
MUSIC VIDEOS AS A MODE OF RESISTANCE IN ALMERÍA'S INDUSTRIAL AGRICULTURE

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ABSTRACT

Music and agricultural work have a long and varied relationship across cultures and throughout history. Activities such as planting, hoeing, herding and harvesting are frequently accompanied by song, while life in the fields has been documented, shared and passed on through varied musical forms. Agricultural songs range from joyous celebrations, odes to nature and the marking of seasons to those that offer biting social commentary, political critique and calls for resistance and revolution. This article explores the complex relationship between musicians and music production in industrial agricultural settings. It examines how the musical rhythms developed by Almería's agricultural industry's workers have evolved as the industry's modes of production have intensified and mechanised, and how music serves as a means to communicate and share worker's feelings and experiences, often leading to forms of connection, rebellion or resistance across time. By exploring how social and political context have been reflected through musical production, performance and the affective relations built around 'sonic images', namely "the set of postures, body movements, expressions, gestures inherent in musical creation" (D'Amico, 2015:2), it analyses the process of co-creating music videos with a local agricultural worker rock band, and how this uses new media to build on long standing popular forms of musical expression in the regional traditional agriculture. The article suggests localized musical production among workers serves to disrupt "comfortable [visual] boundaries and encouraging transgression of rules" (Mitchell 1992:223), but most importantly, to create empathy in shared feelings of social immobility and entrapment, creating affective bonds between the musicians and their audiences while recognising the role of the musicians as writers of intersubjective histories of the industrial reality.

KEYWORDS

music video clip, intensive agriculture, industry, DIY musicians, Southern Spain

BIO

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Introduction

“Hey supervisor, look at the clock,
Make no mistake, it’s already six, it’s already six.
If you make mistakes, make as you wish,
But right this minute, the workers leave”

Fragment of traditional picaila song sang by women during the grape harvest, Padules, Almería (early 20th century)

Translation from Spanish by the author

<https://vimeo.com/66333088>

“Loosing control of my life,
Losing control of the situation
Losing control of my steps
Pulling out the animal inside of me
If this life is shit
And every time we have less patience
At the end, for sure, you will explode”

Fragment of ‘Perdiendo el Control’ (Losing Control) by Simulacro D.G. From their CD “Herederos Del Plástico” (Plastic Heirs). 2019, El Ejido.

Translation from Spanish by the author

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=j2LslxajuRk>

The ritual of labour involves a form of repetitive physical action and imitation that reproduces habitual practices and embodied movements over time and between generations but also forms a shared ground of experience, expression and resistance. The two musical fragments above, sang by agricultural workers in Western Almería, Southern Spain, separated by almost a century, offer a tangible instantiation of shared embodied experience as running through and re-enacted throughout the history of the region. It is a form of “kinaesthetic mimicry” whereby empathy is established through viewing and hearing an activity, which leads us to feeling and being transported into it, both imitating and projecting one’s feelings onto the observed gestures (Lipps, 1903:191). Whether through a moving figure, a story, or a popular song, kinaesthetic empathy offers a mode of sensorial engagement through which we feel, learn about and insert ourselves into the historical process itself, transforming our understanding. Repetition of smells, gestures, movements, sounds and taste, offer a means for relating and adapting to people, objects and environments, of living and placing ourselves inside the other’s non-verbal experience, and of obtaining knowledge through mimesis and kinaesthetic empathy.

As such, this paper draws on ethnographic encounters with a local rock band ‘Chotajo’, whose members are young workers in the agriculture industry. These workers were all participants in a larger research project on the agricultural industry. During the research an idea emerged that we should collaborate to make, produce and launch a music video of their song ‘Menos Animal’ (Less Animal). The process of making the video became a mutually defined method and activity for exploring local narratives of change, the social, cultural and political context of work and labour, and the kinaesthetic and affective dimensions of the music. These qualities of audiovisual research follow Mantle Hood’s filmic interactions “with performers, users, audience, community, and other art forms” (1971:21). The making of the video offered a collaborative mode of participation and ethnography for analysing the political and historical economy of El Ejido, understanding farmers’ and day-labourers’ embodied lived experience and for considering how different generations and their agricultural musical styles, might be used as an index of shared experience, social critique and technological change.

The two song fragments that open this paper show how the social critique of the traditional song becomes rearticulated and adapted to the tone and tempo of the current agriculture industry. The adaptation involves verbal similarities, but also the experiential reciprocity of bodily movement across generations. As Parviainen describes it “we do not arrive at the phenomenon of the other’s experience,

but at the experience of our own which arouses in us the other's gestures witnessed" (2003:154). The local rock band *Simulacro D.G.*, whose fragment is compared to the *picaílla* song above, explicitly builds this link through its Album title "Plastic Heirs". It reveals the temporal continuation of a creative intention, associated to the agricultural productive plastic greenhouse environment across time. Despite the evolution in musical genres, the awareness derived from direct bodily interaction with the productive environment become constituent of the meanings shared symbolically through language, in this case through the contestation present in the region's musical lyrics. Their lyrics show social critique has been passed down through conceptual knowledge derived from verbal communication, but also through the embodied labour experiences of workers, providing empathic knowledge. The fusion between the conceptual social background and one's own bodily experiential histories has been defined by Varela, Rosch and Thompson as 'embodied minds' (1996), and by Stein as the "intuiting" act of knowing within others (1917:20). It draws both on the empathetic "capacity to understand and respond to the unique affective experiences of another person" (Decety & Jackson, 2006:54), and to our bodily experiential register, formed through a historical accumulation of sensorial experiences. This sensorial accumulation, as Marx defined, has been "a labour of the entire history of the world down to the present", including the 'five senses' and the 'human sense', "the mental or practical senses (will, love, etc.)", as well as, all efforts to numb and resist the numbness of the senses (Engels and Marx 1978:89). What we sense as humans today is therefore a consequence of our historical baggage and the relationships workers have built through history.

This study considers the usefulness of co-creating music videos in revealing labourers' as writers of an alternative popular narrative of the industrial reality, based on workers' feelings rather than verbal testimonies, consolidating them as empathy generating actors. It argues the kinaesthetic empathy derived from shared feelings of passivity and entrapment experienced in intensive agricultural labour, engender workers' 'counterappropriation' of their oppression, as revealed in musical production and its representation (Scott 1985:34). It defends musical creation as an experiential tool to reveal workers' unconformity through empathy in feeling, generating a type knowing from and as the others. Miles Davis in his 1964 live recording of 'So What' gives impressions to create paths of discernment and dialectic exchanges with the audience defining collectively what is to be said, rather than over explaining things (Szwed, 2004:264). Similarly, this article defends that the dialectic through recognizable feelings between musicians and audiences in localised musical productions disclose the intersubjective constructions of 'truth' that can help anthropologists understand workers' resilience and forms of subtle sabotage. Rather than considering co-creation as a transformative 'weapon of the weak' in Scott's sense, it considers the role of musicians as the 'project initiators' shaping the meaning construction in the production of 'sonic images', reproduced by filmmakers, anthropologists and audiences (González Flores, 2007; Myers, 2002; McWilliam 2009).

The first section will focus on the local context, its political economy and music as a practice of resistance across the generations. It will show how resistance and social critique is contextualized in the local musical history of Western Almería, using kinaesthetic empathy as a theoretical frame for understanding the sonic/bodily affective aspects of the music. The second section will explore the author's immersion in the local rock scene, exposing the musical-political project of the local band *Chotajo*. It will reveal the musicians' agency and will of expression, analysing how their lyrics and affective relations lead to subtle sabotage and forms of rebellion, as per an existing trope within rock and subculture. The third section will unpack the making of a collaborative music video with *Chotajo*, reflecting on the dialectic relationship to build a sonic image of the musicians' reality. It will also discuss 'visibility' as a significant contemporary capital and the importance for anthropologists to recover and understand the meaning and temporality of localized music production in a context of exploitation and precariousness for the understanding of the regional industrial reality.

Social critique through musical production in agro-industrial Western Almería

The archives of traditional music of Almería in Southern Spain signal to two types of traditional music created as a mode of resistance to abusive labour. The first one, the *palo flamenco* 'taranto' was an evolution of the classical 'fandango' a traditional variety of flamenco music, adapted to the social situation of the miners and with a character of social complaint (Cruces Roldán, 1993:78; Navarro García and Iino, 1989:13; Pacheco, 2019). The second type, 'canción de faena' (labour songs), 'picaílla',

or 'canción de pique' (resentment songs), were normally sang by women while working in the grape harvest (Torres Cortés 1996:89; Bonilla Martínez, 2007). Derived from traditional romance song, these were often satirical songs, sang in fragments by groups of women replying to each other in a sarcastic way across the patio where they cleaned the grapes (Campo Tejedor, 2016:718; Criado and Ramos, 1992:203). It was particular of these two music styles developed by the workers of mining and agriculture, that they eliminated the melismas, or vocal runs, of flamenco. Adopting, instead, a syllabic style following the phonological structure of words. As such, rather than harmonizing words, both Almerian 'taranto' and 'picaílla' songs, played with the cultural features of language and the speaker's philosophy of life, to create intent and give contrast to the different social problems discussed in the songs. Substituting the emotions provoked by a change of notes in succession in the melismatic style, the syllabic approach, unveils the emotions provoked by a language's own rhythm. This is revealing of a speaker's prosody, highlighting the emphasis, irony, or cynicism, given to the words being sung. This way, workers entertained mordant exchanges of personal and social critique, similarly to today's freestyle hip hop battles (Criado and Ramos, 1992:215). The objective was to keep critical with each other's feeling without offending or getting offended.

Today, 'taranto' and 'picaílla' are no longer linked to the mine or to agriculture, instead they are reproduced by contemporary flamenco artist who advocate for their conservation in alternative 'neotraditional' music circuits such as the Union Festival (Torres Cortés 1996:92). Similarly, the current local rock culture lies outside mainstream production and consumption, relying on its situated local component both for the development of the lyrics, as for the circuits of representation and diffusion. The change of styles from picaílla to local or ethnic rock is not motivated by an increased labour precarity through the intensification of the agricultural industry, as both genres have served to denounce repression, exploitation and racism (García Salueña, 2017; Mota, 2017). Yet, the civil war and the dictatorship provoked "emptiness and rupture", breaching traditions such as the transmission of picaílla rhythms at work (Torres Cortés 1996:91). The posterior professionalization of family farms as individual businesses dispersed family units along the different echelons of the commodity chain, decontextualizing traditional rhythms from their original environment. In this process, picaílla and taranto rhythms have been influenced and reshaped by global rhythms arriving to Andalusia, creating new forms of musical expression disseminated outside the work environment but preserving the same spirit of rebellion present in traditional tunes (García-Peinazo, 2019:77). An example of this is the Taranto-Rock fusion developed by the rock band from Seville, Gualberto, in 1975, through their song "Tarantos para Jimi Hendrix" (Tarantos for Jimi Hendrix, on: *A la vida, al dolor*. Gong-Movieplay S-32.645). This was an attempt to unite "two worlds", flamenco and rock, one of the first incursions into developing an Andalusian rock music genre, which would slowly evolve into the delocalized rock scenes such as the one sited at Almería's agricultural industry (García-Peinazo, 2017:149).

Another significant change is that the rhetoric of complaint of picaílla rhythms, allowing labourers to address a problem face to face with the supervisor, has become an unthinkable practice today, due to the risk of losing one's job. Whether in the packaging centres, or working in the fields, it is uncommon for people to speak up, much less sing with a tone of irony. In the packaging centres, where now the majority of women work, the mechanic sounds of the packaging belt and calibre machines, unstoppable during the labour day, make the workers' words unheard. Likewise, in the farms, where migrant and autochthonous workers carry out the seasonal labour, with precarious contracts and little stability, workers rather keep quiet of any critique. Be it in the form of songs or elaborate statements workers know that regardless of the injustice, the industry is not the place to speak up, as the risk of losing your job is very high. Workers keep to themselves. While working, they either doze off into their own thoughts, dreams and expectation of the future, or they put their thoughts to rest, overwhelmed by the workspace. They listen to the tunes of their choice using earplugs, or alternatively let a radio station choose for them, connected always to the exterior, rather than to the workers around. The workplace becomes increasingly more individualistic. Yet, the need of social cohesion and unity to fight for change, inherited through 'picaílla', also finds ways of emerging. Technology has allowed the younger generation to transcend the cultural capital of the town and introduce all types of global rhythms. Some of which, create the same creative conditions as 'picaílla', where slander, and anonymous sabotage are used to mock and contradict the public ritual order (Scott 1985:17). Only where everyday forms of resistance can take place does the industry's control fall away. As such, cultural expression emerges differently, not anymore at the work place, but on little clubs, bars, and public spaces of the local towns.

Oppressed by the systemic increase of the space taken over by the greenhouses, which now surround the rural towns, young people turn to the urban space to escape the industrial reality of everyday work. In El Ejido, the town at the centre of ‘El Campo de Dalías’, the heart of the ‘plastic sea’, the streets are filled with murals and political graffiti tags. Hip-hop tunes and parcouer jumps are seen everyday in the park, and the local rock bar is full every weekend with those that want to disconnect. The rock scene is composed by early millenials, who fully experienced the crisis and remain hardly ‘milleuristas’ (earning less than 1000 Euros per month), while the hip-hop scene integrates the younger generations, still in secondary education. Yet, both this youth scenes share a common history of being the sons and grandsons of the early farmers who started working the desert land. They have seen how the industry provokes competition among relatives and friends, subject to the pressures of the industry. They have also seen their mothers and fathers work countless hours on the different stages of the agricultural process, performing self-exploitation to meet the family needs. Now, they live in the vicious cycle of taking temporary jobs in the industry to have enough money to get by, while they see their big life dreams slip away. For them, the labour space is mechanic and repetitive; it’s where they are asked not to be themselves, putting their creativity on hold, to become one more unit in the production structure. Consequently, after work, they have to exercise their creativity, to remind themselves once again of who they are. Sharing anecdotes of how each has been mistreated at work, they know the industry’s problems are systemic. As such, the music they produce reflects on the feelings and emotions of being trapped by the system. This is an example from local hip-hop group:

“We are birds flying around a perimeter,
 We think we are free, but we fly in circles
 We forget who we are, talking about benefits,
 Fake appearances, with rats in the building
 We consume immeasurably, finest clothes
 I have a new car, but his has wings
 Don’t take out the sticker, leave it on
 So they know it cost me a fortune
 Let my neighbour and their sisters die of envy
 I don’t have anything to eat, but that’s all right.
 In your circus I’m another puppet handled by mice
 Appearances with gallons
 I’m another puppet, waiting for instructions”

Fragment of ‘Títeres’ (Puppets)
 By JeroconJota & Sandra ft. Tercio.
 Translation from Spanish by the author.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=E-ypdNOpJGM>

Switching traditional tunes for punk rock and hip-hop rhythms, lyrics about the social frustration lived in the region proliferate in the local underground music scene. Accentuating the syllabic style, like in the traditional protest song, the young musicians express their revolt against conformity. They show an intrinsic frustration of having been born at the heart of a production network that is set for collapse, if not by the exhaustion of its workers, then by the depletion of its natural resources, like water. Music production is, in this scenario, a vehicle to channel their individual reactions to the existing precarity. In the large Spanish context, pop, rock and hip-hop have been associated with libertarian and insurgent movements, “serving as a metaphor for the cultural transformation of the country” (Val Ripollés, 2014; 2017:1207). Within the structure of the music the history of global flows, of enduring colonialism and of globalization are unveiled, reimagined in a creative ways by the musicians and “reinterpreted according to their own specific cultural characteristics” (Val Ripollés, 2017:1206; Ochoa Gautier, 2003). The “aesthetic cosmopolitanism” reflected in the music offers a context to communicate the stories of human anguish in response to the current productive system and its labour conditions (Regev, 2013). However, rather than a vehicle for action, as was possible in traditional tunes, the current genres serve mostly to

channel the anger and need to rebel that young people experience. Testimonies rewritten onto verses draw on feelings rather than evocate factual evidence of their precarity. The described feelings and portrayed emotions generate empathy among the community of local fans, who find in the musicians gestures and screams an expressive mimicry of what they are personally experiencing in their daily movements and activities.

Bodily actions and expressions have previously been defined as form of subversion in transitioning agricultural settings. Aihwa Ong made reference to spirit possession in factories as a mode of resistance to the proletarianization, dehumanisation and loss of autonomy of peasant Malay women adaptation to corporate agriculture (1987:7). Likewise, Luis Rocca in Peru, made reference to traditional music as protest against slavery and exploitation (1985). These forms of corporal expression provide a space of contestation articulated between the worker and the local environment, confronting or avoiding to the inhabited culture. As Coessens and Ostersjo argue, artists “have to adjust themselves ecologically: space, perception and material linked to the expertise can resist or, on the contrary, enforce certain habits” (2014:333). The specific effect of audience and musicians subversion on “the existing structure of power remains a mystery” (Schiller 1989:149). Yet their shared empathy creates attachments that while acknowledging a continued oppression in agricultural labour, provide a way of processing the anger they cope with. In the case of Almería, these factors promote a continuation of a history of workers’ empathy expressing social critique through music. Which are today fostering the persistence of the local rock and hip-hop scenes and their production.

Stepping on manure and musical resistance

On a hot Saturday afternoon I exchanged my usual fieldwork trips to the greenhouses in the agro-industrial town of El Ejido, for an atypical rock concert in the area. We drove for twenty minutes through narrow pathways of plastic covered greenhouse structures, until we arrived at a stately ‘cortijo’, a traditional rural villa. There, the typical sound of tractors and crickets were faded by the sound of creepy screams, drums and electric guitars. Juanjo and Andrés from Chotajo band came down from the stage to greet my film partner, Benjamin and I. It had been a long way, we had helped them film the music video calling people to come see them perform that night and they were expectant, with a lot of adrenaline. Finally they were at ‘Extiercol Extreme Fest IV’, a small Grindcore music festival that gave them the opportunity of seeing friends from across the region, who find in hard-core rock a way of expressing themselves. As people started appearing from the greenhouse pathways, somehow they didn’t fit into the imaginary of the rural farmer. They could have been the audience of a punk gig in one of Manchester’s underground clubs, wearing black t-shirts from rock bands, tattoos, colourful wigs and piercings. Finally, Juanjo and Andrés got up the stage. At first, the audience had trouble moving, but soon they got active and the first attempts of making a mosh pit started taking place. With a guttural voice Andrés started:



FIGURE 1: *Chotajo and audience at Extiercol Extreme Fest* (Photo by Kaos Creative Studio, 2018)

We are searching for freedom
Ignorant that she is searching for us
She feels alone and we don't see her
Society covers her with a rotten black cloak
In occasions, she hides from us
For being proud and foolish
For being bitter and foolish

I live in a loop where I don't care about anything
And nothing matters
In which I'm not myself
In which I'm nothing

If you want to offer me, come forwards, don't be afraid
If what you want to offend me, you can't surprise me

Live, because less than nothing I cannot be
Human, because less of an animal I cannot be

Read my lips, do not listen to my words
Because they will fly away, and the essence will be left in my hands
Look at my closed eyes; I will do it with mine wide open
You smell it, the truth, act, attack, work

Take a deep breath with your closed nose and you will know
It's your fucking demons, who won't leave you alone

Ignorant that she is searching for us
She feels alone and we don't see her
Human, because less of an animal I cannot be
Society is in your mind
Human, because less than nothing I cannot be
Society is not present

With a hangover, attack, shoot

'Menos Animal' (Less of an Animal) by Chotajo, translation from Spanish by the author:
<https://vimeo.com/271826138>



FIGURE 2: *Andrés singing on stage* (Photo by Kaos Creative Studio, 2018)

Bringing his hand up to the front and drawing the sound up from the back of his throat, Andrés sang the verse 'Society is in your mind' shaking his head with his sunglasses on. They discussed the interiorization of societal norms. They also hinted to an absent freedom, hidden under a 'rotten black cloak', as well as, an absent society, when singing, 'Society is not present'. They also point to the two characteristics that they all share, passivity and the feeling of being trapped. Here they referred to their dependence on the industry and the restriction of movement as a socio-political and existential condition. In verses like, 'I live in a loop where I don't care about anything' or 'In which I'm not myself, in which I'm nothing', they hint to their means of evasion, but also their existential worries and subtle depression. They also talk about socio-political pressures, the need to act, but also the hangover when you can't either attack or shoot. They feel trapped, not only by society and the industry, but also internally, by the 'fucking demons, who won't leave you alone'. A collective paranoia, that creates social suspicion, illustrated in the verse, 'If what you want to offend me, you can't surprise me'. At last, they sang about the 'rotten society' that surrounds their everyday life, sharing what one feels when they've been stripped from their freedom and can't any longer recognize who they are. Singing to less than 70 people, Chotajo, like the other bands, were there to share their fears. They didn't have any plan to actually change their situation, as the interviews I had carried out during fieldwork made clear. Everyone I talked with shared dreams of change, but the region's reality made pressure tangible, due to the existing system of social dependence and domination imposed by the agricultural price system and lack of alternative employment (Martínez Alier, 1971). The majority's view was of ideological unconformity towards the institutions in control of the industry, what Martínez Veiga refers to as 'institutional density' (2001). Yet the instability of their labour conditions and their lack of leverage to confront the magnitude of the commodity change made their inaction a constant. Instead, the musicians concentrated on collective emotions, showing their willingness to find others who feel the pressure and frustration, and who share

their fear of never achieving their future dreams. They were creating an economy of care through the roughest music possible, providing to the group a sense of love and comfort.



FIGURE 3: *Chotajo performing* (Photo by Kaos Creative Studio, 2018)

The song came to a close with the audience excited, screaming, and running into each other, full of energy, in the improvised mosh pit. The audience empathized with the song, which placed humans as ‘less than nothing’. They also showed pride of the animal side of being human, ‘because less of an animal I cannot be’, despite feeling ashamed of how societal norms are reproduced in our minds. As Podolinsky described, the industry is interested on the human “ability to transform 1/5 of total energy added by nutrition into muscular labour” (1983:176). The workers’ condition as animals is what has allowed them to have a position in the productive environment. Strength, muscle, force, endurance, vigour and intensity are the non-spoken requirements to enter the industry. Whether harvesting, carrying vegetable boxes, pilling up pallets, digging holes or patching plastic, the characteristics that we share with animals are the ones that have allowed these workers to undertake their job. Yet, the agricultural industry and the social structure that surrounds it, doesn’t just seek workers for the energy surplus derived from physical labour. The social pressure from family and friends to find economic stability leads workers to the accept precarious temporary part time contracts, while the social construction of progress and ambition gets imprinted like a backdrop in their minds, dissipating their aspirations to find better jobs.

The festival was a metaphor of the human/animal labour relations the industry’s system of social dependence and domination. It had had started four years before. For the first two editions it was hosted in an empty plot of land belonging to one of the organizers. They would bring a truck full of manure and unload it on the plot, giving the name to the festival, ‘Extiercol’, meaning ‘manure’ in Spanish. The audience would stand on the manure pile and do muck mosh pits throughout the concerts. Given that most of the festival musicians and participants are tightly linked to agriculture, this represented a re-appropriation of the land through the rock culture that unites them. Stepping on manure hinted to their similarity with the sheep and goats that produce and spread manure in the greenhouses after every harvest. It also alluded to their ancestors, who worked the land carefully with their own hands and feet rather than with industrial machinery and rushed hard labour as they do now. With those steps, they were symbolically stepping over the industrial production system in which they take a range of precarious positions. Even today, without the pile of manure the same spirit remains.



FIGURE 4: *Juergas Festival 2018* (Official Juergas Photo, 2018)

Some months after, the summer festival season started, and the members of Chotajo invited us to go to the Juergas Rock Fest. It was a local festival taking place since 2013 in Adra, the neighbouring coastal town. Until then, I thought the local rock was a marginal phenomenon, sustained by the small group of people I had met in small festivals, like Extiercol, and at the rock gigs on small bars across Western Almería. Yet, the day 'Juergas' festival started, I realised my perception could not have been more mistaken. There were six thousand attendants with tickets for the main stage; the rest was open to the public. As the festival reshaped the urban space, you could see iconic scenes like grandmothers walking down the promenade at nine in the morning, meeting a group of rockers coming out of the *rave* and entertaining a philosophical conversation with them. However, the most surprising thing was not to see the encounter of different urban groups, but to see the dimension of the rock scene composed mostly by agricultural workers whose interest in rock music is overshadowed by the productive environment the rest of the year. The large majority of people at the festival were locals, yet the music we were hearing seemed completely foreign to the regional reality. Then I saw a video that made everything click. It was a homemade video posted in Youtube by one of El Ejido's farmers. The video, shot with one hand while the video makers is driving, shows the amount of plastic waste on one of the paths of the local greenhouses. The beginning shows a deserted landscape with plastic leftovers, accompanied by the sound of a death metal song playing in the car. Then the person filming starts talking, denouncing the shameful situation of waste management and industrial loitering. Then he pauses with the metal song still playing and makes a reference to the music, breaking the fourth wall with the audience, asking, "What do you say about the music, it fits perfectly right?". Then he says, "Gentleman, this is Spain!" alluding to 'rotten' society denounced by Chotajo and hidden by mainstream media and institutions. What takes place in that region is the closest we have to a Martian scenario. It is harsh, aggressive, exploitative, dark, and filled by metallic rhythms rather than natural ones. Even the new version of *Blade Runner* (Denis Villeneuve, 2017) opens with an apocalyptic song and an aerial shot of the greenhouses of El Ejido. However, what takes place there is not fiction, something that becomes evident with the music generated within the local rock scene. In this sense, the landscape in El Ejido, combined with the rock harmony played by its inhabitants becomes a 'sonotopoi', a space made of sound and a sound composing space, a type of kinaesthetic synergy that establish a singular relationship between sound and space. Out of the understanding of such sonotopic compositions workers' build everyday forms empathy and affective bonds (García López, 2005:19).

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ti8vZcEy_8c&feature=youtu.be

Campo de El Ejido, filled with trash near Santa M^a del Águila (Germán Moreno, 2.39 min)

The collaborative making of a 'rural-punk' music video

The idea of making a music video with Chotajo came out of the musicians' need to give visibility to their band. It was a tool to promote the band, inasmuch as it was a platform for them to have a say about the industrial activities in the region and their everyday forms of resistance. The band aimed to challenge the post-industrial messages agricultural corporations sell to consumers, visually replacing the genuine pictures of workers' life worlds with images of green pastures and smiling actors performing as farmers. Andrés wanted to shoot on the road going up to the Gador Sierra, a forest track serving as a firewall. Everybody in the nearby towns would go up there to get space and fresh air, looking at the huge mass of plastic greenhouses between the clearings of the forest, extending from the foot of the mountain to the sea. There, one could feel and see the dimension of it all, and the urgent need to speak up about it. The music Andrés was writing was a product of the 'plastic ocean' resting under us, and for him it was important to show it in its most extensive image. Similarly, Juanjo wanted to film in the '*cantera*' the stone quarry that was severing the mountain at the bottom of the Sierra. He was certain Arrioca S.L.'s production, operating the quarry to sell rockfill for the riprap layers at the base of local greenhouses, was not legal. The limits on greenhouse expansion had been established years ago, and he knew they were trespassing the limit and building on the natural park. For Juanjo, this was one of the most tangible examples of the laws that rule Western Almería, whereby the industry turns a blind eye to the destruction it produces, as institutions protect companies rather than the natural environment or existing regulations. This communication paradigm in corporate agriculture has been referred to as 'supermarket pastoralism' (Pollan, 2006), whereby industrial organizations build scales of participation with 'gradations of control', filtering the visions and claims of working communities (Bauwens 2014). The quarry stood as a reflection of the institutional ability to conceal both the sound of the machines cutting down the mountain and the citizens denounces against it, deploying what Clara Garí defines as "the acoustics of control", blocking the undesired sounds of the industrial environment by emitting the noise of desired green washed campaigns (2005:4). While the song lyrics did not address this topic, the illustrative intention of the collaborative music video was to make clear it was "not isolated from the relations of power that make up the greater social context" (Worcester 2012:92).

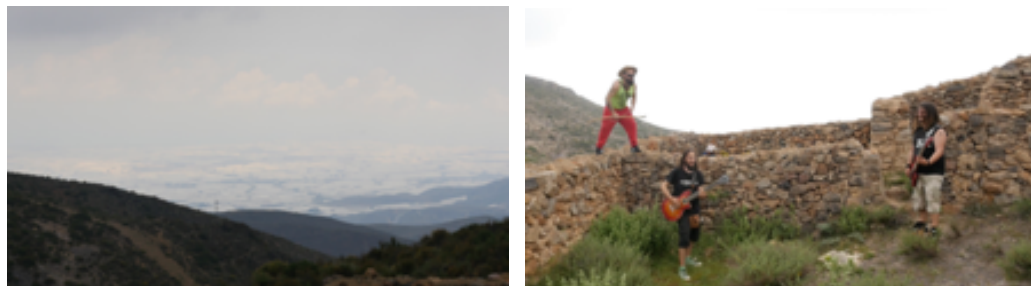


FIGURE 5: Location of the first scene, Gador Sierra (Shots from the music video, 2018)

In this process, Benjamin and I had the challenging role of acting as translators of their ideas, using our technical abilities to diffuse the message and give room to the empathy they sought. Relinquishing control is always a challenge in collaborative filmmaking, but as Sarah Elder concludes in her meaning-making study of montage with Yup'ic Eskimo communities, when we manage to give up control, "there is something greater to be gained" (1995:101). In this case it involved giving up our aesthetic vision as individual filmmakers to illustrate that which the musicians shared with their audience. We used an epistemological framework "that is collectivised/socialised and developed through the research process itself" as proposed by Shireen Walton on her research as curator of Iranian photobloggers, (2016). This involved piecing together the song lyrics and filmed locations with the 'sonic images': the corporality, sensoriality and empathy the musicians wanted to transmit. The result was inherently intersubjective as we were not addressing an objective truth or feeling. It became, as Andrew Irving suggests, "a process of poesis rather than mimesis as persons are not reproducing the past but actively re-interpreting it" (2007:205).

We shot the first scene on the ruins of an old house, representative of the effects of the crises on people's lives, with the white web of greenhouses on the background. As members of the 'Youth Without Future' Spanish generation, hit by the 2008 and 2012 economic crises, the musicians shared in that shot a combination of passivity and resignation to the regional unstable agricultural labour market, as a means of immediate survival (Val Ripollés, 2016). Juanjo and José mimicked their collective frustration, energetically playing their guitars inside the remains of the house with no sound coming out, as the instruments remained unplugged. 'El Pollo', on the farthest corner by himself, showed passivity by hitting the drumsticks on the bushes and flowers around him, mocking the viewer as his pretence play. Andrés, jumping around the remaining walls of the house, was the king of the scene. With the musicians and the horizon below his elbow, he wanted to show he could really crush everyone below with his words. As they expressed, their apathy has gradually built into indignation, forcing them to a huge "self-constructive effort" through a continued deployment of creativity, shared knowledge and collective re-invention (Ibid; Cruces, 2012:157). They have transformed into 'musical entrepreneurs' in Dayan's sense of the term, exposing as fake "what has been constructed as real by the established media" (2013:143). They showed a will to confront shared feelings of loss of sovereignty, weak democracy, market domination, and increase in social inequalities and political subordination from financial powers and large media corporations. All of which was articulated in the March 15th 2011 *Indignados* movement 'metanarrative of outrage' (Sanz and Mateos, 2011: 529). Their claims stand unaltered, contesting the continued logic of domination and oppression within the local agricultural industry. In this context, the music video served to illustrate and contextualise their lyrics, promoting their performance at 'Extiercol Fest', but also capturing "the spatial-temporal dimension of the musical process (rather than the musical product itself)" involving the musicians, their instruments and their creative intention (D'Amico 2015:2).

We ended up not shooting at the *cantera*, but then Andrés proposed to do a final take on the back of Juanjo's van. The van represented all those trips, festivals, nights under the stars; they lived through the years. It was what made them connected to other villages and their friends. It was what reminded them that anytime they could get on the road and run away, even if just for the weekend. We did two takes, but then it started raining and we decided to go back to the studio. At the studio, Andrés took off his shirt, fitted a farmer's hat, and got a stick with a rope tied to one end of the stick, traditionally used in the region to guide the sheep. He started shaking the rope as the shepherd guiding the herd of musicians. 'El Pollo' wore a white safety hat like the one used at the packaging warehouses, customized with tags and signatures, and two huge goat horns attached to each side. With full custom on, they started playing, revealing with the complex set of motor behaviours and refurbished agricultural objects, the sociocultural environment in which the social relations represented occur (D'Amico 2015:2). 'El Pollo' also put on a bandana that read, 'Juan Enciso your mayor', covering his mouth. It was a promotional bandana from the convicted ex-mayor of El Ejido, for embezzling 84 million Euros during his rule from 1991 to 2011. He wore it so nobody forgets about the corrupt people inhabiting the town, who are still protected by the regional administration. The aesthetics of the collaborative film, as in Gruber's community video ethnography, revealed critical views on political leaders and workers' agency, as they become the actors putting into question political power (2016). It was a collective and organic experience, where each of them would add something different each time. Andrés would dedicate words to the audience, Juanjo would perform a guitar solo, and 'El Pollo' would repeat one of the verses Andrés was singing, in an even darker tone. They would look at each other, find their moment and have their instant of rebellion within the song.

The musicians decided the editing of the music video would rely on a non-linear sequence of the various locations chosen, jumping back and forth, and creating a sense of simultaneously being in all places at once. They wanted the audience to feel addressed, communicating the message that their creative inputs at the studio were constantly in dialogue with the views from above and below the productive environment that they shared with them. As Bell and Kennedy suggest, they were crafting through images and sound a sense of being there, of being immersed in a shared environment (2007). We created transitions by intercutting frames of the video to come, on the last bit of each clip. This way, we would play with the music to create a flash between environments that accentuated the beats of the song. The resulting construction of place from different viewpoints, from Andrés' wide-opened mouth to his body above the field of greenhouses, showed the process of 'multilocality' in which the musicians found the local youth embedded (Rodman, 2003). It illustrated the rough feeling of life in El Ejido, where reality is not what it seems and moments of truth only appear in a flash. They were shaping place through

the dynamic interaction of body and landscape (Casey, 1993). This approach to audiovisual research brings the possibility to “empathetically imagine ourselves into the places occupied, the sensations felt by others...” (Pink, 2008:4). The feelings and emotions are not necessarily the same, but the illustration of emplacement and corporal movements give us a path for discernment.

When we first showed the editing to the musicians, for a second, we saw their frustrations come apart, as they envisioned themselves as true musicians living off their music and communicating an emotional path to help others on their daily struggle. The result was for musicians and filmmakers an exercise of collective thinking and being, a type of “knowing beyond the self” (Horst, 2016:7). Seeing the result, the musicians couldn’t believe the transformation that had occurred between the dump reality of their rehearsing space and the dynamic and powerful atmosphere created on the video. For them, the video was an act of resistance, a window of hope guiding them and others through a creative and philosophical route that could free them from their physical entrapment to the agricultural industry. For anthropologists, filmmakers and ethnomusicologists, producing a video with our informants gives us an incredible opportunity to understand social dynamics from within. But, most importantly, it gives us the task of recuing these forms of expressions from being forgotten, by including them in the public discourse of the region, and reclaiming their space, as a relevant manifestation of the cultural subversion that emerges within the cracks of the industry.

The music video reached some of the people we saw among the crowd in Extiercol Fest, and it hit four hundred views in the first two months after being published on Vimeo. During this time, the group stopped playing. They just could not organise themselves to continue rehearsing. They kept saying it was just a phase, but so far, they have not gotten back together. Heinich (2012) observes three factors of influence when describing ‘visibility’: the widespread technical capability to produce images, the asymmetry, or lack of reciprocity among ways of visualization, and the social category or hierarchy dividing people that are visible or famous, and those that are not. Through the process of making the music video we had managed to overcome the challenge of visibility through our technical capability to produce images. The problem laid on the lack of reciprocity. They belonged to a generation that began sharing their music in mixed tapes, using their rooms to produce, remix and cut and paste their music (Yúdice, 2007:27). As creators of ‘2.0 music’, they used the internet as an exchange platform for their music, using channels like YouTube and Soundcloud as a sharing space with their community (Kusek, 2007). However, their inability to obtain reciprocity in the ways of visualization provoked an inter-relational inequality that led them to stop believing in their capacity to make their music seen. Trying to challenge lack of visibility through the making of the music video, the group ended up being trapped by the social hierarchies that legitimized the scales of vision. They kept consuming all their favourite artists’ music. Juanjo even joined Simulacro D.C., a similar regional rock band that he considered would showcase his production better. They even remained meeting as friends, but Chotajo as a band, was not able to overcome its own invisibility, even with the music video as a visual proof of their reality. The hierarchies defining them as non-visible and non-famous, ultimately impaired the continuity of the band (Heinich, 2012).

Conclusion

Despite the ephemeral life of Chotajo, the music video continues to be watched online. It remains a visual element that confirms the existence of the local musical subversion to the outer world. The set of images and unequalled sounds continue to put into question the agricultural industry’s picture of a magical jungle where vegetables and people grow happily (Mitchell 1992:223). In this process, the musicians had become writers of an alternative popular narrative of the industrial reality. The collaborative design, as in Joana Roque de Pinho’s photo collaboration exploring the idea of change with twenty-seven farmers in Guinea Bissau’s Cantanhez National Park, expanded the view on local narratives of transformation (2016). This collaborative research expanding local narratives, also draws attention to the worsening of the living and working conditions of the young autochthonous population of Western Almería. The “downward filtering” of precarity, and the creative modes of resistance producing kinaesthetic empathy addressed through this paper, are novel to the extensive anthropological literature on the region, generally framed through the topics of migration, labour exploitation, the living conditions of racialized subjects and racism, marginalization, and ethnic violence (Checa, 2001:13; SOS Racismo, 2001:11; Calvo Buenzas, 2000:49; Rio Ruíz, 2002:84; Martínez Veiga, 1999a, 1999b;

Rodríguez García, 2002; García Castaño et al., 1998; Castaño Madroñal, 2002). The combination of improvisation and creativity in methods and outcomes, has given the possibility for new narratives to emerge, making of the young musicians, actors of change. This does not mean that they were actually changing things, but that they were engaging themselves and others with the possibility of change. Change in the direction of literature, but most importantly, change in terms of collective empathy. By embracing the idea of subversion they were planting a seed for it.

The music video served to do a 'monstration', in Dayan's meaning of the term. The language of monstration encompasses "(1) asserting or denying the existence of given interactions; (2) imposing judgment on their protagonists; and (3) displaying respect or disrespect toward them" (Dayan, 2013:148). Through the music video, the musicians were defining alternative forms of presenting reality, asserting their existence and the spirit of social critique present in the regional musical compositions across time. By showing the corporality of their music and illustrating their lyrics we were producing new judgements about the labour force, generating a sense of empathy between audiences and music producers. We were defining new forms of representation for the musicians and the surrounding reality, displaying respect for those coping with the industry. In communities that do not normally have visibility, this form of 'monstration' is a way of asserting workers' agency so that their message can co-exist side by side with the messages of institutional media, rather than being summarily dismissed. The music video leaves a trace of a collaborative endeavour to show reality on the terms of the younger generation inhabiting the region. The realisation here, is not about a given music genre fostering rebellion, but about the existence of alternative narratives to official discourses that foster unconformity and get revealed within the local youth scene.

The region makes global news monthly, denouncing the situation of semi-slavery feeding the European supermarkets, but news channels rarely include the views of locals, who live that reality everyday. The images that emerge from the industry, on the contrary, portray an idealistic picture of agro-tech revolution that leaves no room for alternative cultural expression. In this context, the simple existence of the music video serves as proof that the workers in El Ejido are not dormant followers. They are also active contestants. However, they are caught up in a different political economy than their parents and grandparents, whereby workers' problems cannot be voiced as openly as before. What once was a family agricultural region, today it is the largest global concentration of greenhouses and a technological hub of intensive agriculture, supplying vegetables across the world, all year round.

This paper has debated the importance of refocusing our industry ethnographies by showing local narratives of transformations, rather than informing about a trickle-down precarity. It has argued for the use of collaborative visualizing tools such as music videos to illustrate creative forms of expression, feelings and forms of empathy that emerge from marginalised narratives. In industrial environments, where oppression in the form of precarious work conditions, racism, high investment risk, and market pressure coexist, we have the responsibility to search for such subverted accounts. By doing this, we are placing workers' agency at the centre of the industrial debate engaging with the unsustainable pillars that uphold the productive structure. In this process, we are reminded that a rock music player, singing about the evils of the capitalist system and its effects on the intensive agricultural industry, can also be the person producing our supermarket tomatoes. Perhaps this way, we make consumers think differently about what they consume, and institutions take action about the labour illegalities embedded in the production process.

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Produced by The Big Fight Inmate. Instrumental music: Dejota Stail. Master: Ser Soul
Song: Títeres, Artist: Sandra, Tercio and JeroconJota, Released: 2017, Genre: Hip-hop
Available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=E-ypdNOpJGM>

MORENO, Germán

2019 Campo de El Ejido, lleno de basuras junto a Santa M^a del Águila. 2.39 min.
Song: Sinklars Vísa, Artist: Týr, Album: Land, Released: 2008, Genre: Progressive metal
Available at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ti8vZcEy_8c&feature=youtu.be

SIMULACRO D. G.

2019 Simulacro D.G. Perdiendo El Control. Videoclip. 3.51 min. Produced by: Simulacro D.G.
Song: Perdiendo el Control, Artist: Simulacro D.G, Album: Herederos del Plástico, Released: 2019,
Genre: Indie rock, License: The Orchard Music
Available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=j2LslxajuRk>

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Song: Menos Animal, Artist: Chotajo, Released: 2018, Genre: Punk/Rock
Available at: <https://vimeo.com/271826138>