festive celebration of body and sensuality.

At that time we understood that the content of certain musical products was offensive to women and, in the same vein, we said that in a sociocultural context where women are denigrated and relegated to the status of a mere object, they resisted through dance practice to subvert that naturalized mean-

ing, claiming a place of greater autonomy (Silba and Spataro 2008). What ideas emerge from this way of interpreting cultural industries in general and music in particular? On the one hand, that these songs fully represented the sexism of cultural industries in contrast to ones more suitable for women's empowerment (e.g., music that embodies a complaint against gender violence at different scales); and on the other hand, that the only social uses of music would be the uncritical reproduction or the conscious complaint.

These first interpretations, which we claimed in an intuitive and even militant way, were made in the light of early readings on feminism and gender theory, which conditioned the way we studied the social uses of cumbia villera in a particular historical context. And that was not necessarily because of what the texts said, but because of the way in which we read them. As we listened to "Laura," by the band Damas Gratis, a song that describes a young girl who dances wearing a miniskirt because she is so eager to "*be invited to a hotel / You don't do it for the money / You just do it for pleasure*," we pointed out that "the enjoyment is not for women but for men. Sexuality is displayed in the foreground, but it is the male desire that is represented, not the female desire" (Silba and Spataro 2008: 93). This analysis fed off our own irritation more than the complex and contradictory characteristics of this field of research. That same irritation was not even allowing us to read the lyrics, which say that Laura does not have sex with the male speaker for money (which from men's perspective would justify the sexual activity—among other possible reasons, such as their self-perceived ability to seduce women). Rather, Laura does it because she enjoys it, like Pamela, Andrea, La Colorada, La Piba Lechera, La Pibita Fumanchera, La Burruda,³ and many other iconic women who are the main characters in the lyrics of different songs composed by cumbia villera bands.

The starting points and the premises of analysis were getting more complex as we carried out two fieldwork studies, one focused on the link between cumbia and young women and men from popular sectors, and the other focused on the relationship of middle-aged women with romantic music. Using an ethnographic method, our questions stopped concentrating on what the lyrics and the dance meant for us and began to put the emphasis on the meanings that music had for those who listened to it and in the ways in which music was inserted into people's social, cultural, and emotional lives.

Therefore, the aim of this chapter will be to compose a theoretical, methodological, and epistemological reflection not only on the objects of analysis, but more importantly on the ways of approaching them. To do this, we will (1) map the paradigms that have framed studies on music and society in order to shed some light on the theoretical evolution that shaped our questions; (2) create a methodological reflection to advocate for the power of ethnography to study the social uses of music in specific contexts of listening; (3) analyze the delegitimized place of cumbia and romantic music in

both academic and cultural criticism, as some of its epistemological consequences; and finally (4) conclude with some ideas on how to problematize the findings of our first article together with new perspectives on the place of desire and female agency in the consumption of popular music.

FROM REFLECTION THEORY TO AGENCY THEORY

Research on music and society has been changing in the light of certain general discussions in the social sciences and those related to the study of culture and communication in particular. Following Vila (2000), we note three key paradigms: structural resonance, articulation and interpellation, and narrative identities. The first one derives from the assumptions of the British subcultural theorists (Hebdige 2000; Clarke 2010; Jefferson 2010; among others) and understands that certain musical styles connect with specific social actors through a kind of “structural resonance” between social position, on one side, and musical expression on the other. That means that music allows expressing or showing certain identities previously constructed. However, this type of theoretical framework can lead to a kind of reductionism that would indicate that music reflects subjects, preventing understanding of that link in a more complex way. The problem is to try to find the connections between the musical work and the social groups that consume it or produce it, in a homology between material forms and artistic forms. This can be seen in the approaches that understand that the cumbia villera or Mexican *narcocorrido* (drug ballad) reflect what happens in the popular sectors of Argentina and Mexico respectively, to name just a few examples.

To circumvent the problem of structural homology there are some inquiries about music that include the concepts of articulation and interpellation. Vila notes that work such as Frith’s (2014) develops in this line, claiming that the academic study of popular music was limited by the assumption that music reflects or represents people in some way, when the analytical problem is to try to trace the connections between artistic works and social groups. Frith reverses the usual academic argument by pointing out that the issue is not how a particular piece of music reflects the people, but how it produces them, how it creates and constructs an identitarian experience, both subjective and collective: His thesis is not that a social group has beliefs that are then reflected in the music, but that it is the music that creates the group identity. That is, social groups only get recognized as groups through cultural activity, through aesthetic judgments, as the ones enabled, for example, by the music.

Vila says that the theory of articulation and interpellation looks similar to the proposals of English subcultural theory because it has the same difficulties explaining why one interpellation is more successful than another, with-

out ultimately appealing to some kind of structural homology. Vila claims that although music has no intrinsic meaning, it would not be productive to think that the meaning always and only comes from the listener either: “I believe that music is meaningful (not a meaning that is intrinsic to it, but a meaning anyway), and that meaning is linked to those articulations a particular kind of music was involved with in the past” (Vila 2000: 14). At this point, Vila seeks to solve the problems of interpellation theory using narrative theory and introducing the idea of plot to think about the limits of the possible articulations. He states that narrative allows meaning to be given to people’s choices because in stories we make sense of our lives and give unity to them, since identity is a narrative identity (Ricoeur 1984), either for the individual or for the community, and it is this narrative that will engender a certain range of possible musical meanings, to the detriment of others.

These three paradigms—structural resonance, interpellation, and narrative—help to add dimension to the discussions that are at stake in the study of music: centrally the link between cause and effect of music listening, between transmitting and receiving, and between music and society. In this sense, the research that supports this article feeds on the proposals of the existing theoretical field and also intends to relocate the analytical terms. That is why our suggestions are based on the work of DeNora (2000); to the extent that it contains the discussions underlined so far, it condenses them and, at the same time, allows questioning of both the postures that understand music as a reflection of the social order and the ones that problematize paradigms of studying music as a space of identity configuration. As Frith discusses the subculturalists’ position and Vila does his thing with Frith’s, DeNora’s thought moves the discussion to a new point from which it is possible to continue investigating the link between music and society and the identity games formed there, understanding music as a crucial element in terms of being an enabler device and an action promoter. As we pointed out elsewhere (Garriga et al. 2011), her approach overcomes the tension that could be postulated between, for example, Adorno (2003) on one side (and his emphasis on the musical material, on the work and the author) and Michel de Certeau (1996) on the other side (with emphasis on the use of re-signification and appropriation), because DeNora understands that music is not merely a “meaningful” or “communicative” medium but is, at the level of daily life, “implicated in every dimension of social agency, sensations, perceptions, cognition and consciousness, identity and power,” both individual and collective (DeNora 2000: 16–17). DeNora’s thesis could be summarized as follows: in everyday life people interact and appropriate music in ways in which it constitutes one of the privileged resources “to which actors turn when they engage in the aesthetic reflexive practice of configuring self and/or others as emotional and aesthetic agents, across a variety of scenes” (DeNora 2000: 158). Thus, as we noted at the beginning, music becomes a

device for self-representation, enabling people to deploy “strategic uses” to, for example, achieve or modify certain emotions or escape an unwanted mood.

In light of these discussions and the relocation of the link between music and society favored by a heterogeneous field of diverse readings, ethnography was the methodological approach that enabled us to question the social uses of music in listening contexts deployed in various cleavages of class, gender, age, and territory.

MUSICAL ETHNOGRAPHIES

To study the link between music and society, we chose two musics heard massively in Latin America for several decades and, at the same time, degraded by cultural criticism: cumbia and romantic music. With the suspicion that in the social sciences it is more common to study the power of structures over subjects than the agency of those subjects, and that all practices of individuals in subordinate positions (whether of class, gender, age and/or territory) tend to be explained centrally as a function of their subordination,⁴ we undertook our fieldwork seeking to escape these trends as well as those types of analysis that dichotomized actors’ responses: music either serves to break free of or to reproduce the imposed social order. In other words, we proposed to ourselves to think about the link between people and music, trying not to fall into claims such as: “young people from the popular sectors who listen to cumbia—or women who listen to romantic music—submit themselves to the cultural industries”; or its reverse: “young people from the popular sectors use music to resist their own oppression.” As we had been taught by Grignon and Passeron, “The dynamics of popular cultures do not remain stagnant in a state of continuing vigilance with regard to cultural legitimacy, nor should we assume that they are in permanent evolution in a contestatory manner. They also have periods of rest.” (1989: 75, our translation).

We began investigating the meanings that a group of young women made of cumbia villera based on interviews conducted at the door of a television studio from where *Pasión de Sábado*,⁵ the emblematic cumbia program in Argentina, was aired every Saturday. There we asked those women, “What do you think of cumbia villera’s lyrics?” The way in which we developed that work allowed us to notice two limits: the first one was that the type of questions we made reduced questioning to songs’ content that we understood as explicit, leaving out one element that in the interviews occupied center stage—the role of dancing (which women defended as a pleasant one)—where song lyrics had no relevance. That is, we looked into the meaning behind song’s lyrics themselves isolated from its context of listening, and

isolated from the music itself above all! We took lyrics as an independent text and believed that by inquiring in that way we could understand the social meaning of those musics. This way of analyzing texts within the interpretive tradition assumes that song lyrics are interpreted by listeners in the same way that the analyst is doing it, and that their meanings are equal for all listeners. As it was pointed out by Frith, this working methodology falls into a moralistic denunciation of the effects that songs have on their listeners:

It is this argument that supports contemporary moralists' claims that heavy metal lyrics make white adolescents suicidal and that rap lyrics make black adolescents violent. All these things may be true, but they are certainly not demonstrated by content analysis alone. There is, in fact, no firm empirical evidence that song words determine or form listeners' beliefs and values. (2014: 292, our translation)

Stuart Hall (1980) has taught us that texts are polysemic, but polysemy was easier to be proclaimed than to be embodied in research. The second problem of our studies' first stage, related to the previous one, was linked with our own position as analysts, as white, middle-class adult women who have college degrees, inquiring about a group of young women, most of them members of popular and medium-low classes, from a condensation of privileged positions. At that time we did not understand that to ask from our own—and unquestioned—positions of class, gender, and age could condition the responses of those young women and force them, in a certain way, to respond to what we wanted to hear: that lyrics were degrading and offensive. At that time we did not question what Rockwell (2005) defined as the inherent moral asymmetry of the fieldwork situation.

Using as a framework a set of readings that stressed the centrality of the context of listening to study the social uses of music (about tango, Savigliano 1995; Archetti 2003; Saikin 2004; Carozzi 2009, 2011; Liska 2009; on cumbia, Alabarces *et al.* 2008; Semán 2006; Semán and Vila 2011; Cragnolini, 2006; Martín 2006; on quartet, Blázquez 2008; on melodic song, Party 2008, 2009; on bolero, De la Peza 2001, 2009; on opera, Benzecry 2012; on electronic music, Gallo and Semán 2009; Lenarduzzi 2012; on rock, Citro 2008; Garriga Zucal and Salerno 2008; Capriatti 2009, to name just a few), we reorganized both our questions and how to carry out our research. We started two fieldwork studies in Buenos Aires simultaneously between 2007 and 2011, inquiring about the meanings that music had for two groups of people—(a) young individuals who listened to cumbia and (b) middle-aged women who listened to romantic music—in specific contexts: the dance hall, the fan club, and the recital. In both cases we approached the object prioritizing ethnography as a method of data collection, but also as a standpoint and as a text (Guber 2001). This was the main tool to build a type of situated knowledge that started from the reconstruction of actors' perspectives as one

of the main assumptions underlying our investigations. Following Geertz (1989) in our respective fieldwork studies we realized that “being there” with those women was the indispensable premise for analyzing and questioning the social realities we were interested in.

However, in relation to the data collected from our first interviews with young females who had a preference for cumbia villera, we find it necessary to include our own subjectivity by constantly reflecting on our views on the subject of study. Rockwell (2005: 5–12) says:

Staying there makes us aware of the fact that we are also observed and interrogated, a process that has different consequences according to the instruments of conversational power we interpose between us and them. . . . To pick up the social categories is not simply an issue of “seeing things from the native’s point of view,” nor is to assume local categories as if they were our own categories without further reflection. When performing the continuous come-and-go between two ways of viewing a process, a tension emerges, whose only output is further analytical elaboration and greater understanding than that one had at the start of the study. That is why an analysis is ethnographic *only if it modifies profoundly the researcher’s look, only if it contributes to previous knowledge*” (emphasis in the original, our translation).

Therefore, practicing ethnography faced us with the need to escape the threat of ethnocentrism and listen to our *natives*, a requirement that is extended to the writing process, as we understand that writing ethnography is a continuation of the intercultural exchange between the researcher and the people being investigated (Cardoso (1996). The different research experiences we describe below emerged from such an exchange.

In one of our fieldwork studies, we were interested in problematizing the link between cumbia and the trajectories of young women and men from the popular sectors. We practiced participant observation in the neighborhoods and dance halls these young people frequented, situated in a locality of the Greater Buenos Aires.⁶ Complementarily in-depth interviews were conducted with members of the group. One of the central themes was to try to understand what young people from the popular sectors did when they went dancing that rhythm every weekend, but also to comprehend the way in which cumbia turned into a space for identification enabling the production of different meanings of membership and enjoyment. We put particular emphasis on knowing and understanding the multiple uses and meanings of cumbia for these young people, together with how music could become an excuse to know their life stories, desires, emotions, and expectations. In this sense, the fact that we were trying to understand a music genre related to joy and fun also enabled us an entry into the spaces, the festive practices, and the value that each of these young people gave to their entertainment and fun experiences, within an everyday social universe strongly conditioned by ma-

terial constraints. Nevertheless, working with poor women and men did not involve a transference of those negative conditionings to all areas of their lives and, much less, a belief according to which the experience of poverty meant solely the staging of pain, despair, injustice, or desolation against which nothing can be done; on the contrary, the first contribution of our work revolved around the joy, the fun, and the pleasure experienced by these young women and men, forgotten dimensions in studies on youth, gender, and poverty.

Fieldwork was conducted between 2006 and 2007, years of the boom of cumbia villera. What this musical style allowed us to put on stage was the growing concern expressed in many discourses of the dominant sense of the potential danger of this kind of music that supposedly incited crime, to the extent that it was believed that young people listening to these songs might feel called to pursue a criminal career as an employment choice.⁷ Two different criticisms that condensed many of the social fears to which we were interested in referring were combined in these subjects: they were young and poor. This combination of diverse and complex social vulnerabilities placed them in the eye of the storm and on the critical horizon in terms of the (ir)responsibilities they might have in relation to the “hegemonic” social norms and moral values. The names of the two most emblematic cumbia villera bands—Pibes Chorros and Damas Gratis—seemed to condense fears about poor youth: that women become easy girls, or *damas gratis* (free ladies);⁸ and that males end up being criminals, or *young thieves* (Pibes Chorros).

Our fieldwork started from the premise that the social uses of cumbia deserved to be investigated from the standpoint of the social sciences. Although in the dissertation that is the source of this chapter (Silba 2011) we addressed both the representation of young men and women who were poor, for the purposes of this chapter we are only interested in referring to cumbia villera songs that represent females. Here are two emblematic lyrics of the genre in which disruptive and provocative aspects regarding young women’s sexual roles, their erotic-emotional ties, and their relationship with their own bodies and their own pleasure can be read. “*Stop messing around, and don’t act crazy. Go and wash your mouth out. You gave me a kiss and you almost killed me / From the bad odor of milk [cum] that you have*”) says “La Piba Lechera” (Cum chick), a song of Los Pibes Chorros. And it goes on, asking Pamela not to play the mama’s girl because such milk odor that comes out of her mouth does not come from a cow. Furthermore, the singer claims that he realized how cunning (working girl) Pamela is, that she enjoys the fixed one (dick) and that she is easier than learning multiples of two.

This song refers to a young woman who is accused of being easy and quick to sex, and especially who practices oral sex with a male. That is why the male voice orders the young woman to “wash your mouth out,” because it

smells, and that supposedly reveals her fondness for such activity, activity that, besides, should be hidden from the male point of view, as it should be an embarrassment to the young woman in question, beyond her talent for practicing oral sex or the pleasure that she could get from doing it.

On the other hand, “Atrevida” (Naughty) is a song written and performed by Pablo Lescano (leader of Damas Gratis) and Néstor en Bloque (a group led by Néstor Bordiola). Its lyrics reproduce a dialogue between two supposed friends, one who tells how he (Néstor) caught his friend’s girlfriend (Pablo’s) cheating on him while performing a show, and the other (Pablo), who does not believe it, reversing the burden of proof and accusing Néstor of being “rowdy” and willing to ultimately have a sexual relationship with his girlfriend (Pablo uses the expression “you want to fill her belly” as a colloquialism referring to a man who impregnates a woman “filling her belly with children”). There intervenes the female voice (the supposed girlfriend, depersonalized in the story and in the live performance of the song) asking Néstor and Pablo to stop fighting because she would rather stay with both and have a threesome. That is why she is called “Naughty,” a nickname that follows from the fact that those two men are surprised by the defiant and provocative attitude of the young woman in question.

As noted at the beginning of chapter, it is necessary to place these songs within their contexts of use. In the dance halls where they were listened to, a specific step dance was practiced: the meneáito (to wiggle). This step dance became a distinctly feminine ritual, a celebration of women’s pleasure and agency that emulated the sexual act and that allowed women to *be on top*, moving to the rhythm of the music and getting pleasure from pleasuring the man in question. Romina, one of the members of the group that Malvina accompanied to dance during her fieldwork, said about this:

M: When you start dancing the meneáito with Celeste or Jimena or any of the girls, what do you like the most? Dancing or being looked at?

R: Both.

M: And you do not care about what song is playing?

R: No, I do not care.

M: And then, what do you like the most? Provoking or conquering a guy from the dance hall?

R: The first one.

Another finding of our fieldwork is linked to the forms of movement of the young people’s bodies within the space of the dance hall, and the tensions

that occurred when the female presence and/or provocation faced the male desire to appropriate them. On one occasion, Karina, another member of the group, was trying to go to the bathroom and she had to cross through a group of young males who insisted that she dance and blocked her way out. She tried to convince them that she was not interested, to no avail. Angry at Karina's refusal, one of the boys touched her backside. He immediately received a slap from Karina, who thus broke free of groping and interferences and emerged victorious to her destination. This reaction allowed us to visualize some of the various actions carried out by young females when they are faced with a man or a group of them that are going too far or that are intending to establish some kind of erotic bond without their consent. All the groping and the verbal violence often used by some of the young males facing female refusal—with various insults—were experienced by young women as an affront to their personhood and womanhood, and the reaction of Karina, for example, was an action taken to punish the male offender, a practice carried out by her friend Romina too:

M: And when [the guys] come up to you to propose something, do you pay attention to them?]

A: If I like him and he is good-looking, yes. But if he is a “catfish” [an ugly guy], then no (laughs).

M: And what happens when dudes [guys] come and throw you over or want to touch you?

A: If I am with my friends, they beat the crap out of him [they hit him badly].

M: Do they stand up for you?

A: Yes.

M: And what if you are alone?

A: Then I beat the crap out of him.

On another occasion, Cecilia, also a member of the group, had gone dancing accompanied by her friends without her boyfriend. During the time she was dancing several young men approached her, as her movements were quite provocative compared to the rest of the girls. Cecilia was well known for her sensual moves to the rhythm of songs like “The Meneaito” and similar songs that called her to display her corporal knowledge. At first, she ignored the men who looked at her and even seemed to be enjoying their look, but

groping was certainly the limit of her enjoyment; as soon as one of the guys tried to touch her, Cecilia reacted angrily and began pushing him and insulting him by saying, “Back off or I will beat you up. . . . Who do you think you are, huh?”

The young man was surprised by this attitude because it was not common for women to respond with that conviction against his advances. Cecilia’s action showed how women could take care of themselves, regardless of the presence of boyfriends and/or male friends that protect them from the “advances” or the aggression of other males. This shows that these women had the courage and the determination to put limits on their own bodies and on the interactions that others wished to establish with them.

Following Pujol (1999), we understand that cumbia portrays a certain idea of eroticism and corporeality characteristic of different epochs. Interpreting the diverse styles of cumbia dancing involves describing and analyzing what type of bodies are staged and what kind of eroticisms enter the game, in addition to analyzing the relationship models between genders that can be read there. If we reduce the analysis only to cumbia villera lyrics, this would show a very limited representation, not only of women’s actions, but also of their meanings. That is, an analysis that concludes that these lyrics are demeaning and sexist closes the possibility of interpreting their underlying poetic richness, inasmuch as other possible and complementary ways of reading them speak about the permanent importance of women, their active sexuality, and their capacity for action, as stated by the testimonies of Romina and Cecilia and the actions carried out by Karina. On the other hand, the fact that many males have decided to exercise their seductive power on the female body as if they were “authorized” by the sensuality of female dancing makes the analysis even more complex, as the music individuals listen to does not represent or “reflect” them, because subjects do not act through practices that “reflect” the music they listen to, as we said quoting Frith (2014). As the lyrics do not explain why girls dance to the rhythm of a music that interpellates them and calls them to be absolute protagonists of the dance floor, they also do not give us answers to the forms of violence against women’s bodies exercised by men who do not accept the fact that female enjoyment and erotic display present a firm and nonnegotiable limit: young women’s consent.

On the other hand, we ask, what place does the link between dance and sexual morality have around contemporary cumbia? Does the provocative dance of the girls authorize guys to feel entitled to grope them? Everyday life of the young and poor women became a particularly fertile arena for discussing insights and tensions, and for pointing out that there is still a long way to go in the discussion about power relations between genders. Thus, we propose that cumbia and wiggle were cultural practices that, in the context described above, these women carried out as a way to experience new sub-

jectivities and the possibility of an agency marked by fun, pleasure, recognition, and the enjoyment of their own bodies as a source of pleasure for themselves and others. At the same time, the behavior of some men, who, in the context of the dance hall, came too close to those women and even touched them without their consent, shed some light on the fact that they felt entitled to behave that way since they interpreted women's movements as a provocation. And this is a key element in the contemporary configuration of sexuality and gender: women's bodies in public spaces are read as if they were available bodies, especially when they are shown in a tight-fitting garment, dancing, and moving sensually. However, in the described scenes, these young ladies, far from yielding to those degrading practices, insisted on establishing a clear boundary that seemed to stress, again and again, a widespread slogan associated with the fight against gender violence that is taking place in the contemporary Argentine society: "My body is mine, I decide who, how, and when anybody can touch it." Moreover, dancing wildly and shamelessly was a way through which a desired freedom was staged while a model of sexual passivity was transgressed, a model that, strictly speaking and following Pujol's statement (1999), had never been a characteristic of the relationship between women and popular dances, but this dance and this music reached its maximum expressive power and its maximum contestation potential.

As noted above, a subject we will go back to in the next paragraph, another issue that we wanted to investigate was the disrepute of cumbia in relation to its musical quality, which focused on the supposed correlation between material poverty and symbolic poverty. Many of the criticisms indicated that these young people listened and danced to this music because their skills and knowledge did not allow them to expand their awareness toward more heterogeneous or multiple contexts, that is, contexts that were "richer," "variegated," or more "legitimate." At a later stage of the research, when we decided to analyze the link between the trajectories of popular musicians with the music production markets, we interviewed musicians from various popular genres on their opinions about cumbia villera, *inter alia*. Gabo Ferro, a cult singer listened to by certain sectors of the educated middle class and heir to various musical traditions, among which rock and folklore stand out, told us:

I happen to find that lyric ["Cum Chick" by Pibes Chorros] wonderful, that one that says: "Do not kiss me because your breath smells like milk." And that is because I ask myself: Does not that girl by any chance exist? Besides, the muse [of the song] must exist and that is a great thing. I would love to meet the cum chick. What is the difference between the cum chick girl and Cristina, from "Paper Eyes Girl" [a song of Luis Alberto Spinetta]?⁹

This statement is a provocative look at an object that is degraded by musical, cultural, and academic criticisms, an object that Gabo Ferro invites us to resignify. On the one hand, because he vindicates the sexual role of young women as inspiring muses of songs that portray them as agents of their own pleasure and no longer as inspiring muses of classic romantic songs. A pleasure, of course, that focuses on women's talent for enjoying sex and pleasing men. A pleasure from which women are not exempted, as we noted in our first article (Silba and Spataro 2008), but in which she is the main protagonist. On the other hand, Gabo Ferro doubles down when comparing the "inspiring muse" of "Cum Chick" with the figure of Cristina, the young girl who inspired Luis Alberto Spinetta to compose "Muchacha ojos de papel" (Paper eyes girl), an emblematic Argentine rock song by one of its most legitimate and established artists. In relation to this song, Pujol (2010: 223) states:

The subject matter of these lyrics is the consummation of an intimate night. . . . Perhaps the most striking thing about this love gala in the second person is the equitable relationship between subjects who love each other. There is no trace of such torturous forbidden or socially complicated love meetings: nothing could be further from a rebuke than "Paper eyes girl."

The author adds that what appears there are certain ways of establishing intimate relationships and a specific moral agenda for the society. Taking up these concepts, we might ask what relationship models and moral programs could be read from cumbia villera's lyrics, such as the one of "Cum Chick." One dominant and quite widespread way of thinking focuses on the supposed insolence of those lyrics to condemn those products, their cultural meanings, and the moral models that emerge from them, extending all those "undesirable" features to their producers and consumers. That is, it is a kind of criticism based on the idea that young women who enjoy their sexuality and manage to separate it from romantic love stories should not be a part of the script that cultural industries should stage. As we have already said, that kind of criticism impedes understanding of the diversity that underlies these products, in which the active role of women and their possibility of empowerment (León 2001) are also linked to the enjoyment of a challenging sexuality. The equitable relish, the denunciation of violence, and the questioning of gender inequality are not prioritized there because what is at stake is precisely an erotic bond that allows rethinking power relations in the dance hall, in bed and out of it.

The other fieldwork we mentioned above tried to understand the link between women and romantic music, and was carried out in the Ricardo Arjona's fan club in Buenos Aires between 2008 and 2011. Like cumbia, romantic music is a genre often considered of poor quality and it has become

the target of musical criticism. Ricardo Arjona is a Guatemalan singer and composer who has enjoyed great success in the Latin American music industry for over twenty years, and his songs tell, in most cases, erotic stories that focus on the bonding of people passing through different life cycles; but also his work includes songs where, for example, his theme is religion (“Jesus verb not noun” of 1990, which criticizes the hierarchy of the Catholic Church) and international politics (“Wetback” of 2005, in which the Mexico–United States border appears, to name a few). In his “love song” repertoire we find, on the one hand, the characteristic romantic catalog: abandonment, meeting, heartbreak, and so on. But, in turn, we also find some references that erode genders and establish sexualities: claims of women’s ability to enjoy, nonhegemonic body patterns, love relations between people of the same sex, and life cycles and age condition, among other issues.

The choice of this object of study involved two problems: first, the widespread idea that romantic love is a type of discourse that is coercive toward women’s autonomy and, on the other hand, the assumption that certain musics are of a doubtful artistic quality. Regarding the first point it is relevant to point out that romantic love is a topic that appears feminized in contemporary culture (Giddens 2008): love songs, soap operas, gossip magazines appear to be targeted at women.¹⁰ Also, this feminized consumption has often been cataloged as useless and distracting as well as a testimony of passivity.¹¹ It has also been designated as co-responsible for the subordination of women, to the extent that it was interpreted as a source of impossible dreams and that it advanced stories where the male right to the public sphere of work, politics, and power is not discussed, and where questioning the institutionalized bases of patriarchal control over women is avoided (Radway 1991). Based on these assumptions, women are criticized for the consumption of these romantic texts, because they supposedly would have an uncritical attitude regarding those texts, so they might not notice the presence of sexism in their favorite cultural products. Therefore, these women would only reproduce in their lives the alleged signs of patriarchy presented in the texts.

On the other hand, the study of the relationship between women and the repertoire of Arjona also involved another problem that, as noted earlier, appeared in the investigation on cumbia: in the contemporary musical map there are genres and artists who enjoy greater legitimacy than others, a point to which we will return in the next section. Latin American artists who combine the production of love songs in a pop ballad style with wide dissemination through mass media and sales are defined as purveyors of commercial music and, accordingly, as having doubtful quality. Fischerman (2004) says that there is a certain idea of complexity associated with the value of music that is linked to classical music, frequently employed as an aesthetic argument to define what is good or bad music. According to this author, the values of authenticity, complexity, and harmony, combined with

difficulty in the composition, the execution, and even the listening, are the criteria that define the quality of a piece of music. According to Arjona's critics, those elements are absent from his musical production, and a certain "respect" for the musical genre's canon is absent from it as well. That is, if Arjona is labeled by critics as well as by the record industry and some of his fans as a crooner, then composing and performing songs about issues related to the foreign policy of the United States, the questioning of the ecclesiastical hierarchy, and environmental pollution is, at least, out of place. The statement from both Arjona himself and his fans that he is a troubadour, a disciple of some established artists like Silvio Rodríguez and Joan Manuel Serrat, is seen as a provocation. "A protest song is something else," critics seem to scream in unison.

Thus, this particular fieldwork focused on issues that were made invisible as objects of research and that, on the one hand, have been the target of harsh criticism because of the assumed link between romantic love and women's passivity, and, secondly, because of the cataloging of romantic music as bad music. How is it possible to distance oneself from these established meanings? As with the research on cumbia, the use of an ethnographic approach was a path to investigate how people bond with the music they choose and, in turn, to study the complex ways in which femininities are configured, crossed over by the mediation of cultural industries.

Therefore, we chose to place our questions within a specific context: at Ricardo Arjona's fan club in Buenos Aires. But one may ask why we chose that one and not another. This group of people conformed to a number of characteristics that we considered relevant: they had been meeting monthly and uninterruptedly for over sixteen years, being the oldest group of Arjona's fans in Argentina; they get together regularly, which enabled a sustained research throughout time; the group was made up of women of different ages, which enabled an analysis contemplating age and generation cleavages; and the group was a center of heterogeneous trajectories and interests around music, which also promoted various activities related to the dissemination of the work of Arjona, as well as solidarity endeavors.

Fieldwork involved participation in meetings and events organized monthly by the fan club; especially concerts and public events where both the birthday of Arjona and the club itself were celebrated. On the other hand, in the biographical interviews conducted with members of the fan club, other topics unrelated to their fondness for Arjona appeared, topics that transcended it widely: mourning; unemployment; and found, lost, and forgotten love, among others. Thus, the interviews did not involve, as Negus (2005: 30) points out, the extraction of information or truths waiting to be revealed, but were "an active social encounter, through which knowledge of the world is produced via a process of exchange." In these meetings, people reflected on their musical tastes and about what they choose to do in their free time;

about love, about possibilities and limitations that marked their lives according to their gender identity and the generation to which they belonged.

Now, based on our inquiries into the link between these women and the music they listened to (Spataro 2012), in this chapter we focus on some of the central concepts that appeared most clearly in our fieldwork: age-gender-generation. Here we might ask: is there music only for certain ages? The link between music and age is a complex one and its study is usually overloaded with automatisms: there seems to be music for “young,” “adult” music, and music for “old people”—classifications that confront the same problems that have labels such as “music for women.” On the one hand, these automatisms essentialize ways of living a position in the age—or gender—structure and, on the other hand, they do the same with the possible links that can be built around music. The musical production of Arjona is disruptive in relation to those classifications and thematizes age not only in his most famous song “Señora de las cuatro décadas” (Lady of the four decades), but also through the ways in which his lyrics refer to the effects of the passage of time on the lives of people, their bodies, and their affective relationships.¹² Also, while the recording industry calls this music “middle-aged women’s music,” their fans do not fulfill that mandate: the members of this Arjona official fan club were mostly women in a wide age range that went from 14 to 80 years old.

Thus, in our fieldwork several issues concerning temporality appeared. From the point of view of the contents of the songs, the denaturalization of certain life cycles, the explicitness of age, and the reflection on the effects of the passage of time on bodies and affective relationships were central concerns for Arjona. From the point of view of how his fans used those songs, people of different ages felt interpellated by Arjona’s songs not as “young,” “adults,” or “old,” but as women. That is why the problematization of age in relation to the configuration of femininities became an important analytical segment in the discussion that follows. “Señora de las cuatro décadas” starts by pointing out that her figure is no longer the one that she had when she was a teenager, “*But time does not know how to wither / That sensual touch / And that volcanic force of your look.*” And it goes on pleading to the lady of the four decades that she let him find out what is beyond her silver threads and belly fat, which she cannot burn with workout routines. Furthermore, he asks her not to try hiding her age because it is much better if she puts life into her years. Finally, the song says that this lady wears a blouse that suits her body shape, but besides that, she is the best at dealing with love and does not have to protest because she is not thirty anymore, as in her forties she leaves a mark wherever she goes and that makes her the proprietor of any place.

Many of Arjona’s fans—but not all—hear these lyrics as a vindication of the capacity of seduction and enjoyment of a woman who is no longer in the most coveted age group in erotic terms and who has a body that does not correspond to the hegemonic canons of beauty. In his recitals, Arjona will

choose a “lady” in the audience, invite her to the stage, and sing this song in front of a stadium full of people. Many of the attendees who yearn to participate in that moment of the show carry banners with different slogans that might get them chosen: from the literal “I have four decades,” to “The only good thing about turning forty is that you sing into my ear” or “As long as you look at me just for one second, today I would love to have more than forty.” The power of seduction of a woman who has already spent her golden youth is a theme highly valued by many fans, who read it as a re-signification of a vital moment that is not acknowledged publicly, except in terms of decay. In turn, although not all of them believe that “age is what will define you in your life,” they do consider that the thematization of the effects of the passage of time on their bodies and their affective relationships is a characteristic of Arjona’s songs that they celebrate.

As noted, problematization of age not only appears in the texts of the songs, but it is also an important fact addressed by our interviewees themselves. Most of the women engaged in the fan club were over forty years old and their families questioned their devotion to the singer due to their age and generational responsibilities. The women also questioned themselves when they left their homes on the first Saturday of every month to go to the fan club. Fanaticism “relates to adolescence or childhood, and is depicted as feminine, not masculine,” says Lewis (1994). The combination of adolescence and femininity in the system of representation is significant,” and “the link between immaturity and femininity operates as a strategy to make fun of women and their fanaticism” (1992: 158).¹³ When the coherence between age and practice was stressed, then the self-questioning and the questioning of those around these women appeared, because an incongruity between age and certain practices was put on stage: there are ways to express physical and intellectual attraction that a male singer can generate that are not part of the expected repertoire of practices associated with a certain age/gender articulation, so being a grown-up—and generally married—woman places this person outside that game. This is due to the fact that adulthood is one of the segmentations of the life cycle, like childhood and youth, that acts performatively, because, although it varies historically, “subjects tend to adapt to the social definition of the category [age] in which they are defined” (Criado Boado 1998: 88). This means that there is a system of representations, stereotypes, and values that legitimize and shape, through the way in which they are performed, both gender and age roles. And those roles not only are addressed from the outside, but are also part of the self-perception of the subjects regarding what is right and what is wrong, what is appropriate and inappropriate for the different stages of the life cycle. Thus, subjects learn to act like adults and, in the case of women of this generation, adulthood is centrally configured from two logics of transition: toward marriage and motherhood. And, from those positions, organizing or belonging to a fan club

implies a break between age, gender, and expected practices, a fact that appeared in the story of Mirta and Ana, the founders of this fan club, and in that of many other members of the group:

This made me a bit uncomfortable, “me, the professional,” it had never happened to me, my head must be failing me, I have two children, I am a married woman. Moreover, I have my mom in my house telling me “You are a crazy person! How can you go?” But I went to Ezeiza.¹⁴ (Mirta)

When I started I said “they will kill me!” because you can imagine that it is not easy. I have to do this, go out, go here, go there . . . but I felt a little liberated. I don’t know if my husband had the intelligence to not tell me, “No, do not do it.” But he complains, he obviously complains. (Ana)

In both cases, one can read their interpretations about the place they occupied in the age structure and what was possible to do there, indicating certain practices as if they were crazy. Mirta says that her head must be “failing” her. Of course, this failure refers to the inconsistency between age, gender, and practices: going to welcome an idol at the airport and organizing a fan club are not possible practices for a grown-up woman, a wife, and a mother. That limit was marked by family environments as well as perceived by these women themselves.

Despite this they were able to build a complex space of socialization they called “their place” and claimed that when they were in the meetings they felt “free.” This self-perception of freedom was evident not only when explicitly formulated, but also when they pointed out that there were other places where they do not feel like that. Now, saying that something is more or less than anything else involves asking: compared to what? These women established this comparison regarding spaces and relationships where they were interpellated, from the point of view of a particular crossing of gender and age, as family caregivers (a role that has historically been occupied by women, as feminism has been pointing out for decades). These women distanced themselves from those spaces defined as “feminine responsibilities,” but they did not do it following the traditional claims for feminist autonomy: they did it following the affordances provided by the cultural industry. They worshiped Arjona, listened to his music in their homes—many times with headphones, in order to avoid criticism from other family members regarding the musical quality of their idol—and gathered in a public space to share a taste experience and decide how to spend their own time.

Furthermore, these experiences were interpreted as a way of stressing the existing limits of their life trajectories: fans of Madonna produced, based on their musical choices, interpretations of their sexuality that call into question the patriarchal mandates (Fiske 1989);¹⁵ fans of romance novels put limits to the demands of their environment and built a place of their own based on the

reading practice of their favorite books (Radway 1991); Elvis Presley fans found in his figure and his songs a company against the anguish and loneliness experienced in adolescence (Wise 2006); and fans of Arjona's music produced collectively the meanings that could be given to their own gender condition and position in the age structure, and also they found there an empowerment to live more flexibly the rules and boundaries that established the ways and spaces in which they should travel their life cycles.

BAD MUSIC, FOR WHOM?

As noted at the beginning of the chapter, the musical objects we analyzed are often degraded by cultural criticism, either because they are considered to be of poor artistic quality (aesthetic criticism) or because it is thought that its consumption reproduces sexism and impedes the assumption of a critical position toward subaltern conditions that, in this case, are related to class and gender cleavages (ideological criticism). But there is also an academic criticism that relegates those objects as plausible research objects, a fact that becomes evident, for example, when noticing the shortage of papers, presentations, and panel discussions on certain music neglected by academic research—cumbia villera, narcocorrido, top romantic and melodic singers (to name a few, Palito Ortega and Sandro, Luis Miguel, Chayanne and Cristian Castro, José Luis Perales, Dyango, and David Bisbal). Although it is true that there are struggles in the intellectual field for legitimizing certain music as valid research objects, interest in these objects is lower in relation to others. As López Cano states, this can be explained by the legitimizing function of the research object within the academic field: “We are dedicated almost exclusively to the study of music socially considered to be high aesthetic quality music, or music that has proven historical significance, to legitimize ourselves and our work” (2011: 227).¹⁶

In academic circles, both the songs of cumbia villera and Ricardo Arjona are generally considered bad music, due to the alleged poor quality of musical structure and the poverty of its poetry. But does agreeing with such criticism produce knowledge? Is casting doubt on its quality enough reason to disqualify such songs from study in the social sciences? As we have been pointing out, our research tried to question those automatisms, and we decided to study social evaluations that appear in particular listening contexts. In this way, the assessments we accepted in this work are the ones that the “producers and consumers of music considered to be valid,” following Mendivil (2011: 272). This is undoubtedly a political and theoretical decision and does not mean that it is not possible, or even necessary, to make a musicological study of the music in question and place it on a value scale built upon an aesthetic criteria. Our aim was different: to study how music is

inserted into the social, cultural, and emotional life of the people studied. To do this we investigated specific contexts of appropriation and, from there, tried to elaborate explanations that can never be universalized and that will not seek, of course, the supposed objectivity that has already been widely problematized in the social sciences. This does not mean that as analysts we should be translators of what appears in the field or take a neutral position regarding our research objects, but we must rework those positions in relation to our research questions because, following Cardoso (1996): “We must admit that, more than a translation of the ‘native culture’ to ‘anthropological culture,’ what we do is an ‘interpretation’ that, in turn, is limited by the categories or the basic concepts of the discipline.” The interpretations developed on the basis of the fieldwork mentioned above were not aimed at “admitting that our natives were right,” “translating them,” or “showing them the way to reach autonomy.” Rather, our analyses sought to study the meanings that music has for those women and the various ways in which their listening enabled certain modes of aesthetic agency (DeNora 2000).

In order to carry out those studies it was necessary to question, as noted, the starting points of our work. In a very stimulating article, Susana Rostagnol (2011: 7) stresses that it is important to consider our own biases about gender and age (and, among others, we could add both class and sexual orientation) and our political interests when studying the subjects we choose. In her words, “taking advantage of those aspects that positivism considered a problem for achieving objectivity and neutrality, turning them into some of the most valuable tools we have to get to know *otherness*” (emphasis in the original, our translation). As we indicated at the beginning of the chapter, our research took a theoretical, methodological, and epistemological turn once we were able to take into consideration our own positions on gender, age, and class from which we were interpreting music. That allowed us to question our aesthetic and ideological judgments of cumbia villera and Arjona’s songs in order to problematize the hierarchies from which research subjects build up their own frames of reference.

What began to appear clearly from that moment were the criteria by which these women chose to listen to cumbia or to the songs of Ricardo Arjona: the assessments by which they described them as “good” music made sense in a context of cultural codes that was necessary to identify and explore. As Frith (2014: 476) notes, “People’s individual tastes—the ways they experience and describe music for themselves—are a necessary part of academic analysis” (our translation). Thus, the classic definition of these objects as “bad music” began to be questioned. Following Trotta (2011), it should be noted that it is necessary to reassess the concepts of “good music” and “shoddy music,” depending, on the one hand, on the context in which these musics are evaluated as such—that is, delving into for whom they are good or bad and relying on that musical assessment criteria—and, on the

other hand, analyzing more widely the way in which value is constructed—that is, assuming the legitimacy of certain music to the detriment of others. Classical music, the paradigm of what is meant by “good music,” is a product of a social construction—such as noted above following Fischerman—that is supported not only by its intrinsic aspects, but also by the fact that historically it has been used by the nobility and the court of the colonized countries of the Americas, thus becoming a symbol of distinction targeted at the consumption of elites—that is, “something done and appreciated by few” (Trotta 2011: 102). To understand classical music as “good,” then, implies an education that

is oriented toward control . . . toward a kind of musical listening that is silent, focused, and exempt from corporeality, to compose the necessary picture of civility that was opposed to the profane and barbarous cultural practices of the “wild.” . . . The notion of a rationalization of musical practice is correlated with civilizing processes for the control of customs and the dissemination of shame and modesty that would outline a profile of behavior regarding what is right and what is socially unpleasant (Trotta 2011: 103, our translation).

Cumbia and Ricardo Arjona’s music embody a model radically opposed to the one indicated by Trotta as the legitimate model. To begin with, they are music where corporeality is expressed both in the dance and in the various performances that fans, mostly women, deploy in shows of their favorite artists. There, different emotional and corporal expressions are given free rein: they make up a pattern that is repeated in each event and that enables identification with their idol/s as well as the development of a sense of belonging to their group of peers. From these horizontal relationships, different spaces of belonging and identification can be constructed, spaces that these fans experiment with as places of their own and where collective practices coexist with individual desire, places from which these women may experience, process, confront, and challenge different everyday contexts and scenarios. The music, lyrics, artists, dance events, and recitals constitute crucial components in these women’s life narratives, enabling a space where they can practice their own pleasure.

FINAL THOUGHTS

According to the path we have followed, we propose some epistemological requirements:

First, it is relevant to ask: What are the elements of popular music that interpellate people? And this does not mean to celebrate uncritically what “the masses” consume because “if they like it, it is okay,” but to distinguish two different analytical moments from each other. On the one hand, we have

to study the musical objects in question—cumbia and Arjona, in this case—as products of the cultural industries with their lyrics, musical traditions, and aesthetic configurations. On the other hand, we have to think about what such cultural products mean in the lives of the people who listen to them, what empowerments they enable, and which narratives of experience—of gender, class, age, and generation, to name just a few—they connect with.

Second, it is also necessary to carry out an analysis that does not confuse the denunciation of class and gender inequalities with the descriptions and interpretations of the ways in which the links between people and music are configured. If judging is not the same as knowing, and research should promote the production of knowledge, it is important to distinguish the role we play as researchers from the one we play as activists. As Mendívil (2011: 274–75) argues, the analyst as a “political agent” is, in epistemological terms, a problematic figure:

If researchers are fully convinced of [a political] program’s validity, they will see things through their political position; they will also value them according to their convictions and, what is even worse, will spurn any kind of cultural production that is not related to their [political] project. As ethnocentric researchers, political agents will speak from their pride and prejudices. In these circumstances, talking about scientific objectivity would be almost an irony. (Our translation)

The realities of class and gender exist and involve asymmetries; cultural industries’ representations replicate, in many cases, the sexism of contemporary culture, and women’s bodies are sometimes read as a property to be conquered by men. But this does not mean that subjects are in a perpetual collective struggle or, in contrast, in a situation of continuous subjugation of their rights. We understand that power relationships are much more complex and display in specific terms in different contexts,¹⁷ and that, in the case of the study of the social uses of music, the dimension of pleasure is a central element around which inquiries must be problematized.

And finally, it is necessary to keep a certain epistemological vigilance in order not to catalog agentic spaces as places of resistance. In relation to the previous point mentioned above, this gesture also has to do with the role of the researcher as a “political agent,” to the extent that it would indicate a proposal for redirecting the pleasure and enjoyment people have with music toward a political position with which we identify as analysts (or that we demand as activists). This would imply, considering that all the experiences that occur in relation to music are experiences of “cultural resistance,” an operation that mutilates and closes the analysis, as it subsumes any practice under a consistent label of liberation or submission, as Grignon and Passeron (1991) have pointed out. The pieces of the complex puzzle that represent the diverse experiences of people in relation to music cannot be reduced to a

taxonomic definition, because they can be contesting the social order one moment, celebrating it on other occasions, and most of the time doing neither one nor the other.

When we asked these women to explain their musical choices during our fieldwork, the verb that prominently appeared in their responses was “to feel” the music. That feeling is really very hard to understand for analysts as well as, of course, for subjects who enjoy music. Let’s do the exercise and ask ourselves why we love the music we listen to: can we express the kind of relationship we have with “our” music in words? Frith tells that one of his interviewees, facing his insistent questions about why he thought that the music he chose sounded great, said to him: “Maybe I just want to enjoy it, I do not want to explain it. I do not want to start describing ‘what’ and ‘why.’ I just like it and like to hear it . . . like to be moved by it. I feel no *need* to explain it. [. . .] It is not a scientific experiment. And I am glad because I do not want to know. . . . I do not want to know. I do not care” (Frith, 2014: 143, emphasis in the original, our translation). The same happened to us with several of our interviewees. For example, a cumbia producer, perhaps tired of our insistent invitations to reflect on his work, closed his testimony by saying: “The worst thing that can happen to you is to think. . . . You have to feel the music.”

The line of work we suggested here, however, does not brag about its supposed anti-intellectualism. Quite the contrary, from the spaces of knowledge production, we propose to give other explanations that do not always identify research subjects, “the other,” as lacking (in relation to taste, capacity for contestation, autonomy, pleasure experiences, and the like), and that challenge also includes reflexivity itself, since according to Rockwell (2005: 9, our translation), “Often the implicit intention is to ‘change’ the other, and not to learn from the other and transform our own understanding.” If the proposal is to inquire into the relationship that the *other* establishes with music, we have to know that the other has personal political, moral, and aesthetic categories. All together and all at once.

NOTES

1. This chapter is part of the research carried out for our doctoral theses (in Social Sciences, School of Social Sciences–University of Buenos Aires). They were financed by grants from the University of Buenos Aires and from the National Scientific and Technical Research Council (CONICET) from Argentina. “Plebeian Lives: *Cumbia*, Dance and *Aguate* in Young People in the Greater Buenos Aires” (Silba 2011), directed by Pablo Alabarces and Pablo Vila; and “‘Where Had I Been?’ Configuration of Femininities in a Fans’ Club of Ricardo Arjona” (Spataro 2012), directed by Pablo Semán and Pablo Alabarces.

2. One of the emblematic *cumbia villera* bands together with Damas Gratis. Its name alludes to the social stigma associated with young and poor men living in the urban peripheries, who supposedly are engaged in criminal activities such as petty theft.

3. All of them are emblematic *cumbia villera* songs played by Pibes Chorros (in the first four cases) and by La Repandilla (in the latter two). See the following for a video that compiles some of the major successes of Pibes Chorros: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=c5JU1ck-MKY>, with comments from its authors and performers. The La Repandilla videos are at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WSbKyoH246Y> and <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3H-apS0aBk0>

4. We want to emphasize that what we note here is a marked trend in the Argentine academy and that we are not unaware of the fact that the question of agency has been introduced in different fields of study for decades. For example, the Birmingham School worked from that perspective, not without receiving much criticism for it.

5. *Pasión de Sábado* is a program that has aired on Saturday afternoons on Argentine free-access television for more than a decade. Argentine cumbia bands are presented and they do live shows sometimes. This TV program lasts between six and eight hours; it broadcasts live and it is unique in its genre.

6. Greater Buenos Aires is the most densely populated region of Argentina. It comprises the autonomous city of Buenos Aires (C.A.B.A., capital of the country) and the adjacent twenty-four districts over Buenos Aires province. Those districts stand out for their industrial development as well as the coexistence of representatives of different social strata in them, divided into upper, middle and lower classes. In turn, these twenty-four districts can be divided into fully or partially urbanized, according to different census criteria established by the National Institute of Statistics and Censuses (INDEC). The following websites can be consulted for further information: <http://www.gba.gob.ar/> and <http://www.indec.gov.ar/nuevaweb/cuadros/1/folleto%20gba.pdf>.

7. In July 2004 Alberto Fernández, Chief of the Cabinet of Ministers of Néstor Kirchner's government between 2003 and 2008, made some statements related to cumbia villera that can be read, at least, as controversial. He referred to this musical expression as "a culture that is widespread among those social sectors that think about crime as a 'modus vivendi,'" and, speaking of rising crime rates, he added that "ten years ago there was no TV program transmitting for five hours a type of music where criminal action ends up being lauded largely and many times." He also referred to the "cumbia villera phenomenon" as a "cultural movement, in quotation marks." On August 4, 2004, the then president of the country Néstor Kirchner received Daniel "La Tota" Santillán, one of the cumbia scene leaders and host of the TV program Fernández made reference to (*Pasión de Sábado*), to apologize for what that minister had said, while acknowledging that he liked cumbia villera. The full story can be found at <http://www.pagina12.com.ar/diario/sociedad/3-39193-2004-08-05.html>.

8. *Damas Gratis* has a double meaning in this context. On the one hand, it refers to the alleged "easy girls" who would have no trouble accepting offers to establish erotic-affective bonds with men. On the other hand, it refers to the strategies of many cumbia dance clubs that tend to promote the entry of women for free to attract supposedly more men to the clubs. The cumbia band led by Pablo Lescano, founder of the subgenre villero, appropriates that category and re-signifies it proposing a set of identifications to both young women and young men.

9. Interview with Gabo Ferro in the City of Buenos Aires in September 2013, within the UBACyT Project "Men, Young and Cumbieros: The Challenge of Thinking about Cultural Production from the Margins" directed by Malvina Silba (IIGG-FSOC-UBA). Luis Alberto Spinetta or El Flaco was an Argentine singer, guitarist, poet, writer and rock composer, considered one of the most important and respected musicians in Latin America. The instrumental, lyrical, and poetic complexity of his works earned him recognition in many parts of the world. He is considered one of the fathers of Argentine rock. He was leader of the following bands: Almendra, Pescado Rabioso, Invisible, Spinetta Jade, and Spinetta y los Socios del Desierto. In his work there is influence of writers, philosophers, psychologists, and artists of various origins. According to Del Mazo and Perantuono (2015: 56), "[From the late seventies and . . .] in the early 80s, Luis Alberto Spinetta and Charly García raised the referents of musical experimentation with symphonic rock (Spinetta Jade) and progressive rock (La Máquina de hacer pájaros). Returning to the idea of that epoch according to which "dance was synonymous of frivolity while [musical] complexity was a sign of intelligence, intellect and sensibility" A brief digression concerning the identification of Spinetta Jade proposed by Del Mazo and Perantuono

no: most analysts of the band's work identify it as jazz rock, although some others place their approach with symphonic rock. To delve into the topic see Berti (1994).

10. According to Giddens (2008), this link has an origin: before the end of the eighteenth century, love was defined in terms of husbands' camaraderie to manage the assets or the ranch, and that was the reason why love was not gendered. However, with the division of public and private spheres and the location of women in the latter (Archenti 1994) "ideas about romantic love were plainly allied to women's subordination in the home, and her relative separation from the outside world" (Giddens 2008: 49). Besides, gender division between reason and feeling also further stimulated the feminization of romantic love, as masculinity was identified with reason and objectivity, as opposed to a femininity, understood as a more emotional genericity (Lutz 1990; Seidler 1992; Nuñez Noriega 2007). This division is still valid nowadays: today romantic stories are linked to the emotional dimension of life and are labeled as "feminine."

11. In this regard, Giddens (2008: 51) states that "the dream-like, fantasy character of romance, as described in the popular literature of the nineteenth century, drew scorn from rationalist critics, male and female, who saw in it an absurd or pathetic escapism." Along the same line, Illouz (2009: 208) notes that for three centuries there has been a moral discourse that accuses romantic literature of causing "emotional disorders," but this accusation became even stronger after the emergence of mass culture: She says that "film and television have replaced novels, and its ability to affect our fantasies and illusions with the obsessive representation of romance."

12. We are aware of the fact that the passage of time is a subject explicitly thematized by many popular songs, such as "Time Passes" by Pablo Milanés, "Soap Bubbles" by Cadícamo, "Margot" by Celedonio Flores, among others.

13. It is necessary to clarify that although fanaticism has its masculine side, expressed mainly by soccer fans, this practice does not have the same pejorative connotation and can even be read as a sign of "endurance" (*aguante*) (see Alabarces et al., [2008]).

14. Ezeiza is a city within the Greater Buenos Aires where the Ministro Pistarini International Airport (where international flights arrive) is located. Fans of different bands and musical genres usually go to "Ezeiza" to welcome their idols.

15. Fiske (1992: 37) points out that these kinds of practices can be interpreted as "semiotic productivity," a concept that defines "social identity meanings production from cultural goods resources" both related to popular culture in general and fan culture in particular. For extending inquiries into fanaticism see: Jenkins (1992, 2001, 2007, 2009); Jensen (1992); Lewis (1992); Harris (1998); Hills (2002); among others. On fans in Argentina: Borda (1996, 2011); Cragnolini (2001); Martín (2006); Skartveit (2009).

16. Here it is important to stress that the growing interest in these issues, coupled with sustained funding from different scientific and technical agencies to this type of research over the last decade, is gradually consolidating these phenomena as valid for study. This is a remarkable thing in Argentina.

17. For further discussion on popular and mass culture see Semán 2006.

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Chapter Seven

Peronism and Communism, Feelings and Songs

*Militant Affects in Two Versions
of the Political Song in Argentina*

Carlos Molinero and Pablo Vila

The Militant Song Movement (MSM) was a very important artistic and political undertaking in Argentina from the mid-forties to the mid-seventies (Molinero 2011, Molinero and Vila 2014a, 2014b). Its artistic products radically modified Argentine popular culture, and some of its practitioners (Atahualpa Yupanqui, Horacio Guarany, Mercedes Sosa, Cesar Isella, Víctor Heredia, Los Trovadores, Marián Fariás Gómez, Piero, Armando Tejada Gómez, etc.) now form an integral part of the Argentine popular music canon.

It was not, by any means, a monolithic movement. On the contrary, several versions can be easily identified within its borders. However, a broad division can be made between a “leftist-oriented” variant—organically or loosely linked to the Argentine Communist Party (CP)—and a “nationalist/Peronist” tendency (again, organically or loosely linked to the Peronist Movement). At the same time, while the leftist variant went on developing for the entire life span of the Movement, the Peronist one was mostly active between the end of the 1960s and the mid-1970s.

While both variants of the MSM denounced the injustices undergoing Argentina (above all from 1955 to the early 1970s), including denouncing US imperialism, and promoted some type of social change (loosely linked to a “socialist” or “social justice” credo), most of the similarities stop there and the differences start to accrue. The hypothesis that underlines this chapter is that many of those differences are linked to the different ways in which the diverse variants of the Movement related to affect, in particular to “hope,”

and through it to many other emotions. Ideological differences, of course, played an important role as well. However, conveyed through symbolic and representational means, they generate and are buttressed by affect. It is interesting to note that while Communism had and proclaimed with pride a comprehensive normative vision of social reality, it did not consider such a vision as an “ideology” but the “true, scientific description” of reality (ideology was a distorted representation of reality advanced by the dominant class). Peronism, on the other hand, never worried much about it, and usually did not see itself as an ideology at all. On the contrary, it was usually self-defined as a “sentiment.” But regardless of this important consideration, both visions of the world were highly intertwined with affects and emotions.

In the first part of the chapter we will introduce some theoretical ideas about hope as a peculiar kind of affect. Then, in the second part, we will offer a short historical account of the MSM. The third section of the chapter allows us to exemplify our analysis by dealing with two specific and representative theatrical performances.

AFFECTS AND EMOTIONS IN THE MSM IN ARGENTINA

If, as stated in chapter 1, affects and emotions are “performative,” then the affects and emotions put in circulation by the two branches of the Militant Song Movement we referred to above were instrumental in the appearance, surfacing, and materialization of the different subjects and objects they were referring to in the songs they interpreted at the time of their circulation and popularity. We will deal with some of those affects and emotions, in particular “hope,” because hope occupies a central role in a musical movement that, like the MSM, promotes social change.

Hope is a peculiar type of affect. Hope anticipates that something that has not yet become (socialism/communism for the leftist branch of the movement; national liberation and social justice for the Peronists), eventually *will* become. In this regard, hope always presents a peculiar relationship between absence and presence. Thus, for the concertgoers of the MSM the music they were listening to in those concerts was the present, but also referred to a time and space that was still forthcoming, the not-yet. Then the materialities of the music opened up, somehow, an auditory window into such a not-yet, becoming in the process a source of hope. Anderson, our main theoretical source in this matter (2006: 746) states that “the beyond moves through a process of concrecence from being an absolute impossibility to being an outside that is relative to a body disposed to sense and assimilate it. Otherwise it is impossible to say what is not-yet because it is without content or form.” If this is so, we can claim that the lyrics and the music of the MSM provided the

content and the form that allowed the listeners to figure out that sense of hope that was still not yet expressed. And that “figuring out” was done not only at a cognitive level (usually by the way in which the lyrics “anticipated” the content of the not-yet) but also, and more important for our argument in this chapter, at the level of “feeling”—that is, how “socialism” or “liberation” would eventually “feel,” “materializing” them, in turn, in a particular way. It allowed the music’s listeners to emotionally “live” the future, now. That, among other things, explains its success. Most of the musics of the two variants of the MSM are music with lyrics. This fact reflects, very prominently, the implicit necessity that the authors of the songs had to, somehow, “guide” not only the meaning of the songs, but the song’s emotional content as well. In this regard, the lyrics not only functioned in both cases as “guidelines” to the symbolic meaning of the songs (usually a political meaning), but also to how the listeners had to “feel” when listening to those songs—that is, what types of emotions were the ones the authors of the songs expected to arouse in their listeners.

Out of the combination of the cognitive meaning and the emotional arousal, a particular kind of affect was also expected to be triggered by the music: indignation, sadness, outrage, excitement, euphoria, and eventually some kind of emotionally charged political action. And this was done not following the linear trajectory that the previous explanation implies, but in relation to an emergent process in which emotions and affects cannot be easily disentangled from symbolic meaning, nor can they be so from each other. In this regard, for different listeners, at distinct political and musical events—as well as for the same listener at different moments in the same event—the emergence of the emotions/affects/symbolic meaning/political action ensemble could have started from any of those constitutive elements of the assemblage. Of course, because we are talking about music concerts here, in all probability the affective charge was launched by the music.

Additionally, if the not-yet expressed by hope was distinct for each branch of the movement then it is not by chance that the music and the lyrics were different from each other as well, and the circulation of affect followed through such a distinct path (albeit some similarities were present too, such as the folk matrix of most of the songs of both variants of the movement). In this chapter we will focus mostly on the differences, and not on the similarities. In this regard, the process of the emergence of affect, emotions, and (eventually) political action ignited by outrage and hope worked differently in each variant. Why? We believe that in the Peronist case, one can easily imagine that the movement of emergence started, most of the time, from the political action moving back to the songs and going through the symbolic meaning/emotion part of the assemblage.¹ Among other things, this is because most of their songs, like the *Cancionero para la liberación* (hereafter CPL), were not recorded until the most important political action the move-

ment was looking for (the return of Peronism to governance) was already accomplished. Thus, the route that goes from signification/emotion toward affect and political action via the commercial availability of the songs in the media was in that period mostly nonexistent. Simplifying it, in Peronism we find “militants singing,” while in Marxism we find “songs militating.” In that sense, all of the songs of the CPL were militant songs in the strictest sense of the term—that is, songs that were sung almost exclusively in political meetings undertaken to advance the political agenda of the different branches of the Peronist movement.

Something different occurred with the songs of the leftist branch of the Movement, whose origin and development were much more diverse and their availability to be commercially consumed in the media quite ample. In this regard, the route from political action to signification and affect was not a one-way route, but a much more complex one. Thus, on the one hand, here as well, many of those songs were sung in political rallies of the left (in similar ways that the CPL songs were) by people who already were moved by the signification and the emotions related to those songs. On the other hand, though, many people started to be interested (or increased their interest) in some kind of political activity because they heard those songs in the media and were touched by their signification and/or emotional content. But, in all cases, the political content of the songs was only successfully introjected by the audiences when there was some kind of emotional connection between the message of the songs, the singers, and the concertgoers.

If, as Anderson points out (2006: 746), “it is . . . in this process of concrecence that the emotion of hope becomes fixed in the determinations of the already become through the taking place of specific spatially and temporally distributed narratives of hope,” the music and lyrics of the MSM, through their similarities and differences, perform their essential performative role, as narratives of hope, of concretizing and somehow fixing hope as an emotion. Here we have the “back” effect of representation upon affect, which followed the “forth” from affect to representation. As Vila pointed out in chapter 1, in practice, it is very difficult to separate affect, feelings, and emotions and, in any case, it is much more important to understand what they “do” rather than what they “are” in particular instances. And what they do is linked, in most cases, to autonomic responses of the body, habitual bodily practices and different types of representations. As Anderson (2014: 100) points out, “Hope and hopefulness blur into one another, as people name a feeling, become attentive to how they may feel in a particular situation, or offer reasons for feeling a particular way. It is partly through these representational acts that hope and hopefulness are mediated by specific signifying apparatuses that articulate and organise what can be hoped for.” In terms of hope, according to Anderson (2006), what is absent is the actual occurrence of what is being hoped for; what is present is the affect triggered

by such an absence believed to be only temporary. In this regard, hope matters because it discloses the creation of potentiality or possibility. Hope matters because what it produces in people is linked to the word “emotion” in one of its oldest definitional senses from the Latin, *emovere*, referring to “to move,” “to move out”—that is, the possibility of “moving from here/now to there/then.” As Anderson (2014: 96) points out, “Hopefulness happens as a repeated set of background feelings that form a different relation to the future. For a while, a better future is affectively present. Hage (2003) invents the term ‘conatic hope’ to describe a specific constellation of background feelings that is irreducible to the ideational content of what is hoped for.”

In other words: hope circulates and mobilizes people in terms of a future yet-to-come, but already affecting the present, as a type of relation emergent from particular encounters that is “felt” at the level of the body, even though many times it cannot be symbolized with words. In that regard, the “not-yet” actively becomes part of the present. Thus, “as a change in what a body can do, its ‘force of existing,’ hoping opens the space-time that it emerges from to a renewed feeling of possibility: a translation into the body of the affects that move between people during encounters to make a space of hope” (Anderson 2014: 96). But, again, because we are not talking exactly about the same “not-yet” for both branches of the movement, its being already in the present is qualitatively different and exercises different capacities—that is, it triggers diverse feeling of possibilities. Regardless of these differences, in both cases the effect (in different ways) of “this calling forth of an outside, is an intensive colouring of ongoing experience that induces an escalation of the disposition of hopefulness, from which the naming of a hope emerges and into which such a naming of a hope feeds back” (Anderson 2006: 746).

At the same time, as Anderson points out (2006: 742): “The presence of hope has long been thought to herald a more-to-come, an excessive overflowing of life, that draws bodies into an intensified connection with an absent-present . . . horizon because being and becoming hopeful embody a ‘radical refusal to reckon possibilities’ (Marcel, 1965, page 86).” In this regard, more often than not, the not-yet-become of hope points to a future that is visualized as better than the present (but not always than the past), which, in turn, intensifies the present connection with that horizon, that not-yet-become. According to Anderson (Anderson 2006: 747) “Hope emerges from a set of qualitatively distinct relations between bodies and therefore from specific types of encounters.” If this is so, even though the disposition of hope was surely present in many of the participants (but not all) of the MSM *before* they participated in the concerts of the movement, their actual participation mobilized hope in a different way, merely for the distinct relation between bodies (the specificity of the show as an encounter) that the concerts implied. Joining other people (vibrating together) is also a way to overcome individualisms, and, at the same time, a way to reaffirm their own

convictions. Anderson (2006: 747) continues, “The disposition of hope is best defined as a relation of suspension that discloses the future as open whilst enabling a seemingly paradoxical capacity to dwell more intensely in points of divergence within encounters that diminish.” Thus, in the concerts of the Movement, as particular types of encounters, the dread present was provisionally suspended by the not-yet, but possible, future, allowing the participants to vicariously enjoy a future that they foresaw as possibly coming. The effect of a concert crowd, then, affects in a different way than does the solitary listening to a song on the radio or at home. Theater shows like those we are going to analyze in this chapter support this “collectivizing” effect.

Anderson (2006: 747) also contends that, becoming hopeful, “is therefore different from becoming optimistic. It involves a more attuned ability to affect and be affected by a processual world because it is called forth from the disruptions that coax space-times of change into being within that world.” It is precisely here where the most important difference between the two branches of the Argentine MSM come about, because the attunement to a processual world not only involves an attunement to the not-yet future (apparently similar to both branches in their search for a fairer world, but quite distinct in terms of how a fairer world would look like), but also to some version of the past, versions that were completely at odds for those two branches in the 1960s and early 1970s. For the leftist variant of the movement, at least in the 1960s and 1970s, the not-yet future to come did not have any antecedent in Argentina’s colonial or independent past.² It was going to be something totally different from what Argentina was until that not-yet future arrives. On the opposite side of the spectrum, for the Peronist branch of the movement, the not-yet future to come was an ameliorated version of a mythical, fairly recent and glorious past, when Peronism was the government between 1945 and 1955. By default, those two divergent versions of the past tinted very distinct versions of what, at first glance, appeared to be a similar not-yet future.

In the case of the participants in MSM’s concerts, becoming hopeful “momentarily folds into a better way of being,” (Anderson 2006: 743) and the concerts they attended can be understood as “hopeful sites—‘sites where a potential alternative social project exists in the actual world’” (Anderson 2014: 95). Becoming hopeful in those concerts involved the expression of a movement of affect, as a feeling or set of feelings (qualified most of the time as “excitement” or “euphoria”), that countered another set of feelings (linked to the dysphoria of an unjust present, which in the Argentine context would have been qualified with the native word that names the emotion of *bronca*, or anger) “through the capacities of the materialities of music to smooth over despair and induce the affective presence of something better” (in the particular case of Argentina, this is highly intertwined with the affective capacities

of the lyrics of the militant songs). Interestingly enough, it seems that for Anderson's interviewees as well the materialities of music could not be easily disentangled from the affectivities of the lyrics, because, as the author points out (2014: 96), "attuning to the lyrics and tone of Radiohead offers a hope that disrupts, momentarily, the circulation of despair through the ingestion of something different and perhaps better [into his interviewee's everyday life]." For the participants of the MSM's concerts, the lyrics and music of their favorite artists also offered a hope that folded into "the being together of corporealities to disrupt, momentarily, the circulation of despair" associated with the situation of desolation they lived in the 1960s and early 1970s. However, as Anderson reminds us (2014: 96), that "something" that ingresses into the everyday life of the participants of the concerts is not really a full-fledged alternative social project (only a short-lived one), it is "more a minor variation in a 'force of existing,' one that comes and goes, brought into being for a while, before fading as other affects happen." This is so because the music concerts are, ultimately, only music concerts, not political meetings, or even better, the actual "national liberation" or "socialist revolution."

However, beyond the transience of their duration, from the point of view of the emergence and circulation of affect, the music concerts clearly produced what Katz (in Wetherell 80) calls a "sensual metamorphosis," i.e., a series of emotional physical changes. As Wetherell (2012: 80) points out, those physical changes "are embedded in interaction routines and rituals and take shape in relation to them. They are also embedded in people's ongoing personal identity and narrative projects that predate and continue after any particular metamorphosis." What Wetherell is advancing is closely linked to our own ideas of how affects, feelings, and emotions are always negotiated (especially in encounters like the concerts of the MSM) with the identitarian articulations and narrative identities people develop and bring to those concerts. While public shows were always a source of "live" transmission of stronger emotions than the "simple" listening to a single or LP, the tradition of "recitals" (almost ceremonially recipients of a respectful attitude by both artists and audiences), was altered by the folk festivals first, and then, as the MSM evolved, by shows with great content of action/political activity, as with the two shows we analyze in this chapter. Those are characteristic of the period of radicalization of the Movement (near 1973). The flow of affects, feelings, and emotions is clearer and more significant in those types of concerts.

For how hope worked in the case of concerts in the 1960s and 1970s we can say that the bodies of the MSM's participants were composed to disclose and express "feelings of independently flowing . . . forces" (Katz 1999: 309). As Anderson points out (2006: 746), processes of affective contagion like the ones occurring at music concerts, "are attuned to when people describe the atmosphere of a space or time as hopeful or as hopeless as felt through their

own disposition yet existing independently of it. In . . . [some] . . . hope has . . . simultaneously crossed over a threshold of indeterminacy to be felt personally as an emotion.” If this is so, we can say that, in the case of the MSM, hope, as an affect, was “out there” in different ways (in the structures of feeling of the epoch, for example), and related to the dispositions toward hopefulness (different for the two branches of the movement as we have seen) held by the participants of the movements (yet existing independently of their own hope). But, we also contend that hope had also to be attuned to the different identitarian articulations and narrative identities of the militant song’s participants in different ways.

Also in the particular case of the concerts, as Anderson (2006) points out, in those concerts a tangible relation of euphoria dominates the charge of affect and comes to act as an imperative that orders the participants’ relations with the world around them. As Brennan (2004) states, the transmission of excitement constitutes crowds as defined entities that inhabit space with their own logic. But both as a general structure of feeling and as an affective atmosphere, affect (in this case qualified as euphoria) had to enter a particular process of negotiation with the identitarian articulations and narrative identities of the participants in those concerts. And the opposite was occurring as well, in the continuous becoming at the level of the event; that is, the identitarian articulations and narrative identities of the participants in the event had to deal with the euphoria and other affects that were mobilized in the concert and modify themselves accordingly.

As stated in chapter 1, the circulation of affect always happens alongside processes of expression (feelings) and qualification (emotions). In that regard, following Anderson (2006), we can say that for the participants of the MSM in general, but with peculiarities related to its leftist variant and the CPL, induced by the transmission of hope between them and the music, and then between them and their environments (inside and outside the concerts), what it produced was “a corporeal disposition of hopefulness felt in a renewed animation of the proprioceptive and visceral senses (rather than the determinate content of a particular hope).” Here is where the bodies of the MSM participants, through their feelings, occupy center stage in a way that is unaccounted for by theories of affect that only deal with emotions (see chapter 1). In other words, the qualification (as an emotion) of a particular affect as “hope” triggers another affect, qualified, this time as “euphoria,” which, in turn, expressed itself as a corporeal change at the level of the body as a feeling (although the move is not linear as it is exemplified here, as stated in chapter 1).

However, if this movement from affect to emotion to feeling, and back to affect, is common to both branches of the movement, it is processed and works differently in each of them. The most important difference is, as we have mentioned above, what “future-yet-to-come” each branch of the move-

ment tries to anticipate, which is the basis for their hope. In the case of the leftist version, the horizon is literally a “horizon,” in the sense of something that was never arrived at, the outside of what has become at the time of the concert, 1973 (because they had a not very positive evaluation of how the C ampora government related to the possible actualization of their hope, socialism and communism). Therefore, hope and the eventual euphoria that such a hope could have triggered in the concerts were intimately connected to the greater or shorter utopian character of such a hope, qualifying how hope and euphoria translated into hopefulness as corporeal dispositions as feelings. We can say that, in general, depending on (among other things presented in the assemblage—such as personal dispositions, identitarian articulations, narrative identities, time of militancy, and the like) the political situation in which the musical concerts were evolving, the relationship between hope and euphoria could have taken different routes. On the one hand, one can talk about “more” euphoria linked to hope in the leftist branch, because the utopian character of the not-yet opens to any possibility: anything is possible. On the other hand, knowing how utopic it is could have led to “less” euphoria, above all for the old militants who had witnessed many failed actualizations of such a hope in the past. However, quantity is not the only way to feel euphoria. “Desire for euphoria,” is another need or component of it, which may then qualify a special type of euphoria, not only a “rational” one. In this regard, hope and euphoria worked in very complicated ways. In the leftist variant of the MSM, in principle, more hope was linked to the complete openness of their utopia, and such hope would have been lived more euphorically when some glimpse of its possible actualization appeared. When no glimpse was on the horizon, such as the political situation of the early 1970s as viewed from the left, the same hope triggered less euphoria. Even if they did witness what was at least a first (and eventually twisted) step to the not-yet.

In the case of the CPL, the hope is to deepen something (“national liberation” and subsequently social justice) that, somehow, was partially accomplished, first during Per on’s presidency in the 1940s and 1950s, and secondly with the ongoing election of C ampora as president, which was seen as opening the door for the complete accomplishment of the “future-yet-to-come,” a very important step toward national liberation, toward the accomplishment of hope, to the movement of hope from being only “an ‘outside’ on the horizon of ‘what has become’” (Anderson 2006: 746), to being “what will soon become.” A horizon much closer to what the utopian horizon looked like to the left, expanding how hope and euphoria translated into hopefulness as corporeal dispositions as feelings.

Therefore, if, as Anderson (2006: 744) reminds us, “becoming hopeful is marked . . . not by a simple act of transcendence in favour of a good elsewhere or elsewhere but by an act of establishing new relations that disclose a

point of contingency within a present space-time,” the driving for action was qualitatively distinct between the two different branches of the movement. Why? Because, if “hopefulness . . . exemplifies a disposition that provides a dynamic imperative *to action* in that it enables bodies to *go on*” (Anderson 2006: 744), the kinds of action propelled by these two quite different versions of hopefulness were also diverse. We will see how, while the CPL tried to move bodies in support of the nascent Cámpora government, the leftist variant of the MSM tried to mobilize bodies toward what was considered a more profound social change still as a utopia on the faraway horizon.

Therefore, we’ll show how the creation, circulation, and mobilization of hope by these two branches of the MSM were quite dissimilar, quite instrumental in delineating very different historical paths before, during, and after their presence in the Argentine musical scenario, entirely distinct in the way they mobilized people, their capacities of affect and being affected.

DIFFERENT MOVEMENTS. DISSIMILAR EMOTIONS. DIVERSE SONGS

In this regard, songs of Peronism and the left during the militant decade are very, very different. Those of the left denounced present inequalities (indignation is the most present emotion), and promise a better future (hope). The songs of CPL also denounced the past and showed indignation, but from a present of hope, not only a future of hope: they are going to be (or already are) part of the government. Their hope when they were not in power was carried forward by the slogans of the rallies, not by songs that either did not exist or are not remembered today.

Linked to this particular difference we find another important one that Anderson (2006: 742) also helps us to explain:

Hope is a point of hazard in between the vectors of joy and sadness, or enhancement and diminishment. . . . There is, therefore, a point of danger, or hazard, folded into becoming hopeful that indicates that a good way of being has “still not become”: in the sense that the present is haunted by the fact that the something good that exceeds it has yet to take place and that “the conditions that make it possible to hope are strictly the same as those that make it possible to despair” (Marcel, 1965, page 101). It is always from the context of specific diminishments that becoming hopeful emerges.

What Anderson wants to address is the inherent fragility of hope. If this is so, and hope comes to appear and circulate under particular conditions of diminishments, the CPL, written when Cámpora was a candidate, and performed when he had been already elected president, advanced its hopefulness under completely different conditions of diminishment than the leftist variant of the

movement. The “good way of being has ‘still not become,’” but it was, so to speak, “half way through” for the CPL. Instead, for the leftists, just to continue with space metaphors, the distance to the yet-to-come was only one-tenth of the way through: the new government was not a dictatorship, but not much else, even if the social base of the Peronist movement was considered to be the constituency of the future revolution. In this regard, if “the conditions that make it possible to hope are strictly the same as those that make it possible to despair,” there was much more “despair” in the “hope” of the left than in the hope of the CPL.

Anderson (2006: 746) continues, “Relations that diminish and destroy are, however, still present and are actualized in feelings of loss when the object of hope fades away or in feelings of disappointment when the object of hope passes unrealized.” From the point of view of the object of hope passing unrealized, as we mentioned above, the constituency of the leftist branch of the MSM had a long history of “unrealized hope” and of “hope fading away”: socialism (not to mention communism) proved to not be a realistic option in Argentina. It is a completely different case when we talk about the people that followed the CPL. Not only did they see some version of their hope actually realized in the first and second Peronist government, but also, incipiently, in the advent of *Cámpora*’s government. This kind of process is the reason why Anderson (2006: 746) states,

The frequency of such a counter movement of affect heralds the openness of hope to the hazard of that which is not-yet: the extent to which becoming and being hopeful involve a relation of trust in, and for, a life that is felt affectively to be infused by something that is, however, not-yet “here and now.” . . . The resulting lack of guarantee, a hoped body’s openness to something better, is brought forth in . . . protest cultures animated by a belief in the possibility of an alternative world despite deep and lasting inequalities (Parker, 2002).

At the same time, if we agree with Anderson (2006: 746) that “the disclosure of that which is not-yet—an intimation of what, following Benjamin (1969), we could term ‘messianic space-time’—is a point of differentiation between practices of hope (in that the identity of the outside varies), but . . . is also that which enables hope to be spoken of as a specific constellation based on an affective relation to an open not-yet elsewhere or elsewhere,” then it is quite obvious that the identification with a name of the “not-yet” differentiates the diverse hope held by the leftist branch and the CPL. Hope is expressed by the former in relation to the idea of “socialism,” while in the latter, it is organized around the idea of “national liberation” and “social justice.”

As our previous discussion shows, “hope is entangled in the circulation, and displacement, of other affects and emotions. The result is that actual hopes possess different qualities of durability and mobility and slide into and out of broader movements of hope and dispositions of hopefulness” (Ander-

son 2006: 747). Therefore, it is not by chance that other affects and emotions circulated on both musical branches of the movements alongside hope. In the previous pages we mentioned “excitement” and “euphoria,” and showed some close connections to hope. Now we want to add another emotion, “joy” or “happiness” to the assemblage and discuss how it was related to hope in the MSM and also in its evolution.

OTHER EMOTIONS BEYOND HOPE: HAPPINESS AND JOY

Even the visible joy fueled by hope in the concerts was not felt in the same way, either through time or by the participants of the different variants of the MSM. Needless to say, such a joy was not the same for different people within those movements either, due to reasons linked to the narrative identities, identitarian articulations, and dispositions brought by different concertgoers. In the case of the Peronist branch of the movement (CPL being one of the most significant expression of it), many of the concert participants emotionally reproduced something they already felt in their bodies—that is, happiness, which was part of their embodied memory and current dispositions as children of Peronist parents being brought up in the late 1940s and early 1950s, the “golden age” of Peronism. Happiness could have been conveyed by their friends also, if their parents were not Peronists, embodying such happiness vicariously (if they were open to that affect, “disposing” themselves to be affected by joy). The participants of the leftist branch of the movement were never able to “bodily remember” how happy they were (fueling the hope of being as happy in the near future as they were in the past), because they actually were not as happy as their Peronist counterparts during the governments of the 1940s and 1950s (and, actually, they could have embedded in their bodies the unhappiness many leftists felt under Peronism, when some of their militants were persecuted, incarcerated, and tortured). Therefore, even joy, as a bodily reaction similar to that of the real situation to which they bore witness (Wetherell 2012: 107), was quite distinct in both movements.

THE STRUCTURE OF FEELINGS OF THE 1960S

Another very important concept that was developed in chapter 1 and that we want to explore further in this chapter is the idea of “structure of feelings.” According to Eyerman and Jamison (1998: 161–62):

The structures of feeling . . . can be read . . . easily through the songs that are sung in movements. . . . Structures of feeling can be embodied and preserved

in and through music, which is partly why music is such a powerful force in social movements and in social life generally. Music in a sense is a structure of feeling. It creates mood . . . and in this way can communicate a feeling of common purpose. . . . While such a sense may be fleeting and situational, it can be recorded and reproduced, and enter into memory, individual as well as collective, to such an extent that it can be recalled or remembered at other times and places. In such a fashion, music can recall not only the shared situationally bound experiences, but also a more general commitment to common cause and to collective action.

The songs of the MSM embodied and preserved in and through music (and, at the same time, contributed to the creation and development of) a particular structure of feeling, of which, not by chance, hope was one of its most important components.

Like hope, in both branches the structures of feelings they contributed to the creation of were not exactly the same either. On the one hand, the hope for a social change that would bring the nation toward some sort of socialism (fueled by the success of the Cuban revolution, Che Guevara's attempt to spark revolution in Bolivia, and the ascendance of several leftist political parties in Latin America in the 1960s and early 1970s) was central in the structure of feeling of the left. On the other hand, the hope of the Peronist branch of the movement was much more concentrated on the return of their leader, Perón, to the country and, eventually, to power and, following his leadership, to national liberation for social justice. At the same time, the centrality that music occupied in the construction of a particular structure of feeling in the left did not have any parallel on the Peronist branch of the movement, where music was quite marginal. Our position is that the music of the CPL was less instrumental in, first, the creation, and later the preservation of such a structure of feeling for the Peronist movement. The most important difference is that, in some sense, Peronism itself can even be explained as a particular structure of feeling anchored in the Peronist experience of the 1940s and 1950s, but also because for many adherents of the CPL (although not all of them) it restaged the past as a possible future, as expressed in the name, used in those days, of "*socialismo nacional*" (quite explicitly differentiated from Nazism's "national socialism," not without problems, of course). What the music of the CPL attempted to do was, somehow, to try to bring back the structure of feeling most Peronists felt in the 1940s and 1950s by resignifying it.

In this regard, in some of the songs the CPL put into circulation another affect that worked nicely in the assemblage anchored in hope: nostalgia. Linked to the kind of hope that mobilized the bodies of leftist militants, nostalgia, as an emotion, did not have any role in the affective assemblage effective in their concerts. There is no nostalgia in the leftist branch of the movement. Only the future will be better (and this is, somehow, guaranteed,

as we will see below). There is nothing from the past to be rescued in order to fuel nostalgia, except, perhaps, previous struggles, with the caveat that most of them ended in defeat.

A BRIEF HISTORY

The process of the creation and evolution of the Argentine militant song, mainly concentrated on folklore, reaches its maximum development and peak in the third quarter of the twentieth century, just before censorship (initiated by the government of Isabel Martínez de Perón but fiercely enforced by the Process of National Reorganization from 1976 to 1983—the bloodiest military dictatorship in Argentine history) removed it from public broadcasting for many years.

During that time, we found an initial period of “sowing” when the militant songs were cautiously emerging and developing (almost like “asking permission”); and a second period, which Molinero calls the “militant decade,” in which the political song was naturalized in folk music, spreading and radicalizing in turn. That decade (1966–1975) had a double-sided hinge between its two five-year halves. A political one (the *Cordobazo*, a popular revolt against the dictatorship of General Onganía that united students and trade union members in action, from Communist and Peronist origin, respectively, and took place in the city of Córdoba in 1969) and a singing one, “Canción con todos” (Song with everybody), written by A. Tejada Gómez and C. Isella, which also postulated unity, in an ode to an American time without divisions.

The last five years can be called the years of “radicalization,” and its peak is undoubtedly 1973. The two musical oeuvres that we discuss in this chapter in some detail correspond to that year and were released when the elections that installed the government of Héctor J. Cámpora had already occurred. In that year there were also other works of similar characteristics, even when Cámpora had already resigned to allow General Perón himself to reach his third mandate. For instance, *Montoneros* was a musical “cantata” that had been requested, supervised, and funded by the guerrilla organization of the same name. It sang the praise of its own brief history, and has been extensively analyzed by Illa Carrillo Rodríguez (2014). However, to date, the two oeuvres presented in this chapter have not been analyzed.

Both were performed at theaters. One is a Peronist spectacle, *El cancionero para la liberación* (The songbook for liberation) (CPL); while the other is a Communist one, *El cóndor vuelve* (The condor returns) (ECV). Both partisan stances seemed to coalesce in the specific field of political action at that time; and both shows, perhaps for that very reason, have structural similarities, such as a historical account that culminates with the current

reality of Argentina in that year. The two have in their structure several of the characteristics of the “militant Decalogue” (a repetitive theme proper to the militant song; see Molinero 2011), to the extent that the same song that gives title to the work of Marxist orientation is a paradigmatic example of that Decalogue, incorporating everyone of the ten categories of it in the same song (something highly unusual).

Both are integral oeuvres (i.e., not just a compilation of loose, unrelated songs). The two are “historicist” and, in both cases, refer to a glorious past to openly support a present political action, even though one past, the leftist version of it, refers to a mythical reconstruction of a pre-Inca communal life, while the other one, the Peronist, refers to the actual and recent history of Argentina. Aside from being a “historical reinterpretation” of the past, these works made quite explicit the last of the characteristics of the Decalogue:³ the “explicit political proposal,” which appears precisely at the time of the radicalization of the militant song.

The two identified in that past a yearning for some kind of “lost paradise.” The recovery of that past will start the path to hope (a feeling often deposited in the song itself), which is one of the emotions we are going to analyze in this chapter.

But the similarities conclude here. This is due to the fact that the historical search for the “not-yet,” being as dissimilar as they are, does not have any other possibility than expressing itself in many differences between one and the other variant of the MSM.

One of the productions, the communist one, must reach back to the pre-Hispanic inheritance to serve as a foundation for hope for a better future. That is, it has to go back more than five hundred years in the past to say that such a world, though not perfect, was in many ways much more valuable than the present. Over that backdrop, from the very beginning of the show, invading empires are a constant of history even if referring to other Indians as conquerors. This explains more clearly what is occurring in the present. This unmistakably pointed out what was the “principal contradiction,” or the “main enemy” (using a popular expression of those times)—that is, dominant empires (either Inca, Spanish, or American).

In the other work (the Peronist one) the journey is much shorter. From 1955 to the time of the concert only eighteen years had passed. Of course, historical roots are recognized, but paradise was not the lost Incan, Mayan, or Aztec worlds. Paradise was the decade of the recent Peronist government (1945–1955). The fight is also a fight to get it back. The hope is to enjoy it again. As we can see, this is a very different kind of hope because, as Anderson (2006: 741) points out “actual hopes . . . emerge through processes of qualification and are distinguished by addressing determinate objects of hope.” And yes, of course, foes also include Yankee imperialism so that national liberation, the sole goal explicitly mentioned—necessary to achieve

social justice—coincides with the release of the imperialist yoke, expressed, in disguise, by local governments. The hope to which CPL songs appeal is, then, less distant and more actually attainable; in fact, it was already experienced, a fundamental difference with socialist songs. Hence, it requires much less explanation. What it means to be a Peronist and what the government of Perón and Evita did are well known. The only thing that is required is simply self-identifying with Peronism.⁴ Hopefulness, as a feeling here, is a “return” more than a moving forward, and nostalgia is the other affect that seems to be most of the time attached to the affective assemblage that characterizes the Peronist branch of the movement.

To march while singing in rallies, or to jump in the soccer stadium while singing slogans, and to sing the march “Los muchachos peronistas” (The Peronist guys—affectionately known as “the little march”) in any event “flashing the forefinger and middle finger in V shape,” meaning “vuelve” (he returns), are examples that move, performatively and musically, militant bodies in nonexclusive, but very characteristic, Peronist displays, ways that would successively acquire the “sound” of, and become synonymous with (achieve a symbiosis with), “the popular.”⁵ At the same time, “joy” and “happiness” were present in all these performative events as absent-presences, through memories’ affective charges (Connolly 2002). The Peronists’ past was full of joy, and that joy remained embedded in the memories (cognitive and affective) of many people (still living) who re-create such a joy as the “not-yet” of hope. “Joy” had a physicality (above all for the participants of the Peronist experience of 1945–1955 and, to some extent, their offspring) totally absent on the leftist experience of the other branch of the MSM.

Both integral oeuvres⁶ justified violence (even in a sample of “fighting pacifism”). Each also had the necessary features to reassure, for militants, the “immortality of the fighter” (they will survive in popular memories) in their texts, all of them categories of the “militant Decalogue.” This is necessary in a time of struggle against dictatorships. There are also clear expressions of “social protagonism.” However, in the Communist one, the “role of the song” is quite present, something that does not occur in the Peronist case. And this has to do, we think, with a completely different role given to the idea of a “vanguard” in each movement, which is clearly linked to how affects and emotions make objects and people appear by the way in which they are “sensed,” not just spoken.

What we are talking about here is the idea of a vanguard referring to the relatively important function assigned (we are tempted to say self-assigned) to artists in general and authors/performers in particular, in the development and outcome of the history of the others, the “common people.” In an analysis of the protagonists “above the stage,” there will be no doubt about the importance of this point. But here we are taking a look at the affective

content that the songs provoked in the public. Therefore, we will take a closer look at this topic.

DEVELOPMENT OF THE MILITANT SONG

The Marxist Case

At the beginning of the twentieth century, the folk song in Argentina portrayed the traditional and peaceful union of peasants and landlords in the concept of “rural life.” That worked until 1944, when Atahualpa Yupanqui burst on the scene (“disrupted” it actually), with his indigenous re-signification, social demands, and musical trans-regional voice. This opened up a whole phase in the history of the political song, a stage of “seeding” the value of the folk song as representative of the subalterns (rather than talking about “the rural,” in general) and therefore destined to be a natural container of their claims. This particular phase had later expressions that were constitutive of the growth of the movement, with Horacio Guarany, Jorge Cafrune, and the Movement of the New Song.⁷ This path converges, around 1965, to open up the above-mentioned “militant decade” of the song. In that decade, the multiplication, both in quantity and intensity, of an entire series of repetitive and, at the same time, innovative themes, contributed to the construction of a whole new sense of what the militant song was all about. Those themes were mostly, but not exclusively, practiced by the “leftist” sector of the movement, whose most important artists actually ascribed to the Argentine Communist Party (although many of them did not publicly acknowledge their affiliation). In addition, foreign tendencies (Violeta Parra, Daniel Viglietti) received influences from Argentina, and the Argentine MSM was influenced by them as well.

In other words, we can say, simplifying to the extreme, that the path of Marxism in the folk song consisted, first, in a strong symbolic reappraisal of all the subaltern social classes in the songs, not just the rural one, and then, mainly, showing through songs “what was not visible,” in an attempt to make perceptible the hidden reality; for if the song did not illuminate such a reality, the artists thought it would not be known or understood by society. From a discursive point of view, this was achieved by trying to make people think with the song. But the artists were also aware that, in order to be effective, the militant song also had to bodily “hook,” “turn on” people, in the sense of “the message becoming flesh.” And this effect was clearly “planned” by the creative artist, for instance, by including social issues and naturalizing them in the song and by including/postulating the certainty of an inevitable (and bright) future that historical science vindicated—that is, giving a goal, a teleology, to that initial “visibilization” of reality. In other words, with a beginning and a destination, purpose was obtained, both in terms of explana-

tion and direction. We can call it a movement, both in the sense of something that goes on (moves), and in the sense of something that participates in a larger strategy that transcends it and gives it a purpose and direction.

This signals the appearance of a rather peculiar version of hope; not only the possibility of a better future that the leftist song postulated, but also its inevitability. In this sense, the hope that drives much of the action of the leftist militant song (both in its singers and their followers) is a “guaranteed” hope, guaranteed not by a general or religious faith in particular, but (and this is very important) by “science”—that is, by historical materialism that had proven, “without a doubt” that the future is a Communist one. That is the way in which the “Decalogue” was being built, and the song and the singers were an essential part of a strategy of general education and diffusion of a “guaranteed” hope. Hence its self-assigned importance (the *central role* of the song), but also its effectiveness in transmitting a message, wrapped in a song format, that appealed to the cognitive and emotional levels simultaneously.

Songs that we can generically call “leftist” were basically designed and disseminated by artists contributing to the strategy of the Argentine Communist Party who above all sought to “explain” the situation actually experienced by people. Pedagogically, it was called “waking up consciousness.” This is the essence of the ECV show.

If reality was there, but was not seen, you had to teach people how to see. The vanguard, which was already able to see, was the one that would teach people how to see, becoming, in the process, the people’s leader for social change. If intellectuals/artists are basically the leaders, the ones who will pull back the veil by being also and above all artists, the vehicle through which they will try to “educate,” which is the song, must also be able (is required) to move affectively. Since the goal is not reached (effectively) only through consciousness, and “information” should not only be “understood” but also internalized (and the metaphor of the “turn on” is truly eloquent in this case), then somehow it must be “embodied,” made flesh. In other words, not only do the spectators have to “know” (because, for the first time, a song is communicating to them something they did not know before) that, “*At this precise time, there is a child on the street*” (name and first verse of an iconic tune from the leftist militant song—written using a previous and larger poem by Tejada Gómez), but also it has to “hurt” them,⁸ literally in their bodies, that a boy is left on the street and not living in a house being cared for by his parents. So if the popular saying points out that “ink [knowledge] enters the body when one bleeds learning” (to justify corporal punishment in primary education), we could say here that “a message with emotion enters better.” Now we move to some typical examples.

Since that first stage (when Yupanqui is still formally a member of the Communist Party, 1945–1952), his songs, like “El pintor” (The painter) or

“El poeta” (The poet), clearly show this idea when he points out that it was a bad painter who painted him “*singing couplets of the hills on an empty stomach,*” because he only painted his poncho, “*but forgot his starvation.*” We can appreciate the same stance in “The poet”: “*You, poet with certain rhymes, go to the forest [he commands], and live there and you will learn a lot of things, from the woodcutters and their misery.*” In both songs Yupanqui not only describes a situation so that the listeners can be aware of what perhaps they do not yet know is going on (the famine of the northern inhabitant, or the real misery of the northeastern woodcutter). He sees his listener-recipient as “distracted.” He expects, then, this situation “to hurt” the listener, with a pain that may eventually be the trigger for political action in order to change what is actually being described in the song.

Artists (poet or painter) are then criticized for being, in some way, guilty of two things simultaneously (something that has to be amended): the negative social situation itself, and the way in which art shows that situation, beginning with the latter. Because songs, paintings, poetry “naturally” (and this is the most intense message, though less explicit) intend to bring about a better future, to not do so is to desert; it is to be “a bad painter.”

On the other hand, the “guaranteed hope” that such a future will surely come “someday,” is much more omnipresent in the songs of the MNC (Movimiento del Nuevo Cancionero [Movement of the New Song]) than in Yupanqui. “Zamba de los humildes” (Poor people’s zamba), written by A. Tejada Gómez and O. Matus, offers itself precisely to endure this waiting time until a better future arrives (not commanding to transform the social situation itself) calling for the “*little zamba, to be sung*” by the “*poor people of my small town.*” Because if we have to wait for hope, “*It’s better to wait singing.*”

In general, the “to wait–to hope” (*espera-esperanza*) that turns out to be a pun, or wordplay in Spanish by means of its very semantic roots, becomes much more imperative (at a rhythmic level as well) later on in the Militant Decade. The rhythm of a zamba is replaced by a *trunfo* (a much more “active” rhythm) when the song needs to specifically clamor for agrarian reform and expresses the pain suffered by landless peasants, as it is conveyed in “Triunfo Agrario” (Agrarian Triumph) by A. Tejada Gómez and C. Isella: “*And when will be the day, I wonder when? that in barren land,*” will come, sowing, “*every evicted peasant, all of them.*”

THE NATIONALIST/PERONIST CASE

Nationalism also used the folk song, and quite naturally, to multiply its outcomes. Therefore, trends proximate to Peronism (from the right and the

left, with all its gradations) also participated in this communication and emotional path.

Peronism, in the decade it was in power (1946–1955) and the decade that followed (until 1965, gateway of the political folk song’s decade) was pretty much associated with tangos (its leading singer, Hugo del Carril, was a clear symbol of it, since he was the official interpreter of “The Peronist Guys”). In the case of folk music, some songs (such as “Rancho’e la Cambicha” [Cambicha’s ranch], sung by Antonio Tormo) that reflected the reality of the internal migrants from the countryside reached an enormous popularity (see Vila 1991). On the side of rural life, Fabiola Orquera (2008) shows how songs by Yupanqui gave voice to Tucumán’s *vallisto* (inhabitant of the mountain valleys of that province), a subject that was invisible until that moment, and to which Perón gave political presence. Paradoxically, neither Yupanqui nor Antonio Tormo were Peronists.⁹ Peronist folk singing did not produce a militant representative of equal caliber to the leftists. Its needs did not come from that angle. Initially, their special use of music transcended that goal. Interestingly enough, another very popular genre at the time was dance music combining tarantellas, paso dobles, and other “happy” music (just to give them a name), whose performers became known under the name of “characteristic orchestras” (as, for example, Feliciano Brunelli’s). There were very popular interpreters who performed this genre, even if they were known before as performing others genres, such as Alberto Castillo (originally a tango singer), who popularized in the 1940s a song whose refrain argued that for only *four crazy days* (meaning carnival and an analogy for all shortness of life) we are going to live: “*for only four crazy days, you have to have fun.*”

“Joy,” then, characterized the popular classes, and the popular was equated with Peronism. In this way, the song made both “joy” and Peronism the epitome of the popular, which, of course, were things (joy and the Peronist experience) that needed to be recuperated. This is where “nostalgia” for a better past enters the assemblage in which hope for a better future occupies center stage.

Certainly, and in comparison to Communism, starting with the coup d’état against Perón in 1955 and until the last part of the 1960s, there is nothing that can be identified as a specific “Peronist Militant Song Movement.” However, people did use music in a political sense. They sang songs (and *slogans*) in political and trade union meetings during those years (in all probability music of the late 1940s and 1950s, as if a musical déjà-vu was a vital component to preserve feelings and, at the same time, to stage a political strategy whose principal goal was a “return”), and so music, as elsewhere, was a very important affective component of political and syndicalist practice.

At the same time, a specific “use” of music emerged. More important than “songs” in those meetings were “*cantitos*” (sung slogans)—that is, very brief songs of one or two verses with a political slogan, very often mounted on a very popular melody of the time. This is a traditional genre used by soccer fans to cheer for their favorite clubs. But it is essential in political rallies. The evolution of these *cantitos* shows not only how political “common sense” evolved, but also how emotions were expanding their effectiveness. Let’s take a look at some of them.

General *cantitos* (basically from the first decade of exile):¹⁰

- “I’ll give you, my beautiful country, I’ll give you, I’ll give you one thing, one thing that starts with P!: Perón!”
- “Here they are, these are them: the guys of Perón!”
- “Our life for Perón!”
- “Neither Yankees nor Marxists: Peronists!”
- “San Martín, Rosas, Perón, just one heart all!”

More aggressive *cantitos*, from the time of radicalization:

- “Lanusse, you marmot [stupid], Perón will return when he fucking wants!” (From 1972, after President Lanusse declared that Perón did not want to return because he “does not have enough guts.”)
- “Women, women, women are our women, Montonera’s women, the others, only samples are!”
- “Perón, Evita, the Socialist Motherland!” (From the Peronism left wing.)
- “Perón, Evita, the Peronist Motherland!” (From the orthodox right wing.)
- “Cheer up Doña Rosa, and so do Don Pascual, let’s go to Ezeiza and look for our general!” (Path to Ezeiza’s airport, June 20, 1973, for Perón’s return.)
- “No votes, nor boots: guns and balls!”
- “Allende in Chile, in Argentina Perón, out of Latin America, Yankees go home!”
- “Firing squad wall, firing squad wall, for all traitors who sold out the Nation!”
- “Rucci, traitor, you’ll end up [dead] like Vando!” (The Montoneros)
- “They’ll see, they’ll see when, we’ll avenge the people that died in Trelew!”
- “It will end, it will end, you see, the union bureaucracy!”

These *cantitos* were a very important music background for the Peronist movement until the arrival of the CPL (and afterward as well). Politically neutral songs (but happy and popular) merged with *cantitos* for the Peronist branch, with songs used to create consciousness (vindicating *caudillos*, for

example) also mixed into the process.¹¹ Explicitly political songs were not part of the nationalistic canon until well into the 1960s (although they were known and sung by the general public due to their use by the leftist branch of the movement). All of these musical antecedents spurred the creation of oeuvres like *El inglés* (The Englishman), *Montoneros*, or CPL, the one that we have chosen to analyze in this chapter. Additionally, while not necessarily being Peronist, the nationalist stance of many very popular songs in the 1960s was quite well accepted by the Peronists, and contributed to the fluent character of the MSM.

That is not by chance. In the symbolic dispute that also occurred in the field of the folk song, recovering the value of caudillos was an essential issue. One of the reasons such a recovery occurred was the inclusion of historical “revisionism” within the Peronist intellectual culture. This was a process that attracted a significant proportion of university youths to *justicialismo* (the official name of the Peronist movement), even youths that in the early Peronist government had, or would have been furious opponents. The rediscovery of “another story/history” than the official one, and with it the value of the essence of the “national and popular” was parallel to the rediscovery, via the songs, of the ancient federal leaders (the caudillos) in general, and J. M. de Rosas in particular (an important participant of the civil wars to whom we will return later on).¹² Some of those nationalist songs that praised the rural leaders (basically those from the independence period and the subsequent civil wars: 1810/1870) showed the path of unity of the people and the leaders toward national goals, well attuned to the Peronist political project. Those historical struggles showed, somehow, the road of resistance that Peronism itself was undergoing in the 1960s—a recourse to a past of struggles against the “enemy of the nation” (the *anti patria*), as Peronism saw itself engaging in the present. The main emotion at stake was clearly admiration (almost infatuation), conveyed by highlighting the bravery, courage, selflessness, and patriotism of a popular leader: in synthesis, a kind of crowd-love in action, from and to a leader.

In “*Revuelo de ponchos rojos*” (Fluttering of red ponchos), by Roberto Rimoldi Fraga, Rosas is explicitly cheered, and what was actually conveyed was that although the official history hides him (just for being a defender of nationality, something that Perón could embody as well) he was, or should have been, valuable to people. It states that because he never burned servile incenses “*for his own glory, Juan Manuel*” has remained “*buried, in the history.*” And adds “*‘Long live the Restorer,’ people cheer and shout: ‘Long live the Federation and Don Juan Manuel de Rosas.’*”

Before the end of the 1960s there were few folk songs that referred to Rosas explicitly. For the official historical canon Rosas was not a well-respected caudillo (quite the contrary). The opposite was the case, then, for the “alternative” historical account of Argentine history (called “revisionist”

in the Argentine case). For that history the caudillos' order of prominence gradually shifted from an unarticulated "those who contributed to Argentine's greatness," to those who "struggled against the imperial enemy." Only one "founder of the nation" belonged to both historical canons simultaneously, General San Martín. For the revisionist account the other two were Rosas (and secondarily other regional caudillos, like Güemes), and Perón, whose governments were considered "tyrannies" for the official historical account (to the point that Perón's government was called "the second tyranny"). Therefore, vindicating Rosas in the 1960s was a way to "evangelize" young people; additionally, it was a not very subtle way of, almost simultaneously, vindicating Perón. This was the main reason that these "nationalist" folk songs became an integral part of the repertoire of the Peronist branch of the MSM.

In that regard, hope as the "yet-to-come" was also related to a past that already existed, was lost, and required struggle to be regained. And nostalgia became an important part of the affective assemblage around hope. In this particular case such a past is portrayed as one in which the popular sectors of the time (gauchos, Indians, and Afro-Argentines) were active participants in a political project whose main enemy was the Imperial power of the time, England. That Perón's political project was seen by his followers as also mobilizing the popular sectors of his own time (workers, migrants from the interior, etc.) against the imperial power of the second half of the twentieth century, the United States, made the explicit vindication of Rosas a kind of metaphor of Perón's project, and the "yet-to-come" as an affect that encompassed both simultaneously.

But that was not the only variant of the non-Marxist political song.

Further examples, at the beginning of the militant decade, show the similarity of those tendencies closest to Peronism, such as José Larralde and Jaime Dávalos, as well as themes preferred by leftists. Songs like "Manea" (Hobble), "El por qué" (The because), and "Permiso" (Excuse me) by Larralde; or "Canto a Sudamérica" (Song to South America) by Dávalos, show the long path traveled before radicalization. "Hobble," for example, begins by criticizing liberal "individualism" (and "greed," just like the Peronist doctrine does). Therefore, a malformed society is intrinsic to that innate selfishness. Larralde advances his reflection asking himself: "*Why to say what I think alone? If none think equal to another.*" The lyrics continue pointing out that people want to enjoy, *but alone*, and that people want "*the effort of another one.*" So he commands that "*nobody feels shame,*" and then nobody blames any other, for the "*fault lies*" with the man himself, "*alone.*"

Here "greed" is the emotion focused on and criticized by the lyrics. An emotion that materialized particular bodies and not others, while trying to elicit an emotion of disgust from the listener, so that he or she might act against such greed. José Larralde presents to us in an even more complete

way this nonmaterialistic philosophical conception, neither a dialectic one, like Marxism, nor one proposed by liberal capitalism, but a “third position” (somehow linked to the Peronist doctrine) as glimpsed in “Excuse me.” There, he anticipates that he does not belong, as a singer, to the side of the powerful, and then he opens up the way for claiming the right to social justice, saying, “*I don’t approach the powerful and arrogant. From his favors I stay away.*” Why? It’s clear: because “*I’m sick of promises. And as far as he is concerned, I may as well live buck naked.*” But everything he does in his singing is within the limits of his own country, and internationalism (imperialist or proletarian) is not for him. He is too much Argentine, to let “them” come to him with stories: “*I carry my pampa inside me, until I die. I will support the greatest heights of motherland and happy men.*” It is to be noted that, in fact, the last sentence refers to or paraphrases one of the Justicialist truths (achieve a great country and a happy people).

Jaime Dávalos, a great and romantic poet, wrote “Song of South America,” repeating the ineluctability of its future, because “*No one can stop her; it cannot be halted, neither slander, nor boycott, nor anything.*” And if it is even known that as a continent it was ripped off, he is confident, because America, the land of the future, “*like a woman, while lying backwards, she overcomes.*” Here we have a clear nationalist/revisionist version of hope, different from the Marxist version. Even though both of them (optimistically) see the victory of the dispossessed as somehow guaranteed, they see it so for very different reasons. As we have argued above, the guarantee in the Marxist version is a “scientific” one, coming from Karl Marx’s analysis of the historic inevitability of a Communist future. In the case of Dávalos the guarantee is a romantic (nature of the continent) and historical one, rooted in Argentina’s past, again the land, and the national character of the people (as Larralde showed in his songs). A history that claimed (with factual veracity) that Argentina (synecdoche of Latin America), as a nation, had never lost a war against its enemies (something that only changed in 1982, with the Malvinas defeat at the hands of the UK).

In the Peronist camp, the experience between 1945 and 1955—when major industries and public services were nationalized, strong trade union rights were recognized, and other “achievements” were secured, such as the women’s vote, the federal recognition of former territories as provinces, voting rights for military recruits, and social aid to the dispossessed (as with the Eva Perón Foundation)—provided a sense of national belonging founded on popular sectors’ social recognition synthesized in the slogan the “twenty Peronists truths,” or the enduring popular aphorism: “*People’s happiest days were under Peronism.*”

That feeling of happiness, then, does not allude to a hope linked to something imaginary, but refers to, and is anchored by, a truly lived reality. What becomes the *locus* of hope is that it is something yearned for, something that

has to be recovered. The not-yet, in the Peronist case (at least for its adherents), was already lived. It is a “like-those-days,” which actually reinforces it. And that time missed is a foundation, not a ceiling, about which there is nothing to explain and convince people of. It almost shows itself (although for anti-Peronists, the emotions that Peronism offered at the time and continued offering for a long time, were “fear,” “nausea,” “disgust” and several more of the same tenor, which obviously materialized a quite different Peronism).

In other words, we can say, simplifying to the extreme, that the trajectory of nationalism/Peronism in the song consisted in a symbolic recovery of the “national issue.” This was first done by praising the role of the historical caudillos in general, followed by a special vindication of Rosas as the immediate antecedent of Perón. This period concludes, near the radicalization period, in the need for anti-imperialism as a prerequisite of history. It closed the circle, returning then (even if reassessed) to point one, the historical reinterpretation, which became a crucial key for the whole process of departure and arrival. It therefore set the precedent that accounted for almost one hundred years (Rosas was overthrown in 1852) of governments from the “anti-motherland.” Such a historical recovery very fundamentally aimed to “make sense” (at a cognitive level but also at an emotional level), to make people “feel” that the “sale” of the country by those anti-motherland governments between 1853 and 1945 (between Rosas and Perón), “hurts.” And what “hurts” delimits and makes appear as its object two very different versions of “motherland”: one in which everything is sorrow and despair (1853–1945), and the other where everything was happiness and joy (1829–1852 and 1945–1955). That knowledge/pain was instrumental in advancing the idea that Argentina’s history was marked by a historical “national line” (a line that linked the patriotic leaders, San Martín, Rosas, and Perón) whose trajectory is an already lived practice, whose last reincarnation was a very recent one. That is why it is essential to include the national issue in this political vector, naturalized in the song, and later the certainty of recovery of that paradise, lived and lost because of the anti-motherland traitors. In this version of Argentina’s history the “natural” gaucho character (like being compassionate, rebellious, and an active player) makes him national, not international, but also “American,” meaning Latin American (of an extended nation, as in the time of independence). He is the defender of his social and individual rights, but not an “expropriator” or a Communist.

EXPERIMENTING SONG

Constructing a public that resonates in recitals or shows is a process. Far from being spontaneous, this process is not uniform among different musical

practices. Pop, tango, bolero, or in our case, folk music, each had some elements in common and each could be distinguished from the others on the basis of other, unshared features in such a construction process. At the same time, public gatherings are particular events where affects and emotions circulate and reinforce each other. As Anderson (2014) reminds us, affective atmospheres are intensified by creating patterns of affective imitation in sports stadia and concert halls. We can add political rallies to the picture as well, since they were extremely popular and massive in the early 1970s in Argentina. It was in the atmospheres developed at those rallies, particularly in the final stage of radicalization, when many of the *cantitos* we reproduced above were developed. And if we take into account that emotions are performative—that is, they create the entities they “feel”—then the public that attends a concert or recital is, at least in part, a creation of the particular emotions and affects circulating in those music gatherings.

Here we will focus on certain aspects that came together in part, but also partly diverged, in cases of political folk music of the nationalist type (afterward more clearly Peronist) and the leftist variety (afterward more clearly Communist). In an initial phase (1944–1960) the songs were performed as individual units, without any encompassing pretension, and were mostly performed live in theaters or concerts, but then in the sixties they went on expanding and deepening their exemplary content. This occurred with the recording and success of the integral oeuvres, which implicated a broader construction of meaning and artistic pretension, and *guitarreadas* (guitar meetings), which were held in family environments at first, to move to public gatherings afterward. The latter tended to be politically polarized toward the second half of the sixties. Festivals (which had massive turnouts, primarily staged in summer holiday places and times) flourished then with great importance, lasting for several days.

Each of these events had a special way of producing a relationship between the public and the song, such as the types of songs driving those reactions. Hence our comments that these places, performatively, “built” their audience. In that sense, for example, the *jineteadas* (a kind of rodeo) reached the public with more traditional folk songs, and the staging of them (as well as the public, collective, reaction to such staging) worked toward a kind of integral nationalist reinforcement (food, habits, dresses, gaucho sports, etc.).

The affects that circulated in these *jineteadas* were, of course, quite diverse, but one that somehow anchored the affective assemblage and contributed greatly to the creation of a particular atmosphere was “love” for the country, expressed as love for the land. In some way, the main emotion was a yearning for the past, a desire to preserve such a past, instead of hope for a better future. Not only did the nationalistic songs contribute to this particular circulation and reinforcement of “love,” the Argentine food served at the

event (*empanadas, asado, locro*, and the like), the gaucho routines played there (*doma, lazo*, competitions of folk sports like *sortija*, etc.) and many other cultural activities were central in that regard. We can even argue that the smell of manure that heavily impregnated the event, which in any other assemblage could have evoked “disgust” as an emotion and be characterized as “horrible,” positively reinforced the “love for the country” (identified with land, cattle, and the protagonism of the gaucho) emotion. This love was then “felt” through all the senses (sight, hearing, taste, smell, touch), not only cognitively “understood” (showing, by the way, how the same material element materializes differently not only in relation to different discursive practices, but also in relation to different affective practices as well; it “feels” different, not only “means” something different).

Since the early 1910s, the symbolic construction of the nation around the gaucho, rural propriety, Martin Fierro-type romances,¹³ and so on had been very successful in Argentina. In political folk clubs, however, the songs created and made possible an emotional atmosphere among participants already politically convinced, reinforcing a common ideal for change. From the outside they appeared to be the exact counterpart of *jineteadas*: intellectual, rather than physical. But nothing is so simple. Here “hope” was the most important affect in circulation, obviously always mixed with other emotions triggered by the songs and the comments by the participants: disgust regarding the condition of exploitation of some of the actors described by the songs, anger if the description of those horrendous conditions glimpsed some possibility of changing them through political action, and the like. The open environment of *jineteadas* physically connected with the smell of the past and the country that was built at that time. While in tightly packed clubs the atmosphere connected more with the future of the country, with the not-yet that hope was provisionally opening up at the level of emotions. They were a kind of incubator, or “conspiracy-like” sites. Reality and anguish (respectively describe and motivated) were as much a part of that process as hope was—a sort of hopelessness, which, by opposition, could be seen as a source for hope to be built.

Some examples of those songs, full of subtleties, can be mentioned, examples of that game of hopelessness/hope that the clubs’ atmospheres stimulated (against the ones that “mass entertainment” venues looked for, songs that elicited more spontaneous reactions, with more “communicational force”). Songs of Los Trovadores circulated in clubs, like “*Coplas para la muerte*” (Couplets for death), or “*Imágenes de la guerra*” (Images of war), which left a strong aftertaste of restless oppression. These were songs that, from a different perspective could be placed within the fighting pacifism stance of the MSM; even their titles were not musically “encouraging” or exultant.

These songs were useful in reinforcing the need to get away from that situation through the “anger/anguish” they generated, as we saw in “Hay un niño en la calle” (There is a child in the street). Something similar happens with “Tata Juancho” (Papa Juancho), a strong description of helplessness and futility due to social insensitivity: “*They claimed his land and he had to surrender it, he was dying slowly . . . just to stay a little longer.*” “Canción de lejos” (Song from far away), on the other hand, was the counterpart of the previous songs, being soft and anguish relieving, while advancing the message that love can be recuperated. Something similar occurs with “Ave caída” (Fallen bird), which favored the waiting, putting together love and anguish simultaneously.

Festivals, however, aimed at cheering. The whole structure of the festival led to the ovation as a “measure” of success. This success was for the artists themselves and was measured in terms of who was acclaimed the most; but it was also for the version of the festival, which was measured in terms of whether it generated more or fewer ovations than previous versions of the same festival, or than similar simultaneous festivals. And this went far beyond the political side of the musicians involved.

Typical festival songs were those that led to repetitive and catchy choruses, or had an easy pace that was effortlessly joined by rhythmic clapping. However, popular festival songs were also those with militant characteristics that could trigger “fervor.” One reason was the relatively short time given in those festivals for the presentation of artists (who were usually only allowed to perform four or five songs), during which they were obligated to “succeed” in order to be invited to other festivals or to future editions of the same festival in which they were performing.

Only few artists (usually those with a “cult” following like Yupanqui, Falú, Di Fulvio, etc.) could escape, somehow, from that “demand for public participation.” R. Rimoldi Fraga, for example, clamored for participation in his cheering for Rosas, or ended his shows with nationalist recitations and his customary cry “Argentine till Death!” H. Figueroa Reyes, summoned his listeners in “Unidos” (Together), quoting the national anthem in the lyrics.

Something very similar can be said about H. Guarany and his rendition of “Si se calla el cantor” (If the singer stops singing), César Isella’s “Canción con todos” (Song with everybody), or Mercedes Sosa’s “Cuando tenga la tierra” (When I’ll have the land). Thus, emotions linked to nationalism coexisted in the same festival with the hopeful call for an international socialist revolution that seemed proximate; both types of emotions were equally motivating.

Some cases of artists’ presentations that we have collected may be explanatory, even if such an explanation is far from being comprehensive of the enormous variety of proposals.

Mercedes Sosa in Cosquín, 1965: Her First Public Appearance

The song she presented, “Canción del derrumbe indio” (Song of the Indian collapse) generated euphoria by raising its political emphasis. The euphoria Mercedes Sosa was able to put into circulation was responsible for the construction of a particular kind of public that included both CP followers and non-followers. However, such euphoria was processed quite differently by the diverse members of the crowd, among other things because their identitarian articulations were different (most importantly, in our case, is the fact that only some of them had the capacities brought about by the identification “CP member” working in their identitarian articulation). Generic folk songs appealed to traditionalist listeners, while the revolutionary songs were liked by left-wingers.

But we can also identify several other emotions that were part of that particular assemblage formed by the plaza, the singers, the sound system, the people, the atmosphere of the festival, and the like. On the one hand there was the “rage” triggered by the lyrics of the song, which denounced the annihilation of the Indian population of the continent. “Hope” was present as well. Not only regarding the possibility of redeeming the descendants of those discriminated against in the past, but also hope in the possible success of a new artist, Mercedes Sosa, who was clearly identified as “one of us” (as a member of the CP). “Awe” was part of the assemblage as well: they were witnessing the first public appearance in a massive festival of an amazing artist, soon to be the most important female folk singer of the country, and probably of all South America. Therefore “euphoria” in this particular case is a distinctive assemblage as well, combining, in different degrees, “rage,” “hope,” and “awe.” People who were empathetic to the indigenous lament proposed by the song (“*I had an Empire of Sun / white people took it away from me*”) were as attracted to her as those who glimpsed the socialism that the New Song Movement would eventually promote.

Horacio Guarany in Cosquín

The masculine stance, the image of a brave fighter, his screams while singing (without much care for staying in key), always dressed as a gaucho, standing and gesticulating, proposed (and so was received) as a call for euphoria, and for taking sides. Later on, to rebellion (Guarany was a prominent member of CP). In fact, that was (as we already pointed out elsewhere—Molinero and Vila 2014b) one of his most important innovative contributions to MSM. That attitude was more revolutionary than the typical pondering stance of the “protest” songs. It was, within the festival features, an invitation to the whole arena to accompany his songs. In fact, the festival of Cosquín (the most important one in Argentina), even for those who did not know the lyrics,

started a very particular form of active public participation, which also worked for the artist, who in that scenario could understand and could capture the level of support and approval of his or her artistic proposal: handkerchief waving by those attending the concert during the performance. Here we have a very interesting case in which a particular “affective conductor” (handkerchiefs twirled by the audience) is, at the same time, a habit, a non-linguistic message, and a crucial element in the circulation of affect at a particular event, heavily contributing to the particular affective atmosphere being created. This is a gesture that goes back and forth between audience and artist, in a joint construction of this particular fact of a “song that is experienced.”

Roberto Rimoldi Fraga in a Union Theater Performance (Luz y Fuerza, San Martín)

He arrived at the venue dressed in a tuxedo, with a “federalist” red poncho and driving a powerful car, branded Torino, a black vehicle with the Argentine flag painted on the hood, which implied a clear nationalist (and union of classes) symbology. The nationalist fervor that surrounded him exceeded that of a pop star: the screams of the participants (mainly, but not exclusively, female) matched the behavior of the followers of pop artists as well. In fact, his record sales in Argentina at the time surpassed those of the Beatles. Enthusiasm (on songs repetitively intended only to address federal issues) was more than patriotic fervor; it can be interpreted as a desire to fight in order to recuperate values and presences, which, referring to a past history, implied the current loss of them. In a portion of his performance he recites, naming them as great patriots of the nineteenth century, three names: “San Martín, Rosas, Brown.” That is the text of the recorded song. Live pronunciation of “Brown,” though, was intentionally distorted by not voicing the *a* of the British phonetic (*braun*, the most widespread in the country), instead pronouncing an *o*, closer to the American phonetics. But by saying “B-ron” with a slight pause in the *B*, what was heard (or seemed to be heard), in certain complicity with the public (not all noticed it), was “San Martín, Rosas, Perón.” A historical political line, stressing nationalism and anti-imperialist struggle, defended by the Peronist movement.

The assemblage that allows emotions to circulate here is quite complex, mixing, as usual, discourses, sounds, artifacts, stances, and the like. At the same time, the appearance and circulation of those affects end up “materializing” the different elements in particular ways and not others. Rimoldi Fraga arrives at the theater in a black Torino car model, with an Argentine flag painted on the hood. The scene exudes nationalism and promotes “love for the country” as its main affect. This is not only because of the Argentine banner painted on the car, but also because of the car chosen by Rimoldi

Fraga. The Torino was, at that time, the most powerful and important representative of the “*industria nacional*”—that is, cars originally designed and produced in Argentina, not models brought in by foreign car manufacturers operating in the country and reproducing the cars of their countries of origin and other countries where they produced cars. “Torino,” was an Argentine-designed car sold only in Argentina. And the features of the car expressed power over modesty, richness over functionality—in other words, leadership.

As mentioned above, the convergence of nationalism with Peronism in musical terms was a process that evolved, step by step, during the 1960s. The Luz y Fuerza concert occurred when such a process was almost complete, and the historical connection between Rosas and Perón clearly established, even though Rimoldi Fraga used a trick to display it during his concert. It was, in a way (or it was perceived as), a key code of war (if we remember the prohibition on mentioning Perón’s name during the “Liberating Revolution” of 1955), one that created empathy first and identification without explanation afterward. It is important to remember here that Admiral Brown is not a major historical figure in the Argentina patriotic pantheon (as are San Martín, Belgrano, Moreno, Rivadavia, Sarmiento, Roca, and others), and many Argentines do not even know his role in the Argentine struggle for independence; therefore, Rimoldi Fraga’s choice to mention his name was, in all probability (due to phonetic similarity) a hidden way to say “Perón.” These keys, or codes, understood and shared by the public, in addition to the euphoric and almost military rhythms of many of his songs, caused euphoria by releasing some sort of “repressed political desires.” In a way this is repeated also by the left, as discussed below, basically by discovering a hidden reality, sharing it with the public, and becoming a knowing participant in such a reality.

It is important to note here that this particular “triumph” of a “warrior” nationalism with aristocratic bias and clear Peronist insinuations induced reflections, discussions, and learning on the left; even if all these reactions were tinged with an obvious ideological criticism (Molinero 2011). This was a clear precursor, developing in motivation and musicality, through nationalism first and Marxism afterward, toward a participating euphoria that overcame the single joy of knowing.

AFFECTUAL DIFFERENTIATIONS

Euphoria to Participate

If, in the case of the leftist variant of the militant song, the song (as well as the militant singer) is considered essential for the development or almost “provocation” of history, and especially for the actualization of such a history in the desired direction—as struggle, resistance, and construction of real-

ities—it is because ideology and symbolic construction are essential to this fight and that development. If this is so, reality, usually characterized as “bad” must be exposed; explained; and, mainly, transmitted to the people/public who, by themselves, are not able to “find” its real structure (the *raison d’être* of their subordination and their hardships). For the Marxist perspective of the movement, explaining “the real structure” becomes an elucidation of the inevitability of the development of history that has a “scientific” character, and as such should “be taught.” “Awakening consciousness” was the catchword at that time. The explanation of that subjugated reality is not only a side mention, for example, in the show “*El cóndor vuelve*” (ECV). We can almost say that it is its very essence.

Hence the creation of a particular atmosphere is doubly necessary. The circulation of hope and excitement in a musical mass event may have many different forms, and what occurs in a more advanced stage, in which integral oeuvres, such as ECV, are produced, is that hope flows from the euphoric participation of the public attending the event. As we discussed above, something that Roberto Rimoldi Fraga (an active actor of the nationalistic version of the MSM) promoted from the stage, and the leftist branch learned how to use to motivate. This is a very idiosyncratic way in which emotions are produced and circulate in the different events of the Marxist branch of the MSM in Argentina.

Discovering a hidden reality, knowing that one is a participant in such a reality (or the euphoria of sharing it with a leader, as we saw in the nationalistic stance), while recognizing oneself in the light of the knowledge that this dark present will change for a better future (a certainty of a better forthcoming eventuality guaranteed by “science”) generates and circulates not only hope, but also euphoria. The proximity of what is seen, but at the same time (and more importantly) “felt” as something immediate, is the source of both hope and euphoria. This is so because the narrative of the show we are going to analyze below supposedly “demonstrates,” one by one, the various signals that history accumulates as supporting evidence of the effectiveness of these “scientific prophecies.” Prophecies that now are finally understandable, and make that eventual revolution, somehow, in the here and now; and that produces more than joy, it is motivation and explosion. It is the euphoria of living today the celebration of the future reality that, no doubt, will come. That “affection,” hopeful and elated, of the *essential being* sung, has at least two aspects that we should examine carefully: motivation and musicality.

Motivation Is Key

Communist hope is different from the Peronist hope. In the Marxist case, hope is supported as “militant hope,” or, in other words, a “certainty about the future” (almost another oxymoron) as it is a “guaranteed hope” for their

scientific inevitability. In that sense it is publicly “proclaimed” (in almost an “evangelizing” attitude), as it is sung to make listeners believe, after the enlightening has occurred. It is a *proposed* hope, or an *idea* of what “we think is going to be.” But guaranteed in its effectiveness. Although it is still something virtual, with the certainty that it will be actualized, it becomes something real. It is a hope without the agonizing doubt of the unexpected. In such a hope the only doubt is time, how long it will take to “get there,” but not the “there”; the “when,” not the “what.”

Meanwhile, in the Peronist case, the same hope is actually expressed, concretized in the “fidelity” to a leader. The euphoria shown by the participants of R. Rimoldi Fraga’s shows, then, is quite understandable; he is a kind of leader’s representative or messenger in that instance. Such a hope is based on the concrete Peronist experience of 1945–1955, either lived by the participants themselves, or by their parents.¹⁴ In terms of the vocabulary of the Peronist movement, hope is linked to “loyalty” to the leader—that is, the not-yet will eventually come if the Peronist masses follow, faithfully, without major disagreements, Perón’s leadership. In other words, it is an “experienced” and socially effective hope. It is an ongoing reality, although temporarily halted—that is, what “we are,” which in this case is actually “what we already have been, lost, and want to recover.” But, at the same time, it is a more distressing hope than the Marxist one, since it is not guaranteed. In this case “science” is not “on our side,” hence the future is open. Everything depends on political action, and that is where the figure of the leader replaces, somehow, science as a reassurance: the leader knows and he is going to be able to restore what we have lost. Hope is put on that leader, whose skills will transform not the virtual but this present into something similar to (and better than) what the past looked like. Virtual here is a memory of a real past. It is the song of “endurance” of the resistance.

Musicality

In both versions of the MSM, musicality is the other differentiation. Precisely because they are less rooted in experience, the emotions expressed in the Communist case (quality and artistic renown aside) seem to require more “work” in the song. The present or the immediate past is not prosperous, and hope is placed on something that is coming and has had no concrete manifestation in the country (yes abroad, but never in the country). The social denunciation, of course, is anchored in the realities lived by the audience the artists wants to reach with the “truth,” which more than the situation itself aims to show the cause of such a situation. But the not-yet, the “where” to which they want to go is not revealed. Hell is much easier to describe than paradise, which will never be the same for everyone. Hence artistic creation having to show, somehow, what cannot be referenced with a lived reality, must pro-

duce the promised enjoyment of the future possibility in a completely different manner. The description of the past reality actually lived in a key of longing does not work as an emotion that helps hope to circulate via the song. This puts a lot of pressure on the artistic product itself, in the sense that it has to be able to produce an intrinsic aesthetic enjoyment—almost a non-referential one that can somehow supplant reality; an aesthetic enjoyment that cannot be referenced as joyful because it was not really lived.

This seems to have resulted in (or at least helped to obtain) an admittedly remarkable quality as a trademark of the folk songs of the Marxist branch of the Movement, which has made them durable; very well-known all over Latin America; and, in some cases, famous worldwide. Their “universal” theme, their openness to “joy—in general—for a better future,” exceeding the specific case of Argentina, also collaborated in achieving such an extended popularity. We also have to take into account that there was a higher proportion of Marxists among the creators than among the people who voted for leftist political parties, and an even higher number compared to the Peronists, who had a greater following among the masses. In this sense, it seems as if the “sung Marxism” knew it had to go to the “other,” the outsiders, and to evangelize by means of the affects, creating (or supplementing with the space of an affective compatibility) what politics did not provide, at least not sufficiently. The artistic creations of the leftists far outweighed in importance the number of people who followed their ideas.

For Peronism, on the other hand, the symbols of enjoyment were already available. It was enough to use them and all the identifying affects and emotions were readily accessible. In terms of the different political stances we are discussing in this chapter, the relationship between artists and public goes beyond common interests, or a shared history, experienced or expected. There are “naturally incorporated” aspects in every cultural starting condition of the relationship between artist and public. If the proportion of Peronist artists is significantly smaller, it is also because their public is majoritarian. Every day, in any activity, fellow comrades surrounded other companions in unions, schools, and clubs. Culture and experience were already shared. Additionally, happiness linked to an actual, lived past already had specific and iconic cultural manifestations: the *marchita*, devotion to Evita, party cantitos, the Peronist drum, and the like.¹⁵ Music is then simply a better or worse vehicle used to convey the adaptability of an experience of happiness already lived, lost, and now longed for. If nostalgia was part of the affective mix, it was rapidly overcome by rage (due to the injustice of Perón being dethroned by a coup d'état), and hope in Perón's eventual return to power. Sounds mobilized, but they only really needed to confirm beliefs, reinforce atmospheres. Then, in terms of music, they performatively moved the bodies to the beat that the different moments required. Very often, the only thing that was needed was to hear the thunder of the Peronist drums to create an emotional

atmosphere that put into circulation hope among the people participating in public events or union rallies: “We are here, we are . . . , and many . . .”; we could almost say, “We have returned.” And the rumble of the drums affected the bodies present in the events, not only by the emotions they evoked, but also by the physical energy they transmitted. Its function cannot exclude the motivation to “march” in the sense of the rhythmic movement of military troops or street *murgas* (carnival troupes). The name “march” was also given to the songs that identify a political party (the Peronist march, the Radical march, etc.).

Those rhythms, those bodily associations with sound and vibration can be enjoyed if one is part of the party that calls for those sounds, but they are greatly disturbing to those who are not interested in participating in such a party. The Peronist demonstrations were celebrations indeed, before and even after their eviction from the government. And certainly they bother those who were not “inside” the celebration. Rhythm, in fact (as has been known for centuries), moves the masses and can induce fighting, which is why military bands are always distinguished by their drumbeat. The presence of a bass drum in a political demonstration was popular, exciting, mobilizing. The vibration of the drum became embodied, playfully, in each participant in the rally, and made them move in unison, producing an identification from the merely affective (affect in itself), beyond its significance as a Peronist emblem. Thus, the circulation of affect as vibration due to the beat of the bass drum entered a complex assemblage with the circulation of emotions triggered by the fact that the bass drum was identified as “Peronist.”

What vibrated ultimately was Peronism, affectively moving half of the country to struggle for Perón’s return (in “resistance”), and the other half, repulsively affected by those vibrations, to impede such a return at all costs. Later on it was identified with “the popular,” and people marching to their destiny was equated with a beating drum. And that was jubilant and exultant. To hear a bass drum in a rally was a testament to its resonance and popular importance.¹⁶

COMPREHENSIVE ANALYSIS OF INTEGRAL OEUVRES

Marxism of *El cóndor vuelve*

Let us consider some examples of the flow of emotions in this oeuvre (a two-hour musical with intermission) written by Armando Tejada Gómez, performed by him, César Isella, and “Los Trovadores” in 1973 in the IFT Theatre, which followed an earlier one, “Sung report on the New Song” (staged in 1972). We were able to analyze a noncommercial tape of the show recorded by the artists themselves, who kindly gave it to us. The first part focuses on the historical past and its making, the second on the reality of the twentieth

century, and their proposal for concrete action. Fear, endurance, power, reason, joy and euphoria, successively, and until the final explosion, lead the audience on a cognitive, but mostly sensed, journey. Let us take a closer look at what we are talking about.

The first words of the verses show that the paradise from which the history departs was not a perfect one, but by presenting all the people in history as if they were just one, “we” (referring to the people present at the concert) now, in the present, are portrayed as a continuity of “this one and only people.” In that way, we can witness and live such a history as uninterrupted, and when it was interrupted (because it was), to think of that history as developing in “stages” or, better still, in “brackets.” As Tejada wrote “*With an animal fear that still lasts*” since then, “we” are here: “*we, the Runas, watching the condor flying over the wind.*” The speech continues pointing out that throughout history native people always understood life as a *prayer to work*. And for that reason “*warriors were unnecessary to us until the ferocious warriors from the North began to arrive.*”

We have then a clear statement of who is the actor of the story: neither the Aztecs nor the Mayas, nor the Incas: the Runas.¹⁷ In other words, those Native Americans who were eventually conquered by the Inca Empire, signaling the presumptive origin of the current subordination to imperial power in general, actualized by different empires at different times, undergone by today’s Native Americans and their descendants. This stance is reinforced when the narrator mentions the cause of the Runas’ original subordination: the arrival of the “Warriors from the North,” in an unsubtle reference to the Incas but, by extension, to the Spaniards first, and the United States later on. And in the very first verse, *miedo* (fear) occupies center stage as one of the most important emotions that transverse Runa’s history from very early on, one that has created a whole disposition toward the world and nature that still pervades the Runas and their descendants. In this regard, “fear” materializes two different actors simultaneously. On the one hand, the Runas and their descendants’ habits and dispositions; on the other hand, the imperialists’ (as causing fear) habits and dispositions. “Fear” inscribes in the body a relation of subordination for the Runas and a relation of dominance for the imperialists of the moment. Fear materializes the bodies it “feels.”

But the narrator tells us that the Runas did not accept their subordination without resistance, justifying, somehow, their own use of violence: “*The warrior’s only nobility is to use force to protect the weak.*” So from that very moment, violence is justified in relation to the social sector it is used for, and it qualified as an early sign of fighting pacifism, as a justification for the prevailing bipolar discourse of the sixties: no to violence in Vietnam (an imperialist one), but yes to guerrilla violence because it “protects (or claims for) the weak.” Here the emotion that is mobilized in the scene is “caring,” which is used to actualize both, those who care (the warriors), and those who

are cared about (the people without power). “*You have to kill in defense of life if it is impossible to defend life otherwise.*”

But that would be only the prelude to the real affront. That of the superior technology and the imposed culture: “*But I can also say that never came so much death as when men came from the sea, because they were the ones who brought gunpowder, horses, and ships and only one God, to raze everything.*” Here the emotional stance moves from “fear” to “sadness,” because an entire culture was devastated by the violent irruption of the Spaniards. But just as the lost paradise is identified with peace, later on, obliterated, it is also equated with the song and singing. The song was attacked just like the original inhabitants of the land, but the song still resists, because the song is the basis of true resistance. In fact, singers/poets are identified from the beginning of history as essential in that version of the paradise: “*So singers, performed their profession. And they ate because of it, and they dressed because of it.*” So Tejada states his main point: “*The singer was then necessary to the being of the original peoples of America.*”

And through all that happened, the singer is still as necessary as he was. Moreover, he is the heart of that “secret prayer” in each particular case of the five hundred years since the conquest; the song is the one that stands up. Not the warrior, who is, (only?) an outcome of the singer. It is very interesting that the narrator claims that the origin of the mobilization of affect is the song, not the warrior; as if the warrior would need the song to produce in the first place “outrage” and “anger” in him in order to trigger his own willingness to act; and secondly, the mobilization of “courage” so that he may find his own courage. And through time, “*whenever people fall into oppression, it is the chant that passes like a clandestine prayer among the people to set up men’s dignity.*” That chant is definite: “*‘Motherland or Death!’ We say.*” And then again, “*the condor comes back.*”

And here “hope,” one more time, comes to the scene, now by means of songs that keep the spirits high in ruthless times. “Motherland or Death” is a very specific cry, and very current in 1973 (time of the show), not exactly the time of the Spanish conquest, (time of the “action in the show”). The poet tells us that the expression applies many times through history, and specifically as the song states, “*Whenever a people falls into oppression.*” That is why the song not only is announcing, denouncing, and summoning, but also is working as a clarion call to battle, which is its natural function. And to that purpose the song commits itself in music and lyrics to the maintenance of hope when the struggle is not favorable, and to sustaining fervor when it becomes promising. Examples of evoking euphoria are given all through the oeuvre. We choose here only some of them. A very good example is “Triunfo agrario” (Agrarian triumph), based on a musical rhythm of an army dance to celebrate triumphs: “*Father, this is a triumph from joy grown high, from your dreams made seeds now rises life.*” The song here is quite explicit

regarding what kind of emotion it wants to promote: joy, happiness. It is an elegy to joy, and, in the first verses the song addresses happiness in relation to life (using the metaphor of seeds and plants). To promote this image, it actually presents a sexual approach, and certainly not a feminist one. If land is female, then I can have it, possess and inseminate it, *fathering the day* through it. “*Life goes up, to the spike.*” For, he says, if the land is female, “*land is mine. Where dawn is born, I sow the day high.*”

The sexual and legal appropriation of the future, that is the land, is comparable to male possession. Strength (determination) is the basic emotion in this verse. But in the following verses it moves to an anticipated joy, via hope, in relation to a total, not a partial, change that it foresees via struggle on the horizon. As the *taba*¹⁸ does, also we (the listeners) must, to “*turn back the wind: The one who doesn’t change everything doesn’t change anything.*” This last stanza is related to an ideological “confrontation” with Peronism at the time, which was accused of being just “reformist” (i.e., seeking changes “within” the capitalist system, without breaking it), once more stating a struggle against gradualism in which all the “good examples” of change are linked to the Cuban revolution. No trace of Peronism is mentioned in the verses (even when Peronism just won the election after eighteen years of proscription).

Something similar occurs in “*Cuando tenga la tierra*” (When I have the land), a song praising the agrarian reform, which the poet preludes in ECV with words that reinforce the fate of a justified and urgent revolution: “*Because there is a whole continent of subjugated land. Fat dealers, endangered charcoal.*” There are areas, he tells us, “*where hunger chats with agony, and pewter slaved, and misery copper.*” All raw materials are, now and here, compromised: “*There is wheat sentenced to ominous prices, oil, which has its black spring threatened. Oranges exported with all the sun on their backs.*” But those are not the only tragedies: “*There are children who do not become men. They fall, before that.*”

And if the revolution is justified and urgent, it is the reason why the poet firmly believes that the “sadness” and “outrage” he is putting in circulation with his words will trigger the audience’s response in kind. If in the previous song the elements of nature evoked “life,” even *procreated* from the land, here the theft of those elements—natural resources: soil, carbon, pewter, copper, wheat, oil, oranges—generates and circulates particular affects—outrage and sadness—that materialize as the epitome of “death.” The lyrics of the song state: “*When I have the land, they will have it, those who struggle, teachers, lumberjacks, workers.*” And the song, consequently, “demands” in an electrifying rhythm and military march, a change in land’s ownership, just to restore life. “*When I have the land, I swear, seed, that life will be a sweet bunch. And in the sea of grapes, our wine . . .*” And what is the result of that change? “*I will sing, I will sing! I will sing!*”

Although the message refers to those who will benefit from the revolution, it is evident that an expropriation of the land will not affect sectors other than those who labor the land, except marginally. But emotions do not need, and often elude rationalization. The song is not propaganda for a government program; it is a call for action. But the song guarantees life again if the soil returns to the person who labors it; it literally “swears” it will happen. And what the agrarian reform will bring about, not by chance, is joy, happiness, a joy, in this particular case, that materializes grapes as joyfully “sweet.” And a song.

It is not coincidental that the first part of the show ends here, generic and motivating as it is. The second part addresses facts of recent history (even avoiding Argentine particularities) as if history were just one, a Latin American history. The show reinterprets history in a single stroke, from Tupac Amaru to Allende.

The second part, in fact, begins with the speaker’s affirmation that “*The suns of this century have seen the powerful explosion of people.*” He remembers “*the insurgent gallop of Emiliano Zapata and Pancho Villa in Mexico.*” But not only them: “*Colombia, Guatemala, Uruguay, Argentina, Brazil, Panama, Bolivia, they have been keeping vigil on Tupac Amaru’s weapons. And in recent suns, more contemporary years, Cuba dawned free territory of America! by the hands of its own people and in the direction of their winds.*” So he tells us also that while it begins to dawn in “*Peru and Chile. Here, on Argentine land, under the last sun of March people rescued popular sovereignty.*” While Cuba (a conventional Communist regime) is clearly mentioned as the epitome of the model to follow, Peru and Chile are considered countries that are on the “correct path” to a good regime. However, with the return of Peronism, after eighteen years of proscription, Argentina is recognized only as the return of the popular vote. No less, but no more than that. While this is an important event, it is not as important as the other examples of popular power. “*For every point of the compass the condor is coming back. That’s why the song continues flying.*” Hence, the bottom line is that everything is a unique process, at least by which history fulfills its promise. History, it seems, is there in order “*for the song to go on.*” As discussed below, Peronist songs do not simply self-assign such an importance.

Successive songs in the play include Venezuelan *zoropos*, *chamames* in Guarani, and Chilean *cuecas*. That Latin American framework gives symbolic advantages to the left, compared to Peronist liberation, which is exclusively national. The significance of the song itself is emphasized.

This is then the song, nothing less, nothing more. This is what the song brings to the culture of this time. And, then, in these years, under the long night of the dictatorship the song took its place next to the combatants, accompanying their dreams and their hopes their pain, and persecution. It was persecuted

and punished and forbidden . . . as its people were the same as its people, which were also persecuted and punished and their basic rights prohibited, the most sacred of their rights, rights that no one had granted them, rights that WE had conquered according to our own way of seeing and understanding life as we want to live it and the song, as being one, accompanied one by one those struggles. And hundreds of songs blew up everywhere throughout the entire map. And here in our land, the song escorted its people in combat.

Song, repeatedly mentioned, is not simply a fellow traveler. It is tough, as Peronism will present itself, but also clandestine and, as such, a fighter. That resistant function clearly established it as a protagonist and is what allows the song to wax euphoric. But in order to successfully build such euphoria, a road-stop on outrage is advantageous: outrage regarding people's suffering who were also persecuted and punished and their basic and most sacred rights forbidden. This makes the song's accomplishments greater and fully deserving the euphoria it triggers. But the song is not the people; there is a barrier. That song is like a leader or an enlightened condor (a kind of symbolization of the CP?) that should "open the doors to people": "*And forbidden . . . and in the shafts of oblivion. It knew how to strike in such a way as to be able to pass as a watchword through our ears and our mouths. And then we knew hope remained sounding in our hearts.*"

Here Tejada Gómez straightforwardly refers to the song as an emotional "holding form," not only a cognitive one. The clandestine songs circulating among the Runas while they were subjected by different empires were not only cognitive memory archives, but affective artifacts as well, keeping hope alive in hard times.

Some other features of the militant Decalogue are easily found in the show. For instance, the fighting pacifism that characterized the decade appears in a song ("If a Child You Want from Me") that ends with a final fury. The author of the lyrics states that if you want a child to play, a child is what he'll give you, because that's what the child wants. But, if you want a child from him just to kill that child, he prefers to say a bold NO: "*It's for this blood that I come to fight, this is my life, it'll always be. And for this 'fury' they name me sea, for my tenderness . . . better it be.*"

This song portrays the anti-imperialist wars of resistance, eliciting ova-tions and shouts from the public, something that the authors and interpreters of the song expected and for which they prepared in advance. Fighting against fights (another oxymoron) provokes euphoria, joining fury and tenderness. Euphoria was expected, even provoked, pushing all the emotional buttons that the authors and the interpreters of the song knew were going to have such an outcome.

Another song, "I Name You Liberty" shows resistance as a path to glory: "*I write your name on the walls of my city. Your real name. Your name and other names. That for fear I will not name.*" As the rhythm slows down, the

song takes a serious, gloomy, solemn, and clandestine tone, effectively reinforcing the circulation of “watchwords,” those forbidden names, almost referring to the functioning of guerrilla cells. The first verse and the musicians’ interpretation of them prepares the climate for the eventual outburst of euphoria: From the point of view of a victory (the return of democracy in 1973), the past is remembered with the emotion that was quite prevalent at that time—fear. Here “fear” as the emotion of the past, materializes “happiness” as the emotion of the present.

Then, as the rhythm accelerates, conveying ever-greater urgency to resist, stand up, fight for the certain future, for the long-awaited revolution, the following verse unleashes a list of things, events, and people, in the name of whom “liberty” is proclaimed as a current accomplishment. It is a tribute to all the people who deserve the song’s homage for different reasons: for hunted-down ideas, for the blows received, for those who don’t resist, for those who hide, and so on.

Interestingly enough, the list of people starts with those who did not fight against the dictatorship but, instead, did not resist or, even worse, hid themselves during those dark times. Mixed with the implicit heroism of the first two lines (the ideas that were hunted down and the beatings suffered) we have here some kind of “pity” regarding those who, even though they did not do anything to enjoy the current liberty, still benefit from it. Pity, however, is really overcome by resistance and courage from the singer who did name liberty, in spite of everything. The next verse continues with the list of things and people to whom liberty is proclaimed: “*For the fear they have about you.*” Also for your steps, that they watch, but especially, “*For the despot in charge now. For your children that they kill: Freedom I name you.*” If in the first verse “fear” is referred to as the emotion most people felt during the dictatorship, here fear reverses its course and is adjudicated to the dictators themselves: they fear liberty and all that liberty can bring about. “Outrage” is reintroduced in this verse in relation to the young people that the dictatorship killed to stay in power. Clearly after passing through fear and anger, because of the disappeared (“the children that you kill,” that would pale compared to the massive killings of the subsequent dictatorship), the greatest euphoria is brought about by the song that gives the title to the whole oeuvre, “*El cóndor vuela.*” Its ending is the summation of all the symbols of struggle (clearly Perón is not included in the Argentine case). Written by Eduardo Aragón and Armando Tejada Gómez, it is played in a quasi-march rhythm. It is quite euphoric indeed. The lyrics refer to the most important Latin American “liberty fighters” officially recognized by the Argentine CP: Prestes (from Brazil), Camilo Torres (from Colombia), Che Guevara (the Argentine Cuban revolutionary), Artigas (from Uruguay), Fidel Castro (from Cuba), and Güemes (from Argentina). The simple act of choosing a hero of Argentina’s independence in the nineteenth century, Güemes, to represent the country is

far from innocent: Tejada Gómez does not choose any of the leaders of the civil wars—the caudillos, or even Yrigoyen or Perón, at that time already winner of the election. This points to the fact that the lyricist is unwilling, for partisan reasons, to choose from Argentine history other more politicized warriors in order to demonstrate unity in combat, as he claims it was the case for the rest of Latin America. Of course the author includes living leaders like Fidel Castro and Allende. After Allende's murder in the coup d'état of September 1973, the lyrics were changed to “the sun has set,” instead of “the sun returns” to acknowledge that *allende*—“the beyond” in Spanish—had been cut short. After mentioning Allende the lyrics proclaim that the present witnesses the “return of the condor,” but this time for good, because now the entire South has to unite in a shout: “*Liberty, land and bread. Liberty, Liberty!*” (ending the show with big applause).

A political proposal (freedom, land, and bread), a historical claim (no to a new Guayaquil, metaphor for Latin American disunity), and a sense of a five-hundred-year search that is coming to an end (with the return of the condor to the Alto Peru—currently Bolivian territory) is the pinnacle, the culmination, the ecstasy, the emotional explosion that calls for the ovation (which the audience delivers). The encore is, “naturally,” “Canción con todos” (Song with everyone), summary of the wished-for Americanism, which also proposes a change in rhythm from the ballad style to an up-tempo galloping allegro that involves an almost physical impulse toward social change. If in all the previous songs we analyzed there is also a mobilization of affect via the rhythm, the melody, the harmony, and the interpretation (that we briefly noted here and there), in “Canción con todos” such mobilization of affect via the rhythm occupies center stage. The name of the second rhythm itself (“gallops,” which refers to a galloping horse) shows the importance of mobility and impulse in its rhythm, and a motivation to percussion. The final stanza, which moves to choral singing of both, the public and the interpreters—that is, explicit mobilization of collective affect—even today, almost fifty years later, still provokes the same emotions. In fact it has been performed in more than thirty languages by more than one hundred singers around the world, and even presented to Pope John Paul II in Chile while the authors were still banned there. Its lyrics invite collective singing, motivating brotherhood, unity, liberation: “*All voices, all of them, All hands, all of them. Any blood may be a song in the wind.*” Calling in and for the song, as a cry, of that “one” voice: “*Sing with me, sing, Latin American brother, free your hope with a shout in your voice.*”

And, not by chance, “hope,” which is meant to be liberated (as if previously imprisoned) by or through the song, comes back full-circle. Even though the song was written in 1969 under the dictatorship, and in 1973 Argentina was no longer under a military regime, hope was still necessary, the “not-yet” still had to be actualized, because Cámpora's government was

not the accomplishment of leftist hope but a minor road-stop on the way to the full achievement of a socialist future.

THE PERONIST CACIONERO PARA LA LIBERACIÓN

Let us turn to the performance of the *Cancionero para la liberación* by the Podestá Group, a group of Peronist artists of diverse backgrounds and not only music authors or performers. The show was also performed in a theater, but in this case commercially recorded as well, whereas a public record is unavailable in the case of *El cóndor vuelve*.

The intention of the oeuvre takes place, directly and explicitly, within a militant act. A very special one, that begins and ends with the Peronist march. It is a political undertaking that is sung and recorded, and to which people are summoned to participate and even star in, something that they eagerly do. The performers of the spectacle clarify this themselves,¹⁹ and the introduction of the show is explicit about that as well. And this is not an anomaly—that is, a militant gathering recorded and sold as an LP among a myriad of regular, mainly “artistic” concerts (recorded or not). On the contrary, it was the rule because the Peronist branch of the MSM, as a group, only performed in militant gatherings, not commercial theaters or dance halls. That is the reason why the assemblage in which affect circulated is completely different from the one in which *El cóndor vuelve*’s affect moved. And the differences start from the beginning of the event, in which no words are used to name the affective atmosphere everybody attending the event was expecting to ripen. Are words necessary?

Whistled Affects

The circulation of affect, moving emotions, is accomplished even without words. Which does not mean that it is achieved without “discourse.” In chapter 1 Vila develops the complex relationship between affects, feelings, emotions, and expressions. We will try to show, analyzing the introductory melody of the show, the implicit or unspoken yet recognizable relationships that are invoked by a simple whistle. There are “signs” that require no other codes than those of the group they belong to—a membership that is reaffirmed through attendance and participation. It is almost a religious ceremony, or a secular mass, as tango authors would say. The whistling takes place from afar, in passing, as if someone were walking and enjoying his music. Its internal beat quavers simultaneously producing identity, brimming with affect: the march “Los muchachos peronistas.” Timing (between the March 1973 vote that gave victory to FREJULI and the inauguration of Héctor J. Cámpora as president) is doubly valuable in finding the affects mobilized by this interpretation.

The Peronist march was born and performed thousands of times during the glory years of the first two governments of Perón (1946–1952, and the one interrupted by the coup, 1952–1955). Its single melody places us in a history with a meaning, “in paradise.” The one who whistles the *marchita* knows the lyrics of the song as well as the ones who, eventually, listen to it. In fact, one of its stanzas is illuminating in this regard: “*For that great Argentina that San Martín dreamed of . . . It is the actual reality, we owe to Perón.*”

What the march tells the audience (always in terms of an “us”) is crystal clear. In one stanza, with the rhythm of a military march, we are told why we are marching and singing: for a Great Argentina. However, this is not any Great Argentina but the one dreamed of by San Martín. That is, delineating a historical line that connects Perón to the national hero, the so called “father of our motherland,” who fought in the nineteenth century in Argentina, Chile, and Peru for independence from Spain. But what was only a “hope” for San Martín became reality under Perón. There is no need to imagine it; it is an *actual reality*. It is a concrete reality from “today” on (that is, the “now” when the march was created and sung). It is a reality that is not gratuitous. According to the march’s songwriters, we owe it to Perón. In other words, it is a program not only for the future, but also for an achieved present, with historical roots, and also a proposed way to move forward.

Comments from Rovito (one of the actors who organized the event) posted on the Internet are not then just by chance:

What you hear at the beginning is evocative of one of the first actions of resistance in which we participated more than 50 years ago, at the time of the overthrow of Perón. A group of companions went out at night to roam the desolate streets of our neighborhood, whistling “the *marchita*” as a testimony that we were still alive, that it [history] did not end there [with the coup d’état] . . . although we didn’t know yet how it would continue.

The word “evocative” has a double meaning here. On one side is a memory/homage to actions of the Resistance, even quite simple ones like roaming neighborhoods whistling the party song, an unmistakable one for any Argentine, which announced both membership and a program of action. Affects, in short, live, even the “negative ones” harbored by the “*contreras*,” as anti-Peronist opponents were called. What also is “evoked” here in the memory of whistling the Peronist march soon after the coup d’état against Perón are several emotions experienced in this act: “fear” of being incarcerated (it was prohibited by the first de facto government to mention or display any reference to Peronism); “rage” due to the injustice committed against a legitimate government that had people’s interests as its main goal; “despair” at living in desolated neighborhoods, which would change animated by musical action;

and “courage” because the danger implied in whistling the marchita required a lot of nerve.

The other implication, especially in times of consummated politicization when elections have already been won, enacts the same action, but oriented to a future mission that grows new “resistance,” builds new power, and generates new explosive effects. To evoke is to anticipate the “yet-to-come,” because the new Peronist government was only in its infancy and much had to be done to recuperate the “paradise” lost in 1955. On this occasion, the marchita allows the circulation of hope in order to materialize different kinds of people: Peronists moving from resistant opposition to government, anti-Peronists moving in reverse undergoing the opposite route; different kinds of practices (from singing the marchita as an oppositional stance to singing it as a chanted celebration); and, above all, different possible futures. Hence, the simple act of whistling a melody became an entire political program without words. If at the beginning of ECV Tejada Gómez educated the spectator by developing, narrating, and “explaining what really happened,” reiterating it at the end of the show, Peronism only needed to whistle, embodying everything that could be said in the act. If something really qualifies as an “affective conductor,” the Peronist march, even without words, quite fits the bill.

This vision of hope as a result of an experienced, interrupted history to be remade, certainly shows that if “hope” is an affect that opens a parenthesis in the present on something that does not exist, although one wants it to exist, then one anticipates it, at least vicariously, in the present. For this is how affect circulates, it does not belong to anyone, but it is everywhere. If in the 1950s the main affect circulating was paranoia, in the 1960s illusion/hope, in 1970s, at least in Argentina, it was struggle and achievement, considered as imminent. In this regard, different “structures of feeling” mediated how the marchita was whistled at different times, and what and how different affects circulated when whistling it. This affective circulation undoubtedly happened in a more “concentrated” way in circumscribed places (marches, concerts, as in this case).

Whistling is not simply a musical performance: as it goes up in volume, it increases the number of people whistling it and the sensation of mass marching it conveys, such as it is represented on the CPL LP. It is the way in which music affectively touches listeners’ bodies and fits them into a participation that only can be understood from minor to major, from solitude to collectivity, from introspection to projection, from reflection to subversion. That is how an increasing collective creation of a march plays a role in conquering the government first and real power afterward. The way in which the whistling of the march was staged in the concert and its recording is a clear metaphor of the history of the Peronist movement at that time. In that regard, the enactment of the marchita in that way helped embody this history in people’s bodies, buttressing its symbolic effect with an affective one. This

double effect is only distinguishable analytically, but not in the actual affective participation in the event.

Circulating Emotions

A detailed analysis of the codes that were being used can take more space than what is available in this essay. We are going to address the most significant ones.

From that initial memory of “the happiest days,” the *Resistencia* is chronicled. There are of course some links with the general history of the country (there is no such thing as “the general history of the country” without Peronism).²⁰ It is actually a game of sounds that proposes again the slogans of the Peronists acts and marches, showing, once more, the difficulty of trying to understand the history of Peronist militant music without understanding its relationship to party cantitos. Something that was an exception for the left wing of the movement, because only Horacio Guarany included in his music militant cantitos, for example, in “El pueblo unido” (The people united), became quite frequent in Peronist songs.

“Los muchachos de Perón” (Perón’s boys—not to be confused with “Los muchachos peronistas,” i.e., “The Peronist guys”) begins with a military snare drum roll, alluding to the caudillos, and thus forms a historical line, evident in the development of the militant nationalist song, that goes from them to Perón, a continuity that makes understandable the meaning of what is going on today. If Marxism puts its faith in the scientism of dialectical materialism that gives unique meaning to social evolution and to successive class struggles culminating in the final triumph of the proletariat, Peronism postulates the continuous fight between two sides, those who love the motherland and those who oppose it. Over time both sides have changed names, but not the historical presence—or reality and essence—of the opposition. Clashes reproduce themselves, because this interpretation does have room for the idea of successive actors. Hence the cantitos express precisely that permanent parallelism, and this military song, starting from the sound itself, refers to these unalterable protagonists: a military song tailored for a version of the continuous struggle in Argentina’s history. While there is no doubt that the song refers to Argentina’s historical background, it does so in such a way that it connects these, the Peronist soldiers or boys of the present, with the historic warriors, whom it extols. These certainly are not the same warriors as those referred to in the Marxism songs of *El cóndor vuelve*. “*San Martín, alongside to Juan Manuel [de Rosas]. With Chacho, Varela, the great Facundo, are glorious leaders, true and straight.*”

We see, however, that all this is done as a mere excuse with the purpose of self-identification, with the musical envelope of a march, with almost the same rhythm of the historic Peronist march. A song that includes a choir that

almost mimics the choirs of military training marches. “*Here they are, these they are, Perón’s boys.*” It is not a coincidence that it sounds distinctly military. Performatively, it seems as if the song moves your feet and makes you march. Listening to it, one moves one’s head and hands, even without waiting for the call of the march’s lyrics. And the musical march materializes, via the affects that are mobilized in the concert, the real “marcha” toward social change that the nascent third Peronist government was intending to undertake.

We understand, in this context, that the inclusion of a sung slogan is not by chance. What is more, we believe that the previous part of the song that precedes that slogan is just a “preamble” that justifies the slogan itself. It is just a way to prepare for the appearance of the emotionality of the actual marches on the streets with shouts of slogans, which are artistically reproduced without any kind of translation to the musical format called “song,” an explicit attempt to reintroduce into the musical concert the circulation of affects that usually occurs in public partisan events. It is popular, but also something more: almost designable as a “political folklorization,” since it is revalued by that essentialism, upgraded (while absorbing a new meaning), but attempting to reproduce the same affects. The recourse of including cantitos of the movement’s marches in the songs would also be used by other representatives of the Peronist branch of the MSM, such as Huerque Mapu in the *Cantata Montoneros*. Thanks to such a usage it is not necessary for there to be any further introduction, long speeches, or justifications. As we have already pointed out “including slogans not only ‘prepares a climate,’ but also seeks to be part of the process of ‘anonymity’ and collectivization that is attributed to folklore. What is popular is claimed to be (and is put in conjunction with) the national, the cultural, the immanent. Political slogans, for their fleeting essence, seek to legitimate themselves in the eternity of the song, assimilating themselves to folklore” (Molinero 2011: 373). That is to say, that it *is* (it shows itself as if), it *already* exists inside people, and wants to *stay* there. It does not need to *get in* (called “entrismo” in the political jargon of the time), that is, to find acceptance by a foreign mass to which you want to belong.

From Sadness to Liberating Euphoria

Meanwhile, in “La calle de la cárcel” (Jail street), the song and the singer address Mary and Elvira, the archetypical common neighbors who suffer the persecution of their militant family members. The hope of having them removed from prison is presented as a short step within the long path of resistance, a step that summons and, if it does not bring euphoria in the Communist sense, brings shared emotions and a call to direct action. The emotion that materializes people and things by inducing a particular way of

“feeling” them in the first part of the song seems to be “sadness.” Even the hope to, at least, be able to see a loved one who is incarcerated (which, sometimes, was denied by the guards, using different excuses) transmits sadness.

Prospective visitors to the prisoners, those who “*go through the jail street*” are “*Father, mother, wife, girlfriend, friend.*” And sadness, one more time, tints the entire scene. This is a very interesting list, as it does *not* include “boyfriend” or “husband.” Thus, almost all of the song’s characters are women: “*Women who bet everything without anybody being suspicious of their bravery.*” The militant woman is still only a man’s sidekick; she is not yet valued by herself. It seems to be implicitly understood that if she is a woman, she is weak and can only wait, even if she does it so valiantly. Furthermore, she waits and hopes almost secretly. There is no suspicion or hunch of her real bravery.

It is a waiting, then, but not just any kind of waiting; “*their waiting is a bridge to liberation.*” Here the waiting is connected to the Marxist “hope” because it is related to something more than just the return to what has already been experienced. It implies engaging in a new journey, a “better” one. But what we are interested in pointing out, beyond the textual analysis, is what the music of the song adds to it in terms of feelings and emotions, which ultimately mediate much of the meanings of the lyrics. The song is composed in a slow rhythm, which precisely corresponds to the litany of waiting that the lyrics stress, and expresses itself using diminutive terms, such as the quote about the “little packet” (usually with food) that family members brought to jail. Then, at the moment the song talks about the jail street, the music rises in intensity, with a snare drum in the background that resembles a march, a martial march once more, linking again the description of a reality with the call to stage an organized struggle, even with its soft “cry for freedom” that appears to be uttered almost surreptitiously. But the music, almost unchanging, changes, when the lyrics state that it “*is Don Pedro, Doña Elvira, with their children . . . going . . . we ALL go.*”

This precise moment is where, rhythmically agitating, the music calls, moves; it is known what it requests/orders/promotes without further explanation. The final stanza, which states, “*people go!*” is already an acclaimed cry of, for, and by everybody, as in a rally, referring to the night of May 25, 1973, when a huge popular demonstration outside the prison of Villa Devoto (the most emblematic prison of the country), literally forced President Campora on his “inauguration day,” to dictate a decree releasing all political prisoners. Here the emotions evoke change, following the change in the music, and euphoria replaces sadness, a euphoria linked to the possibility of collectively liberating the prisoners from jail.

To show an example of a song that survived the epoch of its inception and still is remembered today (none of the other songs of the show had the same

fate), written by Piero, we analyze “Para el pueblo lo que es del pueblo” (For the people, what rightfully belongs to the people).

Dancing Irony: Listen to the Stanza, Sing the Choir

At the point in time at which this song was performed at the concert it was only partially known, but it became very famous afterward (and many people suspect that this is the reason why Piero was persecuted by the military and forced into exile in the mid-1970s). It is the only song from the CPL that lived by its own merit. It deserves a more extensive analysis (partially done in Molinero and Vila 2014b), but here we only present some of its features. The beginning of the song presents a portrait of the “historic moment,” but also a diagnosis for the solution of its most important problems. If everything was mishandled, and only by three people, the return of people’s power was clearly the right path to take. In a word, Democracy: “*Liberty was a matter, badly handled by three. Liberty was an Admiral, General or Brigadier.*”

That power and freedom should be restricted to only three people, or the mere fact that eating was considered subversive, and joy was equated to violence, as stated in the lyrics, shows the contraposition of the political system of the military with people and their rights, as does the music and its joyful rhythm, which though thoughtful, alternates with the choir calling more for liberation than freedom. But still there is another contrast: the stanzas of the song invite people to *think*, but the repeating chorus invites them to *dance, jump, cheer* (which is what most people did and the recording of the concerts clearly shows). The guitar marks it, and, eventually, step-by-step, the music infects the public as a contagion that was sought by the performer and then actually achieved. The description of a sad reality can be an individual endeavor, but overcoming such a reality will always be a collective task.

As Pablo Vila pointed out elsewhere (Vila 2014), this song was successful precisely because it resonated with many narrative identities and their articulations. But we also see in the above analysis that the affective mobilization is not indifferent to such a success (see chapter 1). Such a mobilization of affect, through the rhythm of the song, is instrumental in the interpellative power of the lyrics; and this is not by chance, because the emotional investment in one’s narrative plot cannot be disentangled from the emotional investments we attach to things, people, events, or cultural artifacts, like songs. What we have here are affects and emotions playing a central role at both sides of the encounter between music and people, and this is quite palpable in the live recording of the concert. From the point of view of the identitarian articulations and sketches of narrative plots that people bring with them to the music concert, emotional investment in previous characters and story lines are crucial to understanding their persistence in people’s

current repertoires. At the same time, those storylines and characters are not exclusively rational accounts of rational actors playing a well-rehearsed rational script. On the contrary, both, story lines and characters, are inundated by affects and emotions. In fact, rational accounts and rational actors cannot even be disentangled from emotions and affects; as Jaspers (2011: 286) points out: “Feeling and thinking are parallel, interacting processes of evaluating and interacting with our worlds.” In addition, though, from the point of view of the songs, as we have been addressing extensively in this chapter, emotions are continuously mobilized via the different components of the songs: its music, lyrics, and performances.

If this is so, then, the resonance that occurs between identitarian articulations, narrative plots, affects, emotions, and music is quite complex because it includes, all the time, a particular assemblage of cognition and emotion *on both sides of the social encounter* that is very difficult to disentangle. In other places we have tried to show how this complex entangling of signification and affect works in terms of processes of identification (Vila 2015). In this chapter we have been advancing clues on how this process, by which what is being said and done when a song is performed, continually goes back and forth from signification to affect and vice versa. In the case of the song we are analyzing here, it is also important to remember the quasi-humorous stance that Piero proposes via the lyrics, the music, and the performance. Even though the lyrics are talking about very serious matters (authoritarianism, poverty, repression, and the like), they have plenty of ironic humor interspersed here and there. And the music and the performance transmit humor as well. We have to remember that the song was not previously well known at this event, and the event occurred *after* Campora won the election. Therefore, in some ways, it is a celebration song, denouncing the atrocities of the past, but also celebrating the success of the present and, above all (because the new government was only starting its mandate) the adventurous possible future.

Because the song practically made its debut that night, in each part corresponding to a stanza’s beginning, the public was silent, without applause. The public did not yet know the song as it would be known afterwards and even as it is today. It calls for attention because the lyrics are advancing a new description, using more information and novel reflections, before collectively merging and reiterating in the massive, repetitive, and militant slogan of the choruses. The change, from attention to participation/protagonism is accepted and performed in an accomplice duo between Piero and the public. Pure affect in sync. Slowly at first, probably because the public did not know the refrain, but increasingly boisterously when the refrain is repeated, as it is done many times in the song, after a very brief new description/denunciation of the past. As a matter of fact, the entire structure of the song seems to have been done in order to continuously highlight the refrain, which is repeated

seven times in the song, something completely unusual in popular songs of the time. In other words: every time a criticism of the past is briefly addressed (many times with some humor), the refrain asking for “liberation” is repeated: everything leads to “liberation,” to the point that the song ends with a continuous repetition of this word.

The demand for freedom, food, education, and hope, and the fact that it was “forbidden to forbid” is expressed in different parts of the song, which always leads to the chorus clamoring for “liberation.” But not only that: the description of the oppressive situation is exaggerated, ironized, and, at a particular moment in the song, intentionally overacted; and it is done ironically. The emotion that this part of the song tries to put into circulation implies a moral superiority of the listener over the stupidity of the military system. This reaffirms not only anger for the situation, but also the rational impossibility for the oppressors to maintain the system: “*It is prohibited to be born. Won't be too much Admiral? Not at all Colonel.*”

This is a dialogue/decision that the song re-creates, as in a conspiratorial climate, of a power exercised by only two people, in closed circles and decisional foreignness. It is unsustainable, but is also a matter of knowing that you have to wait, for in time this system can only collapse. But if the people have patience, the country instead was auctioned and now it has to be put back together again. However, with the people on the street, the homeland has been liberated. “*The people won it.*” The message is clear and is completed with the central slogan, in a repetition that penetrates, sticking again (something that Piero surely hoped that the audience would carry in their ears, repeating it and becoming a performative memory: “*For the people what rightly belongs to the people*” . . . and “*Liberation!*”).

Circular Reconstruction—Continuing the Journey: Hope with the Leader

The end of the show, far from euphoric grandiosity, is a slow march (as were the eighteen years of resistance), a memory, and a reassurance. There is no need to convince anybody; it is enough to remember and go on. The difference in attitude (and its musical outcome) with Communism in songs is notorious, hence the way in which the show ends.

Working people, the humble people of the motherland are standing. And they will follow Perón, the leader of the people, because he has raised the banner of redemption and justice of the working masses. They will follow him, despite the opposition of the traitors, from inside and out. The *vendepatrias* [nation sellers, for traitors] that sell themselves for four coins, are also on the lookout to strike at any time. But we are the people. I know that if people are alert they are invincible, because we are the nation itself.

The emotions that the discourse tries to activate among the public are quite complex here. On the one hand we have “courage”: people are on their feet confronting their enemies. On the other hand there is something that is felt by any Peronist (difficult to explain to a non-Peronist using ordinary affective words) when the word “loyalty” is addressed to Perón. Such a feeling complexly mixes satisfaction, joy, and hope in different degrees. But fear is present as well, materializing a particular social actor: the “traitors” who are working to derail Perón’s political project. But naming the traitors in the way the discourse does also brings about another emotion that complexly articulates with fear in the way those traitors are particularly materialized: “disgust.” And the speech ends with a “guaranteed hope” quite different from the one advocated by the leftist branch of the movement: Perón’s project (the people’s project) will ultimately prevail because victory is guaranteed if people struggle together against their enemies. The future is nearby. Still, it is reassured. If people follow Perón it is not for anything, or blindly, but because he has raised the banner of redemption and justice of the working masses. And the speaker (“I know that if people . . .”) connects himself to the collective (“*we are the people . . . the nation itself*”).

The last song is slow, unhurried, almost religious, but still clearly a military march. With a counterpointing duo of women and men, who respectively utter short sentences such as: Peronist people have a tough skin. Eighteen years of struggle, tough men are those who carried out the journey and the present outcome: “*Companions, it’s already shining the sun, in our hands.*” Reviewing history: “*It was the first revenge of our wounded history. Ashes, flesh and blood. Young gentle women accompanied them.*” Touching words: “*Evita waking us up with a kiss. It’s already shining.*” In those ways, the verses, brief and direct, advance a message that signifies, in this particular case: people’s resilience (via the metaphor of having “tough skin”); the struggle against different dictatorships; hope in the very-soon-to-arrive social change (using the metaphor of the dawn); revenge after so many years of persecution and tragic story (addressed using single words that synthesize the meaning of war); love, and the like. But, we think, much more importantly, those simple verses not only signify, they mobilize emotions as well; as a matter of fact, they emotionally affect much more than signify (knowing, as we have pointed out many times in this chapter—and developed in full in Vila’s chapters in this book, that signification and affect are very difficult to disentangle from each other). And notwithstanding the fact that we cannot talk about people’s affects and emotions *in general* for all the reasons advanced in chapter 1—that is, the way in which different identitarian articulations, signifying apparatuses, structures of feeling, and affective atmospheres condition how people “feel”—we still can advance some ideas of how we think affects and emotions were mobilized in this particular concert. This is done not only by taking into account our own affective reactions to the music

performance being analyzed, but also, and more importantly, basing them on the emotive reaction clearly registered by the live recording of the event.

In that regard, when listening to the last song of the concert, we (and we can imagine and perceive through the recorded reactions that the audience of the concert felt in very similar ways) can really “feel” in our own bodies the tough skin of the resistant Peronists, the hope that they felt when everything seemed possible in the first days of Cámpora’s government, the feeling of revenge as well as the sadness of remembering the atrocities of the past, and the love that Evita’s figure elicits among Peronists. In other words, the simple verses of the song materialize particular bodies and objects not only by the way they signify them, but also by the way they direct them to be “felt.” Men and women sing together the exultant main points of the discourse, those that augment the charge of affect of artists and audience alike: Perón, Evita, the blood of the dead, victory as “final fire,” liberation, the contribution of religion (the party itself as a communion wafer), the Liberated Great Motherland (that is Latin America), to war! We can see now that part that shows the union of the parts and the whole: Perón at the front,²¹ safely leads us, Evita sustains our strength. The blood of the dead washes our eyes. Go ahead! Let’s go everybody, companions. Until the final fire of victory it summons, in a word, our liberated motherland. To war, our motherland, fair, Free, and Sovereign.

The show ends with the traditional recorded version (although without Hugo del Carril’s singing) of the Peronist march, which on the LP (commercially distributed) is omitted. The beginning is the end. There are no barriers between those on stage and their audiences in front of the stage. Remember the origin, quite close, to which one wants to return, marching, to the three Perón movement banners (a homeland that is socially fair, economically free, and politically sovereign).

CONCLUSIVE COMPARISONS

We have presented in this chapter a first attempt at applying to the militant folk song of Argentina, in the third quarter of the twentieth century (the one most characterized by the presence of politics in its society in general and art in particular), the theoretical tools that focus on emotions, feelings, and affects that characterize what became to be known as the “affective turn.” To provide a basis from which to supplement or adjust more detailed findings, we have tried to show not only the presence of feelings and emotions in the songs and performances, but also the differences that characterize this presence and performativity in the two most relevant politico-musical trends of that time.

Even if the two variants mentioned above proposed the category “people,” one (the Peronist one) does not worry about justifying it or tracking such a category through history: the people “are”; merely mentioning the category materializes it, apparently, in a unique and absolute way. The way in which “the people” is articulated in this particular political stance, as working within a particular signifying apparatus, conditions how affects are launched and mobilized by the Peronist branch of the movement. In addition, the voice of the people is the voice of the country itself. The other side, the leftist one, looks for (or even constructs) the “people,” from the beginning as a “way of being” (nonviolent, worker, seeking not to be exploited and based on culture), mobilizing affects in ways quite different from the Peronist variant. In other words, both voices express themselves in a particular and differential affective way through their songs. That is why in CPL the singer does not appear as a main protagonist or essential character of the story of “the people” to be told. Perón is present, of course, as a political leader, but there is no a specific individual voice, even less the voice of a privileged singer. This is quite different from the case of Marxism: the singers are the people, or perhaps their best representation, their “enlightened” representative, their guide or vanguard.

For that reason we have shown that protagonists, in the case of CPL, are real characters called by name, or generic social categories; but in each case they are extremely recognizable, not symbolically created or gendered, as in the case of ECV with the Runa or the singer (with the exception, of course of the final statement of the ECV, which, not by chance, is a plain political proposal).

What is more, CPL is practically a collection of appeals (almost as in a campaign for an election) to social sectors that both belonged to and were necessary for political construction: such as a Militant (who “organizes” and spreads the word of directives, or otherwise takes arms), or María (companion woman who visits the imprisoned militant); or Don Pedro and Doña Elvira. Priests of the Third World are also protagonists, like the “Peronist girl” (*pebeta peronista*), a student (the one who sings the Peronist folklore). The latter almost represents a reconciliation (with a hint of triumph) in relation to the confrontation—“espadrilles yes, books no”—very prominent in the first Peronist government, when students were among the social actors who opposed Perón the most.

In ECV, meanwhile, what is extremely recognizable (in addition to the militants killed by the different military dictatorships, addressed as the most combative constituency) is the Marxist presence in Latin America: Allende, Fidel Castro, Che Guevara, and Camilo Torres are examples of that; as is the international war-games of the Cold War. Bureaucrats of the OAS are enemies, while clarity is expressed by Marx himself, as is quoted in the show, and so on. All that configures a gravity center closely identified with the

Soviet polo strategy, rather than with specific characters and local problems of Argentina.

Both movements auto-identify their position, in the world and in time, and both agree about the imminence of revolution. Consequently, each one uses musical and lyric affections, which mobilize artists and audiences in very different ways. In one case, as we saw, certain key moments are highly significant. A simple “passing” whistle is enough to start, the drums can move one to make percussion with one’s own body, and party slogans will “push to march” in euphoria—but at the same time in familiarity—toward a hope for a time that was already lived, just yesterday. The crowd does not need to learn anything more than what they already know and to be what they really are. They have just to remain what they are, and to do what the “marchita” says: to follow General Perón.

Significant moments appear in the other case as well. A distant thunder, as distant as the origin of the “Runa” (intellectually provoked and provocative), is introduced. A name (Runa), that was not even popular at that time, is given to the protagonist. In fact, as a name that was unusual, it created a kind of “inferiority complex,” just for not knowing it, and thus the need to respond to the interpellating artist, who knows more than we, and can illuminate us. Using a name with which aborigines from this region of Argentina named themselves implies what one needs to learn in order to be, and to be what the Condor will show.

The strength of music and poetry encourages more lucubration and more development. Its consequent quality, added to its international diffusion, gave more durability to this communist vector. Intense and immediate applicability and “natural” integration into popular life gave more empathy to the Peronist vector. At the same time, while heralds of a political message that was extremely minoritarian, some of the artists of the Communist variant of the Militant Song Movement (Mercedes Sosa, Atahualpa Yupanqui, Horacio Guarany, etc.) eventually became central figures in the Argentine folk pantheon. Meanwhile, being one in the multitude, and then only messengers of a majoritarian political stance, contributed to the fact that the artists of the Podestá Group never entered such a pantheon at all. And this discrepancy is a very peculiar way in which signification and affect interact with each other, sometimes in very complex ways.

The Peronist masses had many difficulties connecting their political identities with some of the political messages coming from the leftist’s songs; while they were quite open to those political messages that coincided with their own search for social justice. However, in relation to many leftists’ songs, there was a clear cognitive barrier between one and the other. Therefore, some of the interpellations coming from those songs could not pass the sieving filter of their narrative identities, in the sense of “modifying them.” But, at the same time, they could not “feel” either what those songs wanted

them to politically “feel.” And this, obviously, was instrumental in those interpellations’ failure to enter people’s identitarian articulations and narrative identities. However, as we pointed out above, at a completely different level (not excluding music qualities articulated to other—nonpolitical—topics, advancing different emotions and discourses in their repertoires), most Peronists ended up liking the music of Mercedes Sosa, Yupanqui, and Guarany. Obviously, other proposals of those same artists (other interpellations but, more prominently, other affects) were able to connect with the different identitarian articulations and narrative identities of the Peronist public that also liked them.

In the case of the CPL artists, it is obvious that their political message did not have any problem connecting to the narrative identities of their Peronist followers, well prepared to accept the interpellations offered by them. The same can be said about the affects that their songs mobilized. However, none of those artists eventually became an important figure in Argentine music (only Piero and Marilina Ross had a significant further trajectory, but not as folk or even Militant Song musicians; and the former directly became a Peronist officer of the Buenos Aires province during the 2000s, and almost totally forgot his artistic endeavors during the Peronist government of those years), showing how their impact on the audience was linked to a political immediacy that did not resist the passage of time.

Both sides of the Militant Song Movement, beyond whatever discursive analysis of them that can be done, and that we have done elsewhere, indicate the value and strength of affects on the militant song.

NOTES

1. Reading an early version of this chapter George Yúdice (many thanks George!) pointed out: “There is an important issue to deal with here. You distinguish between “political action” and “songs” and “symbolic meaning/emotion.” However, there is affect in all of them, although one can’t be sure it is the same affect as when all the elements form part of an assemblage. In any case, if political action is first, it has affect. Is that the same affect as that of the songs or of the meaning that one derives from the lyrics? In other words, is the affect the same at all points and times of an assemblage?” Our answer is no. The affect is never the same at all points and times of an assemblage. Affect circulating in a music concert, and affects linked to political action have their own distinctive intensity, even though many times, such an intensity can be named with the same emotion (hope or joy in our case). What we also think is that in an assemblage such as the one we are talking about in this chapter, in which music works together with political action, the different charges of affect “boost” each other. Hence the importance of the political song in the process of circulation of affect.

2. We will see below that, in order to find some antecedents of the not-yet yearned for, the leftist variant of the movement has to go back five hundred years in order to mythically reconstruct a pre-Inca communal way of life.

3. The ten Decalogue topics that characterize the MSM in Argentina are: indigenism, Americanism, hopefulness, historic reinterpretation, social complaint, fighting pacifism, social leadership, role of the song, and explicit political proposal.

4. We are not claiming here that everyone (either artists or public) in the Peronist branch of the MSM had the same idea of what Peronism was all about. The meaning of Peronism and the Peronist experience were always meanings in constant flux—that is, Peronism was always a contested category that took on multiple meanings. What is important for our argument here is that in their “preaching,” militants seemed not to need any more precision about the meaning of Peronism: there was a core of meanings and affects that, more or less and in different degrees, most Peronists in the late 1960s and early 1970s shared and brought to their encounter with the music of the Peronist variant of the MSM that, somehow, conditioned the way in which they were affected by that music.

5. “Popular,” as a term, is quite complex, and in Latin America has been subject to different characterizations through history. However, just as a glimpse of the effects of that term, we quote one leading cultural studies scholar:

“The notion of the popular was used by Gramsci in his diagnosis of the rise of fascism in 1920s Italy. . . . In his estimation, progressive Italian intellectuals were out of touch with the social forces, particularly the ‘popular masses,’ necessary for the construction of a ‘national-popular’ consciousness or ‘collective will’ that in turn were necessary for revolution. . . . The history of the relationship between the left and popular masses has not been a felicitous one in Latin America, for leftist intellectuals and indeed revolutionaries . . . have not understood the specificity of popular subjects’ historical, geocultural and ideological formations. Since these formations are rooted in social, political and cultural struggles on a national or regional scale, socialist or revolutionary strategy must permit the development of cultural policies in which popular groups participate” (Yúdice 2001: xix–xx).

6. Works typical of Latin American folk music and characterized by their length, thematic unity, and unified naming, performed by one or more interpreters (see Molinero 2011: 153.)

7. The Movement of the New Song was a group of artists (Mercedes Sosa and Tejada Gómez among them), from Mendoza (an Argentine Province) later on extended to other actors in different regions of the country, who contributed with their group action, instead of the “individualist” previous attempts, to the political aim of the song.

8. Reading a previous version of this chapter George Yúdice, correctly, pointed out: “This is what the singer-songwriters and party members thought about the reception of the songs. But was this really the case? Did the audience already know what the reality was that the songs referred to? . . . In other words, as analysts of popular songs, you really can’t explain the experience of listening to the songs only from the perspective of what singer-songwriters and party leaders intended. But, of course, you can’t do retroactive ethnography back to the ’50s and ’60s, unless you get access to listeners’ reactions.” We are completely aware of this issue, and in all our previous research we always did some kind of ethnographic fieldwork to gauge audiences’ responses. However, what we wanted to do in this chapter is to see how, from the point of view of the authors and performers, affects and emotions were put into circulation—that is, what kind of affects and emotions they “expected” to trigger among the public that followed them. Additionally, we both were spectators of these different performances and, in many places of the chapter, are doing an auto-ethnography regarding what kinds of affects and emotions we were experiencing in them. Memory is always difficult in that sense. Listening to the recorded version of both oeuvres helped us to appreciate some of the affective flow as well.

9. Antonio Tormo was the most important folk singer of the late 1940s and early 1950s. He was the first music performer to sell more than one million copies of a single in the early 1950s.

10. Perón went into exile in 1955 and was only allowed to return to the country in 1972.

11. “Caudillos” were informal leaders fighting the civil wars of the nineteenth century. Their leadership came from their bravery and charisma. They usually commanded a kind of gaucho “militia” in the provinces, and they mostly opposed the Unitarian forces. For the

official version of Argentine history they were “barbarians.” For historical revisionists, on the other hand, they were “defenders of the motherland.”

12. After the war of independence from Spain, Argentina suffered a long period of civil war between two sides that proposed two different forms of organization for the country. The “*federales*” (“Federalists”) pretended an autonomous organization of the various provinces (states) with a central government that worked as a representation of the provinces’ wills (much like the United States); the “*unitarios*” (“Unitarians”), instead, proposed a single central government that, in turn, had “delegates” in each province, very similar to the previous colonial Spaniard system. Rosas was one of the most powerful federal leaders, although being the governor of Buenos Aires at the same time.

13. “Martín Fierro” was José Hernández’s long poem, written in two parts and published in 1872 and 1879 respectively. It deals with the exploitation of the gaucho especially after the inauguration of constitutional governments. However, the popularity of Martín Fierro was immense at a time when few audiences could read. A lot of novels followed its pattern. Around Argentina’s centennial the poem was re-signified and this fictional but representative character became a symbol of dignity and Creole character, and the book became a cornerstone of Argentine literature as well.

14. Of course, such an “experience” could also be vicariously “recuperated,” “believing” the experiences of others who truly enjoyed the Peronist decade.

15. A very well-known saying points out that when a day is wonderful and sunny, “It is a Peronist day.”

16. And so the expression “auto-bombo” [self-drum] means giving importance to oneself (i.e., to play the drum to oneself, is not quite bragging, but is to extol, by multitudinously supporting oneself).

17. Runa is a word of the Aymara Quechua language that means “people” or “human being.” This gives the word a generic meaning, referring to the aboriginal ethnic group located in the present territory of the Argentine northwest.

18. Short cow’s foot bone used in a traditional gaucho game. Up or down means winning or losing.

19. In Rovito’s own words: “The themes included in this songbook were written especially for the occasion, and were part of one of the many political and cultural actions developed by the Peronist militancy in the context of the return of General Perón to the country. The recording of the songs was performed live at the theatre of the Luz y Fuerza trade union (Peru 800), with the presence of an audience that manifested with their own slogans, and participated in its realization.”

20. Song no. 7: “La matanza del basural” (Landfield slaughter), by Daniel Barberis; and no. 3: “La calle de la cárcel” (Jail street) by Marilina Ross and María Maristany, present the history of leaders shot in 1956 and the jailed militants afterward. Song no. 9: “Evita está presente” (Evita is present), by Marilina Ross, addresses the historical feminine leader; and songs no. 11 and no. 12 mention actual and electoral circumstances. The remaining songs of the CPL refer to more general characters of the Peronist movement.

21. The Spanish version talks about “FRENTE” in capital letters, referring to the political alliance Perón built to win the 1973 elections, the FREJULI (Frente Justicialista de Liberación).

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Chapter Eight

Music, Dance, Affect, and Emotions

Where We Can Be

Pablo Vila

Since early on in my career (Jelín and Vila 1987) I have been a fervent advocate of a dialogical social science. I understand research as a continuous, open dialogue between the researcher and the field, as well as between the researcher and his or her colleagues. In *Podría ser yo* (1987) what we did with Elizabeth Jelín was to photocopy an initial draft of the book and share it with different groups who had been very enthusiastic in their participation in the interviews, along with the photographs that originated the book. I was totally convinced that the reaction to that draft (many times quite negative—when I returned to discuss the draft with one of the groups its leader welcomed me with “Pablo, people in this neighborhood are going to kill you for this book!”) should open the book, which is why the first chapter of the book is a criticism of the rest of it, something that Shevy Jelín rapidly agreed to.

In *Crossing Borders: Reinforcing Borders* (2000) I changed, a little bit, the dialogical format. Instead of sharing the entire manuscript with some of the groups that were discussing the photographs of the border, I discussed with them the most important narrative plots they had used during the original interviews to separate themselves from the “despised” border actors they wanted to be detached from. Chapter 6 of that book reflects the (in a few cases, very negative) reactions of the people that participated in the process of discussing the narrative plots they displayed in the original interviews.

Another version of my dialogical approach (this time following the leading role of Pablo Semán, who proposed the option to me) can be seen in *Troubling Gender* (2011). There we gave the manuscript to a very well-

known Argentine anthropologist, Marita Carozzi, for her to take a critical look at the book in a postscript. There Marita advanced very important new ideas about the material we presented in the book that greatly influenced my current understanding of how embodiment works in terms of popular music and processes of identification.

In my *Music and Youth Culture in Latin America* (2014) I attempted a totally different dialogical route. This time I used one of the chapters of the book (the wonderful chapter by Rossana Reguillo) as a springboard to illustrate my theoretical proposal of how narrative identities work in relation to popular music affordances.

In this chapter I will attempt still another possible variant of dialogical social science. What I am going to do here is to reread the case studies presented in the book from the perspective of the theoretical discussion I developed in chapter 1. My rereading will take the shape of an open reflection on what the chapters “look like” from the point of view of the different theories of emotion and affect I described in that chapter. The different contributors to the book took a particular stance regarding this theoretical field, which I respect. However, I think that it is a valuable exercise to see how the different cases they brilliantly analyze can be approached from “the other side of the fence,” so to speak.

Citro and Cerletti—“The Embodiment of *Gozo*: Aesthetic, Emotion, and Politics in the Indigenous Song-Dances of the Argentine Chaco”

In their wonderful chapter Silvia Citro and Adriana Cerletti, talking about the *Nmi* and the *Rueda*, claim that “the sensorial-emotional ways of experiencing these song-dances are not so different, and these ways are closely related to their similar musical and choreographic structures.” From the point of view of the affective turn, the most important question to ask is what type of affects and emotions do these dances put into circulation? Silvia and Adriana claim that both make “gozo” (bliss) circulate.¹ In that way, they refer to a particular *emotion* put into circulation by the dances—that is, a capacity of the body to affect and be affected that, for the Tobas, receives the name of an emotion called “bliss.”

What the chapter by Silvia and Adriana allows us to show are two very important tenets of the affective turn. On the one hand, how signifying apparatuses, most of the time, mediate how affects circulate in assemblages and in relation to different identitarian articulations; that is, their chapter makes quite clear the mechanisms by which affect is complexly transformed into a “namable” emotion. On the other hand, their chapter is a very good example of how emotions are performative and end up materializing the bodies (in this particular case the community as a collective body) that they “feel.”

As Silvia and Adriana point out, “This embodied experience of bliss is culturally interpreted as an *increasing power*: *power to seduce* in the Nmi, probably reinforced by the centripetal direction of sounds and movement in the closed circle; and *power to attract the spiritual beings* in the Rueda, probably reinforced by the centrifugal directions of this loud music and fast dances.” What the community is describing here is what kind of affect circulates in both dances—that is, affect as, in this case, an augmentation (not a diminution) in the charge of affect experienced by the participants in the different assemblages related to those distinct dances. In other words, “power,” as the capacity to affect and be affected, is explicitly linked to a particular emotion the Tobas feel while dancing; that is, the Tobas enjoy the intensification of their capacity to affect and be affected. At the same time, the augmentation of this capacity to affect and be affected is linked by the community to two different bodies that are affected by this increase in power: women’s bodies (as the expansion of the power to seduce women that the young Tobas say the Nmi brings about); and their own bodies (as the augmentation of the power of the Holy Spirit to heal and strengthen their bodies and spirit, which the young Tobas say the Rueda brings about).

The interesting thing that Silvia and Adriana discovered in their fieldwork is that those different experiences of an intensification in the charge of affect, initially linked to two very different dances, lately became synthesized in the Rueda, which started to be linked to both augmentations of power simultaneously: “The religious and sexual bliss, the power to heal or grow stronger and to seduce were all perceived as part of a single experience of bliss (*ntonaGaq* in Toba) and power (*lañaGaik*).” In this way, it seems that the bliss sensed by the young Tobas is a bliss experienced in relation to feeling more powerful than before the dances to affect their own bodies and women’s bodies simultaneously. The bliss is about this affective capacity; the feeling is about such a power. What they are enjoying so much is the positive charge of affect in relation to both, their own bodies and women’s bodies they are experiencing while dancing the Rueda.

By definition, the modulation of the charge of affect felt by the young Tobas can receive many names in terms of emotions. Here is where the signifying apparatuses exert all their power of mediation, transforming affects into namable emotions. Theoretically speaking, the augmentation of the charge of affect in relation to their own bodies, in terms of the increasing capacity of the Holy Spirit to heal them brought about by the Rueda, can be differentiated from the expansion of the charge of affect regarding their capacities to seduce women. Again, theoretically speaking, such a differentiation can lead to name this modulation of the charge of affect with two different namable emotions.

As a matter of fact, that theoretical possibility is shared by some members of the Toba community who, according to Silvia and Adriana, have strong

doubts that the young Tobas are really feeling the same emotion under the umbrella term “bliss”: “the Rueda has become a source of debate in indigenous churches, because some people have strong doubts about the type of bliss that the youngsters can reach through this dance.” In other words, some members of the community do not believe that the same name for the emotion of bliss linked to a religious experience should be used to address an emotion linked to increasing the power of seduction. They claim that, at least, some precise differentiation in terms of “types” of bliss should be made, something that the young Tobas refuse to do.

Here is where the proposal by Gomart and Hennion (1999), as discussed in chapter 1, can help us to better understand how these young Tobas, somehow, “prepare themselves” to be affected by the Rueda in such a way. My point is that these youngsters do not passively wait for an expression (what dancing the Rueda does to their bodies, what “impresses” on them) to affect them. On the contrary, they, somehow, prepare themselves in a particular way to be affected. That way is to conflate into one namable emotion, bliss, what could have been experienced as two very different ways of affecting and being affected. Therefore, in all probability, because of how affect is being mediated by this particular signifying apparatus and transformed into “bliss” (only *one* bliss, without any differentiation in terms of different “kinds” of bliss), young Tobas end up “feeling” bliss as an undifferentiated augmentation of their affective power, which includes both their power of seduction and the power of being healed by the Holy Spirit.

The very interesting thing is that bliss, as the emotion linked to the increase in seduction power, can still be felt in the Rueda performance that, as an assemblage, is qualitatively different from the Nmi. We have to remember here that, for instance, the bodies participating in the Rueda are not the same bodies that participate in the Nmi: “The captain initiated each song and later joined the rest of the performers; the men stepped together with the same foot while the women stood around them and watched. When a woman tapped her chosen man, the men broke up their chain to allow her to join the circle. The song-dance continued without interruption as each of the women joined in.” Thus, while in the Nmi women allowed their bodies to affect and be affected through the way the choreography of the dance unfolds, in the Rueda they do not, relinquishing one of the most important ways in which affect circulates among bodies in seduction rituals: the embrace. In the case of the Rueda, according to Silvia and Adriana, seduction moves from the dancing itself to the fringes of the dancing event, and the bodies involved in the dance affect and are affected in a different way: “Seduction does not appear on the Rueda during the running movement in itself, since the refraining from body contact between the sexes during this dance is proof of control of sexual expressions characteristic of Pentecostal Evangelism. Nevertheless, seduction emerges in

the gaps among each sequence of performances, through gazes, gestures and brief comments among the dancers, and between them and the musicians.”

Thus, other types of body movements are involved in the process of seduction in the Rueda when compared to the Nmi, but all of them with seductive capacities to affect and be affected. In a sense, the body movements linked to the Rueda are much more “mediated” in their seductive power than the frank and direct body movements involved in the Nmi, in which the female dancers touched the shoulder of a male dancer of her choice, asking him to be embraced and allowed to participate in the “ronda,” straightforwardly telling him that she fell under his seductive power. Nevertheless seduction is still working in the Rueda. We can think of this process of forceful mediation as related to the current dispositions and habits of most young dancers, nowadays highly influenced by the Evangelical teachings about the “proper” use and display of body capacities, quite distant from the old Toba traditions in that regard.

According to Silvia and Adriana, in addition to how bliss is connected to dancing both the Rueda and the Nmi, these dances are quite instrumental in the way in which they promote, cognitively and emotionally, a sense of community:

This aesthetic principle usually evokes, through iconic and indexical links, meanings of “community” and “permanence”: the experience of belonging to a common group that persists through time. These “meanings” not only imply symbolic ideas in the interpretants, but also result in a fully felt embodied experience. Dancing in rings, with the simultaneous repetition of the same movements and similar musical units, usually promotes fraternity and closeness. . . . This experience, opposed to social structural relationships, has a direct, egalitarian, and undifferentiated character, a predominance of emotion, play, and creativity.

Here we are dealing, once more, with affective practices as “meaning-making” activities that constantly mix discourses and body affections. Also showing how emotions are performative (as discussed in chapter 1), creating, in this case by the way a “community” is “felt,” a particular version of community. If we take into account what Silvia and Adriana tell us about the centripetal versus centrifugal direction of the two distinct dance performances—that is, the fact that “in the Nmi, the lower intensity of sound and the slower steps in a closed circle seem to reinforce the centripetal direction of this performance [while] . . . in the Rueda, the louder intensity of sound and the faster running in an opened circle seem to reinforce the centrifugal direction of this performance”—we can understand better how different circulations of affect construct, in fact, two very different cognitive and emotional versions of community.

In this regard, for instance, the embrace in the Nmi versus the non-embrace in the Rueda goes beyond the erotic potential of the embrace (although linked to the mating process and how the reproduction of the community occurs), working also as an index of how the “embrace” of the community is performatively enacted in both dances. Additionally, the centripetal versus the centrifugal direction of the performances can eventually be analyzed in terms of how the charge of affect instantiated by the dances puts into circulation an affect that closes the community to its own aboriginal origin in the case of the Nmi, and opens the community to the influence of the Evangelical faith in the case of the Rueda.² As we can see, many different readings can be advanced using the affective turn and how the circulation of affect has performative capabilities.

Podhajcer—“Traditional Poetic Sound: Modes of Appropriation and Perception of Music and ‘Andean’ Practices in Buenos Aires”

In her wonderful chapter, Adil Podhajcer gives us plenty of opportunities to reflect on how affects and emotions circulate in an Andean ethnic music performance in Buenos Aires. Let us consider the following statement: “The moment of collective execution is ‘deeper.’ It begins with the first ‘round’ or ‘*tocada*’ of the melody on the spot, without moving and with a greater energy stimulated by the action of starting to blow.” With this sentence Adil starts a superb description of the mechanics of the musical performance that follows, almost step by step, what the affective turn is looking for in order to understand how affects and emotions circulate in events. As Blackman and Venn (2010: 20) point out, “Particular spatial configurations can amplify particular affective dynamics and modulate, augment or even destroy dynamics that have been an important part of what makes a community ‘tight-knit.’” Adil’s description of how the *ronda* works in space is a great illustration of what Blackman and Venn are talking about, as well as how what happens in the *ronda* is a collective form of action that appears to operate below the threshold of conscious, rational experience. Paraphrasing Blackman and Venn (2010: 21–22), we could say that such an emphasis on the spatial, technical, and performative arrangements that are an essential part of this particular assemblage called *ronda*, draws our attention to the different elements that constitute the assemblage. This includes the range of technologies, techniques, identifications, and performative gestures (among others) that allow or afford the *sikuris* to concentrate or become attuned to the “feel of the *ronda*,” where developing a “feel for the *ronda*” involves the conjoining of cognitive and affective sensing and thinking, the integration of feeling and discerning such that body-mind-world meld into one organism. Instruments, techniques, repertoires, identifications, mixed in with moods and emotional

energies, enable the sikuris to participate in an activity in which all behave as an element of a collectivity.

But even though this characterizes the ronda in general, different sikuris groups enact and put into circulation affects and emotions in differential ways. The main boundary Adil proposes is the one that divides “natives” and “professional musicians” from “hippies.” For the first group of sikuri players Adil states the following:

For them, “blowing well” means “filling well the cane” in each player’s particular way, while correctly performing the style, without adding or “extending” the notes. Leaders or musical directors state that the instrument is well blown when players “know” the instrument, which implies: good use of the diaphragm, making the most of the strength and air put into the cane, perceiving variations in melody and rhythm (“listening to the music well”), “not getting lost” (in the canes) and knowing the styles, among others. When this happens, a unification in the playing known as “connection” takes place. . . . On the other hand, “not sounding well” comprehends a musical failure that is related to a lack of knowledge and special interest on learning these types of music, highlighting its differential indigenous origins.

What kind of affect and emotions are mobilized in this event? What kind of emotions do the different elements of the assemblage materialize here? I think that what is being mobilized in the performance of these groups of sikuris is “satisfaction” (or its opposite, dissatisfaction) in relation to the competency while playing. The satisfaction of feeling that the ronda is “playing well” is linked to the proper enactments of the skills that the genre requires. In this regard it is a “technical” satisfaction. Thus, sikuri players belonging to these two traditions, feel an augmentation in their charge of affect when everybody is performing according to the technical requirements of the genre, as understood by the leaders of the group. This is “felt” as satisfaction—that is, satisfaction in complying with the norms and rules of the genre linked to a predetermined technology.

If this is so, it is not by chance that any departure from such norms and rules is not quite welcome by natives and professional musicians. As Adil points out:

Micro-musical structures are solved with skill and musical perception (mentioned in expressions such as “we must listen”), which at the same time creates a “non-Western” hearing, or at least enables the acquisition of tools to develop a hearing that is different from that of the West. This is why improvisations are, for some groups, isolated situations that always imply some kind of fault, a mistake or error or “it should not be done,” meaning that it does not correspond because “it alters the melody” or “it doesn’t fit.” . . . Therefore, improvisations such as unexpected sounds are situations that affect the sound and “confront” the hegemonic signifiers on “the correct way” of playing a song.

My point here is that those improvisations not only affect the sound and the hegemonic signifiers of the genre, but discouraging them also entails a potential reduction in the charge of affect that the sikuri players could have virtually experienced at the event. In this regard, the charge of affect that the players are going to experience in the ronda is circumscribed by the allowed range of sounds that the flow of affect as “technical satisfaction” allows to circulate. Something different occurs among the other sikuri players, the hippies:

For “hippies” however, “blowing well” is linked to musical interconnection and is described as a “feeling” of physical well-being. Emphasis is not on improving the sound or achieving more harmony, but rather on inter-corporal connection through the instruments. This is why some directors say things such as “We are not listening to each other,” emphasizing the musical dialogue over the way of performing.

Answering the same questions we asked above, we can say that, in this case, the main emotion that circulates and materializes the different elements of the ronda as an assemblage is, as Adil points out, a feeling of “well-being.” While this feeling has clear connections to the emotional satisfaction we pointed out above, in this particular case it is not a “technical satisfaction” at all. On the contrary, no matter how close or how far (but obviously, not too far) a particular performance is from the “technically correct way to play this or that particular tune,” satisfaction is achieved in this case in relation to how close or how far the group attained a good inter-corporal connection through the instruments. In other words, technical competence is still important (they are not talking about “anything goes”), but it is not the main cause of satisfaction and, somehow, the causality order is reversed for these sikuris. Instead of going from “sounding good—feeling good,” it goes in the other direction, as a sikuri quoted by Adil pointed out: “If a group is not feeling well, it sounds bad.”

In that regard we can also claim that the kind of player that the two different emotions materialize is different as well. In the first case players acquire value in terms of their technical skills; skills that, eventually, will lead those players to get a good “connection” to the musical ensemble. While in the second case, the emotions that circulate in the hippie’s assemblage will materialize players in terms of their capacity to connect to others, more or less (but not totally, of course) independently of their skill capacities. In other words, the capacities to affect and be affected are linked, for the “natives” and “professional musicians” to their skill levels; while those same capacities are linked for the hippies to their possibility to successfully attune themselves to the mood of the sikuri band.

In terms of the particular identitarian articulations that are deployed at the sikuri encounters, Adil points out, “The different paths—migration experi-

ence, musical orientation, role within the group, ideological positioning, ethnic and gender differences, and even social situation—lead to different ways of living the same experience,” referring to the corporatist experience of performing “the Andean.” Here she is talking (if we are going to use my jargon) about how particular identitarian articulations are responsible for living the same musical experience of performing “the Andean” in different ways. Later on in her chapter Adil points out that “as emotions are neither universal nor transcultural, they also do not appear in the same manner at a certain moment to different people, even though the flow of the performance may make it seem that way.” In that regard, even if the *ronda* is instrumental in the staging and circulation of particular affects and emotions (as discussed above), and those affects and emotions are, in turn, instrumental in the performative materialization of peculiar bodies and identities, the identitarian articulations people sequentially deploy in the music event (as mediated by the atmosphere of the events and the affects that circulate on them) always mediate those affects and emotions (showing the continuous back-and-forth, or continuous mediation, of all the elements that belong to an assemblage, as we discussed in chapter 1).

This issue is well encapsulated by the testimony of one of Adil’s interviewees:

On how you open yourself to be touched, like this, inside. And on how you are, the things that happened to you. Your life, I don’t know. . . . You can’t expect someone else to feel the same things. They are not going to feel the same things; they are going to feel their own things. They are living their experience with their things. It isn’t like in this part we all feel this. . . . But in that way, traveling and knowing, you are going to feel your things, even if you play with the locals. They are going to feel their things, and you are going to feel yours, your life, and your work, whatever. With the same melody.

This interviewee is fully aware that “the same melody” will be felt and experienced in totally different ways by different people depending “on how you open yourself to be touched, like this, inside. And on how you are, the things that happened to you. Your life,” pointing out not only what Gomart and Hennion posit about how people “prepare” themselves to be affected, but also how different identitarian articulations always mediate the capacity of music to affect and be affected.

Verdenelli—“Pleasures in Conflict: Maternity, Eroticism,
and Sexuality in Tango Dancing”

In her chapter, Juliana Verdenelli points out how her pregnancy greatly changed not only the way she danced tango, but also how dancing tango while pregnant gave her a completely different perspective on her own body:

Within the tango embrace, my pregnancy acquired, without doubt, great centrality. Not only because of the difficulty of calculating the distance between my body and that of my dance partner and also of foreseeing the possibilities of movement in my body, which changed daily, but also (and mainly) because the communication between the torsos in the embrace, which is fundamental for the execution of the dance, generated a permanent interaction between that other being inside of me and gave rise to a dialogue “in threes,” something very new in the inter-body relationships that make up the history of my experiences.

What does this statement tell us about the capacity of a body to affect and be affected? What Juliana is telling us is that her pregnancy (a body inhabited by another body) triggered a complete change in the systems of relationships her body was involved with: its relationship with space, movement, objects, and other people in that space, technology and the like. The assemblages she participated in while pregnant were completely different from the similar assemblages she was engaged in before (and after) her pregnancy. Of course, she was a “different” Juliana while pregnant, but her being part of the assemblages she belonged to, by default, not only transformed people in the assemblage into “other kinds of people” (her tango partner, for instance, had to exercise different capacities than the ones he exercised as a dance partner before Juliana’s pregnancy), but also transformed material things habitual in the “dancing tango assemblage” into different things, inasmuch as they acquired new capacities to affect (and be affected in time) Juliana’s pregnant body (tripping over her tango partner’s shoes while pregnant could have affected her differently than tripping over them while not pregnant). If we think in terms of capacities instead of in terms of properties (the basic tenet of the affective turn), we have to conclude that her partner’s shoes, potentially, had developed new capacities when Juliana started dancing pregnant, capacities that were not there before Juliana’s pregnancy. The same can be said about other people, things, and technologies involved in the assemblages Juliana participated in while pregnant.

In terms of the dispositions Juliana brought to the scene, the habits so important for the affective turn—that is, in terms of those body dispositions that work beyond representation, it is very interesting to note that, while pregnant (at least during her first pregnancy), Juliana did not bring many habits of the body to the assemblages she participated in while dancing. In that regard, she had to “improvise” a lot on how to dance tango while pregnant, in the same way that her partner had to do so.

But Juliana did not participate in the tango scene only as a “female tango dancer who happens to be pregnant.” She also brought with her other identifications as well, identifications that had their own dispositions embedded as habits of the body. In that way, attuned to the different happenings of the tango event, she eventually added (but, obviously, also subtracted) different

identifications (and their peculiar bodily dispositions as capacities) to the identitarian articulation she was enacting there. Some of those identifications were easily visible and worked from the start on the assemblages (her gender, age, ethnicity, soon-to-be-mother, dancer, and the like). But some others required either the practice of some action (looking for a male partner instead of a female one, showing her sexual identification) or the utterance of some discourse (when asked about why her partner did not come to dance with her, pointing out that her *male* partner does not dance, again, showing her sexual orientation). But, in any event, either as a body practice or a discourse, the appearance of a new identification in the choreography of her identitarian articulation added new capacities to affect and be affected to the dancing tango assemblage in particular, and the tango scene in general. In other words, even though her pregnant identity was central in how her particular identitarian articulation worked in the scene, it never functioned in isolation from her other identifications and their particular capacities to affect and be affected.

Juliana's experiences in the dance hall are also a good example of how affects, feelings, and emotions work in a continuous back-and-forth and many times are difficult to disentangle:

For a few eternal seconds I felt that all eyes were on my abdomen; at the same time an intense sensation of heat came over me and I searched in vain for a familiar face in that hall (my friend had still not arrived and I didn't know anyone there). At this precise moment something happened that somehow was already familiar to me: I felt completely out of place. For the first time in many years, a place where I had been comfortable before seemed strange and completely foreign to me and I didn't know how to act.

Here, the intense heat Juliana felt is the epitome of a non-representational feeling, a literal impression of the emergence and movement of affect on Juliana's body (i.e., a corporeal expression of affect). But the heat emerged in the context of a particular assemblage, one in which representations and emotions played a very important role. Juliana "felt" that all the eyes were looking at her abdomen, as if her prominent abdomen would have had only one possible reading: pregnancy. That could have been the case (above all if Juliana went to the Milonga very late in her pregnancy), but even a pregnant body has to be taught to be read as a pregnant body by the culture Juliana belongs to. Pregnancy and the feeling of being read as pregnant in a scene where pregnant women are not quite welcome, did not come straightforwardly from her prominent abdomen before that abdomen was read as "pregnancy," which is a cultural representation. Therefore here a corporeal expression of affect is complexly mediated by a cultural representation.

Some "panic" (an emotion) seems to have been part of Juliana's affective practice at the scene as well (searching desperately for a familiar face among

the members of the Milonga). In this regard, “panic,” an emotion with performative capacities, materialized Juliana and the other members of the scene in a particular way: as objects of panic (Juliana), and as producers of panic (the unfamiliar faces of the dancers present on the dance hall, and the physical absence of her friend). As part of the performative capacity of “panic” many other elements of the scene (artifacts, music, technology) were also materialized in particular ways and not others. As Ahmed (2004: 33) reminds us (talking about how some whites even refuse to touch black bodies, but we can extend her analysis to how some males do not want to dance with a pregnant woman): “So the white woman’s refusal to touch the Black child does not simply stand for the expulsion of Blackness from white social space, but actually re-forms social space through re-forming the apartness of the white body.”³

And, finally, another feeling can be found at the end of Juliana’s description: feeling out of place; that is, she felt in her body that she didn’t belong to the scene she was participating in. In other words, out of a particular feeling (the heat of her body), mediated by a peculiar representation of the body (pregnancy), and articulated with a particular emotion, “panic,” another feeling appears in the affective practice Juliana was involved with while going to the Milonga during her pregnancy. As we can see, this is a very good example of the continuous back-and-forth between affect, feelings, and emotions.

Verdenelli writes later on in her chapter:

In line with the thinking of Wright (1994), I believe that my pregnancy enabled me to experience an ontological displacement that was crucial for my ethnographic exploration given the fact that during this type of work, “The subject displaces his Being-in-the-world (Dasein) to a different place—or remains in his place, but with a different ontological agenda. It is the Being-in-the-world of the ethnographer, his ontological structure, which undergoes modifications in his contact with people.” (Wright 1994: 367)

Following my theoretical position as stated in chapter 1, I think that it is not really the “being in the world,” in general, that modified Juliana’s ethnographic exploration. Instead, my point is that such a change was linked to how different identitarian articulations (enabling the performance of different capacities), modified the way Juliana engaged with other people and things in the ethnographic scenes she was participating in. Her faculty of affecting and being affected changed when the capacities (and incapacities) linked to the soon-to-be-mother identification started to play a role in the particular encounter she was having at the Milonga. In other words, when her “pregnant woman” identification started its choreographic move with the identification of Juliana as an ethnographer (of course articulated with her other identifications that were instrumental for the affective practice at stake, such as being young, female, heterosexual, middle-class of European origin, and

the like) her capacity of affecting the field and being affected by what happened in the field completely changed.

Some pages down, this is the way Juliana quotes one of her interviewees:

I had already learned both roles, but at that point I didn't want the other to suffer any more. After my pregnancy what changed me is this level of perceiving myself in relation with the other. A strength or a power that is born within you and it no longer matters which role you take. It has nothing to do with the role. It has to do with the fact that everything you do to give birth and have a child, to give life, revolves around having great strength. And you believe that if you can do all that, you can do anything, whatever you set out to do. That you can handle whatever life throws at you. So I no longer worried about roles, I didn't care. Everything I did starting at that moment, I did with confidence, with affirmation [. . .] you feel all powerful. Like man and woman. You feel both. (María José, age thirty-two)

This testimony is a very good example of how intensity changes in affective practices, and how a body's charge of affect works, so important for the affective turn. What María José is talking about is how her body's charge of affect is a function of both, a series of immediate encounters at the dance hall (her partners and the usual tango roles—leading/being led—that she used to play with those partners), and the geo-historicity of her body, which, in this case, involves the capacities to affect and be affected that her pregnancy brought about for María José. Additionally, a particular emotion is implicitly hinted of in her testimony—that is, some kind of “liberation” María José felt in relation to not worrying any longer about what type of role she has to play in the Milonga. Then, if emotions are performative, as I believe they are, such liberation materialized herself, her partners, and different material elements in the dance assemblage (as well as the technology involved) in particular ways. We don't know in which ways this emotion materialized María José's partners, because Juliana did not interview them, but we know that María José's materialization as a “powerful woman” (endowed with hitherto nonexistent capacities), is a direct product of the affective change she underwent. In other words, the changes in her capacities of affecting and being affected once the identification “mother who already gave birth” entered the choreography of her identitarian articulation (felt as “strength,” and emotionally lived as “liberation”) completely modified her identification as a “tango dancer.”

Juliana tells us that she rapidly discovered that, somehow, her “new” body was not easily accepted at the Milonga she was a habitué of: “This body erupted on the scene as something both novel and menacing, something that in some way subverted certain rules of play and eluded the capacity of many people's understanding. It challenged their feelings about maternity and

above all about what a mother can do or how she should behave, feelings that were widely shared in that context.”

Here Juliana is describing how her body, a body not easily attuned to the habitual tango scene, triggered a circulation of affects that were not the customary ones in such a scene. She, somehow, felt that her own pregnant body, its capacity to affect and be affected, was a menace to the usual affective practice of the Milonga. In other words, the dispositions of the other participants of the scene (and we can assume that the physical arrangement of the tango assemblage as well) were not prepared to deal with this type of body. Then, it is not only that her pregnancy, subverting rules, “eluded the capacity of many people’s understanding”—that is, solely at a cognitive level. Her pregnancy also, and perhaps more importantly, modified the entire tango assemblage at the level of affect, which, of course, has a signification component, but not only because it works at the non-representational level as well. If this is so, the emotion Juliana is talking about (“fear” linked to a particular menace) that the other participants experienced because her pregnant body appeared on the scene, through its performative capacities, materialized people, things, and technology in particular ways: Juliana as a menacing actor, the other dance participants as fearful, and the like. In other words, her new capacities to affect and be affected as a pregnant woman conditioned, in turn, the capacities to affect and be affected of the people and materialities of the entire tango affective practice.

In another section of her wonderful chapter Verdenelli points out that, “the feeling of ‘shame’ experienced by myself as well as by other women can be interpreted, to paraphrase Semán and Vila (2011), as the possible effect of a complicated commitment.” From the point of view of the affective turn the question is: what kind of people and things are materialized when shame is the prominent feeling experienced by some participants on a scene?

On the other hand, even though what Juliana asks in her chapter is absolutely valid—that is: “It becomes indispensable to ask: What, in these spaces, are the limits that a gestating body must confront, and what is the way of thinking that is in dispute or being questioned?”—we, following the affective turn, should also ask: “What are the doings of such a gestating body that affect other bodies in the assemblages (human and nonhuman) that those bodies react to in a nonhabitual way?” In this way we add to the discussion the affective dimension that, even though it is present in the first part of Juliana’s sentence, is absent in the second part. In other words, Juliana’s pregnant body is not only “subversive” in relation to a system of representation that does not see a place for such a body in the Milonga (a valid analysis coming from the discursive turn), but also (a position central to the affective turn), her pregnant body affects and is affected by other bodies in the scene in a way that is beyond the bodily habits of the other participants in the scene

(many of those habits currently outside of their conscious grasping, i.e., their “way of thinking”).

If we add my proposal of the identitarian articulations to the theoretical mix used to make sense of what happened with Juliana’s pregnant body in the Milonga, and due to the fact that not “all” the participants of the Milonga rejected her pregnant body in the same way (to the point that even some of them accepted it), we could ask from what kind of peculiar identitarian articulation (i.e., from what combination of capacities linked to the different habits of distinct identifications that were choreographed together in the Milonga) did some bodies have difficulties in managing the way in which Juliana’s body was affecting them, while other bodies did not have those difficulties.

Very interestingly, later on Juliana reports that, in the tango scene, “Maternity appears to ‘close’ not only the possibility of eroticism and seduction in dance but also, and above all, that of a possible subsequent sexual encounter.” This statement is, from the point of view of the affective turn, very interesting for different reasons. On the one hand because it calls attention to one of the things a pregnant body can do (or cannot) in the Milongas: to seduce other bodies. As usual, “seduction” as an affective practice, involves a continuous back-and-forth between affect, feeling, emotions, and representations, in which the actors not only “feel” the excitement of trying to seduce and/or be seduced, but also a particular system of representations that condition what kinds of bodies can seduce and what kinds of bodies supposedly do not seduce (Juliana’s main point in her statement).

But from an affective point of view the inquiry moves to another angle of the encounter, now paying attention to how the system of relationships in the Milonga changes when a pregnant body appears on the scene and tries to dance. What is my point here? What a pregnant body introduces into the scene is not only a different woman’s body (one that moves and is moved by the tango partner in a different way than the usual bodies in the scene), but also another actor who inhabits that body. Juliana, in her chapter, is well aware of this fact and, in different sections, tells us how “dancing in a trio” looks and how it obviously changes how bodies affect and are affected in the scene. However, we can go beyond that and claim that still another body (a fourth one) is present (as an absence) in the “three” dancing “couple.” I am referring here to the “absent father of the child,” who, somehow, through the echoes of his absence (and the “his” here refers to the still common assumption that a woman became pregnant due to the action of a man), is present in the scene modifying the systems of relationships habitually linked to the affective practices called “seduction” and “sexual encounter.” In this way, an absent body (but one that is quite present due to the habitual systems of representation linked to gestation) has, in this case, the same capacities of affecting and being affected that the present ones do.

Juliana writes,

In the interviews and informal conversations, some women pointed out that the experience of dancing while pregnant constituted an opportunity to better know themselves, to raise their consciousness of their own bodies, of their emotions, and to connect themselves with the transformations inherent in this vital time of their lives. By contrast, other women remarked that they had experienced their pregnancy as an obstacle to dancing and to physically connecting with others because they felt that the changes in their bodies brought on by gestation deprived them of technical, aesthetic, expressive, and even erotic abilities.

This passage from Juliana's chapter is well suited to illustrate how my identitarian articulation approach works. From the point of view of how the circulation of affect in a scene is always mediated by the identitarian articulations different actors (and the same actor at different times of the event; see chapter 1 for a more developed account of how this works) enact there, a particular question became central: what type of identitarian articulation made it possible to direct the circulation of affect in the scene toward an augmentation of a body charge of affect (not only in terms of "awareness," i.e., "knowing" more about the body, but also in terms of "feeling" more the body and the emotions that such a feeling can trigger), versus the type of identitarian articulation that "diminished" the intensity of the body in terms of its capacity for technical, aesthetic, expressive, and even erotic abilities?

What I am trying to address here is how the same affective atmosphere (the usual rejection of a gestating body in the Milonga), being mediated by different identitarian articulations, can trigger very opposite directions in terms of how a body manages its intensities, in one case leading to an augmentation of the capacities to affect and be affected, while in the other case leading to a lessening of such capacities. If this is so, we can even imagine a situation in which the same interviewee could have claimed both charges of affect at the same time, linked to how her identitarian articulations changed in the scene over time, allowing the entrance and exit of different identifications in the identitarian choreography in such a way that one of those articulations triggered the capacity to connect more deeply with her own body (cognitively and emotionally), while another type of articulation, through the different capacities such an articulation was able to prompt, led to a feeling of diminishment in her capacities to affect and be affected.

Mora—"Self-Expression through Self-Discipline: Technique, Expression, and Losing Oneself in Classical Dance"

Ana Sabrina asks herself in her chapter: "How could they feel this [pleasure, freedom, etc.] at the same time they experienced so much pain, exhaustion,

and fatigue, and all this within such a strict disciplinary regimen? The usual answer was to dismiss this question saying, ‘I don’t know why.’” From the point of view of the affective turn and my identitarian articulation proposal this statement is very interesting for different reasons. On the one hand because it introduces the possibility of thinking about the dancers as affecting and being affected in terms of the different assemblages they belong to; that is, different assemblages trigger the choreography of distinct identitarian articulations for the same dancers, articulations that, in turn, affect and are affected by the other bodies in the scene (humans and nonhumans), in such a way that particular feelings and emotions are put into circulation.

If this is so, and greatly simplifying something that for sure is much more complex (as proven by Sabrina’s reaction to my initial analysis), we can think of how different the identitarian articulation enacted by the dancers is when practicing, learning a new play, rehearsing it for a ballet concert, and eventually showing their students how to dance it when they become dance teachers. The systems of relationships in relation to which those different identitarian articulations are performed are completely different (precisely one of the reasons why the articulations are diverse), leading to a completely different circulation of affects, feelings, and emotions. My point here is that the incompatible emotions Sabrina identified among her interviewees perhaps are not at all incompatible if we think about them as emotions being triggered by different affective practices (linked to distinct assemblages—learning, rehearsing, dancing in front of an audience or in front of their own students, as affective practices, evolve in relation to different assemblages), and associated with diverse identitarian articulations (dancer as student, dancer as rehearser, dancer as performer, and dancer as a professor of dancing).

Somehow, Sabrina is aware of this possibility, when she states that:

In my field work at the EDCLP, a problem emerged that will be interesting to discuss here: the tension between the necessity of working arduously over time in order to incorporate a highly codified, strict and unchanging technique, and the feeling of sensations of pleasure and of fulfillment associated with expression. This, which analytically can be delineated as a tension between opposing elements that act together, was not experienced as a contradiction by students and teachers.

Second Round I

When Sabrina read my previous statement she did not agree with my interpretation, and for good reasons, she pointed out that,

I find it difficult to consider, for my case study, the emotions evoked as being in relation to diverse identitarian articulations (dancer as student, dancer as

rehearsing, and dancer as performer), because, in these instances, everything is done within a training trajectory whose point of arrival is to be a dance professor. . . . I would doubt that in the case of EDCLP's students there are distinct identitarian articulations that produce these different emotions; and on the other hand, that those different situations into the path of learning respond to diverse identitarian articulations.

In a nutshell her disagreement is related to the fact that being a "professional dancer" is not the main goal for most of the students at EDCLP, but being a dance professor is their career goal instead. That was the main reason why she did not agree with me either on my second comment on her chapter.

To my previous analysis of how different affective practices are linked to distinct assemblages, which, in turn, are related to the enactment of diverse identitarian articulations, I would add here something else in order to understand why students and teachers do not see any contradiction between the rather different emotions they feel while dancing ballet. My point here is that, somehow, there is an emotion that is not mentioned explicitly in the testimonies Sabrina got in her fieldwork but that, I think, is working as a kind of "hinge" between particular affective practices/assemblages linked to the identitarian articulation centered on the "student/rehearsing" character and those other affective practices/assemblages related to the identitarian articulation that is anchored in the "ballet performer" character. That emotion, if I am not mistaken, is "hope." I think that "hope," as an emotion, is a crucial component of the affective scenario to understand why the students endure such a strict training to begin with. In other words, without the "hope" that they, as students, eventually will master the technique in order to, in the future, fully express themselves as performers (using such a technique), it is impossible to understand why they put themselves through the ordeals of training, with all the dissatisfaction, discomfort and pain that is involved in such a training. And I think that "hope," as a "not-yet" that will eventually become is precisely the hinge that, somehow, mediated between the (exaggerating a little bit) "horrible" present of the student and the venturesome future of the performer, preventing the classical ballet dancer from seeing any contradiction between those opposing elements (strict, painful training, and expressive freedom). As Sabrina, in her path-breaking chapter, highlights: "No contradiction was perceived between criticizing the strict codes, the parameters of exclusion, the disqualifications, and the constant frustrations of ballet on the one hand and the feelings of passion and enjoyment in this type of dance on the other."

As Sabrina points out later on in her chapter,

That effect of pleasure, of feeling free, of feeling that one is oneself, and so on, is an effect not expressly sought after in the codification of technique and is not strictly necessary for such a technique to be assimilated and continue in

existence. But it is an effect that is taken into consideration at some levels of the transmission of that codification, ranging from some teaching texts . . . to the things that teachers say in class (“the more it hurts the better, because that means that you are closer to achieving your goal”).

We can clearly see here how “hope” is hinted at by the “promise” that enduring pain is the only route to the “not-yet” of enjoyment, showing the performative character of this particular emotion in the classical ballet scene, which, as any emotion, materializes the bodies and objects it “feels” about.

Second Round II

I think that Sabrina is right in pointing out that “hope” linked to being a professional dancer (something that most of the students at EDCLP are not going to be) is not working as a “‘hinge’ between particular affective practices/assemblages linked to the identitarian articulation centered on the ‘student/rehearsing’ character and those other affective practices/assemblages related to the identitarian articulation that is anchored on the ‘ballet performer’ character,” as I pointed out in my original text. But, what about the hope of being a “dance professor” instead? Even though I agree with Sabrina that “I think that the pleasure of dancing exists in different contexts, and pain as well, also frustration (in relation to what I said before regarding the ballet stage at EDCLP as being a particular stage, where the audience consists of family members and other dancers, for example),” and, due to that, I cannot claim any longer that “pain,” “frustration,” and the like belong only to one type of identitarian articulation, while “pleasure,” “accomplishment,” etc., is the characteristic of other type. I think that we have to consider the possibility that hope as the not-yet of being a dance professor can explain, at least, part of the affective scenario we are trying to understand here.

Perhaps, what could answer (at least in part) Sabrina’s questions—“I ask then: if what is expected never will come, if just reaching adolescence they already know that if they are still in the EDCLP, it is because they never are going to be professional dancers, or have little chance of someday being one, then what is what is expected? What is the reason for hope? What is what, eventually, will come? And what is it that sustains them?”—is the possibility of being an accomplished dance teacher instead of a professional dance performer.

Advancing in her argument in the chapter, Sabrina quotes a creative dancing interviewee as saying: “Technique constrains us when we dance; sometimes I see ballerinas who have a lot of technique but who express nothing, they convey nothing to me, they move like little robots.” This testimony is, from the point of view of the affective turn, very interesting for different reasons. On the one hand, because the statement revolves around the idea of “expressing” that is so important for the affective turn. In this regard, I think

that the creative dancing student and her putative ballet dancing interlocutor are working with two very different ideas of what they want to “express,” and what they can (or even “want”) to “feel” when they see the expressions of others. In the testimony we can see that, from the point of view of the narrative identities, identitarian articulations, dispositions and habits of this dancer, she wants to be “moved” and wants to “move” others (affect and be affected) through particular “expressions.” But she does not see those “expressions” emanating from classical dancers’ performances. She can only see “technique,” not “expression.”

This creative dancing student, following Gomart and Hennion (see chapter 1), prepares herself to be affected in particular ways by the dance: she wants to be emotionally moved. In this regard, her reception of the dance, what the dance does to her, is not something done to a passive subject. And, obviously in her case, such a preparation (in which narrative identities, habits, dispositions, and identitarian articulations play an important role) ends up building the stage for exactly the opposite occurring: she is not affected by the dance in the way she wants to be “moved” emotionally. Her emotional expectations are not met. Her emotional dispositions are, somehow, challenged.

On the other hand the statement is very important for understanding how affect works in totally different ways in ballet and creative dancing. This becomes clearer if we put, side by side, what a student of ballet told Sabrina: “The moment you have incorporated a technique to the point where you no longer have to think about it, that’s when you can relax and feel and express yourself with dance.”

What this ballet student refers to is the embodiment of a technique—that is, when a technique becomes habit. And she points out that, at least in ballet, the only route to expression is “within the technique.” In other words, accepting the affordances of the technique to develop a particular type of expression (according to Sabrina’s interviewees something that is “ethereal, romantic, magical, slender, delicate, sober, beautiful, lineal”), the rendering of particular kinds of emotions (the ones promoted by the technique—emotions linked to “the harmonious and ethereal beauty of bodies and movements,” reminiscent of angels without bodies, but done by people with real bodies), but also accepting the limitations of the technique to develop other kinds of expressions, the rendering of other types of emotions and feelings. In some sense we can talk about “legitimate emotions to be expressed by the dance”—that is, those allowed by the technique, where the “official” route from affect to emotion would go from *affect* (bodies moving in space affecting and being affected by other bodies) to those movements within the technique being “read” as particular kinds of *expression* (according to Sabrina, “an almost indefinable quality of having “grace”), expression that would produce certain kinds of *emotions* in both the bodies that move (freedom, happiness,

according to the dancers) and the spectators of those movements (different emotions depending on the identitarian articulations, narrative identities, habits, and dispositions the spectators brought to their encounter with the ballet concert, but we can imagine at least awe and happiness for the ballet habitué).

Later on in her chapter Sabrina points out that, “Experiences that evoke feelings of freedom and pleasure are the result of the effectiveness of a methodology of power that seeks to control the body and confine it to parameters and a sphere of action that are extremely strict—that is, the pleasure is produced by the maximization of control over the body.” And

many of the pleasurable experiences evoked are the result of achieving things that in previous classes could not be achieved (for example, greater elongation or a movement that was not possible before) or things that were visualized in earlier stages of formation and observed in dancers who were more advanced. Besides, these students are taught to enjoy pain and effort because these are the things that will allow them to dance.

What I see in these statements is in line with my previous position—that is, the dancers feel pleasure in the accomplishment of the “official” route ballet dancing has established of how affects move through feelings and emotions: successful acquisition of a technique, expression of what ballet wants to express (“grace”), arousing the feelings and emotions that the technique allows to arouse. In that regard, I think, it goes beyond Sabrina’s point about pleasure as produced by the maximization of control over the body (while it is included as part of the route of affect). But also, if my previous analysis of hope is correct, the feeling of pleasure, even while undergoing pain, is linked to the “not-yet” the dancers are hoping for.

Something quite different occurs in the case of the contemporary dance scene, and affect, expression, and emotions work differently as well. Sabrina told us that, “In the case of the contemporary dance program, the descriptions of the experiences that take place can be summed up as the intention, the effort, and the pleasure of knowing and *taking the body beyond its limits, in broadening the concept of ‘what my body can do,’* while bearing in mind that the limit is set by each body in particular.” The words emphasized by me above could have been quoted from a book called “Spinoza for Dummies.” Spinoza famously stated that “We do not even know what a body is capable of.” and “We do not even know of what affections we are capable, nor the extent of our power.” His point, among other things, was that because we never can know in advance the systems of relationships in which a body will eventually be engaged, and because we define a body by its capacities to affect and be affected, we are really never going to know what a body can ultimately do.

Continues Sabrina:

The main experiences that students and teachers of contemporary dance talked about in their interviews were connected to “feeling what happens inside the body, in terms of the musculature, the joints, the bones, the spinal axis”; to feel the body in movement, discover how to use it, how to position it, how to find enough strength for the movements, challenging oneself and overcoming those challenges. The emphasis placed on knowing one’s own body, comes together with the sensation of knowing *from* and *with* the body, “forgetting everything,” “silencing the head,” paying attention to the energies of the body that have been put into movement.

What this is telling us is how, in contemporary dance, attention to the energies emanating from the body (as attention to the affects of the body, its capacities to affect and be affected) is, somehow, attention to *affect itself*, beyond expressions and emotions (“forgetting everything,” “silencing the head,”). In this way, what we have here is a much more prominent role of affect itself for contemporary dance (the feeling of energy by itself) than for ballet, which is much more interested in the movement from affect to emotion, via the expression of affect as the emotions allowed by the technique. Therefore, it is not by chance that it is in contemporary and creative dance, and not in ballet, where Sabrina found almost the impossibility to state with words what these students felt while dancing:

In the study I am referring to here, elements appeared repeatedly that led me to think that even though it is impossible to escape the effectiveness of representations (and of practices based on such representations), in the construction of particular experiences, there is something from these experiences that appears to surpass, to exceed the limits of, to overflow these representations that are transmitted, above all, in teaching-apprenticeship practices. In the contemporary and creative dance programs, this surpassing or overflow appeared to be present in experiences that the students said they could not explain or put into words. They characterized it as moments of intensity, of something vibratory, manifest in states of the body that they said they could not explain or make intelligible through words. Yet in ballet the impossibility of capturing experience in language or making it explicit did not appear to be a problem.

Referring to “moments of intensity, of something vibratory, manifest in states of the body that they said they could not explain or make intelligible through words” is precisely trying to express in words affect beyond its expression in feelings and representation in terms of emotions—that is, affect itself.

Second Round III

Reading the previous section of my dialogic engagement with her work, Sabrina wrote the following:

In contemporary and creative dance two authors circulate, or very *sui generis* readings of those authors are being read by some students: Merleau-Ponty, and Deleuze. Some teachers use them, those more academically inclined, those who talk about other things besides the dance itself. A couple of these teachers, they may even have taken the same course that I took (in a master's degree in physical education at UNLP). Anyway, it is not uncommon that you thought that some comments were coming from the book "Spinoza for Dummies," because there are discourses that are circulating at EDCLP, discourses that eventually reach the students.

The idea that immediately came to my mind was: but, if this is the case, it is not "affect itself" any longer! What we have here is a particular signifying apparatus, Spinoza's philosophy (via the interpretation of Deleuze), that is supplying the concepts ("affect itself" in this particular case) that transforms a particular charge of affect into something nameable—that is, something within a system of meaning and representation. A kind of a dog chasing its tail?

This interpretation of the different route of affect to these different types of dance seems to be corroborated by other statements coming from Sabrina's fieldwork: "Many students single out the possibility of freedom that contemporary dance gives them given that it allows them to constantly create new movements. They contrast this with what would happen in ballet, in which movements are structured and even described as 'anti-natural' and devoid of any possibility of innovation or leaving one's own personal mark." The most important emotion evoked by these students is "freedom," and in the statement such a freedom is linked to "creation." The opposite seems to be "repetition without creation." From the point of view of the affective turn the question that immediately comes to mind is: What kind of body is materialized by this particular emotion? It seems that the answer is linked to the search for affect itself that seems to characterize contemporary dance—that is, a body that always wants to test its limits and go beyond where it went before, a "daring body." The way in which these students materialize the bodies of ballet dancers through the emotions they attach to those bodies is a type of body that, once the ballet technique is acquired, has no other choice than to limit the possibilities of affecting and being affected to what that technique affords it, a "conservative body." That is the reason why I beg to differ from Sabrina's following statement: "In this way, the experiences of pleasure associated with that which one's own body can do in creative dance have nothing to do with the ability to assimilate a technique as in the other two types of dance, but rather with exploring the abilities that one's body may have and that no other has, with getting to know this body and expressing oneself through it."

I really think that this search for "affect itself" is also present in contemporary dance, not only in creative dance alone. In both, it seems to me that

pleasure is linked to exploring the limit of the bodies' capacities, not the adjustment of those capacities to a fixed repertoire of what a body can do. But I can be wrong (it would not be the first time). Perhaps the difference between contemporary and creative dance is the extent to which they have consciously accepted this search for affect itself, but not the search in itself. Regardless of this minor difference with Sabrina's position, it is quite clear that the search for affect itself is overtly verbalized and acted upon by creative dancing practitioners. This is shown, for instance, in their rejection of copying models. According to Sabrina, "Creative dance, working from explorations into movement carried out by each dancer, rejects the copying of models." This is an obvious way to extend the possibilities of how a body affects and is being affected by other bodies. Copying models is, at the same time, copying a previous way in which a body affects and is being affected, while not copying and instead creating new movements is a way to explore uncharted ways to affect and be affected, new feelings and emotions. If we tie this rejection of models to the emphasis of creative dancing "on introspection, on investigation, and on expression by means of the body in movement, with the intention of increasing the dancer's creativity and power of expression," we can see how such an introspection is related to a search for one's own script instead of internalizing the script written by others. And the way in which these new scripts allow the bodies involved to affect and be affected in unexpected ways.

Second Round IV

I was partially right and partially wrong in my previous analysis, and Sabrina is quite correct when she points out:

I think that an element is missing in relation to that issue: contemporary dance (and its predecessor, modern dance) consists of various movement techniques; they are standardized, many of them are even named after their creators. They have the particularity that they can be combined; in fact, they are combined in the technical classes of contemporary dance, depending on the teacher's formation. It is quite common to detect motion sequences that are used to teach these different techniques even in moments of improvisation. I think that I was referring to this in the statement I originally wrote, compared to creative dance, which tries to avoid the transmission of sequences.

A different scenario occurs among ballet dancers. Sabrina points out:

Experiences identified as positive are diverse: to feel that one is getting to know one's own body and what it is capable of doing; to achieve an objective that represents a challenge; to feel that the body is "freeing itself of bonds"; that the possibilities of movement, of elongating, of making the body do what

the dancer wants it to do, are expanding; to feel one's control over the body increasing; among other and similar experiences. These experiences occur in relation to small moments, small achievements; the leg can be lifted higher and held there longer; a movement is achieved with greater ease; a step is connected with another with greater fluidity.

While this statement seems to imply that the pleasure that is referred to here is a pleasure of knowing how a body can affect and be affected—that is, affect itself, Sabrina is correct in pointing out that, “‘To know one's own body and that which it can do' is to know it within the knowledge system that this type of dance proposes; to know a body as this type of dance understands it and tries to construct it; to broaden and become familiar with its possibilities in accordance with a technical regulation that determines what it is which must be sought after and what types of movement should be hidden or eliminated.” And, “‘To control one's own body' is to control it within the parameters of that which technique says can and must be controlled. ‘To free the body from all bonds' is to take it progressively closer to the model that technique proposes.”

This means, somehow, to restrict affect, to confine affect to what it is already known affect can do. Or, in Mora's words, “Freedom should be seen as a question of recognizing and of experiencing one's own potential inside a given universe, and not above or beyond it (Jackson, 1989).” To restrict affect is not freeing it to all its virtualities, to explore all the things a body can do and allow to be done to it, as it seems what contemporary (and still more) creative dance is doing.

Silba and Spataro—“Did Cumbia Villera Bother Us? Criticism of the Academic Representation of the Links between Women and Music”

The superb article by Carolina Spataro and Malvina Silba offers us plenty of opportunities to understand what kind of affects circulate in the venues where these young women go to dance cumbia villera, and how those affects, as particular emotions, materialize the diverse bodies of the assemblages that are active in the scene. Let's take a closer look at this exchange:

M: When you start dancing the meneaíto with Celeste or Jimena or any of the girls, what do you like the most? Dancing or being looked at?

R: Both.

M: And you do not care about what song is playing?

R: No, I do not care.

M: And then, what do you like the most? Provoking or conquering a guy from the dance hall?

R: The first one.

What kind of affects and emotions are mobilized by dancing, by being looked at, by trying to conquer a guy, and by provoking males' desires? And what kind of bodies do those affects and emotions materialize? Of course we cannot analyze all of them in this brief dialogic exercise, but we can concentrate on one of them in order to illustrate how a view from the affective turn can illuminate some aspects of the phenomena under investigation that are not so clear when analyzed from other types of theoretical approaches.

What kind of affects and emotions are mobilized by "provoking" males? Desire. What this interviewee is referring to is the enjoyment she feels when she knows that her dance arouses a sexual desire in the males who are watching her dancing. She knows that when dancing the highly sexualized *meneaito* she is arousing a sexual desire in turn. The charge of affect this interviewee sees augmenting is her capacity to sexually seduce male bodies in the scene, and she enjoys the feeling of that intensification in her capacity to affect and be affected, simultaneously exercising strict limits in the way her body is being affected (as Carolina and Malvina point out, these girls, through different performances, clearly state that "my body is mine, I decide who, how, and when anybody can touch it").

What the affective turn allows us to understand a little bit better is how the system of relations in which the *meneaito* is performed (and the affects and emotions those systems of relations help to mobilize) go beyond the immediate affective practice of dancing to a song, to include not only the whole affective atmosphere of the dance club, but also the systems of relations and affects mobilized by the network of people who go to dance together with this particular interviewee.

In terms of the dance hall atmosphere, the most important emotion that is mobilized most of the time is "joy." The dance hall is, by definition, a leisure place, a place whose most important promise is the circulation of joy. The fact that very often other emotions are also put into circulation in the dance hall (fear when a fight starts, shame and rage when a female body is touched without permission, etc.) does not detract from the fact that joy is *the* emotion the dance hall promises and usually delivers. If emotions are performative as I believe they are, the bodies that are materialized by the affective atmosphere of the dance hall are bodies that relate, in different ways, to "joy." Obviously, those bodies, "joyfully differentiated," enter into a complicated choreography with the different identitarian articulations the participants in the dance hall scene bring about and sequentially deploy there through the night. In that regard, joy is experienced differently (and in turn

helps the differential materialization of those distinct identifications) by the different identitarian articulations of the dancers in terms of their different assemblages of age, gender, sexual orientation, age, body ability, dancing skills, social class, and the like. Because the choreography of this identitarian articulation constantly changes during the time people spend in the dance hall (see Vila 2015), the way “joy” is experienced also changes accordingly, while joy itself alters its capacity of affection when the identitarian articulations undergoes a modification.

Additionally, if we take into account what Carolina and Malvina point out: “We propose that cumbia and wiggle were cultural practices that . . . these women carried out as a way to experience new subjectivities and the possibility of an agency marked by fun, pleasure, recognition, and the enjoyment of their own bodies as a source of pleasure for themselves and others,” then we can see how the augmentation in their charge of affect, their capacity to affect and being affected brought about by a particular cultural practice, allows these young women to physically feel in their bodies an improved level of agency. The important thing for the affective turn in this scenario is that these young women not only can “see”—that is, cognitively recognize—that their dancing provokes males’ desires, but also, and more importantly, they can “feel” in their bodies what the outcomes of the circulation of affect are that their dancing contributed to creating. The intensification of their capacity to affect and be affected that these young women sense while dancing is felt and addressed by the name of a particular emotion, “joy,” which is analyzed by Carolina and Malvina in terms of an increase in their agentic capacity.

At the same time, in terms of my proposal about the choreographic staging of always-moveable identitarian articulations, we can point out that what Carolina and Malvina refer to as “new subjectivities” can be analyzed in terms of the particular identitarian articulation that the requirements of the event brought about, considering that a very important requirement is always how power relations work in the scene. In that regard, dancing the meneaito in a dance hall whose affective atmosphere is characterized as a joyful one, stages an affective practice in which these young women’s different identifications (in terms of gender, age, sexuality, phenotype, class, body ability, dancing skills, and the like) enter into different kinds of choreographic relationships among themselves throughout the night (something that I call identitarian articulations) that, simultaneously, affect other bodies in the scene (different identitarian articulations have different possibilities to affect and be affected); and are affected by those bodies and, in general, by the diverse bodies (human and nonhuman) and technologies present in such scenarios. How affect circulates in the event, then, depends not only on what kind of identitarian articulations are staged there, but also on how other elements in the scene contribute to or hinder such a circulation. (No matter what amount

of eroticism is put into motion by Romina, Cecilia, and their friends' dancing, eroticism as an affect ends its circulation if, for instance, a power outage stops the music and nobody can dance any longer; and at that point, more often than not, other kinds of emotions start their circulation: disappointment, rage, etc.)

In terms of the more ample systems of relations this interviewee belongs to, for these young people the *previa* (i.e., the complex rituals they are engaged in during the many hours they spend together before going to the dance hall after midnight) is a very important collective ceremonial in which many affects are mobilized and emotions, performatively, actualize particular bodies and not others. But beyond this, an event that happens just before the dance hall experience, I want to pay attention to another emotion that is quite present in the everyday lives of these young people and that, I think, has a lot to do with the almost "desperate" search for joy these youngsters look for at the *previa* and, above all, while dancing cumbia villera every Saturday night. What I am referring to here is "boredom," and the ways boredom, as an emotion with capacities to affect and be affected, performatively materialize particular bodies and not others.

Everyday life for many of these young people (males and females alike) is quite boring: they go to schools that usually do not challenge them, work in tedious jobs that they know will lead them nowhere, and have family obligations that they experience as an insurmountable burden. These everyday situations, among other things, compose daily affective practices in which the diminishment of the charge of affect is more often the rule than the exception. The exception is precisely the joyful atmosphere and affective practices of the dance hall that they eagerly plan on going to all week long, while enduring the boredom of their weekly routine. In that regard, the joyful atmosphere of the dance hall, with the augmentation of the charge of affect they feel while being there (and, during the week, remembering and chatting with their friends about what happened there), works as a counterweight in relation to the constant dwindling of their charge of affect that they sense due to the boredom they usually feel all week long. Of course, all the things that we said above about how joy is articulated with the different identifications people bring about and deploy in the dance hall is applicable to the way in which boredom participates as a component of the different identitarian articulations people perform in their everyday lives, in which boredom affects those different identitarian articulations while, at the same time, is affected by them.

There are many other places in Carolina and Malvina's chapter in which the circulation of affect, its expression in feelings and emotions, could be analyzed in terms of what kinds of affects circulate, what emotions are activated, and how those emotions materialize in particular ways the bodies that participate in the scenes. At the same time all of those instances involve a

continuous back-and-forth between the emotions circulating in the events and the different identitarian articulations the young dancers deploy there: Karina slapping a young male who touched her without her consent, Romina and Cecilia's menace to beat up any guy who attempts to touch them at the dance hall, and so on. Because affects circulate in the entire scene and the capacities enacted by Karina, Romina, and Cecilia affect other bodies present there, it would have been interesting to know what kinds of emotions were produced on the boys referred to in these interviewees' testimonies when Karina, Romina, and Cecilia did not authorize them to do something they believed they were authorized to do, and what particular kind of male bodies were materialized by those emotions.

When Carolina and Malvina move from cumbia villera's scene to the Arjona's fan club, they offer us another very interesting analysis of how the systems of gender relations are always linked to different circulations of affect:

There is a system of representations, stereotypes and values that legitimize and shape, through the way in which they are performed, both gender and age roles. And those roles not only are addressed from the outside, but also form part of the self-perception of the subjects regarding what is right and what is wrong, what is appropriate and inappropriate for the different stages of the life cycle. Thus, subjects learn to act like adults and, in the case of women of this generation, adulthood is centrally configured from two logics of transition: toward marriage and motherhood. And, from those positions, organizing or belonging to a fan club implied a break between age, gender, and expected practices.

Among the expected practices Carolina and Malvina talk about, affective practices occupy center stage. From the point of view of the affective turn some of the most important questions we have to ask ourselves are, for instance: What kind of mobilization of affect is produced within Arjona's fan club? What kinds of bodies are materialized by the emotions mobilized there? What types of identitarian articulations does the club promote and how do those identitarian articulations influence the affects that circulate in the club, while being influenced by those affects in turn? As Carolina and Malvina correctly point out, "belonging to a fan club implied a break between age, gender, and expected practices." Age and gender (and we can add parental, class, sexual, work-related, and several other identifications to the identitarian assemblage) are articulated in particular ways at home, while not only do the same identifications enter into an altered choreography in the fan club (some of them completely disappearing from the choreography, while others changing in terms of their salience) but also new identifications (never performed or completely secondary at home) become central for the identitarian articulation sequentially performed at the club. Simultaneously, while

these identitarian articulations change, the charge of affect of the bodies involved in the affective practice and the affects that circulate at the club change as well, feeding back the identitarian choreography in turn—that is, the entrance and exit and change in salience of the different identifications staged there.

It is important to quote here what Carolina and Malvina pointed out in their chapter:

[These women] were able to build a complex space of socialization they called “their place” and claimed that when they were in the meetings they felt “free.” This self-perception of freedom was evident not only when explicitly formulated, but when they pointed out that there were other places where they do not feel like that. . . . These women established this comparison regarding spaces and relationships where they were interpellated, from the point of view of a particular crossing of gender and age, as family caregivers. . . . These women distanced themselves from those spaces defined as “feminine responsibilities,” but they did not do it following the traditional claims for feminist autonomy: they did it following the affordances provided by the cultural industry. They worshiped Arjona . . . and gathered in a public space to share a taste experience and decide how to spend their own time.

As I pointed out above, from the point of view of the affective turn it is important not only to analyze how these women relate to the different interpellations by which they were historically addressed (a very important thing to do, following what we have learned from the linguistic turn), but also to consider what kind of affect those identitarian articulations that they accept and perform at home put into circulation and to compare the ways such an affect differs from the affect these same women put into motion in the fan club while performing a very different set of identitarian articulations there.

What I see in these two scenarios (home and fan club) is the circulation of two different kinds of affects linked to two different, albeit related, emotions: love and idolization. At home, among others, love (for the offspring, the partner, etc.) is usually mobilized; and it is always related to other not-so-pleasant emotions usually linked to the family responsibilities involved at home. In the fan club, idolization is the most important emotion these women put into circulation, an idolization (for sure complexly related to other not-so-pleasant emotions that also circulate at the club) enacted within a system of relations (relative to the identifications that address those systems of relations) that is different from the system of relations and identifications enacted at home and that is “felt” by these women as the basis for their “freedom.” In this sense, the circulation of a particular affect, love for a singer, ends up promoting and putting into circulation another affect among the club members, an affect that they feel as “freedom.” As we can see, it is a very

interesting way in which affects circulate, are felt, and are addressed as emotions with very important identitarian consequences.

NOTES

1. I have known many of the contributors of this book for many years (Silvia, Carolina, Malvina, and Carlos) and I consider them very good friends. With some others we have developed a very personalized relationship while putting together this collection of essays (Adriana, Adil, Juliana, and Sabrina). Because of that and because it is an Argentine custom (totally unrelated to patriarchal norms) to use the first name to address anybody, not only females, I am using the first names of the contributors I am dialoguing with in this chapter (who happen to be females), and not their last names when discussing their respective chapters.

2. If we take a closer look at what Silvia and Adriana pointed out later in their chapter, “Only gender and age relations set the performers momentarily apart: in the Nmi, just at the beginning of the choreography in the different roles of an adult captain and his young followers, and men and women; and in the Rueda, in the different roles of men and women during the musical performance but not in the movements of dance,” we can also see how age has disappeared from the identitarian articulation of the Rueda, and it can be analyzed in terms of a different kind of community that is materialized and, in turn, “felt” through the dance when age disappears from the choreography of the dance.

3. Ahmed (2004: 33–34) extends her analysis pointing out:

The re-forming of bodily and social space involves a process of making the skin crawl; the threat posed by the bodies of others is registered on the skin. Or, to be more precise, the skin comes to be felt as a border through reading the impression of one surface upon another as a form of negation. Such impressions are traces on the skin surface of the presence of others, and they depend on the repetition of past associations, through which the other is attributed as the cause of bad feeling. It is through how others impress upon us that the skin of the collective begins to take shape.

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