Trans
REVISTA TRANSCULTURAL DE MÚSICA
TRANSCULTURAL MUSIC REVIEW
ISSN:1697-0101
www.sibetrans.com/trans
SIBE Sociedad de Etnomusicología

TRANS 27 (2023)
DOSSIER: REIMAGINING AUDIOVISUAL ETHNOMUSICOLOGY

Toward shared research practices on music. From an experience of music video production to the concepts of co-utility and transmodality

Hacia prácticas compartidas de investigación sobre la música. De una experiencia de producción de vídeos musicales a los conceptos de co-utilidad y transmodalidad.

Dario Ranocchiari (Universidad de Granada)
ORCID: https://orcid.org/0000-0002-8700-4877

Abstract
This article describes an experience of video music production on the Caribbean Island of San Andrés (Colombia). Working with a local media company, the ethnographer contributed to the production of four videos, an apparently extra-ethnographic experience that nevertheless changed his vision of the Sanandrean "urban music" scene (reggaetón, dancehall). Building on this experience and reflecting on the meaning of participation in collaborative ethnography, the author proposes to use ethnographically grounded music videos as shared research outcomes that are at the same time co-useful and transmodal. In a few words, "co-utility" refers to the effort to conciliate the priorities of academic and non-academic subjects engaged in a shared research process; while "transmodality" stresses the necessity of elaborating research products that transcend conventional modalities of the transmission of academic knowledge and constitute a significant contribution to both scholar and public debates.

Keywords
Participatory research; collaborative ethnography; Caribbean; music video; visual anthropology.

Resumen
Este artículo describe una experiencia de producción de vídeos musicales en la isla caribeña de San Andrés (Colombia). Trabajando con una empresa local de medios de comunicación, el etnógrafo contribuyó a la producción de cuatro vídeos, una experiencia aparentemente extra-etnográfica que, sin embargo, cambió su visión de la escena sanandresana de "música urbana" (reggaetón, dancehall). Partiendo de esta experiencia y reflexionando sobre el significado de la participación en la etnografía colaborativa, el autor propone utilizar los vídeos musicales de base etnográfica como resultados de investigación compartidos que son al mismo tiempo co-útiles y transmodales. En pocas palabras, la "co-utilidad" se refiere al esfuerzo por conciliar las prioridades de los sujetos académicos y no académicos que participan en un proceso de investigación compartido; mientras que la "transmodalidad" subraya la necesidad de elaborar productos de investigación que trasciendan las modalidades convencionales de transmisión del conocimiento académico y constituyan una contribución significativa tanto a los debates académicos como a los públicos.

Palabras clave
Investigación participativa; etnografía colaborativa; Caribe; vídeo musical; antropología visual.

Received: April 4th 2023
Acceptance Date: November 7th 2023
Release Date: December 31st 2023

Fecha de recepción: 4 de abril de 2023
Fecha de aceptación: 7 de noviembre 2023
Fecha de publicación: 31 de diciembre 2023

Toward shared research practices on music. From an experience of music video production to the concepts of co-utility and transmodality

Dario Ranocchiari (Universidad de Granada)
Email: darioranocchiari@ugr.es

Two collaborative failures

I have conducted two long-term ethnographic projects on music and politics. Both were failed shared research experiences, if we define this expression as a way of producing collective knowledge together with "subjects" (Sardo 2017: 231). The first took place in 2002-2003 in the suburbs of Lisbon among young rappers of African origin and focused on "conscious" rap music as a critical reflection on social injustice and racism in Portugal (Ranocchiari 2011). I proposed to MC Chullage, one of the most politically committed rappers in Portugal and the leader of the association with whom I did fieldwork, to design with me a research project that could be useful in some way to the struggle that he and his collaborators were conducting against racism and discrimination of African-Portuguese people. He agreed, but he and his colleagues were much more interested in making music and social work than following the routine of assemblies and the collective decision-making process that supports what I intended as "participatory ethnography". The easiest collaborative element in our relationship would potentially be my direct participation in their musical endeavours, but I am not a rap practitioner. I clearly remember the frustration that derived from the difficulty to translate the promise of participation that is implicit in ethnographic methodological manuals into a real research experience, which is probably similar to the one of every young ethnographer at his/her first fieldwork. I wrote insistently in my field notes: "Oh, if I were a musician…"

As part of my Ph.D., I tried to set up a collaborative research project on a small island in the Western Caribbean. This experience followed a different path, but with similar results. The archipelago of San Andrés and Providencia is a Colombian administrative region, but its native African-Caribbean population has a colonial history and culture strongly linked to the English Antilles and Jamaica, including a local English creole idiom very close to Jamaica's. Because of this, from the beginning of the twentieth century, Colombia adopted measures to "colombianize" creole islanders, converting them to Catholicism (they were predominantly Baptist), inciting a massive migration of Colombian families from continental regions and introducing Spanish as the only official language in school and administration. As a result, islanders began to consider themselves culturally discriminated people or even victims of Colombia's internal colonialist pretensions. During the 1960s and 1970s several social movements rose; many of them gathered around Baptist churches and their pastors. Some of those movements began to claim political autonomy, and the most radical of them wanted complete independence (Ranocchiari 2020; Ranocchiari and Calabresi 2016).

Ethnic consciousness rapidly mounted and by the beginning of the 1980s natives (who formerly defined themselves simply as "creole" or "islanders") adopted the term Raizal People to

indicate themselves. The ethnonym Raizal is a neologism derived from the Spanish word for root (*raíz*): the allusion is to "the people who not only live in the archipelago but who definitively have a historical, emotional, and familiar link with the soil of the islands". In this process of ethnicization, Raizal activists used a broad range of pre-"colombianization" cultural elements as ethnic markers, such as the traditional affiliation to Protestantism, the local creole language, and —of course— the typical English-Caribbean architecture, gastronomy, and music.

In 2010 I spent the two months of my exploratory stay talking with the leaders of the social movements, musical group members, and other local collectives about how to tune up my very general research interests —music and ethnicity— with their particular interests as Raizal activists. Unfortunately, for many reasons, we did not find common ground for collaboration.

From the locals' point of view, the problems were basically two. First, the strong religious frame in which all active Raizal social movements operate made them sceptical about my research topic. From an emic point of view, Raizal identity is strongly linked with strict moral values, so my proposal to investigate the links between identity configuration and "scandalous" musical genres such as calypso, soca, and dancehall was inappropriate. Second, for musicians —with very few exceptions— it was important that local music scenes remained separate from political claims against the local Colombian elite. The island's very small music market was completely based on contracts with resort companies (owned and managed by continental Colombian entrepreneurs and executives) that monopolise the tourism industry.

Similarly, to what happened in my Portuguese experience, I found myself at a point in which it was impossible to go further with a shared ethnographic project. I began again to think that if I were a musician, I would find at least one solid point of contact with whom I wanted to be my epistemic partners (Holmes and Marcus 2008: 84).

The dynamic in San Andrés would probably have been similar to the fieldwork in Lisbon had I not met a young free-lance journalist that was looking for a photographer to cover a musical event. Iván Samir saw me taking pictures during the gala of *Premios Nuestra Identidad*, the most important Sanandrean award for musical and artistic production, and asked me to replace for a few weeks a photographer who had to travel outside of the island. I agreed and began to hang around with Iván, for the most part taking photos of artists and musicians I had interviewed or tried to interview before. A small production company with which Iván was working, Cotton Tree Media, also used to produce music videos for local reggaetón and dancehall musicians, and the photographer I was called to replace was one of their cameramen. Consequently, the video-maker and co-associate of Cotton Tree, Maki Egusguiza, asked me to participate in the shooting of some scheduled videos.

Initially I refused because I was interested in the videos they were producing, and I wanted to analyse them in my dissertation. I considered that a contingent participation in a key role such as the cameraman would dramatically affect the social dynamics in question, as well as my capacity to analyse the semiologic and performative aspects of the music videos. I am not referring to a tension between observation and participation, but to the influence of my own aesthetic standards in image production on the "performatic" elements (Taylor 2011: 24) of the shooting. These elements, which

include proxemic and kinetic choices, rely directly on the cameraman's performance and sensibility, and on my own ideas (based on a six-month fieldwork experience) about how a Sanandrean "urban music" video should be. In spite of this, two random aspects eventually convinced me to participate.

The first was an opportunity to shoot with Maki a documentary film about the Creole Group, the most important active traditional band on the island. Making this film was a research breakthrough of sorts, due to the fact that the shooting appeared to be (and has effectively been) an extremely rich performative context, in which the Creole Group expressed the articulation between their music and ethnicization processes in the island. It was also an essential part of my fieldwork because Creole members actively collaborated in my research, although they were not interested in the research objectives and any future academic output. The film was the only possible ethnographic outcome they were really interested in. Consequently, the best way for me to collaborate with them was to contribute to the shooting of the film. The second aspect, a more personal one, is the intimate friendship that I had gradually developed with Iván and Maki. Although I had established strong relationships with other people during the previous six months on the island, Maki and Iván were the only ones that circulated regularly in the local music scene. Therefore, I began to shoot music videos for Cotton Tree Media, and when I left the island for the last time in 2012, we had shot a number of hours for the documentary about the Creole Group[1] and we had completed four music videos for different local, national, and even one international band.

From ethnographer to video-maker (and back)

The ethnographic knowledge that I achieved through my collaboration with Cotton Tree Media radically changed both my position in the field and my relationship with the musicians and the rest of my local partners. These changes were not abrupt, but the products of a gradual process. I began with a strong epistemological concern about my participation in non-academic video production, and when I agreed to collaborate in the creation of the cultural products I intended to analyse as a scholar, I also understood that I had to deal with certain issues in order to benefit from the positive aspects of the process. The main benefit was the opportunity to work with the protagonists of the local music scene, entering as a peer in the creative process.

Although the intimacy I established with my Cotton Tree colleagues was important to me, in the initial stage of our collaboration, my goal remained basically the same as before meeting them: to do "useful" research —useful for me, for the academic community and, if possible, also for the Sanandrean people. As Herzfeld argues, the "social intimacy of the field situation is the source of anthropologist's earliest and most fundamental reflexivity" (Herzfeld 2001: 49). This means that intimacy is not only a personal issue, but a central condition that reaches the very heart of ethnographic knowledge: the level of cultural intimacy. That is why, for ethnographers, being intimate with fieldwork collaborators is considered so important and has a central role in the construction of ethnographic authority. It also means that intimacy plays a practical function in the ethnographic process: a sort of emotional-methodological tool that should allow us to understand

[1] Unfortunately, we never finished the film. For a reflection on this project, see Ranocchiari (2015).

better the people with whom we are working. But intimacy does not automatically translate into equal collaboration.

While I established intimate relationships with people who worked at Cotton Tree Media, I also used this intimacy and my role as "one of them" for non-collaborative research purposes. Every contribution I made to Cotton Tree productions was part of a reciprocal relationship, a sort of *do ut des* (Hinson cit. in Lassiter 2006: 17). Yet, in this phase of our collaboration, I was interested mostly in ethnographic data: my field notes after the briefings and the shootings, the visual materials themselves, and the notes I took on more informal social occasions.

In 2012, when I reread my field diary, I suddenly discovered that what I had written had gradually shifted from ethnographic fieldnotes to video production guidelines. I remembered that at some point during fieldwork I had experienced a feeling of ethnographic saturation, but I was not aware that I had stopped acting as an ethnographer to begin acting mainly as a music video maker. Because that was what the diary was telling me: gradually, I became much more interested in making music videos than in producing "scholarly useful" written or visual ethnographic data.

In the first two productions in which I participated, *Te quiero conmigo* (2011) by Land Rose and *Movimiento de cadera* (2011), I tried to do exactly what the director and musicians told me to do, even though there was some scope for improvisation. I did not participate at all in the editing process of these two videos, limiting my presence to short visits to the studio. On the contrary, I actively participated in the preproduction, production, and postproduction of the third and fourth one, *Hot Gial* (2011) by SS Crew and *Intocable* (2011) by Colombian Party Cartel. I took —together with Maki and the musicians— important decisions concerning the screenplay, the visual aesthetics, and the montage. At this point, I was not able to clearly perceive which performative elements, aesthetic considerations, and even emotional responses were derived by local ideas about Sanandrean urban music and which were derived from my own vision (as an ethnographer and as video-maker) of it. Our final goal was the same: to produce "good" music videos. Ethnomusicologists who do fieldwork and play music together with the subjects of their research must feel something similar to what I am describing here: a moment in which you are more musician than (only) an ethnographer. In some way, what I achieved by filming performances was what I wanted to achieve when I wished to be a musician: to participate more intimately in the cultural and social life of the people I was researching with.

Gradually, I became "one of them". Obviously not a Raizal or a Sanandrean, but someone who has some role in their world, the "music business" of the island. Because of this, my relationship with people connected to musical practices became deeper and this fact conditioned my research. I began to be invited by the musicians to more informal and private social occasions to which I had no access before. For example, once I was invited along with part of the filming crew to a birthday party at the home of a dancehall artist. There I met his mother, a chorist, who invited me to a choir rehearsal and presented me to her brother, a pastor with whom I had been trying to talk for a long time. Similarly, I often found myself involved in conversations about music, ethnic identity, business, religion, and politics that sounded much more "natural" than before, when the locals knew me only

as “the Spanish scholar” who wanted to study ethnicity and music[2].

Such conversations were often triggered by something that had happened during the briefings or the shootings, confirming the stimulating effect of the camera in the production of discursive representations (MacDougall 1998). For instance, Cotton Tree had produced the video *Intocable* for an American artist of Colombian origin, Carey James Balboa. Balboa was based in Nashville, Tennessee, but spent part of the year in Colombia co-producing songs with local partners for what he called “revolutionary Latin music parties”. His partner in this video is Shungu, a Raizal urban artist heavily involved in the burgeoning Sanandrean music scene. Shungu was working with his parents at the Ebony Foundation, an organisation devoted to the promotion of traditional Sanandrean culture, and was one of the proponents of the idea of using the term “mode-up” for labelling Sanandrean urban music. His detractors maintained that he did not really promote Raizal culture, as demonstrated by the fact that he sang mainly in Spanish and not in creole or in English, and that he overtly preferred a reggaetón style (that recalls the Hispanic-Caribbean musical culture) to a dancehall one (that’s associated with Anglo-Caribbean culture and consequently Raizal culture).

The video shows the performers in two contrasting locations: the bright and paradisiac *playas* of the island, with their exotic beach bars and crystalline waters, and the dark and suggestive atmosphere of a disco party. Balboa’s idea was to place a love affair with a beautiful woman in the perfect Caribbean mix of relaxation and partying, thus representing the most attractive elements of his diasporic identity. This is also why a large Colombian flag occasionally appears in the video, fluttering in the sweet island winds. The point is that the Colombian flag is one of the more controversial national symbols for Raizal militants; when the AMEN-SD movement declared the independence of the archipelago in 2007, the first action was to lower the official flag and raise the one of the movement. So, the presence of the Colombian flag —and especially its association with Shungu’s presence and performance— worked as a real catalyst for discussions of ethnic conflict on the island, both during the shooting sessions and after, when I showed the video to different informal groups of people not always directly connected with the urban music scene.

Discursive elements are not the most important in this case. I started the research with an interest in the discursive representations and auto-representations about Sanandrean music and musicians, but the intrusion of the audiovisual dimension in the fieldwork transformed everything. The performative context of the shooting, mediated by the camera, became a common ground in which “we” —the musicians, the video-makers, the producers, the occasional actors, and the often-copious meddlers— visually produced such cultural representations together.

On the one hand, we participated in the shooting, which is a complex blend of acting, musical performance, and what I would call “film performance”. The latter consists of all the elements that contribute to the “visual sound” of the musicking process (Small 1998): the specific ways in which the cameraman “plays” his instrument, with the exposure, colour balance, and composition variations that are essential for obtaining the most expressive images, the movements he makes in

[2] I am not alluding to a sort of providential and ultimately indecent mimicry. After all, they perfectly knew that I still was a researcher doing fieldwork. Rather, I am referring to the fact that in some way my new role in local music scene normalized my position on the island.

the space of the performance, getting close or distancing himself from the actors, continuously interacting with them and with the music that is playing in the background. All these elements were the result of spontaneous improvisation during our shootings. Screenplays used to be open ended and Maki Egusguiza's interventions in the shooting were mostly directed at inciting and maintaining this spontaneity. Every person involved, and particularly the musicians, were relatively free to play, expressing a personal performative commentary about the song and the video, the specific context of shooting, and the larger social context in which it was placed.

On the other hand, we have made together the cultural artefacts that we can watch today on YouTube. Artefacts that have been produced to achieve goals that are completely internal to the Sanandrean social and musical context: enjoy urban music, open doors for local bands to the translocal musical market and earn money. But from my particular point of view, they are also kinds of "unidentified ethnographic objects". At the same time, Sanandrean cultural products that are significant in understanding the relationship between urban music and ethnicity on San Andrés Island, and productions by an ethnographer who wanted to study those relationships.

Shared research practices

Rethinking about this first experience I had filming music videos while doing ethnographic fieldwork, the idea of having a shared goal between academic and non-academic people engaged into the research emerges as a central point for the development of a more inclusive way of conducting ethnography. There is a wide variety of epistemological positioning and methodological practices that explore different modalities of doing what has often been labelled collaborative or participatory research. The Latin American bibliography on participatory action research has been particularly important in the development of this kind of research in ethnomusicology (Araujo 2009; Cambria 2019; Cambria, Fonseca, and Guazina 2012).

Avoiding entering into interminable terminological disputes about collaborative, participatory, or applied ethnomusicology, and following Jean Rouch —who at times talked about *anthropologie partagée*— Sardo uses the expression "shared research practices on music and dance" (2017: 221). She refers to any practice designed to include non-academic subjects (the "informants" of conventional methodology) in every stage of the investigation: from data collection to analysis and dissemination. These kinds of projects are characterised by the attempt to facilitate people who speak from marginalised places of enunciation in taking part in the knowledge construction processes.

The question of the utility our research has for the people that Holmes and Marcus called "our epistemic partners" (2008: 84) is absolutely central for all participatory research. Of course, a certain degree of collaboration is implicit in every ethnography. Just by quoting two authors of the anthropological canon, we could trace it back to Lewis H. Morgan, who dedicates to the Seneca man Ely Parker *League of the Iroquois* ("the materials of which are the fruit of our joint researches": Morgan 1922) and to Franz Boas, who shares the authorship of different publications with his Tlingit-English collaborator (Boas and Hunt 1905, 1906). However, it was Boas who defined the topics,

research questions, and even the style in which the texts were written (Briggs and Bauman 1999). Even if Boas and Hunt were friends and collaborated for approximately 40 years, their professional relation was that of the academic researcher and his assistant. This example shows that the tension between ethnographic collaboration and academic recognition is not a recent issue. But it also highlights two other points.

The first is that this tension has not been resolved in favour of the epistemic partners of the ethnographers. With the affirmation of the Malinowskian fieldwork model, the trend has been to institutionalise the figure of the lonely ethnographer, who moves to the field, observes the locals, interviews them, and comes back home to analyse the data, theorise, and write. In other words, to produce knowledge. The second point is that not every collaboration is an equal collaboration, in which every subject has the same weight in the epistemic partnership, and they share the same aims. In contrast, as Sardo suggests by referring to the concept of abyssal thinking (de Sousa Santos 2007), the researcher represents a subject of academically empowered authority, whose work contributes to unveiling knowledge about the subjects involved, but above all to the validation of the researcher himself/herself as the holder of a socially better qualified knowledge. The greater the social distance between the researcher and his or her study context, the greater the abyssality between this relation of gain and interest. Until what point can we continue to "use" musical knowledge and the "music of others" as a way of legitimising our professional situation as academics and, consequently, to legitimise the disciplines we represent? (Sardo 2017: 221-222)

To find possible ways to go beyond the abyssal thinking[3], we have to temporarily move away from ethnography in the strict sense of the term, and to look to two cross-cutting approaches. The first one is that of the participatory action-research (PAR) developed by activist researchers like Paulo Freire, Darcy Ribeiro and particularly Orlando Fals Borda (2015; Fals Borda and Rahman 1991). The PAR conceives research as an empowering tool for marginalised people and social movements, who pass from being objects of study to protagonists of the process of knowledge construction. Every PAR experience should produce situated and useful knowledge: the main aim of the research must be focused on structural or local problems of the community in which the research is developed, and not on the academic debates.

The fact that PAR rethinks "conventional" research methods and techniques to put them in the service of practical problems of subaltern collectives determined its success. But at the same time, it limited the influence PAR had on theory and epistemology, as if being centred on a real problem of real people made it some kind of second-tier research, as is often considered the research perspectives labelled "applied".

[3] 'Modern Western thinking is an abyssal thinking. It consists of a system of visible and invisible distinctions, the invisible ones being the foundation of the visible ones. The invisible distinctions are established through radical lines that divide social reality into two realms, the realm of "this side of the line" and the realm of "the other side of the line". The division is such that "the other side of the line" vanishes as reality, becomes nonexistent, and is indeed produced as nonexistent. Nonexistent means not existing in any relevant or comprehensible way of being. Whatever is produced as nonexistent is radically excluded because it lies beyond the realm of what the accepted conception of inclusion considers to be its other. What most fundamentally characterizes abyssal thinking is thus the impossibility of the co-presence of the two sides of the line. To the extent that it prevails, this side of the line only prevails by exhausting the field of relevant reality. Beyond it, there is only nonexistence, invisibility, non-dialectical absence' (de Sousa Santos 2007: 45-46).

The second approach is that proposed by the Latin American group *modernidad/colonialidad* (modernity/coloniality) and known as the decolonial perspective. Their central thesis is that coloniality (the cultural logic of colonialism, a way to conceive and classify the world that transcends the historical colonialism) is a structural part of modernity. As a consequence, the relationship between modernity and coloniality did not end with the political decolonisation of the 20th century, it just changed, but remained functional to the demands of global capitalism (Grosfoguel 2008). According to these authors, coloniality has three principal dimensions: coloniality of power (Quijano 2000), coloniality of being (Maldonado Torres 2007) and coloniality of knowledge (Lander 2000).

I am here particularly interested in this third dimension. Academia and its system of disciplines have inevitably been shaped by the coloniality of knowledge, and the only way to break with the relation between coloniality and knowledge construction is to do research "together with" (and not "on") the people that are usually considered informants, bearers of culture, or even objects of study. At the moment, that of the group *modernidad/colonialidad* is probably the only general critical theory that had been able to clearly state that to do participatory research is not an addition but an epistemological necessity.

Co-utility, transmodality and the video-making

Coming back to ethnography, the problem of defining a shared aim that works for the academic and for the non-academic subjects have been only partially resolved by researchers like Lassiter, who rediscovered, reshaped, and systematised some of the collaborative practices inaugurated by Boas (Lassiter 2006). Lassiter talks of co-research, co-interpretation, co-writing, and co-authorship: some of many "co-s" that dot the bibliography on participatory research. (The idea of co-theorising, developed in Rappaport 2008, is particularly interesting).

The problem is that in many collaborative ethnographic projects, the academic and the non-academic aims remain separated. Academic and non-academic researchers continue to have divergent goals that lead to different outcomes. I really hope that the academic publications that came out of my ethnography of Sanandrean musical practices can be useful for islanders, but I couldn't possibly say that, writing the Ph.D. dissertation, the papers and the book I published on the topic, me and the musicians with whom I worked had the same objective.

In previous publications (Miguel, Ranocchiari and Sardo 2020; Ranocchiari and Giorgianni 2020) I proposed the concept of co-utility as a principle to follow when we want to set up a participatory project. I think that including some collaborative practices in our fieldwork, and/or sharing our theoretical efforts with (some of) the non-academic subjects we collaborate with, is not enough. I am convinced that adding some "less academic" research result to academic papers and books is not sufficient in collaborative ethnography. The real challenge is to find a way to produce outcomes that are equally useful to the different subjects involved. Outcomes that can be really considered as the culmination of a shared process of knowledge construction: that is an attempt to operate in a different epistemological framework.

On occasion (i.e., in many PAR projects) the empowerment that derives from the activation

of a collaborative project constitutes by itself a shared outcome. In other cases, the writing of a coauthored academic book or paper can also be a co-useful goal. A good example is *The Jesus Road* by Lassiter, Ellis, and Kotay (2002), in which two academic scholars (Lassiter and Ellis) and a Kiowa singer (Kotay) jointly reflect on Kiowa's Christian hymns. A book seems to them the best way to materialise their shared research. But, even if it is true that a co-authored "ethno-dash-graphy" can be a co-useful result, it is not always the case. Unlike Kotay, many of our epistemic partners are not interested in writing ethnographies together.

For instance, I moved towards the anthropology of music when, after trying for months to produce narrative life histories of the African Portuguese young people I talked about at the beginning of this paper, I discovered that they expressed themselves better through rap music and that a mixtape and a show were outcomes much more interesting for them than some academic paper (Ranocchiari 2011).

At that time, I did not analyse the problem of the final research results, assuming that an ethno-dash-graphy on their worldview was for them sufficiently useful and interesting to justify their participation in a laborious and sometimes boring research process. Maybe the result of this first attempt of shared ethnography could have been different if I had accepted the proposal of some of my interlocutors to shoot music videos with them.

The question of final research products is not a side issue in shared research. I think it is absolutely central point: not an addendum to a potentially liberating process but the very heart of collaboration. But, in the case of my Portuguese fieldwork, the point is if to do music videos would have been really co-useful for us: for the rappers and for scholars like me. In other words, if those hypothetical videos would have been not only "good" music videos, but also good para-ethnographic research products (Holmes and Marcus 2008). Would those visual objects be able to express the critical reflexions that we (the rappers and the ethnographer) would have realised jointly while producing them?

This issue has to do with the mode in which knowledge is passed on. That is why I suggest adding to the principle of co-utility the concept of transmodality, which refers to the need to produce research results that are co-useful and, at the same time, accessible to people in and outside academia. The outcomes of shared research should be transmodal in the sense that they should be able to transcend the barriers imposed by academic and non-academic modalities of knowledge transmission. Pursuing such kind of outcome is the only way we have to give the collaboration between different epistemic partners the opportunity to leave a trace that goes beyond the enriching but ephemeral process of co-research. Transmodal outcomes are opportunities to join wider dialogues with other subjects on different issues, in and outside the community of scholars.

When talking about transmodal outcomes, I use the concept of "mode" in a different way than many multimodal anthropologists (Collins, Durington, and Gill 2017; Dattatreyan and Marrero Guillemón 2019). Using "mode", I'm not referring to media issues: it has more to do with the format in which knowledge is organised to be understood by different types of subjects, and not with the

use of any media or ecology of media.

For instance, in subsequent experiments that I made with music videos, I discovered that this genre can be adapted to collaborative ethnography and used both as a co-useful research device and a transmodal outcome for the ethnography of musical practices. Eugenio Giorgianni and edited a special issue on what we called "ethnographically-grounded music videos" (Ranocchiari and Giorgianni 2020). There, we bring together some pioneering experiences of music video making that took place while the filmmaker was doing ethnographic fieldwork. In the introductory essay, we proposed a minimalist definition (and we also listed some things that cannot be expected by this kind of outcomes):

> they are basically music videos produced while (part of) their authors were doing ethnographic fieldwork; whose fieldwork they influenced and from which have been already influenced. […] So, they are not conventional ethnographic videos. They don't document any aspect of the real life of local communities. They don't portray directly the daily life of subjects that are representative of a certain cultural context. They don't tell the story of an ethnographic encounter… they are rather one of the consequences of it. If that weren't enough, they are works of fiction that move on the imaginary level and not on the level of the academic documentation of cultural practices. Recalling an old debate, they try to work on 'the true' and not on 'the real', as conventional ethnography does. (Ranocchiari and Giorgianni 2020: 12)

Coming back to San Andrés, the videos we made are definitely ethnographically-grounded in this minimalist sense. But they are not transmodal outcomes in the sense I expressed before. Even if their making gave me advantages and fruitful intuitions, it would be difficult to defend *Intocable* as an artefact that is (also) an academic outcome —a product that expresses *per se* some kind of ethnographic knowledge. As happens with other examples collected in the special issue, they are more intuitive and almost casual "unidentified ethnographic objects" than conscious research devices. I developed the idea of ethnographically-grounded music videos and experimented with them in a subsequent project. It resulted in a video with Saharawi activists (Ranocchiari and Romero Luque 2023), three videos with *neoandalusí* music bands in Granada, and an ethnographic film showing their making-of (*Videomusicking Al Ándalus* 2022).

This experience helped me to focus some key elements of what ethnographically-grounded video —as co-useful devices and transmodal outcomes— can bring to shared research. The first one is that the production of this kind of videos inevitably force the ethnographer to get out of his/her comfort zone, moving on a co-creative ground that is not the one we have been trained for as scholars. To lose (at least, part of) control on the ethnographic process is normal in every shared research, but doing such kind of videos also means to experiment and accept fiction-making as a mode of knowledge construction and transmission.

The second key element is that its full potential is disclosed when also our epistemic partners are driven to get out of their comfort zone. It didn't happen in San Andrés (where I have merged with a local production company that offered artists a complete package), but it did happen in my subsequent project. Working with *neoandalusí* musicians, I set up a specific co-creation/production

workflow, pushing them to rethink visually their music on the basis of what they had discovered about themselves in previous auto-ethnographic sessions. Entering into the visual, they had to get into an area they weren't used to step into and co-creating the videos from the starting idea to the montage, the musicians reflected on their own music and achieved meanings that did not come into play during song production.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Araujo, Samuel. 2009. "Diversidade e desigualdade entre pesquisadores e pesquisados. Consideraçoes a partir da etnomusicologia". *Diversidade & Diversidade*, 4: 173-91.

Boas, Franz and George Hunt. 1905. *Kwakiutl Texts. The Jesup North Pacific Expedition*, Vol. 3. New York: Memoirs of the American Museum of Natural History.

———. 1906. *Kwakiutl Texts, Second Series. The Jesup North Pacific Expedition*. Vol. 10, n.1. New York: Memoirs of the American Museum of Natural History.

Briggs, Charles and Richard Bauman. 1999. "'The Foundation of All Future Researches': Franz Boas, George Hunt, Native American Texts, and the Construction of Modernity". *American Quarterly*, 51(3): 479-528.

Cambria, Vincenzo. 2019. "Community and the musicking of participatory research in Rio de Janeiro". In *The Routledge Companion to the Study of Local Musicking*, eds. S. A. Reily and K. Brucher, 79-87. London: Routledge.

Cambria, Vincenzo, Edilberto Fonseca and Laíze Guazina. 2012. "'With the people': Reflections on Collaboration and Participatory Research Perspectives in Brazilian Ethnomusicology". *The World of Music (New Series)*, 5(1): 55-80.

Collins, Samuel Gerald, Matthew Durington, and Harjant Gill. 2017. "Multimodality: An Invitation". *American Anthropologist,* 119(1): 142-46.

Dattatreyan, Ethiraj Gabriel and Isaac Marrero-Guillamón. 2019. "Introduction: Multimodal Anthropology and the Politics of Invention". *American Anthropologist,* 121(1): 220-28.

de Sousa Santos, Boaventura. 2007. "Beyond Abyssal Thinking: From Global Lines to Ecologies of Knowledges". *Review,* XXX(1): 45-89.

Fals-Borda, Orlando. 2015. *Una sociología sentipensante para América Latina*. Buenos Aires y Ciudad de México: CLACSO and Siglo XXI.

Fals Borda, Orlando and Muhammad Anisur Rahman. 1991. *Action and knowledge: breaking the monopoly with participatory action-research*. New York: Apex Press.

Grosfoguel, Ramón. 2001. "Transmodernity, border thinking, and global coloniality". *Eurozine*, 4 Nov.

Herzfeld, Michael. 2001. *Anthropology: theoretical practice in culture and society*. Oxford: Blackwell.

Holmes, Douglas R. and George E. Marcus. 2008. "Collaboration Today and the Re-Imagination of the Classic Scene of Fieldwork Encounter". *Collaborative Anthropologies,* 1: 81-101.

Lander, Edgardo (ed.). 2000. *La colonialidad del saber: eurocentrismo y ciencias sociales*. Buenos Aires:

CLACSO.

Lassiter, Luke Eric. 2006. *The Chicago Guide to Collaborative Ethnography*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Lassiter, Luke Eric, Clyde Ellis and Ralph Kotay. 2002. *The Jesus Road: Kiowas, Christianity, and Indian Hymns*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press.

MacDougall, David. 1998. *Transcultural cinema*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Maldonado-Torres, Nelson. 2007. "On the Coloniality of Being: Contributions to the Development of a Concept". *Cultural studies,* 2(3): 240-70.

Miguel, Ana Flávia, Dario Ranocchiari, and Susana Sardo. 2020. "Prácticas de investigación compartida en música: tentativas y desafíos desde Portugal". *AIBR Revista de Antropología Iberoamericana,* 15(2): 357-82.

Morgan, Lewis Henry. 1922. *League of the Ho-de'-no-sau-nee or Iroquois*. New York: Dood, Mead and Company.

Quijano, Aníbal. 2000. "Coloniality of Power, Eurocentrism, and Latin America". *Nepantla: Views from South,* 1(3): 533-80.

Ranocchiari, Dario. 2011. "Between the Bairro and the Nation: Performative Identities of Afro-Lusitan Rap Music in Lisbon". *Music and Politics*, V (1).

———. 2015. "Creole: Inside. Cómo hacer filmaciones no etnográficas puede servir a la realización de una etnografía". *Revista de Antropología Experimental,* 15.

———. 2020. *Paraíso y frontera. Prácticas musicales y performance de la etnicidad en la isla de San Andrés*. Bogotá: Instituto Colombiano de Antropología e Historia.

Ranocchiari, Dario and Gloria Calabresi. 2016. "Ethnicity and Religion in the Archipelago of San Andrés, Providencia and Santa Catalina". *Bulletin of Latin American Research,* 35(4): 481-495.

Ranocchiari, D. and E. Giorgianni. 2020. "Doing ethnographically grounded music videos". *Visual Ethnography Journal,* 9(1): 7-18.

Ranocchiari, Dario and Jara Romero Luque. 2023. "Tefla madlouma: resiliencias femeninas y memoria cultural saharaui a través de la realización de un vídeo musical etnográficamente fundamentado". *El Oído Pensante* 11(2): 111-141.

Rappaport, Joanne. 2008. "Beyond Participant Observation: Collaborative Ethnography as Theoretical Innovation". *Collaborative Anthropologies,* 1(1): 1-31.

Sardo, Susana. 2017. "Shared Research Practices on and about music: toward decolonizing colonial ethnomusicology". In *Making Music, Making Society*, eds. J. Martí y S. Revilla Gútiez. Newcastle: Cambridge Scholars.

Small, Christopher. 1998. *Musicking: The meanings of performing and listening*. Middletown: Wesleyan University Press.

Taylor, Diana. 2011. "Introducción". In *Estudios avanzados de performance*, eds. D. Taylor and M. Fuentes, 7-30. Ciudad de México: Fondo de Cultura Económica.

Audiovisuals

Hot Gial (2011). Music: DJ Wak. Performer: SS Crew. Director: Maki Egusguiza. Production: Cotton Tree Media.

Intocable (2011). Music and performer: Colombian Party Cartel. Director: Maki Egusguiza. Production: Cotton Tree Media.

Movimiento de cadera (2011). Music and performer: Rayo & Toby. Director: Maki Egusguiza. Production: Cotton Tree Media.

Te quiero conmigo (2011). Music: Dominic Productions & Housni Celis. Performer: Land Rose. Director: Maki Egusguiza. Production: Cotton Tree Media.

Videomusicking Al Ándalus (2022). Director: Dario Ranocchiari. Production: Fondazione Giorgio Cini and Universidad de Granada.

Dario Ranocchiari: is an ethnographer with expertise in anthropology, ethnomusicology, and the humanities. He serves as Professor at the Department of Social Anthropology at the Universidad de Granada, Spain. His main research interests include audiovisual and multimodal research, collaborative ethnography, and the anthropologies of creative processes and performance. In recent projects, he has been exploring the use of fiction as a tool for ethnographic research.

Cita recomendada
Ranocchiari, Dario. 2023. "Toward shared research practices on music. From an experience of music video production to the concepts of co-utility and transmodality". *TRANS-Revista Transcultural de Música/Transcultural Music Review* 27 [Fecha de consulta: dd/mm/aa]

Esta obra está sujeta a la licencia de Reconocimiento-NoComercial-SinObraDerivada 4.0 España de Creative Commons. Puede copiarla, distribuirla y comunicarla públicamente siempre que cite su autor y la revista que lo publica (TRANS-Revista Transcultural de Música), agregando la dirección URL y/o un enlace a este sitio: www.sibetrans.com/trans. No la utilice para fines comerciales y no haga con ella obra derivada. La licencia completa se puede consultar en http://creativecommons.org/choose/?lang=es_ES