



TRANS 26 (2022)

DOSSIER: AL SON DE LA MAREA FEMINISTA

Feminist activism and queer claims in traditional dance and music. Two case studies: the *dimònies* (female demons) and the *queer bullanguera* of Mallorca

Bàrbara Duran Bordoy (Grup de Recerca en Etnopoètica de les Illes Balears-Universitat de les Illes Balears. Institut de Musicologia Pau Villalonga)

Resumen

Durante la última década, diversas actuaciones de colectivos feministas y LGTBI se han hecho visibles en manifestaciones de música y danzas tradicionales. El marco festivo, los lugares públicos de *performance*, la emoción compartida y las reivindicaciones de género en un repertorio históricamente patriarcal son analizados aquí en dos casos de estudio (las *dimònies* y la *bullanguera queer*). Este activismo, aunque de carácter mediterráneo y local, ha incidido en la remodelación de políticas regionales en materia de igualdad; generando encendidos debates en medios de comunicación y redes sociales. Música y códigos coreográficos, relaciones entre géneros y sexualidades han sido estudiados por diferentes especialistas (Magrini 2003; Magowan y Wrazen 2013; Liska 2017; Snyder 2018); siguiendo sus aportaciones, la performatividad en relación al género, el respeto por el espacio simbólico marcado por la tradición y la emoción colectiva a través de la música y la coreografía son estudiados aquí.

Palabras clave

Activismo feminista; música y danza mediterráneas; reivindicaciones queer; Festividad de Sant Antoni; tradición oral; *dimònies*, *bullanguera*.

Fecha de recepción: septiembre 2021

Fecha de aceptación: octubre 2022

Fecha de publicación: diciembre 2022

Abstract

Feminist and queer claims have appeared in an intense and passionate way, questioning aspects of some manifestations of the intangible oral heritage. The festive setting, the public places of performance, the shared emotion around a historically patriarchal repertoire are analysed here in two case studies (the *dimònies* and the *queer bullanguera*). This activism, although Mediterranean and local, has reshaped regional policies on equality; and has generated debates in media and social networks. At the same time, music and choreographic codes evolve into more balanced gender and sexualities treatment (Magowan & Wrazen 2013; Liska 2017; Snyder 2018). Following these scholars; the relationship between performativity and gender, the respect for the symbolic space bounded by tradition and collective emotion through music and choreography are studied here.

Keywords

Feminist activism, queer claims, Mediterranean music & dance, Sant Anthony festivity, oral tradition, *dimònies*, *bullanguera*.

Received: September 2021

Acceptance Date: October 2022

Release Date: December 2022

Feminist activism and queer claims in traditional dance and music. Two case studies: the *dimònies* (female demons) and the *queer bullanguera* of Mallorca¹

Bàrbara Duran Bordoy (Grup de Recerca en Etnopoètica de les Illes Balears-Universitat de les Illes Balears. Institut de Musicologia Pau Villalonga)

Introduction

Feminist and queer claims have appeared in an intense and passionate way, questioning aspects of some manifestations of the intangible oral heritage, including in their demands the need to analyse and correct patriarchal and homophobic discourses in music, dance and stories of oral tradition, as well as ensuring equal participation and non-discriminatory practice for both sexes. The objective of this essay is to explore why some groups which are involved in a very active movement to change a society that they consider patriarchal, have promoted highly controversial changes regarding the protagonists and visible elements of certain festivities. However, they have kept music and choreography, which are the fundamental elements, in their most traditional expression.

This fact shows, once again, the great symbolic power of the music towards generating a community, in this context, two case studies are addressed. On the one hand, the *dimònies*² of Manacor (Mallorca), who have subverted gender roles by incorporating women who dance as *dimonis* (an eminently masculine and patriarchal figure) in an alternative dance, an unthinkable fact a few years ago. On the other hand, the second case is based on the controversy created by the public dance of a man/man couple (specifically the one called *bullanguera*) where the woman, traditionally, can choose or change her partner as she pleases. Those involved in these two cases have not changed any of the other traditional elements of the performance, therefore this study approaches the reasons why two of the most subversive demands in the folk tradition, which have the greatest impact in contemporary Mallorcan society, have kept intact the music and the choreography, but have subverted the traditional gender roles assigned to the participants. It is interesting to consider that these demands may be applied or expanded to other geographical frames.

This fact requires a comparative analysis with other contemporary festive events, since the changes caused by the participation of women in a public dance, where their presence was unthinkable until now, could have been based on new musical compositions or choreographies, or have created contemporary versions in order to highlight this new stage of feminist and LGBTBI vindication. As Liska points out regarding the Argentinian tango, "electronic tango emerged alongside new dance practices, reviving debates about the authenticity of music that promotes mass culture" (2018: 87), and she mentions two key concepts here: 'debate' and 'authenticity'. The title she gives to that section is also very illustrative, "From Tradition to Betrayal. Musical innovations".

¹ I would like to thank Laura Timoner for her feedback and assessment in the translation from Spanish into English.

² In Sant Antoni festivity, each Mallorcan town has its own group of demon dancers. There are eleven in sa Pobla, two in Artà, and four in Manacor, led by one *Dimoni Gros*. *Dimònies* can be translated as *female demons*. It is important here to underline that *female demons* will be used as the equivalent to the Catalan word *dimònies* and *demons* to the Catalan *dimonis* (male demons), but when the reference is about the *dimoni gros* (literally, the *Big Demon*), *Devil* will be the term used. There is only one Devil in English, as in the Mallorcan festivity there is only one *Dimoni Gros*. So, we consider these two terms as equivalents.

New repertoires from traditional music have been generated or some of them have been recontextualized in what has been called *neo-fiestas* (*neo-festivals*, Pich 2019; Vives 2019): the inclusion of festive brass bands, the full acceptance of pop/rock and TV repertoire in the music that accompanies these festivities. An example of that is the case of the *Muc de Sineu* Festival (Mallorca). This festive event (and it is only one example among others) displays songs by Queen, The Beatles, Frank Sinatra and the traditional Minorcan tune of Sant Joan festivity, with the singing of some newly composed *Goigs* (Joys) sung during an apparently traditional pilgrimage in the surroundings of Sineu town. Moreover, the *Muc* was born with an unequivocal vocation to vindicate feminism and the LGBTBI demands, something they proudly show off: the *Fufes* mares —parody of the *fufos* canary horses—, a Mallorcan version of Conchita Wurst and legionnaires in shorts, accompany the figures of the *Muc* and *Muca* in a gay-friendly transgression mixed with patriotism of local flags and Sabino Arana ones (Pich 2019: 66).

This Mallorcan *neo-fiesta* absorbs contemporary and universal cultural references as well as the implicit acceptance of the “purity” of the repertoire of oral tradition, which is surprising and worthy of analysis, because the promoters of the subversive demands are aware of the established values transgression that occurs when women dance in an extremely masculinized dance (the *dimonis* of Sant Antoni one) instead of men; or by the participation of male/male couples (in the queer scene). The hypothesis presented here is that this absolute respect for the accepted forms of the oral tradition heritage “authenticates” and gives reliability to the most passionate demands of the feminist and LGBTBI collective. This respect authorizes them, almost officially, to lead positive pedagogies in gender issues and act as cultural agents generating new social synergies.

This study methodologically starts from the instrumental case studies. It is based on interviews carried out individually and in a small group as well as participant observation, which allow us to glimpse the main categories: the processes and the shifts, in addition to the maintained elements in the traditional heritage by feminist and LGBTBI collective claims. It is also important to highlight the textual analysis of the categories emerged from these two case studies, as well as their correspondence to the theoretical framework generated by the Music Revival theory and the studies by Liska (2018) and Snyder (2019). In the same way it must be considered that the study case on the *queer bullanguera* also arises from digital ethnography: recordings and the observation of heated debates in blogs and social networks on music and dance of oral tradition.

Not only has participation in popular and ancient religious festivities increased, but also the aforementioned neo-festivities have been created (such as the *Muc*); which bring together, on the one hand, elements of traditional culture and, on the other, modern elements and artistic plus aesthetic expressions that incorporate contents of the contemporary audiovisual language. This integration of modern symbols, which coexists with the presence of referential elements to the peasant world, creates a festive-musical landscape that refers to the interpretive framework of the Music Revival (Hill & Bithell 2014: 4), also generating a new subculture that is materialized in these neo-festivities. All in all, it implies the identification of musical elements and practices as ‘ancient, historical or traditional’; a selection and reinterpretation of the past which sets, precisely, historical narratives. These actions imply a decontextualization and a recontextualization that can be described as shifts (Rönstrom 2014: 45).

In the case of the *dimònies* from Manacor, the most powerful shift that has created a great controversy has been the gender shift: the proposal of a female demon dance (danced by women) instead of the male demon dance (traditionally danced by men). In fact, a new term has been coined here: *dimònies* (feminine of *dimoni*, demon). But they have also introduced two fundamental shifts: an alternative performance space (they do not dance in the traditional location, where everybody

knows that the first dance will take place) and the creation of a new perspective that arises from the shared emotion when dancing and singing in order to integrate their proposals into the traditional heritage (in other words, to validate their proposals). These factors are essential and follow the same pattern as the *queer bullanguera*. This term is proposed here adapting it from Liska's *queer tango* presented in her *Argentine Queer Tango. Dance and sexuality politics in Buenos Aires* (2018). This essay, together with Andrew Snyder paper (2019) constitutes the foundations of the present study. Although two specific and geographically located case studies are proposed here, their presence is an indicator that feminist and queer claims in the field of oral tradition music can trigger effective actions in local and regional policy frameworks and influence, later on, in broader spectrum policies.

The distinction between the *danses de pagès* (dances of peasant) and the *danses de figures* (dances of figures)³ in Mallorca

Regarding traditional dances, the island of Mallorca presents two different types. On the one hand, the *ball de pagès* or *ball de bot*, that can be found in public squares or spaces; the one taught in dance schools or learned among friends or family. The main Mallorcan types of this dance are the *jota*, the *mateixa*, the *copeo* and the *bolero*, but there are also other forms of great acceptance, such as the *bullanguera*. It is in this last dance where the woman, while dancing, chooses or changes her partner.

The second typology is the *ball de figures*, the latter embodiment of the tradition that many call 'ancestral'. They are dances in a small group with a very closed and highly 'sacralized' choreography, since for many they evoke a remote, historical and untouchable past. The best known among them is the dance of the *Cossiers* (present in Algaida, Manacor, Montuïri, Pollença and other towns). In order to explain how patriarchal structures were transmitted from generation to generation, it is necessary to know that the formations are usually made up of about six dancers with a central *dama* (a dame, a lady). The role of the *dama* was always danced by a man, in a case of an early and public cross-dressing, although invisible and non-existent in the social context and anthropological patterns in earlier times. These dances were performed for centuries solely and exclusively by men, and these dances of figures were one of the first targets of vindication of Mallorcan women, creating heated controversies in the press, media and altering the social agreement reached by many Town Halls on festive days.

In this context, the *ball de dimonis* can be considered a type of simple and repetitive figures dance, suitable to be shared and danced by all, since it is not necessary to rehearse a choreography made up of an ostinato tapped while dancing and a repetitive melody. The *dimonis* dance in a circle, jumping rhythmically on the beat and spinning every four or five steps.

The number of participants in the *dimonis* dance fluctuates according to the town: there are only two *dimonis* in Artà, four in Manacor (the *dimoni gros* and three *dimonis petits*). The number of *dimonis* may vary but they keep chasing and fiddling around the present audience. The *dimonis* have always displayed a lewd and provocative behavior, both in the stories of oral tradition and in the contemporary dance.

³ *Danses de figures*, the Catalan name, is translated here as *dances of figures*. It must be understood here that it is referred to the choreography setting: the different shape and position of the human body during the dance, which creates circles, lines, or face to face positions.

The *Assemblea Antipatriarcal* and Sant Antoni festivals in Mallorca

Around 2014, a group of young women created the *Assemblea Antipatriarcal* (Antipatriarchal Assembly) in Manacor (Mallorca). They had started a path of vindication hand in hand with another feminist association, the *Col·lectiu Dones de Llevant*. The latter association, in any case, was and still is linked to an activism of national focus, rather than the regional roots displayed by the Antipatriarchal Assembly. Both collectives affirm that this initial collaboration allowed them to test the town, to know the place they occupied as feminist groups, but the Antipatriarchal Assembly felt that they had to reach a younger population, with other profiles, ideas and interests:

There is a political articulation behind our group. All women who are in the Association come from other local left-wing movements, all of them related to the *Lo Tort* Athenaeum. When our group was born, coincided with the birth Gallardón Law [a very right-winged one regarding women rights]. (Margalida Gelabert)

Our objectives are those of vindication within the territory in which we operate, perhaps in a most densely populated area we would do other activities. Manacor is a small town, we have to coordinate and collaborate with other entities. As major projects we have our proposals on municipal urban planning from a gender perspective, together with the other feminist association. The debate of the *dimònies* has meant that we had to train ourselves, in some way, to make decisions, have contacts... It was the perfect excuse or action for us to be known for the locals and it has also made us grow as a collective. We have been known elsewhere only because of this issue. The idea of the *dimònies* started when we wondered: what do we do, how do we work around the fact that citizens reflect on feminism? Because if they feel touched by something of their interest, like the Sant Antoni festival... then it may be that you will become truly interested in our proposals. (Margalida Cortes).

L'Assemblea had an idea that, nowadays, they consider extremely reckless. The festivity of Sant Antoni in Mallorca has experienced an extraordinary growth in recent decades, a successful participation that moves a very young generation raised with the singing of the communal *Goigs* (songs which are decontextualized from their initial religious function) in the solemn church service of Completes (Compline Service). The towns that have a deeply rooted festivity are Sa Pobla and Artà. In the last two decades, Manacor (the city of the *Assemblea Antipatriarcal* and the *dimònies*) has experienced an expansion of all the activities related to this festival, common among the different towns: the bonfires (*foguerons*), where food is shared in a family or friends' group (*torrada*, a communal roast of *llonganissa* and *botifarrons*, unmistakable regional sausages), the collective singing (*Goigs* and *glosses*) and the *dimonis* dance.



Figure 1. Poster of the *Assemblea Antipatriarcal* summoning the singing of the *Goigs*.

Source: Facebook *Assemblea Antipatriarcal* (2017)

The party brings together very powerful anthropological and cultural elements. On the one hand, a strong visual and sound aesthetic and shared meals, and also the subversion of established hierarchies. The festive leaders are the *dimoni gros* (the Devil) with his diabolic court and all his companions; and the holy man (Sant Antoni) who appears accompanying them in silence and in charge of collecting the donations in a totally passive role. This subversion of the established hierarchy, with the *dimonis* as protagonists, is also reflected in the lyrics sung on the structure of the traditional *Goigs* (*Joys*, a poetic and musical form inherited from medieval repertoire). The whole set points out to the preparation for the Carnival itself, which takes place between three and four weeks later as the festival of Sant Anthony is on January 17th (Patron Saint protector of animals).

In order to fully understand this article, it is advisable to watch the following video recordings:

Video 1. *Goigs* singing and *dimònies* dance 2019:

https://www.facebook.com/watch/?ref=search&v=1152162221613204&external_log_id=5bb07116-7d70-43b2-87d7-e5fc1a0a1235&q=ball

Video 2. Town Hall: *Dimonis* dance: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GKm8ioOKpeE>

It is necessary to understand the power that music achieves in the context of this festivity. Melody and rhythm are simple but effective, the *Goigs* are made up of stanzas of four verses alternated within a chorus, and the strictly religious *Joys* repeat the lyrics every year. But on this rhythmic-melodic structure it is feasible the improvisation of verses, replacing the original religious

text; an art that on the islands is known as *glosar*, as Ayats explains in the article, “singing everything that cannot be said. The songs of Sant Antoni de Artà, Mallorca” (2010). The *glosadors* (men singers who improvised the lyrics) developed an attitude of exhibition and defiance linked directly to a specific image of masculinity, and they counter-attack with great verbal virulence, which would be unforgivable out of the ritualized framework. On the Islands, both Mallorca and Menorca, the chanted combats of *glosa*⁴ did not allow female participation due to the language being considered ‘incorrect’ in the mouth of a woman and also because the arguments and images related to sex were treated in the public scene.

Ayats points out to the subversive power of these songs, which have acted as vigorous protest tools at different times of the year. At present (2022), the barrier of female participation does not exist anymore, especially due to the existence of *glosa* workshops and public combats where the presence of both *glosadors* and *glosadores* (male and female singers) is frequent as well as regular mixed performances. A phenomenon that can be considered equivalent to the increasing presence of Basque *bertsolaris*, which also display the lyric improvisation on individual tunes (Gaitero 2018). Ayats continues with a description of the party that summarizes all the elements studied here:

The other great annual time of songs [...] is during the festival of *Sant Antoni*. Many towns on the island of Mallorca have the celebration of this Saint, on January 17th, as one of the main festivals or have him as their Patron Saint; or they place the festival in the celebration of San Sebastián (January 20th), that indicates that, in the past, the most important annual festival took place those days. In fact, Sant Antoni is the most common festival in the entire area of Romance languages, with elements -fire, demons, bells and the tau symbol- very common in Italy, Corsica, Sardinia, and in all the countries of the Iberian Peninsula (as well as large areas of Latin America). This Saint assumes symbols that are part of the most shared mythical foundation in the Latin cultural space of previous centuries, and that come from the Ancient Mediterranean societies.

In the northeaster part of Majorca, the festivals of Sant Antoni in the towns of Sa Pobla and Artà are well known [...]. On the eve of the Saint’s Day, starting at eight in the morning, hundreds of youngsters and adults (up to a thousand at times) walk down the streets of the town following the dance of the two demons, which are accompanied by the local band and, above all, for a song that everyone knows, a melody that all the participants identify within the town. The procession would have, long time ago, the objective of collecting money or objects for the festival and the workers of the religious brotherhood that cares for the altar and the Saint. Throughout the day the band repeats the same melody incessantly -only occasionally alternating with another-, and everyone sings hundreds and hundreds of times, until exhaustion. The main melody has a tonal appearance, with a characteristic polyrhythmic articulation (between 6/8 and 3/4, as you can hear on audio-visual recordings). It can be sung in two voices in parallel thirds, but it is rarely done.

This description shows the strength and boldness of the proposal of the *Assemblea Antipatriarcal* that, in fact, dynamites essential elements of this festival: “the most shared mythical foundation in the Latin cultural space of previous centuries, and that comes from the Ancient Mediterranean societies” as Ayats writes.

As it can be imagined, the introduction of the exclusively female dancing in one of the occasions when male power is strongly displayed in the Mediterranean area questions, in an integral way, all the patriarchal values inherited. In this sense, various scholars have approached this festival from different angles. Genovart (2014) makes an interpretation based on the contributions of Freud, Jung, Abraham and Frazer, it is enough to mention here the titles of some chapters: “Chapter VII. The phallic emblems in the solstice festivities”; “Chapter VIII. The ride or the exaltation of

⁴ A battle between two singers, who improvise the lyrics on a personal and individual tune very quickly.

masculinity [...] 3. The gracefulness of the *cavallets* and Neolithic femininity”, which explain by themselves the narratives built around the festival of Sant Antoni. Vicens (2020 [2010]) carries out an analytical and descriptive work on all the elements of the festivity in a study that covers all the contemporary details and describes some of the shifts or adaptations that have been conducted in recent decades. Vives (2009), on the other hand, approaches the social structures that have maintained the festival: from the "paternalism" of the *confraries* (brotherhoods), the economic dimension of the festival (who controls the money and how), the nostalgia for the rural past (idealization of the peasant world) and the expressions of satire and popular protests. Vives uses, from another point of view, arguments similar to the postulates of Hill & Bithell (2014) described above in relation to the theoretical aspects of Music Revival. Other approaches provide a vision of the festival as an expression and vehicle of a contemporary ritual, establishing similarities with other festivals where the dance (physical movement), a certain consumption of substances that alter consciousness (alcohol, drugs) and the music are protagonists, as in the case of raves. But it also establishes links with other traditions where the rituals of initiation display similar elements (Duran 2017).

In any case, it is clear that a whole young generation is passionately involved in the contemporary experience of this festivity. One of the most anticipated events is the collective singing of the *Goigs*. The emotion overflows in the church, the feeling is of a unique identity, of a group: “The waves of a passionate mass come and go, all singing at the same time, the non-existent personal space, only a communal space, shared breaths, the beating of the same heart, a creature with a hundred, a thousand heads.” (Duran 2017: 12).

This impact on the youth population makes the Anti-Patriarchal Assembly fully aware that its interventions affect a field where gender equality and social justice need to be clearly visible. They have used these aspects masterfully as a tool to spread their message, this one being the prestige that they still have as a literary and musical form capable of synthesizing identity and tribal fervor, accompanied by music and dance of oral tradition:

Everything was really born from the singing of the alternative *Goigs*, this was in 2014. You have to think that we did not make a poster or anything, and after sending a WhatsApp a lot of people showed up. Everyone wanted to sing, really. It had been two or three years since the singing of the *Goigs*, in the church, had become very popular. There were people who began to queue around four in the afternoon [the Compline Service is at 8:00 p.m.]. People who had been going for years began to spend a lot of time standing five hours to attend the Service. And, in the end, about a hundred people came with us. (Margalida Gelabert).

That was when all started. We thought: “we can try the same activities, at the same time, in the Plaça de Sant Jaume [Saint Jaume Square]”. We changed the setting, we have always thought that this square has an "underground" touch, it is not one of the central squares of Manacor, and acts as an alternative or underground space. So many people were able to attend with us our performance, they had no place in the church or in the first dance in the Rectory Square. But not because they didn't want to queue, it was they did want to come with their young sons or daughters who couldn't stand waiting several hours. So they came, and we couldn't believe the first year was so successful. (Margalida Cortes).

They point out an important shift here: the space. They disassociated their proposal from the traditional location: the church and the first dance of the festivity in the Rectory Square; and they scheduled this convocation of the Antipatriarchal Assembly at the same time as the traditional religious service. This shift made possible to focus the attention of all the traditional participants on their proposal, because it appeared as an alternative and synchronous counter-offer within the activities of the *Patronat* (Sant Anthony Brotherhood), the institutional agent. The objective was, in

any case, to summon as many people as possible to sing the *Goigs*, but from the new perspective of equal gender participation and the refusal of the patriarchal system. However, they perceive it all as something that it was not and it is not easy:

Nobody would believe it, but the great problem, every year, has been that we haven't got musicians. The first year, we didn't have musicians. They want to be where the "power" is. Finally, we got some musicians and we sang the alternative *Goigs*. And, surprise! The *dimònies* came out to dance! What is most difficult for us is the music, ideally, they should be women musicians and not men musicians. Most of the people who come now are from other towns, because the music school and the band have a lot of power. Both powerful and scary, it seems that if the band knows that some musicians are there [with the *dimònies*] they may question them... They are 16, 17-year-old teenagers; and they prefer to be on the side of the official power. (Margalida Gelabert).

We have offered money to the musicians, we have given them sausages, sweet herbs [a Mallorcan liquor] ... everything! Usually there are seven or eight musicians, but everything is very uneven: three saxophones, for example, come. Some years we have thought that there would be no musicians at all. And then, at the very last moment, as if by a divine gift... someone always shows up! (Margalida Cortes).

It's a good thing that every year someone comes to correct them, because the music sounds as it sounds, really... I give them the sheet music and OK, let's play! Some of them don't even know what the original music sounds like. The explanation, I think, is that there are people who do not want to position themselves publicly. They think that if they are part of the *dimònies* gang it is like publicly declaring their position. The truth is that, as *Assemblea Antipatriarcal*, we are not seen by people... but musicians are. (Margalida Gelabert).

It may be added that they imitate the costumes and scenery of the *dimonis*, since they are dressed completely covered (using masks, as well). The new dresses that the *Assemblea* has created for the *dimònies*, the general props have been thought out and taken care of. The two interviewees define the role of the 'official' music very well: it is the stage of power. Local musicians do not want to be identified as performers on an alternative stage, in a new space that relocates and dissolves the official scenarios accepted by all. They are aware of the challenge that the participating musicians have to face, and when asked why they did not create a new music that could be identified exclusively with the *dimònies*, both answer:

Because it is what it is, it is not about modifying everything just because we want. For example, we could have introduced ten demons, and we were very sure that we didn't want to change things for the sake of changing, but what we wanted to change was everything we didn't like about the festivity. And the music is what identifies the festivity. I think that if the *dimònies* dance to other music, they would not be the *dimònies*. (Margalida Gelabert)

This last sentence recognizes, in an implicit and natural way, the almost magical power of the *Sant Antoni* tune, the immense capacity to create a powerful feeling of community. They know, in an intuitive way, that without the music, without the singing of the *Goigs*, their initiative would not have had the transcendence that it had. Without that music, no one would identify the *dimònies* as the iconic, feminist alternative to the *dimonis*. This opposition to patriarchy is produced, then, from the use of 'genuine' and 'authentic' symbols that are immediately identified by the population as an expression of inherited patriarchal power. The same melody that synthesizes emotion, space for collective participation and some dancing figures that (now, in the Antipatriarcal Assembly proposal) show transgression and the same freedom of action traditionally associated with the male gender.



Figure 2. *Dimònies* dance. Source: Antipatriarchal Assembly

Contrary to what many may think, they do not want to scandalize or to challenge the institutions for the sake of it, the message is very clear: they want to modify those aspects that imply being able to act from the perspective of gender equality, progressivism and work in favor of a language and a culture.

Nobody knew anything, some even got angry. We knew that there would be people who would get angry, that there would be a lot of criticism, but also a lot of positive emotions: the happiness we felt the day of each festivity, a rush with something that identifies and unites us. It's very visceral; people who do not usually greet each other do so on this day. And we said to ourselves: come on, let's do something crazy! Because madness forces you to think. Let's do this, see what happens. And the subsequent consequences of this action was what really strengthened our original idea. Identity as people, as an incorporated fact, with its own culture, is necessary, we need it. And we started from this fact, precisely. (Margalida Cortes).

One of the elements of the festivity that they knew it would be deeply touched by their proposals is the emotion and intensity of the collective feeling which they define as 'visceral'; the almost inexplicable shared joy of the festivity: "those who do not greet each other regularly, they do it this day". And the temptation to do something crazy, subverting the roles, questioning in a visible and public way the 'ancestral' manifestations of the patriarchy, and also wave that emotion and the strong links that the festivity creates in the community:

This action has brought us closer to many women who did not define themselves about feminism, did not know about feminism or did not perceive it, or had previous myths... They understand that a woman cannot be killed or mistreated, but they had never raised that popular culture is sexist, and with our intervention they were able to check it. (Margalida Gelabert).

Now people know us better. The first years it was either pro *dimònies* or anti *dimònies*, now people go to see *dimonis* and *dimònies*. Some of them also think that if they support our initiative, they are supporting an alternative, invented phenomenon, which makes no sense, because the *dimonis* do not dance at the same moment of the *Goigs* singing, as the *dimònies* do. Ours is invented, we play with intention, because what really

doesn't make any sense is that a woman can't dance. Some have needed several years (from 2014/2015 to 2021) to come without feeling internal contradictions; They have approached and spoke to us, they have also recognized that we have done a good job. Here everyone criticizes [the postulates of an essentially male society] but no one sits down to try to find a solution; criticize the fact of promoting certain things, perhaps they should consider doing something and not just criticize. (Margalida Cortes).

This counter-programming within the festival posed a real challenge to institutions whose power of management no one disputed: the Town Hall and the *Patronat de Sant Antoni*.⁵ They brought to light the management of the *Patronat*, a private non-profit entity subsidized by the City Council; they questioned the allocation of this public money, and the *Patronat* had to make some changes. They had no choice but to reflect and sit down to talk with the *Assemblea Antipatriarcal* (De la Salut 2019) because the social impact of their actions was great and much discussed.

From that point, we have participated in the amendments that were made to the Equality Law of 2016 [11/2016 of July 28]. Article 32 clearly says that popular and subsidized culture cannot discriminate. Let's see how we manage it... We have to admit that the *Patronat* sat down to talk to us. The truth is that we did not understand each other, but it is surprising that they asked us that the *dimònies* did not dance, because it was a boycott of the festivity, and that we did not "love" the festivity. And that we were about to destroy all the years they had been fighting to get the festivity back; that when we were little they were already there, pushing the festivity. (Margalida Gelabert).

It must be taken into account that the *Patronat* gave prizes to sexist *gloses*, to bonfires which displayed *dimònies* with big breasts... all this was rewarded, everything that encourages inequality. And, in addition, all the roles of the festivity (the Devil, Sant Anthony, the Demons) have been transmitted by a parental line, in the families: the role of the Devil is inherited by a single family, Sant Antoni.... all through the paternal line. (Margalida Cortes).

The *Patronat* spoke through the media. Its president answered a journalist's question about the women's role, which has always been controversial. What should this role be?

The same as the man's. A woman can participate in bonfires, *Beneïdes* [the public parade with the animals to get blessed by the priest], go to the Compline Service, she can chase the *dimonis*. But we all come down to dancing. For the *Patronat*, the festivity is not one hundred percent the group of devils. It is the best-known activity, but it is not the most important. To affirm that women are not allowed to dance in the Sant Antoni festivity is to lie completely. Yes, it is undeniable that women have limited access to the *dimonis* group and from the *Patronat* we are working to solve this problem (Anna de la Salut 2020).

The aforementioned Balearic Law is the Law 11/2016 on equality between women and men, which dedicates its article 32 to Participation in the cultural field, headed by section 1, and where sections 2 and 4 are very important, which are reproduced next:

2. The public administrations of the Balearic Islands will facilitate women's access to culture, will disclose their contributions in all cultural manifestations and will encourage artistic and cultural productions that promote the values of equality between women and men, especially in artistic disciplines in which the presence of women is a minority. Likewise, they must ensure that stereotypes and sexist values are not reproduced in artistic manifestations, and they will favour the creation and dissemination of works that present formal

⁵ Board of Trustees, but also referred to the ancient Brotherhoods.

innovations favourable to overcoming androcentrism and sexism.

4. Public administrations will promote and guarantee equal opportunities between women and men participation in traditional festivals and popular culture, correcting sexist stereotypes.

The Anti-Patriarchal Assembly also questions popular culture stereotypes that prioritize the body, size and masculine appearance:

What is it important whoever is under the *dimoni* dress? The dresses are masculinized. We have always thought that *dimonis* have a masculine appearance, within the collective imagination the Devil has to be a person of great workmanship. Well, if it has to be large, it has to be a man, it cannot be a woman. There are large women, but you will always find a man with a larger size, this is obvious. If you have a woman who is 1'80, you will easily find a man who is 1'90; there will always be one man bigger than a woman. (Margalida Cortes).

The 'official' response of the *Patronat* and the City Council was to create a way to select the participants in an 'objective' way: a training course, which, obviously, some components of the Assembla had to carry out, if only to set an example, but also to know what was thought of their proposals and how everything was solved:

At least we have started a topic. And now there is no turning back, even if it is unofficially. If they dance in a school or institution, and wear a skirt, no one will criticize them. But it is also true that more men than women signed up for the training course... But they knew that one of the participating women, the one they were most excited about (and who also gives physical stature) was placed, in the final assessment, as third place. Right after one of us, who they know she would never dance. We understand that it is a way of control the results, they continue to conduct the ways, how things have to be done. It is a manipulation, because this participant, the one who came in third place, is a super strong woman, an athlete, she has all the conditions to be the Devil. But, in any case, the one who came first (to be a substitute to the Devil) was a man, not a woman. (Margalida Gelabert).

I think that until a female Devil is handpicked (as has always been done) within official festivities, we will not reach equality. Let's see [she proposes ironically to her companion], but have you wondered if, in the event that she becomes the Devil, will her son or her daughter inherit it? Because this role is inherited by certain families [the two of them burst out laughing, such a thing cannot be imagined, but it is funny to imagine that the same tics of patriarchal society are reproduced]. (Margalida Cortes).

These considerations were commented in the previously article (De la Salud 2020): the president of the *Patronat* publicly explained how the training course for *dimonis*, *Sant Antoni* and *Baciner* (the money collector participant) had been, the number of attendees and the way of scoring:

The intention [with the training course] was to create a quarry, and it's done. What we have considered is to hold an annual course to publicize the *dimonis* dance, but without the intention of forming a quarry. We didn't know how everything would turn out, because 17 people could enrol as well as 300. We have to remember that Manacor has 40,000 inhabitants and only 17 people showed up to create the quarry: not all the places have been covered.

The scale was: 50% the practical part, 40% the theoretical and 10% personal aspects, if they were collaborators of the festival, etc. The election has been equal, in all the figures there have been men and women, but from here the mark will be taken into account.

The president tries to clarify the result, which seems to be very important. On the other hand, the components of the *Assemblea* are more committed to a qualitative assessment. They are very aware, in any case, that they have opened a path that forces them to restructure popular culture values considered immutable:

We have not wanted to create an alternative dance group, but rather that they [the City Council and the *Patronat*] open up... They invite us to dance in schools, but we have not gone. We do not want to make another story of this festivity. But it is very nice that they identify us with these *dimònies* dance, because behind it there is a whole content. We do not want to be identified with a *Sant Antoni* figure, but as a figure or institution who wants to change the patriarchy. We want to be in debates, in meetings with the *Patronat*, with the City Council, we don't want to be in favour of 'alternatives'. (Margalida Cortes).

The square we use [refers to the square with underground characteristics] is also somewhat symbolic for us, as a collective, it is a kind of wasted space. We programmed to do the same thing as in the traditional festival: the *dimònies* light the bonfire; all similar to the official event, because we like it that way, otherwise we wouldn't do it. Dancing and being in a circle, like everyone else, doing the toast... we don't use other types of music because it would be an invented party. The ritual is the same, but from the female perspective. It is true that if they continue to be foolish we will end up distorting it. Because next year, if the demons come out to say hello from the Town Hall balcony, we will also do the same. And we'll also take the Mayor's rod, like the Devil does! [...]. We are a little crazy, but we are crazy following the rules. It is not a whim, here there are administrations, professionals and subsidies that do not comply the law. (Margalida Gelabert)

Their revolutionary proposals have also surpassed the global pandemic. In 2020 and 2021, all public and mass events related to the Sant Antoni festival were cancelled. In 2019, the *Patronat* announced that a photographic exhibition would be organized, which ultimately did not take place. Meanwhile, the *Assemblea* had two years to think about an exhibition by the photographer Núria Sánchez with images that brought together young women, some of them menstruating, dressed in the habit of *Sant Antoni*. The red pigment of the Mallorcan *sobrassada* accompanying the red of menstruation blood is shown in order to remember the humiliating tradition that obliges women not to touch the *sobrassada* during the *matances*, if they menstruate when the sausage is made, they can contaminate it (following the popular tradition). In her images, the photographer brought together an exclusive patriarchal tradition and elements of the collective party:

The *dimònies*, Sant Antoni, the blood, the *sobrassada* and the naked body are the main elements with which the images have been worked and the photographs taken, accompanied, at the same time, by the *gloses* [the lyrics of the traditional song] that would explain each section. As Sánchez says, the exhibition "is a story, it has a plot line. If you follow the tour of the photographs and read the *gloses*, you can capture the whole message". The exhibition, partly a vindication and partly a provocation, tries to break with the role that women are supposed to have in the festivity and daily life and normalize within our imagination a fact as natural as menstruation; in fact, the *Assemblea* explains "the image may seem rude, but the exhibition invites us to question why this is rude instead of natural." (Gomez 2021)



Figure 3. Photograph by Núria Sánchez. Source: Cent per cent 2021.

The members of the *Assemblea* were deeply surprised by the criticism that appeared in relation to the exhibition. No one criticized the use of the *Sant Antoni* habit, but rather the images of the menstruating woman, which they refuted in different press articles (*Assemblea Antipatriarcal* 2021).

Analysing their contributions, it can be observed that all their vindictive force is supported by two axes: on the one hand, the maintenance of the constitutive elements of the festival recognized by all (singing of the *Goigs*, music and choreography; bonfires and barbecue, the communal food (gastronomic elements) which fully ‘validate’ their proposals; and on the other hand the revolutionary shifts (the women dance, performing in an alternative space and also generating a new discourse)... The impact of their actions has made reconsider the policies of the *Patronat* of Sant Antoni and the City Council in terms of popular culture and has influenced the general policy of institutions such as the Consell de Mallorca (La Vanguardia 2018).

The queer *bullanguera*

The *bullanguera* is a type of Mallorcan dance that has been described above. The main characteristic of this dance is that the woman, while dancing, chooses the partner she wants or changes onto a new partner. Sometimes it is not clear if she is always the woman, or if she alternates partners in an apparently random way. Many lovers of popular culture have seen in this choreography a recognition of the active role of women in traditional dance; but they are only endowed with a

certain autonomy to be able to choose a partner exclusively in this dance.

A great controversy was created when a *bullanguera* was danced publicly by two men in one of the Palma squares. The queer perspective was contemplated for the first time in the sacred ground of traditional dances, and this fact fuelled an intense debate on social networks that was also reproduced by regional media. According to Phillips (2005), Queer Theory discusses a series of categories thought of as pairs: man/woman, gay/straight, white/black, underlining the pre-eminence and visibility of masculine sexual experiences. Turner (2000) affirms that the term 'queer' does not refer to anything in particular but tries to show opposition to everything that is the norm. As it has been commented before, the term *queer bullanguera* was born inspired by the *queer tango* described by Mercedes Liska (2018: 13):

At that time, a workshop by and for lesbians was set up that was later called *queer tango*. The activity, small and sheltered, began to take place in a feminist cultural space and became a milonga on the tango circuit of the city of Buenos Aires [...]. Its existence resonated in the tango ecosystem; men and women dancing with each other in a milonga where the complementary roles of dance, traditionally assigned to each sex, were equally taught, was a slow digestion situation. Is feminism going to destroy tango, Argentine social history, popular culture?

These words of Liska's can be applied, aside from the obvious differences, to the affair that occurred around the queer *bullanguera* that is narrated here (Cent per Cent 2017); especially because of the resonance that it had (using the same words as Liska) in the ecosystem of traditional Mallorcan dance. Thus, a reconsideration of the roles in the popular dance couple is proposed, forcing us to reformulate a series of questions: Who is Who? Who occupies the place of the woman and the evolution of her role? Do you have to adapt the choreography, the position of the arms, or do you dance kinetically as two men would? A similar debate was generated by a report that reproduced a kiss between two men dressed for the Moors and Christians festival, an event of tourist interest in Alcoy (Alicante) and reproduced by a digital media (*nosgustas.com*, 3 -V-2014). This fact was echoed in the regional press and on social networks, and highlighted that the Moors and Christians festivals are, as the article comments, unquestionably homoerotic. It is also questioned here if the gay/lesbian component exists, and it is added: "dancing, or simply walking surrounded by Moors, warriors, favourites, Christians, meshes, feathers, rich helmets, metallic breastplates, swords or hand-embroidered capes is a pleasure for the senses, including a morbid curiosity for the most daring..." (*op. cit.*). This approach to the Moors and Christians festivals from a queer perspective is also addressed by Miguel Ángel Martínez Pozo (2017), who documents a whole culture of androgynisation and gender change in these festivals, a subversion of gender roles men / women who make the event more open to all groups:

In the Moors and Christians festivities, an air of extreme freedom is breathed where the body goes beyond its own limits, defying established stereotypes; there is a metamorphosis, displacements, or a dialogue where, in turn, men and/or women cross-dress and even become androgenised; camouflage, simulation or deception occurs, even dressing the adult as a child, the human being as mythological beings, animals and even nature itself (Martínez del Pozo 2017: 66).

Going back to the dance, Liska writes a story told by Docampo describing the consequences of the reversal that occurred during the first queer 'milongas' in Buenos Aires. It is not necessary to remember that the tango is, by definition, one of the greatest exponents of the Argentine collective

identity, in the same way that the *mateixa*, *jota* or *bullanguera* are for the Mallorcans most committed to their traditional culture. Although these are different, distant moments and social contexts, the reconsideration of predetermined roles in a dance associated with a 'national identity' is present:

At one time he organized a milonga called El Desvío, it was on Pringles street and it was like a treasure. Although the milonga did not last long (barely three months), many things happened there, including the arrival of Jenifer. Jenifer was a crossdresser, a full-fledged Lord by day, father of a family and loving husband, at night she would put on a miniskirt, heels, paint her lips and come to El Desvío to dance tango. At first, she came alone, and then she brought other cross friends, among them a thin-legged Japanese woman called Kimono, who she only knew how to guide. Jenifer was brought by Niní, a Finnish twenty-something who was doing her queer studies in Buenos Aires, and who, although she had a boyfriend; always came to the milonga with her friend Úrsula, who was clearly in love with her [...] Another Scandinavian Finn friend of the milonga, called Alex, also began to come to El Desvío around these times and one day she wanted to do a performance as Roberto, which was her cross name. She had on a jacket and tie, a little moustache made from her own hair, and she was carrying a revolver. The end of the performance resulted in the symbolic death of the genre and there Roberto asked Jenifer to dance a tango with the roles reversed, which at this point the transformations were already a bit confusing. (Liska 2017: 128-129).

What Liska's example shows is that tango obviously had to rethink gender roles, which also affected the energy of the dance and the choreographic codes; steps, rhythms, bodies had to be adapted and also the way of guiding tango. Another example where the necessary choreographic adaptations create a new body code is provided by Andrew Snyder in "Contraculture: Bird Names and the Degendering of Contra Dance", where the fact of changing roles (ladies/gents) in country dances generates new relationship codes; choreographic codes between the couples and the group of dancers, an aspect that Snyder explains from his own experience:

Now a regular at the dance, I am happy to dance either role or switch roles throughout a dance. It is well known that through dance we learn gendered behavior patterns, but through this experience I have understood that dance can also be a practice through which we can unlearn them (Snyder 2019: 187).

This paragraph corresponds to the proposals of the *Assemblea Antipatriarcal*, it is exactly the message they want to convey. If we allow women to dance roles to which they have never had access, we are unlearning schemes of privilege held by the patriarchy. They naturally follow Butler's (1990) performative theory of gender which proposes to rethink the categories of sex, body, gender and sexuality and thus provoke their 'subversive' redefinition beyond the binary framework.

Perhaps Majorcan dance will also see great debates in the coming years; whether dancing the *bullanguera* or a *mateixa* between two men or two women requires adaptation of dresses or choreography, as in Liska's narration. The truth is that this unusual episode generated a whole debate within the traditionalist followers of Mallorcan dance. Bartomeu Noguera (2020) writes, in relation to this episode:

Little could Toni Lluís imagined in the summer of 2017 that his going out to dance a *bullanguera* with another man in a popular dance venue in the Santa Catalina neighbourhood of Palma would today be considered a gesture worthy of study in academic circles as a symbol of a movement social that, especially during the last decade, claims the participation and visibility of groups of women and LGBTI in events of the traditional Mallorcan culture such as *ball de bot*, *figure dances* or *gloses*. In other words, a generational leap that creates,

how could it be otherwise, a real train wreck between the conservative purism of inherited customs and the desire to break against any barrier that discriminates against a part of society. And it is that, indeed, we are talking about no less than debating about 'lo nostro' [our heritage]. Whether the wall of traditional culture resists, if doors are opening, or if we are facing the generation that has decided to jump over it.

The protagonist of the first conflictive 'riot' never thought that the controversy would reach such resonance, but Noguera points to a concept that is key here: "we are talking about no less than debating about 'lo nostro' [our heritage]". The pure roots of the oral tradition are threatened. The protagonist of the episode comments:

I came from the Barcelona environment, where I had been a Mallorcan dance instructor in various spaces. We did not have all the traditional combinations to practice the dance, so it was common to dance man/man, for example. No one there questioned anything, in fact, I myself never questioned whether this was an important fact or not. It was in Santa Catalina, in Palma, when I started dancing with my partner in public... It was a scandal. The *bullanguera* is not a courtship dance, it is a dance to show off oneself. The role is established through looks, or because you have already discussed it before (let's say, I will go out dancing with you...). Now things are quiet, really. Now there are women who dance together, from this point of view it has become normal. I see a big difference between the *bullangueras* of Mallorca and those of Barcelona. There, people acclaimed and applauded when two men or two women danced.

In Barcelona you live differently. Those who dance there are also Mallorcans, they are students, young people who look to the future... In Mallorca we carry more traditionalist, more right-wing positions. When they lose power they get out of control. This tradition that they have served and cared for is gone, lost, and they see how young people have other proposals. (Antoni Lluís Reyes).

He points out two elements that are fundamental and also appear in the *dimònies* dance: the space, the public location where the gender role is built and the emotion. This affront to tradition does not affect, in the first instance, neither the choreography nor the music. There is also a detail that coincides with the narrative of Liska (2018: 13), and it is the fact that the starting point in which one begins to dance with same-sex couples is in a workshop, places where there is more room for choreographic experimentation and musical, but that involves a whole way of perceiving how to dance and with whom. In the case of the *bullanguera*, it implies an oral tradition that some groups consider 'ancestral' and 'sacred' and in the case of *queer tango*, it affected Argentine identity and history, but in both cases the background is the same: a traditional code assumed by people who consider it a symbol of their historical identity. In relation to Mallorcan dances, Linda Dankworth (2014: 2) points out:

An analysis is also made of the changing role of men in performing Mallorquin dance, who at a certain period were excluded from dancing. If as Stuart Hodes argues that 'dance is ruled by an ancient paradigm that of oral history', the transmission of an art form is key to its survival [Hodes 1992:97]. I question if aesthetic principles derived from oral transmissions of dance from a past era enhance the kinetic qualities of movement in the present, or do they restrict their social development? What effect, for example, does tourism impact on narratives of gender in men and women's embodied representations of Mallorquin dance? The Mallorcan musicians and dancers have generated a historical narrative in their performance practices of their perceptions of the folkloric dance customs and origins from Mallorcan authors' texts on dance.

This is one of the real problems underlying public episodes of the queer *bullanguera*. A whole historical narrative has been generated about the purity of Mallorcan dance transmitted by oral

tradition among groups of native musicians and dancers. Dankworth also points out another interpretative current inherited from the Francoist Women's Section, which marked the choreography of an entire era. Although it is fair to point out that, as different authors study (Martínez del Fresno 2017; Duran 2020), the Women's Section helped preserve traditional practices that would otherwise have been irretrievably lost, and acted as a mediating agent between a past prior to the Civil War and a Spain which was culturally, socially and economically damaged after it. The denial of the Francoist heritage, together with the effort to sacralise the choreographies and music learned by oral tradition are the basis of the rejection of innovations; something that the interviewee underlines. But it is not a question of conservatism associated with age, because some young people are also against it:

There is a video where you can see that there is even some shove, a woman came out to give us a shove to try to return to the previous couple. I never considered that this could happen, I don't understand the problem. Here, in Mallorca, there are young people who are very much against it, and older people who are in favor of it. There is a young man who makes me laugh, because he publicly insults us. (Antoni Lluís Reyes).

This action of dancing man/man was repeated several times, and the result was more or less the same; but it is also true that the fact of taking away the protagonism of women in the only dance where, according to tradition and apparently, they exercised some kind of control, was criticized:

It was the only time and place where women could command... They can brand us as male sexist for taking away from women; but the woman was in charge precisely for a matter of sexism: the woman 'enchanted' the dances, and she had to dance very well in order to be able to have the men hooked. She was in charge of the subject of "enchanted" the dances; I think two women can dance if they want. I advocate that people dance with whom they want and with whom they feel like it. (Antoni Lluís Reyes).

The issue of 'authenticity', a key concept for traditionalists, is also highlighted below, as well as the review of the 'tradition' concept. In this sense, this refers to some concepts used by Ronström (2014: 43-44) in relation to Music Revival. Although one speaks of tradition (in this case of traditional dance), its representation takes place in the present; and despite the discourse of conservation, preservation, restoration, reclamation, recovery, recreation, revitalization and regeneration etc., the revival produces something new in the present that draws on the past. As Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett (1998: 149) explains, it is a recoding operation that takes the form of a "reevaluation of the obsolete, the wrong, the outdated, the dead and the deceased"; a shift that is described by the interviewee:

Traditional dance: whoever clings to tradition, so 'traditional', never stops tripping himself. At what point are we, at what point are we? In the same way, would you have to refuse to dance with some music or with loudspeakers? Can you refuse if a violin plays, for example, and not the traditional instruments? You would always have to go dancing on foot, you could not use the car to get around, for example. Dancing with a woman or a man, ok, since the moment two men can get married, adopt children, have children... the tradition has to accept it. When appropriate, in this sense, tradition is broken. Today dance it is no longer used to court the couple. And if it's a courtship dance, why not between two men? Who breaks the tradition, in this case, is the one who does not accept that two men can court each other. (Antoni Lluís Reyes).

These positions are precisely reminiscent of the contributions of Snyder (2019: 198): "the

evolving value of equal participation as a primary reason that the choreography of the dance changed substantially in the twentieth century". Accepting the expansion or change of gender roles is what makes traditional choreographies more flexible. And, certainly, opening the body codes of dances encrypted in time allows opening choreographic shifts that include the full acceptance of varied and different sexualities.

Conclusion

The two case studies displayed here, public interventions visible to all social sectors have been used as protest tools: the music and dance of traditional roots, the moments of collective festive performance that generate the imagined community. As Anderson (1983) argues, it is an imagined community because all the individuals that are part of it, all its members, are never known; but it is perceived as the social or human group to which one belongs.

The contribution of this essay allows us to define two types of actions. On the one hand, a planned action (*Assemblea Antipatriarcal*), which starts from the deconstruction of the Sant Antoni festival to build equal participation. Their public questioning about the programming of institutions such as the local City Council or the Patronat of Sant Antoni have already generated some shifts: in August 2018, a motion was approved in the City Council to make sure the equal participation of men and women in the traditional dances a motion which was unanimously approved. On the other hand, they also delivered 83 signatures asking to release the money invested by the City Council in the Sant Antoni festival, since it still maintains gender inequalities (De la Salud 2019).

The individual activism displayed in the *queer bullanguera* is a unique action, which reached great public significance and opened a controversy that shows various social trends. The debate on the *bullanguera* has made it evident that the shifts in the choreographic patterns and the participation of the dancers continue to bother an essentialist sector of popular culture; a social sector that believes to keep the *volksgeit* alive. And these essentialist activists belong, as noted before, to different age groups.

The women of the *Assemblea Antipatriarcal* have displayed a very intelligent policy: they have forced official institutions to reconsider many issues based on the challenge shown in the public space. And this action has fuelled an internal reflection that has led them to more direct interventions, such as participation in the amendments to Equality Law 11/2016 and their vigilance and commitment to ensure that this is fulfilled in terms of popular culture.

The two cases described here handle elements and concepts highlighted by various authors. Magowan and Wrazen (2013) consider that musical practice is not just a matter of being a man or a woman, but becoming a man or a woman by understanding their spheres of participation and feelings of belonging in the world. Through dances and songs (as those interviewed here have stated) the performers create different emotional bonds between themselves and with their audience, also creating bonds of interdependence, privacy and reciprocity. In the singing of the *Goigs* (either the institutional one or the one created by the *dimònies*) the performers invite the listeners to participate, to sing and dance too, in a moment of musical intimacy through the affective power of the songs, the words and the constructed meanings, which, when shared, generate feelings of place, identity and nation. It is in the public and shared square when the complicity between a queer couple dancing against the established norms, challenges the narratives and meanings built up the purest tradition. As Magrini explains: "[...] The rules that govern the use of the body in dance offer a typical example of the synthesis of ideas about the feminine, the

masculine, and the appropriate interaction between genders (or between a single gender) that distinguish a community specific at a given time” (2003: 6).

Generating new rules embedded in musical and choreographic performance is one of the fundamental elements of feminist and queer activism described here. They do not generate new musical and choreographic repertoires, but they are built in a different ‘performative space’. Its main tool is the preservation of music and choreography, which becomes one of the key elements to generate its prestige and social impact.

The *dimònies* change the official performative place for one with an ‘alternative’ tradition; the queer *bullanguera* takes the traditional sacrosanct space to make visible the right to dance with whoever one wants. None of them forgets, in any case, the emotion they generate both in the audience and in themselves; the emotion that comes from sharing the reinterpretation of gender, space and emotions through music and dance with the ‘imagined community’ (Anderson 2006).

Finally, as Liska (2017: 159) also points out, it must be admitted that it is not possible to analyse this activism in the popular music sphere without situating it in the economic and political framework of each country; state and regional policies on legislative issues and cultural promotion; and here it needs to be added the feminist and LGBTI proposals transversally and vertically. In any case, this activism implies the birth of new social structures that include new genders and sexualities, due to the impact caused by music, space and emotion on the symbolic framework.

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Interviews

Margalida Gelabert (1989). Interview Manacor, 2021 August 2.

Margalida Cortès (1988). Interview Manacor, 2021 August 2.

Toni Lluís Reyes (1985). Interview Manacor 2020 June 21.

Recordings

Video 1. *Goigs* y baile *dimònies* 2019:

https://www.facebook.com/watch/?ref=search&v=1152162221613204&external_log_id=5bb07116-7d70-43b2-87d7-e5fc1a0a1235&q=ball

Video 2. *Dimonis* dance at Town Hall: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GKm8ioOKpeE>

Photograph Exhibition

Facebook Assemblée Antipatriarcal

<https://www.facebook.com/antipatriarcalmanacor/videos/433679114495072>

by the Trinity College of London (Exhibition Award 2003) and Grade Organ by the Palma Conservatory. Doctor of Art and Musicology by the Autonomous University of Barcelona, she plays recorders in Polissonia, a Medieval-Renaissance consort; and also organ and piano. She has published several books and papers and has been awarded with the Alexandre Ballester 2018 prize; the City of Manacor 2019 Award for the publishing version of her Ph.D. thesis *Deixem lo dol*, the Font i Roig Award and Castellitx Research Award. She currently combines teaching with research and writing.

Recommended quote:

Duran Bordoy, Bàrbara. 2022. "Feminist activism and queer claims in traditional dance and music. Two case studies: the *dimònies* (female demons) and the *queer bullanguera* of Mallorca". *TRANS-Revista Transcultural de Música/Transcultural Music Review* 26 [Fecha de consulta: dd/mm/aa]



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