Reimagining the city: hip hop and the social transformation of Comuna 13, Medellín

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Abstract

This dissertation studies the role of music making in the social construction of the city within the paradigm of the experience economy. Music making as collective organization of sound that requires decisions of what is being emitted and what not, of what creates harmony and what produces dissonance, is also the organization of the imaginary and real spaces where it is created. Looking at hip hop as a social process that is constitutive of and constituted by in-between differential spaces, the thesis puts into value vernacular practices of creativity, analysing their role in the social reconstruction of Comuna 13 in Medellín, Colombia. Focusing on the cultural heritage of Comuna 13 that has been created by young artists as a means of resistance to (state) violence, the dissertation argues that urban social formations, such as hip hop groups, have an important role in empowering youth and in creating counter-dominant place narratives to the elitist city imagery.

Resumen

La presente tesis estudia el papel de la práctica musical en la construcción social de la ciudad desde el paradigma de la economía de la experiencia. La práctica musical, entendida como la organización colectiva sonido que requiere tomar decisiones sobre lo que se emite o lo que no, y sobre lo que crea armonía o lo que produce disonancia, también organiza el espacio imaginario y real donde esa música se crea. Destacando al hip hop como un proceso social que constituye y a su vez está constituido por espacios intermedios diferenciales, la tesis pone en valor las prácticas de creatividad vernácula, analizando su función en la reconstrucción social de la Comuna 13 de Medellín, Colombia. La investigación, centrada en el patrimonio cultural creado por jóvenes artistas como un medio de resistencia a la violencia (estatal), sostiene que las formaciones urbano-sociales, como los grupos de hip-hop, tienen una repercusión importante en el empoderamiento de la juventud y en la creación de narrativas de lugar alternativas al imaginario elitista de la ciudad.

Preface

After the initial delay in our departure, caused by a landslide, we were finally on our way to Manrique la Cruz in the packed minibus that aggressively took to the streets. Sitting between my two Medellín friends, I observed the smog cloud that was left behind us as we climbed the road of the western hillside of Medellín. After an hour long ride through the zigzagged narrow road that could merely fit the van, we finally stepped off the bus to continue walking toward the studio. A few hundred meters of an unpaved path led us to a couple of wooden houses that seemed to ignore gravity rules, considering the steepness of the hill where they were located. In the midst of mud, a few hens and a rooster, we'd arrived at our destination–the home of DJ WAM. So this was the headquarter of Sueños Reales Records[1]–I thought to myself–where real dreams come true. A simple living room with TV playing in the background, concrete floor, a bathroom separated by a shower curtain and a 2x2m recording room with full equipment. We had come here to record the Partido de las Doñas song and there I was all the sudden, dropping some lines of critique on sexism with three male companions sitting next to me. As I sang about the darker side of Medellín, imagining adolescent girls selling their bodies in exchange for a few dollars, my new friends seemed to be content with my singing skills. Thinking of where I was, and looking at my companions' happy faces, I realized how different our life stories were, and at the same time, that we shared something that was important for all of us–music.

By the time I'd finished singing my lines for the track that was to represent the new Ladies Party, it was already midnight and no public transportation would take me back to my apartment in Comuna 13. So we decided to walk downhill, taking some unexpected shortcuts through places that I as a foreigner (and probably the majority of Medellín's high class) would never have expected to visit. I slowly started to realize the meaning of "caminar el barrio"–to walk the 'hood–that I'd so often heard from different rappers. It was about resistance. Resistance to one's own fears, resistance to the invisible political

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[1] In English: Real Dreams Records.

frontiers, and it was about resisting the established forms of social reproduction that excluded arts from being a decent way of living. It was about an everyday revolution–as Lefebvre had suggested–that had to be televised through the new media that was giving the youth a voice.

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The path to studying hip hop's role in the social transformation of one of Medellín's most marginalized areas was full of surprises. I had no previous experience nor interest in hip hop; the only thing I sought for was music as a means of place making and as a way of strengthening communities that I believe to be fundamental components of good, healthy cities. In first place, with no prior knowledge of Medellín, I'd imagined studying buskers on the squares of that city, or even doing some experimental performances myself, but that was all before I began to assume the socio-spatial complexity of the city.

Why study cities through its music anyway? What can it tell us about places? My increasingly convinced answer is that music can reveal a lot more than we could first imagine. My first visit to Medellín, when I was still concretizing the focus of my study, took me to the majority of the *comunas*[2] of Medellín and to several little civic organizations that were hidden in the high up neighbourhoods that I would otherwise never have gotten to know. Meeting the social leaders, musicians and music teachers of the barrios of Medellín on my first weeks in the city was like a fast-track to Medellín's heart. Stories that spoke about the local civic engagement for providing children a place for music making, of coordinated parental vigilance to guarantee a safe path to the music school, and of organizing concerts to resolve conflicts in the neighbourhood all weaved into a map in my head that began to speak loud about Medellín through its music.

Cities would be a lot less lively and healthy if it weren't for its music. Not only are there numerous studies of its benefits on people's cognitive skills and overall health, but there

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[2] *Comunas* are the administrative districts within the municipality.

are also signs of rapid growth in the music industry, contributing evermore to local economies through concerts in bars, music halls and likewise. Music tourism that involves travelling for festivals or to determined destinations because of the musical heritage, is also on the rise, forming part of the positive trend of global tourism.

UNESCO's Cities of Music prioritises the Global South precisely because music creates economic growth and social cohesion. In 2015, Medellín was named one of these Cities of Music to promote creativity as a strategic factor for sustainable urban development. This was yet another award for the city that has received several international prizes for its development in terms of innovation. Often in opposition between its violent past and innovative present, recognizing the city's musical heritage adds to the dialectics that dominate the discourse on Medellín.

Medellín has a long past as a city of music, apart from autochthonous genres such as the *trova paisa* or *música de carrillera,* the city is also very proud of adapting foreign genres, such as tango, rock and punk music. Tango became popularized in the 1920 and 30s with prominent figures such as the French Argentine singer and song-writer Carlos Gadena, whose images are still visible in many tango bars of Medellín that tourist now like to visit because of their authenticity. What tango had in common with other genres to follow was its warm acceptance among the migrant populations of Medellín who shared the sense of placelessness that is expressed in tango.

Following global trends, the late 1960s and beginning of the 70s Medellín saw the emergence of a rock scene that was both influenced by the events of May 1968, the hippie movement, as well as by local anti-establishment movements, such as nadaism. The scarce and rudimentary instruments that sounded on the first poorly recorded rock songs were also noticeable in the punk music that took to the city's underground scenarios in the 1980s. Filtered in through the LP-s of the fortunate ones who'd been to London or New York, the foreign sounds of punk were rapidly copied to cassettes and distributed among those urging for innovation. The city has had many great punk bands, such as I.R.A or Pestes with their song "Dinero" that figured on the soundtrack of *Rodrigo D: No*

Futuro (Gaviria, 1990). Shot in Medellín in 1985-86, this film had an important role in the scattering of punk bands in the city. In addition to inciting the birth of numerous bands, the film is also unique in its portrayal of the hazardous city and how its youth experienced it through frantic punk songs in the 1980s. Overwhelmed and irritated by poverty and lack of opportunities, many decided to adopt the radical stance of not studying, working, nor obeying to social norms. However underground and hidden punk music might have been at the time, the mere looks of mohawks and leather jackets full of metal hooks shook the profoundly catholic Antioquian society and its conservative values.

In the 90s, while rock and punk musicians were expressing anti-establishment messages from their underground music spaces, the Establishment created its own program for printing social vestiges on the hyperviolent city. Inspired by Venezuela's music education program El Sistema, Medellín's Red de Escuelas de Música [Network of Music Schools] was to contest the unprecedented levels of violence by providing children with music instruments instead of guns. In 1997 the first six schools were inaugurated in the city's most low-income and high-crime areas, offering free lessons of classical music to underprivileged youth. Today there are 27 schools spread all over the city, offering lessons to more than five thousand pupils.

Despite the open-doors policy of the public music schools, many youths did not find themselves fit for the curriculum of classical music and sought for another form of free artistic expression. Initially taking the streets of Medellín through the moves of b-boying, hip hop and rap music grew to be one of Medellín's most significant musical phenomenon. Similar to its birthplace in New York, hip-hop emerged in Medellín as an instrument of vocalizing the social realities of the marginal neighbourhoods of the city. Parallel to the rise of violence, the 1990s also saw emergent voices denouncing crime and injustice from numerous provisional rehearsal spaces, as well as in public spaces where hip-hoppers would reunite. Recuperating the contesting character of music that had already been demonstrated by other underground movements, hip-hoppers appropriated

the streets with their loudspeakers, break dance moves and rhymes that spoke about their first hand experiences in the 'hood. In the middle of the 2000s hip hop became the essence and the tool for numerous collectives that worked as hip hop schools and cultural organizations. This represented a new phenomenon of popular culture being subsidised by the State with a common objective: to enhance social cohesion in the city's underprivileged areas. Coinciding with the recuperation of some state functions and with new socio-cultural policies, Medellín's hip hop scene received public funds that allowed the promotion of artists and social processes linked to this urban art form. While it gave a high-rise for some of the city's artists, the public subsidies were also efficient in submitting the artistic and political objectives of the hip hop groups to the State's agenda.

Preliminary notes on the language use

I have taken the right to translate the original texts in the interviews, song lyrics, newspapers and in other sources on my own, and I take responsibility for the errors that may occur. A few words that don't figure in English, but are necessary for maintaining the situatedness of this study in the context of Medellín, appear in its original form in some parts of the text. These words are *barrio* and *comuna*. Speaking from a linguistically neutral point of view, the barrio equals "neighbourhood," notwithstanding, in the popular use of the word in Medellín, it comes closer to the "'hood," given that the popular imaginary connects the barrio with low-income areas. The interpretation is similar with the word comuna, which means "city district," but is often perceived with a slight connotation toward the poorer districts. This way, Comuna 13,[3] is most commonly referred to in this precise way, whilst it is very uncommon to hear the word comuna being used for the upper-class district El Poblado. This, I believe, is representative of the high levels of physical and imaginary segregation that exists in Medellín.

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[3] I write Comuna with a capital letter to refer to it as the name of the district.

One last specification goes for the use of the word "project" when speaking about the endeavours of the two case studies. The informants' own way of describing their undertakings would normally use the word *procesos* or *procesos sociales*, referring to their projects as "social processes," which communicates idea of their projects being about the process, about something lasing and time-consuming, something that involves other people. In this case, I have adopted the English word project in order to avoid confusions with the vocabulary from Symbolic Interactionism and social movement theory.

Aim and scope of the research

The aim of this dissertation is to study the role of music making in the social construction of space in the context of political transition. Looking at hip hop as a creative social process, two case studies are compared, using constructivist grounded theory to study how their spatial practices and discourse and their use of the new media have accompanied the renovation of one of Medellín's historically most marginalized areas, Comuna 13. With a special focus on social transformation as a leitmotiv in the reconstruction of this peripheral part of the city, the dissertation analyses the role of hip hop in reinventing and reimagining the everyday spaces of its practitioners and its also focuses on its instrumentalization as a strategic tool for participatory politics.

Looking at the two case studies in the context of urban political transition towards neoliberal practices, the micro-level experiences of hip hop offer contrasting patterns of how this art form can simultaneously resist and contribute to state-led urban transformations, allowing considerations of the political subtlety of hip hop as an urban social formation. On the other hand, these cases also speak of modern states' need to institutionalize civic expressions and movements in order to profit from the grassroots-level knowledge and to incorporate it into the state machinery.

Looking at how the notions of social transformation and resilience are used in the institutional discourse, and how the social impact of hip hop is covered in the media, I argue that civic activism is commodified as a place asset for place marketing. The hypothesis holds that the notion of social transformation that contains individual and collective experiences of resistance, resilience and communal efforts of reconstruction, has been broken down into a simple slogan of urban metamorphosis that allows marketing Medellin through this unique identity. This hypothesis is built upon Kavaratzis and Ashworth's (2005) premise that place marketing is largely dependent on the construction, communication and management of the city's image and identity. I hereby suggest that the terms and experiences of social urbanism and social transformation have been used to communicate the image of Medellín as a city that represents resilience, change and revival with the aim of augmenting its popularity as a tourist destination. Within the process of image reconstruction, Comuna 13 has become the materialization of social transformation, where resilience and change can be physically experienced thanks to recent tourist activities. This allows contemplating the transformation of Comuna 13 as an example of image-building, where social actors such as hip hoppers and cultural producers take part of the collective place imagineering, despite their apparent opposition to the state and its elitist discourse.

Principal research issues and questions

1. Issue: Music as a relational practice that comprehends ties with place and people. Questions: How does an individual's personal background influence her/his choice of participating in music making? Which are the reasons for participating in a musical collective?

2. Issue: Collective music making, community and the social construction of space. Questions: How do collectives come into being and what defines them as a community? How are identities constructed and performed collectively? Which spaces become meaningful for a musicking community and why?

3. Issue: Music making collectives and scalability

Questions: Which factors influence the growth and replicability of a musicking collective? Which individual and institutional relationships can contribute to or damage the scalability of a musicking collective to new territories? How does the political standing of the collectives influence their participation in the social construction of space?

4. Issue: Hip hop, resistance and commodification

Questions: Is rap necessarily oppositional resistance music or can the interaction between artists, intermediaries, and state institutions be more than dialectic? Which processes influence the commodification of musicking and who benefits from them? In which ways can hip hop counter the homogenization of the city and in which ways can it consolidate state-operated representations of space?

Thesis outline chapter by chapter

The first chapter of the thesis offers an introduction to the study through a literature review that explains the Medellín "miracle". A summary of the historical events and the political decisions of the past two decades will contextualize the mechanisms behind the transformation of Medellín. Chapter 2 explains the research paradigm, methodology and the design of the qualitative mixed methodology that was used during the research. It also describes the two fieldworks performed in Medellín to explain the final decision and focus on hip hop. Chapter 3 intertwines theoretical views on music and urban space with the aim of weaving an integrating understanding of how music making forms part of the social construction of space and how it could contribute to the making of more equal and diverse cities. Chapter 4 discusses the spatial perspective of rap music by looking at past writings on hip hop and rap in its birth place in New York as well as in Latin-America and in Colombia. In addition to the historical focus put on hip hop as an artistic form that it spatially rooted, the chapter also makes a review of the more relevant contemporary

topics regarding hip hop. Chapter 5 centres on Comuna 13, looking at its demography and main historical events to contextualizes its current urban situation. The second part offers a short analysis of the role of hip hop in the social transformation of comuna 13. Chapter 6 is entirely dedicated on discussing matters related to the two case studies used for this research. The forms of music making in both organizations is discussed together with an analysis of its musical production in order to look at the place narratives that both entities have weaved with the use of new media. Chapter 7 resumes the initial research questions and summarizes the outcomes of the study, giving way to the conclusions of the final chapter that also suggests future lines of research.

Index

CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION: THE MEDELLÍN "MIRACLE"

> *What happens when transgression becomes permanent? Successful social transformation is the culmination of transgression and is grounded in the spatiality of everyday life [...]. Any social transformation, to be successful, has to be understood as a spatial transformation.*

> (Cresswell, 1996: 176)

This chapter provides the context to understand the changes that have taken place in Medellín ever since the 1990s. A revision of the historical events and political decisions of the past two decades will set the scenario to understand the mechanisms behind the transformation of Medellín. In first place, the meaning of the Medellín "miracle" will be discussed through previous investigations that have looked at the rhetorical construction of this urban myth. In second place, the chapter will provide information on the different decisions of urban governing that have accompanied the development of the notorious social urbanism in Medellín and, subsequently, the internationalization of the city. Finally, it will be argued that the allegedly socialist measures of urban governance gradually directed Medellín towards market-driven urban policies that overlook the urgent socio-economic issues of inequality.

1.1. The Medellín "miracle": from the most violent city to the capital of innovation

The Medellín 'miracle' and its transformation through social urbanism have been studied by many scholars of different academic fields from geography to conflict resolution and sociology. To disentangle the formula of the 'miracle', several academics have focused on the implementation of participative planning and budgeting (Ramírez, 2008; Fierst, 2012; Molina Merchán, 2012; Brough, 2014); others have studied security planning, normalization and control mechanisms (Brand, 2013; Serna, 2011; Sotomayor, 2017) with a special focus on youth criminal groups (Rozema, 2007; Atehortúa, Amparo, & Jiménez, 2009; Baird, 2015). While some question whether social urbanism has really

improved the life quality of poor neighbourhoods of Medellín (Brand & Dávila, 2011; Velásques, 2012; Duque Franco, 2014), several agree that behind the successful transformation there are also efforts of improving Medellín's international reputation to attract foreign investment (Hylton, 2007; Brand, 2013; Hernandez, 2013; Montoya-Restrepo, 2014; Maclean, 2015) through innovative transportation system and iconic architecture allocating library parks and sports infrastructures in the low-income areas of the city. The focus of this thesis, however, is on questioning the meaning of social urbanism and social transformation of Comuna 13 by looking at how the image of a transformed peripheral district has been achieved through the instrumentalization of culture and hip hop in particular.

According to different authors, Medellín's 'miraculous' makeover (Hylton, 2007; Baird, 2015; Maclean, 2015) refers to the sharp decline of crime rates in just a decade, following the implementation of the urban development approach, commonly known as social urbanism which is an umbrella term for policies enacted in Medellín during the late 1990s and early 2000s. Investments in infrastructure, public transport, and outstanding architectural projects in the dim marginal areas of the city were designed to address the decades' long oblivion these areas had experienced ever since the city's plummeting expansion from the 1950s onwards. The miracle thus refers to the transformation of Medellín as one of the world's most violent cities in the early 1990-s [4] into the world's most innovative city in 2013, hosting the UN World Urban Habitat in 2014 and receiving another notable award for urbanism and development, the Lee Kuan Yew World City Prize in 2016 (Plataforma Arquitectura, 2016). Thanks to this outstanding agenda, Medellín has become a model for other Latin American cities and its cable-car transportation system has already been replicated in Caracas and Rio de Janeiro (Brand, 2013).

1.1.1. The origins of violence

To understand the transformation of Medellín from one of the world's most dangerous cities to becoming an example of innovation, we must go back to the origins of the

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[4] Medellín reached the peak of 381 homicides per 100.000 inhabitants in 1991 (Insuasty et. al., 2010).

violence. As Maclean contends, urban violence results from the political processes that have created exclusions, and in turn, from the way that inequality and exclusion maintain violence as part of political process (2015: 28). Accordingly, to understand the origins of the contemporary violence in Colombia, we must go back to the middle of the XX century, to the era of La Violencia [The Violence] when tensions between the two traditional political parties, the liberals and the conservatives, led to a civil war.

Until 2003 the two dominant political parties–the Liberals and the conservatives–held a political duopoly that represented the exclusive colonial elites (Maclean, 2015). The two parties have been fierce rivals, pushing the country into two civil wars since the late 19th century, The Thousand Days War (1899-1903) and the undeclared civil war La Violencia (1948-1953) (Roldán, 1997). The latter was triggered by the assassination of the Liberal presidential candidate Jorge Eliecer Gaitan in 1948 and spread from Bogotá all over the country, leaving the Colombia in a five-year conflict during which homicides were committed due to political party allegiances. La Violencia that summed a total of 100 000 - 200 000 deaths (Rozema, 2007) reached its end with the establishing of the Frente Nacional [The National Front], a pact that lasted from 1958 to 1975. The Frente Nacional set the conditions for the exclusive division of power between the Liberals and the Conservatives who altered presidency every four years and shut third parties out of the political system (Brough, 2014).

It was in this same period, in the 1950s, that the first guerrilla movements emerged with the aim of fulfilling their political ideals through armed struggle (Rozema, 2007). In the following decades the guerrilla movements grew rapidly through recruitments of youth mostly in the countryside areas where economic and labour conditions were poor. Illicit drug production and trafficking, kidnappings and extortions became the main income of the guerrilla movements, the FARC [Armed Resistance Forces of Colombia] and ELN [Army of National Liberation] being the biggest far-left groupings. The illicit operations were most often performed in the countryside, however, some guerrillas were also infiltrated in cities like Barrancabermeja and Medellín (Rozema, 2007.).

The guerrilla fighters of the FARC whose ideal was a more righteous land division between peasants, targeted their combat against the new illegal rural landowners, many

of whom were drug traffickers (Rozema, 2007). They became the objective of the guerrilla fighters who started to extort and abduct them to finance the growth and maintenance of the movement. As a reaction to the growing threats, the landowners began to organize themselves into armed groups of self-defence known as the *autodefensas* to prevent abductions. In 1997 the different paramilitary self-defence groups united their forces and founded Autodefensas Unidas de Colombia (AUC) [United Self-Defence of Colombia] with the common objective of defeating the guerrilla (Fierst, 2012).

In the following years the paramilitary groups attacked different guerrilla groups all over Colombia and also committed massacres against civil societies that allegedly collaborated with the guerrilla (Rozema, 2007). According to Livingstone (2003, cited in Rozema, 2007), in 2003 the AUC had 11.000 members across the country, some of them tied to illicit drug trafficking, others focused on the destruction of the guerrilla fronts. Rozema underlines that many (former) paramilitary leaders who used to reside in the countryside became the main instigators of violence in the marginal neighbourhoods of cities like Medellín (2007: 538). The paramilitary leaders would often be infiltrated to the cities through different criminal networks. To obtain control over marginal neighbourhoods the paramilitaries either eliminated or co-opted armed groups that were already present in the barrio as local gangs. Criminals of lesser threat would be assassinated, which created a sense of security and control among the residents of the neighbourhoods forgotten by the State (Duncan, 2005 cited in Rozema, 2007). This allowed new paramilitary leaders to gain territorial control and local support in areas where the state institutions were mainly known by their withdrawal from intervening in the everydayness of the institutionally uncontrolled areas (Maclean, 2015). In Medellín, this shift among local power holders helped decrease petty crimes such as shoplifting and robberies, while new forms of criminality emerged. Among these were the extortions of transport companies and the elimination of persons who declined to cooperate with the paramilitaries or pay the *vacuna,*[5] the illegal fee claimed in exchange for a supposed service of protection (Rozema, 2007).

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[5] *Vacuna* translates into "vaccine" and signifies bribing money that is regularly demanded from local businesses by paramilitaries or other illicit groups for sustaining their activities and for "offering protection" for the businesses.

Medellín's peripheral neighbourhoods continue to be an infamous stage for myriad criminal groups, the de facto control of the section of a neighbourhood may belong to a paramilitary group, a *combo* (a local gang with certain delimited territory but little complexity in their hierarchical, military or economic organization) or a *banda* (a criminal group with a hierarchic, military and economic organization) (Insuasty et.al., 2010). The latter are more often defined as *bacrim*[6] [drug trafficking criminal groups] that emerged after the alleged dismantling of the paramilitary groups between 2003-2006 (Prieto, 2012). A survey conducted in 2014 listed only Medellín's high-end district, El Poblado, as exempt of local combos*,* while the rest of the city's sixteen districts were distributed between 247 local gangs (El Inspector, 2014).

The industrialization of cocaine in trade in Colombia began in 1976, showing important advances in its production, commercialization and transportation that introduced the partial monopolization of the business by the cocaine routes and by the emergence of the big cartels and their leaders who fought for the dominium (Insuasty et.al., 2010: 38). Consequently, crime rates plummeted in Medellín in the 1980s with the rise of the Medellín drug cartel (Vásquez, 2013). Between 1985 and 1990 there were approximately 153 criminal groups associated to the Cartel of Medellín, serving the interests of the Cartel and its *Oficinas*[7] that became the centre of a complex system controlling security and the illegal justice system around the drug trading economy (Insuasty et.al., 2010: 41). In 1982 Colombian drug traffickers managed a business that was equal to about 10-25% of the country's export (Vásquez, 2013:122).

The cartel was established by various illicit actors, the most infamous of them being Pablo Escobar Gaviria who had started his criminal career early in the tobacco contraband trade. According to Hylton it was the rising class of traffickers who were working in the informal economy that established the "various interlocking networks of the coca trade–purchase, processing, credit lines, transportation–that would become known as the

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[6] The *bacrim –bandas criminales–*were the so called new paramilitary groups that emerged after the apparent demobilization of the AUC (Autodefensas Unidas de Colombia) paramilitaries as part of the national program that took place between 2003- 2006.

[7] The *Oficinas* were drug cartels and criminal organizations that were close to mafia leaders; they functioned as the intermediary forces between the clients who ordered criminal services, and the neighbourhood based criminal groups (of hitmen) that fulfilled the orders (Ceballos, 2000).

Medellín cartel, and whose long tentacles linked the coffee heartlands to eastern tropical frontiers and the northern Atlantic coast" (2007: 78). The undeclared money required laundering and was often inverted in buying land in rural regions where the presence of the FARC guerrillas had frightened ranchers to flee their land, selling their property for cheap prices and producing the exact contrary to what the guerrilla fighters demanded (a more just division of land between the working class). This provoked conflicts between the local guerrilla and the new narco-baron landowners who suffered from frequent extortions and kidnappings and had to organize their own private self-defence forces, employing professional hitmen against the FARC supporters and other leftists in Medellín itself, "plunging the city into a murderous downward spiral" (Hylton, 2007: 79).

In Medellín, to reinforce the monopoly of the cartel, groups of contract-killers started to operate in the service of drug-traffickers under the leadership of Pablo Escobar. Through the drug trade and the subsequent violence related to it, Escobar managed to reach a high level of reputation, admiration and fear throughout the country, including the authorities of various governments (Barco, Betancourt, Gaviria, Pastrana, etc.) who had owned very limited capacity to control the narco-baron's transnational reach (Vásquez, 2013: 125). Not only were competitors eliminated, but also politicians, functionaries and businessmen were assassinated for rejecting collaboration with the cartel (Wallace, 2013).

1.1.2. Consumption society as an instigator for youth's involvement in crime

Escobar's persona also left a quenchless cultural inheritance of *para la cucha todo*[8] for the youth of Medellín, combining the cult of Virgin Mary and the motherly female figure with the necessity for goods, positioning the needs of the mother as an excuse to commit whichever type of crime. When in politics,[9] with his regular middle class background coming from a family of a peasant and a teacher, Escobar easily won the support of Medellín's working-class neighbourhoods where he ordered the construction of housing and football pitches and other sports infrastructures. In the meanwhile, under the influence of the demands of the Medellín Cartel, juvenile delinquents entered the chain

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[8] This translates into "everything for the mama".
[9] Escobar was a member the Liberal Party and got elected as an alternate member of the Chamber of Representatives of Colombia as part of the Liberal Alternative movement in 1982.

of drug trafficking, transforming youth groups into criminal organizations. Conflicts between the different organizations became more common as the number of illicit groups was increasing owing to the lack of labour and free-time activities in the barrios (Rozema, 2007). Organized crime bred by drug production and trading created illicit job opportunities for the youth of marginal neighbourhoods without other prospects of salaried work.

Apart from the social and infrastructural shortcomings in Medellín's low-income areas, several authors blame the society of consumption as a major instigator for youth to become members of criminal gangs (Salazar, 1993; Vallejo, 1994; Maclean, 2015). As Salazar contends, "brands, fashion and the capacity for consumption are important for the hitman"[10] (1993: 200), allowing to show off their economic improvement through materialism. Forming part of a gang permits the member to have his own income as well as a higher status in the barrio thanks to the position in the criminal organization that holds control over the territory (Rozema, 2007; Bean, 2014). The mentality of fast money through "narco dollars" was largely introduced by Pablo Escobar whose early involvement in cigarette contraband trade and later leadership of coca trade networks allowed him to reach unimaginable wealth despite his middle class descent (Hylton, 2007).

In his seminal novel *La virgen de los sicarios* (1994), Vallejo draws a desolating image of the 1990s Medellín, portraying a young hitman, Alexis, whose days are spent in "blood puddles", carrying out paid assassinations. The common helper of Alexis and others alike that earn their living as paid killers is María Auxiliadora [the "Virgin of the hitmen"] who guarantees them spiritual remission. The contradictory figure represents the Catholic double moral that became common among the criminal youth that sought for protection and justification for their unorthodox behaviour. Describing the era when homicide rates were at its peak in Medellín in the early 1990s, the author laments how morgues are filled with young men's bodies while chapels are left empty due to civilians' fear of being attacked even in the most sacred places; only young hitmen enter the church before and

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[10] My translation from the original publication in Spanish.

after executing their duty, first to beg the Virgin's blessing for the criminal task to succeed and later to ask for her remission after the crime has been committed.

Similarly, in *No nacimos pa' semilla*[11] (1993) Salazar quotes a priest in whose opinion young hitmen counted on a "feminine, tolerant and permissive God"[12] (1993: 198) while the masculine, punishing and fearsome God had fallen into oblivion. Illustrating the particular interpretation of Catholic principles and moral, the author quotes another Medellín-based testifier who explains why, in his eyes, man is allowed to kill another man:

> ¿Que si soy creyente? Claro hombre. Mi familia ha sido muy católica, tengo tres tío curas. Creo en Dios y la Santísima Virgen y siempre vamos es pa'delante. La Sagrada Escritura prohíbe matar, yo entiendo que no se debe matar cristianos. Pero aquí no matamos cristianos sino animals […].

(Salazar, 993: 76).[13]

Both Salazar and Vallejo's books give a discomforting idea of the turbulent everyday life in the marginal comunas of Medellín in the 1990-s. In 1991 the city's homicide rate reached its all-time peak with 381 deaths per 100.00 inhabitants, a total of 5424 in just one year. In 2018, the number was 88.5% lower with 626 violent deaths committed in the whole city. The decline in violence rates began in 1992, reaching a low point of 154 homicides per 100.000 inhabitants in 1997; followed by a slight incline until 2001 (184 homicides); and from 2002 (98,2 per 100.000) onwards the rates have no longer passed the 100 line (Insuasty et.al, 2010; Dolan, 2018).

Finally, in 1993 a change in the de facto power control of Medellín was reached when President Gaviria's Administration (1990-1994) forged an alliance with the Cali cartel and former employees of Pablo Escobar, Carlos Castaño and Fernando Murillo (more known as Don Berna) to pursue the head of Escobar (Hylton, 2007). The narco-baron was

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[11] The title translates into "We weren't born as seeds" referring to the author's words of a lost generation of youth owing to the lack of culture nor ambition for a change in the future.

[12] My translation.

[13] My translation of the extract: "Am I a believer? Of course. My family has been very Catholic, I have three uncles who are priests. I believe in God and in the Holy Virgin and we always move forward. The Holy Writing prohibits killing, I understand that Christians shouldn't be killed. But here we are not killing Christians but animals."

killed on December 3, 1993 on the roof of one of his residencies in Medellín. This, however, did not signal the end of drug trafficking in Medellín. The new drug lord to reign the *Oficina* of Envigado–the city's biggest drug cartel–was Don Berna who remained at better terms with the authorities and kept the crime rates low when demanded so (Ramírez, 2008; Velásquez, 2012; Baird, 2015), allowing the governors to deliver numbers that spoke of the pacification of the city.

According to Hylton (2007), Don Berna assumed the necessity of peace (through his controlling of the troops and the majority of the city's gangs) for future economic growth and guaranteed low crime rates in order to develop new businesses. In an interview published by Amnesty International, Don Berna affirms that it was important to create the "necessary climate so that investment returns, particularly foreign investment, which is fundamental if we do not want to be left behind by the engine of globalization" (Amnesty International, 2005, cited by Hylton, 2007: 86). Apart from managing extortion, kidnappings, contract killing and drug deals, Don Berna was also involved in construction, finance, private security and other businesses that clearly benefitted from the pacification of the city that allowed attracting foreign investors. Several researches (Hylton, 2007; Rozema, 2007; Pachico, 2011; Velásquez, 2012; Maclean, 2015) suggest that the pacification of Medellín was a "reconfiguration, and then assertion, of Don Berna's criminal control of the city's narcotics dominated underworld" (Baird, 2015: 15), not just fruit of the peace negotiations held between the Government and the different criminal groups.

1.1.3. Social urbanism

In Informalidad y Urbanismo Social de Medellín (2010), Echeverri and Orsini, the chief architect and engineer of the transformation of Medellín lay out the main components and achievements of the projects carried out under the government of Sergio Fajardo (2004-2007) and his successor Alonso Salazar (2008-2011). The illustrative essay makes a somewhat self-endorsing overview of the architectural interventions that were carried out in Medellín to help the city "change its skin" (Echeverri & Orsini, 2010: 16). The idea of urban transformation through acupunctural interventions is a well spread city planning practice that has proven to be widely popular in cities across the world, from Barcelona

to Curitiba. One of the most famous models of urban metamorphosis, Barcelona (Delgado, 2005; Casellas, 2006), allegedly inspired the leaders of urban change in Medellín (Brand, 2013). Brand argues that Alejandro Echeverri, the chief architect and leader of urban projects in Medellin had undertaken doctoral studies in Barcelona in the late 1990s in the midst of city's post-Olympic transformation and was influenced by the changes he'd witnessed. Also, the discourse of social urbanism in Medellín is loaded with the Barcelona lexicon of "urban acupuncture", "new centralities", and "the democratic value of public space," (Brand, 2013: 3) which aim to replicate the Barcelona model despite the fundamental geographical and socio-economic differences of the two cities.

The initial approach to Barcelona's urban renewal was, indeed, much focused on creating public spaces that civic movements had been claiming ever since the 1970s, denouncing the shortcomings of urban planning under decades of Francoist governance (Marshall, 2004; Lindmäe, 2013). However, the initial focus on small urban interventions aimed at providing spaces of conviviality to the city's inhabitants was soon substituted by hasty big scale projects that were to turn the former industrial city into the capital of the Mediterranean (Rituerto, 2008). This dynamic has generated an urban agenda that gives priority to the components of economic growth instead of social priorities (Casellas, 2006), resulting in urban speculation, macro-gentrification and overtourism that is expulsing the city's residents. Was this the model to be replicated by Medellín? Questioning the miraculous transformation of Medellín, Franz has argued that the good governance agenda of the city has enabled the city's transnational capitalist class to reconfigure its hegemony and push for market-driven development policies without responding to questions of economic inequality (2017: 65). In addition, the "Medellín model" seems to have "reconfigured and enhanced rather than challenged neoliberal development approaches and thus reinforced power structures at the national, regional, and local levels," (Franz, 2017: 66).

Despite the impression given by the article of Echeverri and Orsini (2010), the grand renewal of Medellín did not exactly begin in 2004 with the administration of Sergio Fajardo; rather, the transformation started more than a decade before the 2003 elections. A key move for changing the political culture of Medellín that was dominated by the elitist duopoly of the Liberals and the Democrats and their populist approach to garnering

votes was the institutionalization of the popular election of the mayor (Maclean, 2015). In 1988, mayors were elected for the first time by popular vote rather than being appointed by department governors (Dávila, 2009). Also, Colombia's new Constitution of 1991 that reflected and instigated changes in the political landscape "opened up political spaces that enabled a resonance of ideas and the articulation of viewpoints that were hitherto excluded from mainstream debate" (Maclean, 2015: 95-96). In 1990 the Consejería Presidencial was set up by President Gaviria, consisting of a programme that involved resources and personnel to find solutions for Medellín's crisis of violence that the president recognized as Colombia's number one issue. The report *Medellín: Reencuentro con el Futuro* (Presidencia de la República, 1991) identified inequality and poverty as the root causes of violence and set an agenda to fight them. This included financial support for NGO-s, social movements and community groups. Also, the Consejería facilitated political fora, such as Seminarios Alternativos para el Futuro de Medellín [Alternative Seminars for the Future of Medellín] to work out solutions for the crisis.

Between 1991 and 1995 Foros Comunales and Seminarios Alternativos para el Futuro de Medellín took place in Medellín in order to discuss the future of the city. The participation of international policymakers, development organizations and policy specialists in the fora and seminars facilitated the construction of coalitions as well as the acquisition of financial support from international organizations (Maclean, 2015: 89). Some of the policy programmes discussed in those fora went on to be central facets of social urbanism. The policies, report, and expertise that came out of these experiences resulted in the *Plan Estratégico para Medellín* [Strategic Plan for Medellín] 1995-1998 that lists many of the policy innovations that were to become known as social urbanism and that were vital in creating the 'miracle' of Medellín (Maclean, 2015: 90).

One of the most significant outcomes of these spaces of discussion associated with the Consejería Presidencial between academics, activists, NGOs, businesses, and politicians was the founding of Compromiso Ciudadano, initially a civic movement born out of the alliances forged in the different fora and seminars. After nearly a decade of its birth, Compromiso Ciudadano decided to present itself as a political party to the elections and needed a charismatic leader who would represent the opposite of Medellín's hegemonic, elitist governors. Sergio Fajardo, a former mathematics professor, had a rather severe

mayoral candidate profile, especially in Antioquia's decades' long power divide. Fajardo neglected to associate himself to any of the major political currents and was therefore declared as "the most independent of all" candidates ("Sergio Fajardo, ciudadano," 2011). Fajardo's participation in the elections of 2003 resulted in a landslide victory, making it the first time a party other than the traditional Liberal or Conservative parties had been elected, marking a radical change in the city's political fabric (Maclean, 2015: 90.).

1.1.4. Public participation in planning and budgeting

Public participation in planning and budgeting (PB) was one of the keystone matters in the transformation and development of Medellín during Sergio Fajardo's administration in 2004-2007 (Brough, 2014). Facilitating wider involvement in the decision-making of local budgets and planning was expected to form a new generation of democratic citizens who would share their knowledge on local issues and take responsibility for local development.

Even though the infrastructures for participation were significantly improved during the 2004-2007 administration, introducing this change in the Colombian political culture that has long been known for clientelism, corruption and exclusivity (Molina Merchán, 2012; Brough, 2014), should not be solely accredited to Mayor Fajardo. Participatory democracy was already prompted by the escalation of popular movements in the 1970s and 1980s, the armed conflict, and the crisis of legitimacy of the state (Ramírez, 2008; Brough, 2014). In 1986 Law 11 was introduced to decentralize mechanisms of governance to the municipalities, allowing higher citizen participation in questions of local development. However, it was the re-writing of the Constitution in 1991 and the Law 134 that institutionalized democratic participation as a key function of the state (Velásquez & González, 2003; Molina Merchán, 2012).

In Medellín, participatory budgeting was first implemented by Mayor Juan Gómez Martínez in 1998. Inspired by the success of the PB of Porto Alegre, Brazil, (Ramírez, 2008; Molina Merchán, 2012) it was further developed by Fajardo into the Participatory Planning and Budgeting Programme that was approved in 2004, institutionalizing local planning and Participatory Budgeting in the Municipal Planning System. Initially, 5% of

the municipal budget was destined for the PB, divided between 16 comunas[14] and 5 *corregimientos*[15]. Participatory planning aimed to engage citizens in the creation of each of the local development plans of the 16 comunas and five corregimientos, strengthen relations between civil society and the state and allow local residents to partake in the planning of their neighbourhoods.

Cultivating participation was expected to increase trust in formal politics in the peripheral and poorer communities, establish legitimacy of the municipal government and formal economy in areas where informal markets and armed illicit actors are dominant and reduce poverty and improve human development in the city's deprived areas. Importantly, as Molina Merchán suggests, the new participatory culture was also supposed to form new "ideal" citizens who would be "tolerant, respectful towards difference, pluralist, prepared to discuss his differences without physical aggression and endorse the ethical agreements of cohabiting […] this virtuous citizen would be aware of his rights as well as of his obligations and duties that call for respect toward laws, pay taxes, participate in the elections, defend the rule of law and propose developing, not disruptive actions in the public sphere"[16] (2012:69-70).

As one of the aims of the participation programme was to raise the involvement of youth in everyday politics, residents over the age of 14 became eligible to vote and participate as a delegate, offering youth an active role in the decision-making of the local community. Concurrently, the 2008 report *Del miedo a la esperanza* [From fear to hope] celebrates the positive outcomes of the programme, claiming that "today's citizens are more aware of their community and more committed to its development and to the development of the city. Our leaders are better prepared; the communities are more active and public servants are more willing to dialogue" (Alcaldía de Medellín, 2007: 115, 120).

According to the balance sheet of Alcaldía de Medellín (2017), almost forty thousand inhabitants participated in the decision-making in 2016. This represents approximately 1.6% of the official population of the city, 28% of which was youth. In the 2016

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[14] Administrative urban districts.
[15] Rural townships that fall within the city's jurisdiction.
[16] My translation.

programme, the biggest budget was dedicated to higher education (18 million euros), followed by projects of physical infrastructures (6 million euros) and social inclusion (3.5 million euros). The highest number of participants (5126 votes) was in Comuna 1 and the lowest (558) in the district right next to it–in Comuna 2, both are Medellín's lowest income areas (Alcaldía de Medellín, 2012).

Even though the PB programme has received positive coverage among some scholars (Valencia Agudelo et.al., 2008; Urán Arenas, 2012), others (Gómez Hernandez, 2007; Ramírez, 2008; Maclean, 2015) have highlighted its various shortcomings. In their analysis of participatory budgeting processes around the world, Baiocchi and Ganuza express their concern that the global travel and reproduction of the PB programmes has resulted in "institutional blueprint based only on communication," without paying sufficient attention to real transformation and citizen empowerment (2014: 43). Relating to Baiocchi and Ganuza's cocern, Bean (2014) has argued that behind the intention of promoting active citizenship and participatory democracy in Medellín was the modern state's need of disposing new repertoires that would legitimate and facilitate governance against a backdrop of sustained periods of withdrawal. Maclean (2015) draws out that in Medellín, participation remained delimited by 'technical' considerations that often reflect the economic demands of the communities, and she also stresses the highly bureaucratic character of the process that discourages participation and creates exclusion. In terms of bureaucracy, an evaluation of the PB between 2005 and 2006 (Gómez Hernandez, 2007) found that the methodological design of the programme allowed the administration workers to hold complete control over the participation. Ramírez (2008), on the other hand, criticized the limited freedom of expression in the meetings owing to the possible presence of demobilized paramilitaries or other power-holders in the neighbourhood. Maclean (2015) also confirms that paramilitary groups had been found using the projects to demand vacunas as well as jobs and direct participation in the benefits of the PB. Brough also suggests that the PB is not isolated from the corrupt local politics and networks of power: "it is also infiltrated by the interests of armed groups and their networks of power, who maintain connections and influence with local leaders, organizations, and other participants in PB" (2014: 138). In addition, she draws out a more general consideration of participatory programmes being very strongly supported

by international aid organizations, investors and development agencies such as the World Bank that aim to promote their neoliberal agenda of reducing the role of the state across the global South though the PB programmes (Brough, 2014: 145). The idea here is not to put into doubt the relevance of a more participatory democracy; but to point out the perils of urban policy tourism (González, 2010) and the use of urban governing models to as communicational blueprints instead of actual policies for triggering social change.

1.1.5. Pedagogical urbanism

Apart from reforming and institutionalizing the participatory processes in Medellín, Fajardo's administration focused on two main aspects: firstly, investments in the built environment that included the construction of numerous public infrastructures, such as libraries, recreational areas and new transportation systems. Secondly, large emphasis was put on education and pedagogical approaches known as Medellín la Más Educada [Medellín the Most Educated].

Aiming to make up for the "long accumulated social debt" that was caused by the decades' long absence of the state in Medellín's poor neighbourhoods (Duque Franco, 2014: 9). The tool for carrying out and materializing the principles and objectives of social urbanism were called Projects of Urban Integration [Proyectos Urbanos Integrales]. According to Duque Franco, their structure was based on the following instruments:

1. Focusing inversion on territories with high indicators of insecurity and low levels of development and life quality.
2. Urban interventions such as the construction of public space, urban equipment, housing programs and connectivity of the informal neighbourhoods with the urban fabric of Medellín.
3. Joint responsibility through the participation and prominence of citizens.
4. The use of high quality architecture and design as a means of dignifying and socially transforming Medellín (2014:10).

Between 2004 and 2011 five PUI-s were carried out in the different peripheral areas of Medellín, including Comuna 13 which will be discussed in depth further on.

On the pedagogical side, Fajardo underlined his commitment to decreasing the social imbalance through the improvement of access to education (2007). This was done through several new programmes, including Jóvenes con Futuro [Youth with Future] and Buen Comienzo [A Good Start] that attend the needs of improving youth's access to the labour market and nutritional and educational attention to the youngest citizens, aged 0 to 6. In addition, the Nadie por fuera [No one left aside] programme was implemented with the aim of counteracting social and economic circumstances that impede children and youth to assist and remain in school, while Units of Comprehensive Attention [Unidades de Atención Integral] were created for including the vulnerable population in the education system (Fajardo, 2007).

One of the core strategies of the pedagogical programme was the upgrading of already existing educational establishments and the construction of public libraries known as *parque-biblioteca* that offer educational and recreational opportunities in the public libraries. Ever since the implementation of public libraries, activities for the youth and courses for adults have been offered with the aim of instigating entrepreneurship and driving the informal economy towards formal means of ensuring an income (Alcaldía de Medellín, 2007). In this sense, the Medellín la más educada programme was not only conceived in terms of improving access to education and training children and youth; rather, it was a much wider programme of citizenship pedagogy that was to be reflected in the everyday environment and acting in public space.

Fajardo put great emphasis on the new public spaces that were to become "the central figure and scenario of encounters and cohabiting between equals, indifferently of their economic condition, religious belief or origin; a place where diversity is freely manifested" (Alcaldía de Medellín, 2004a: 94). Parallel to the very classical values of public space as the open-air scenario for performing democracy, the administration also underlined its importance for cultivating entrepreneurship: "The adequate orientation of a public space policy relies on the factor of life quality for everyone as the primary condition for advancing towards a city and a region that is competitive in the national and international context"[17] (p.94).

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[17] My translation.

Today, the art of citizenry has noticeably gained prominence in public spaces such as the metro of Medellín where culture and civic behaviour are instituted as the greatest virtue. Calm classical music is played in the metro stops to inspire its users to proper behaviour. In addition, periodical messages are emitted through the loudspeakers, reminding the travellers that consuming food or beverages is prohibited, just as carrying bulky bags or other oversized luggage. In case radiophonic and written signs weren't enough, numerous civil servants or policemen perform surveillance tasks in the metro, organizing travellers into orderly cues. The well behaving metro culture has become such a reference in the city that when arriving to the central San Antonio stop, the ubiquitous radio voice tells travellers that "the Alcaldía invites you to behave in the centre of the city[18] as you would in the metro."[19]

Duque Franco has argued that the policies of education and public space that were developed during Fajardo's administration were, in part, strategies of standardization and spatial control, enacted in the peripheral parts of the city that suffer under poverty, exclusion, conflict and violence (2014: 2). Following Foucault (1972), power structures, relations and their effects are not only transmitted through established systems of knowledge, culture and social norms, but also integrated into formalized structures, such as the built environment, where they get actualized and stabilized. This way, the new educational institutions and public spaces in the formerly uncontrolled peripheral areas embedded its users in narratives constituted by the power structures that exerted its role of normalization and control to advance towards a new realm of Medellín that is "democratic, pacific, governable, inclusive, equitable, decent, sustainable, global and competitive" (Alcaldía de Medellín, 2004a). Many of the abovementioned adjectives, especially sustainability, globality and competitiveness resonate from a series of urban theses that were popular at the time–such as the need of increasing cites' competitiveness (Malecki, 2002) through clustered knowledge, innovation (Simmie, 2002; O'Connor, 2004) and creativity (Florida, 2002), each of which emphasize global competition between cities. This allows us to consider that despite the practice of certain socialist

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[18] The heart of Medellín with more than half of its businesses being informal (Alcaldía de Medellín, 2004b) is still perceived much as a chaotic city centre that beats to its very own rhythm and often ignores the norms of the desired civic conduct.
[19] Personal notes.

measures (prioritizing the poor, investing in education and equality), social urbanism also introduced strategies (internationally recognizable architecture and design, new infrastructures) that were to attract foreign investors' money, this way rowing towards market-led urban development.

1.1.6. From Medellín the most educated city to Medellín the most innovative city

Much of Fajardo's programme was taken over by his successor and his former advisor Alonso Salazar who was also a somewhat untraditional candidate, considering his experience as a journalist and writer. The report of the outcomes of the governing period of Salazar (2008-2011) (Alcaldía de Medellín, 2011a) highlights the progress of citizen culture in the following way: "Together with the physical transformation of urban space, the citizens of Medellín are now more respectful with the rules and capable of cohabiting in a healthy manner; they are educated to respect public property and to enjoy different artistic and cultural expressions" (2011a:72).[20] In another institutional publication, *Medellín, Guía de la transformación ciudadana 2004-2011* (Alcaldía de Medellín, 2011b) Salazar victoriously announced the achievements of the past eight years, using the metaphor of a city that has "shed its skin" (Salazar, 2011: 13) to portray Medellín's metamorphosis, borrowing from Echeverri and Orsini's (2010) discourse of social urbanism. Salazar declares that after eight years of "responsible management, transparency and efficiency," Medellín had become a "dynamic metropolis" and an "essential reference for international tourism in our country, and one of the regions generating greater foreign investment […]" (2011:13). Following Fajardo's legacy, civic transformation is principally conceived as the victory of pedagogy: "in Medellín, governing is a pedagogical act; the land and all the interventions completed within become scenarios that define the act of building citizenship: everyone learns of the processes, of the city itself, of the needs and the possibilities that arise" (Valencia & Rodríguez, 2011:17). To round off the successful transformation of the city, the guiding book to Medellín's transformation draws out nine different "cities" that exist within Medellín:

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[20] My translation.

> Medellín is understood as a city of many cities; they come together and complement each other […], a city that conceives itself, and does so as a city of well-being, a fair city, a city to live and roam, a global city, an entrepreneurial city and connected with the world, a city of knowledge, one for meeting, a safe city, and naturally: a green city. Nine cities that are one, ready for citizens, to promote quality of life for all […]

> (Valencia & Rodríguez, 2011: 19).

Imagineering this multicultural, progressive and successful city that is up to date with the latest trends in goal-oriented city planning (Ashworth and Voogd, 1990) was most definitely necessary to keep nurturing the transformation narrative and to initiate other big ideas that could attract foreign interest and capital.

One of the outstanding novelties of Salazar's administration was the founding of Corporation Ruta N, a public joint venture that was to inspire and encourage innovation in Medellín and create favourable conditions for entrepreneurship and new businesses. Inspired by Barcelona's 22@ innovation district (Molina Betancur et.al., 2015) which was created in a largely desolate post-industrial area, Ruta N was located in a newly created sector in the north of Medellín, functioning as a private nonprofit organization that organizes different innovation programmes and manages the municipal resources for investigation. The Corporation was initially directed by the Alcaldía de Medellín, EPM[21] and UNE[22] and their main mission was to be the centre that could help Medellín become a leader in innovation and business in all of Latin-America by 2021 (Alcaldía de Medellín, 2011a: 87; Molina Betancur et.al., 2015). With the implementation of the innovation district, Medellín entered the circle of the creative class cities (Florida, 2002), putting its stakes on the expected clusterization of creative productivity that pledges profitability and the transformation of derelict areas (Evans, 2009). It was also a decisive step towards Medellín's early denomination as the most innovative city of the world in 2013. The award was received by the then-governor of Antioquia, Sergio Fajardo, with words that registered a new, corporate tone. Expressing his content over the prize, Fajardo stated that

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[21] EPM stands for Empresas Públicas de Medellín [Public Companies of Medellín], a public utilities company that was funded in 1995 and is now one of the biggest companies of Colombia.
[22] UNE, now known as Tigo, was the national telecommunications company that was launched by EPM in 2006.

Medellín was "a brand that used to be associated with drug trafficking and destruction, and now with innovation […]" (Fajardo, n.d., cited in Camargo, 2013).

The innovation award was bestowed by the Urban Land Institute (ULI) which is a cross-disciplinary network of real estate and land use experts in the world ("About ULI", n.d.). Somewhat surprisingly, the contest that was sponsored by Citi bank and Wall Street Journal in collaboration with the ULI has only been organized once–the year when Medellín won. This raises the question whether the award given to Medellín could have been a communication strategy for increasing foreign investors' interest in Medellín in the benefit of large corporations such as Citi bank that has been operative in Colombia since 1916, being the "preferred bank for multinational and most top domestic companies […]," specialized in "foreign trade, cash management and offshore investment products" (Citi, n.d.).

Even though both Fajardo and Salazar were keen to declare the victorious achievements of social urbanism, several scholars have been reluctant to confirm its apparent success (Duque Franco, 2014; Montoya-Restrepo, 2014; Maclean, 2015). Analysing the official discourse of the different administrations that acted under the name of social urbanism (during the leadership of Fajardo, Salazar and Gaviria), Montoya-Restrepo denominates their governing an "amphibious state" that can both be inclusive, tolerant and transparent; or, in contrast, use repression and violence with the justification of the "well-being of the majority" (2014: 170). She argues that the construction of new public spaces and outstanding architectural pieces have been instrumental for transforming and establishing new power relations to reinforce the presence of the state in places where they have been long absent, while legitimacy is taken away from the former public spaces that have thus far functioned in informal parts of the city (p. 171). The author contends that social urbanism and its allegedly inclusive discourse has gradually become a tool for "selling the city to multinationals and others who are willing to pay for a city that is competitive and inclusive" (Montoya Restrepo, 2014: 171).

Looking at the emphasis that the governors put on the civic behaviour to achieve the transformation into the "most educated Medellín" raises the question of citizens' role in conducting the city towards becoming a "competitive brand" (Fajardo, n.d., cited in

Camargo, 2013). Could eight years of governance between Fajardo and Salazar really transform a population that "lacked trust and credibility in the government and its acts" (Fajardo, 2007: 69) into "respectful and educated inhabitants" (Salazar, 2011a: 72) who are truly "committed to the development of the city" (Alcaldía de Medellín, 2008: 120)? Which was the political elites' intention behind emphasizing "democratic, pacific, governable, inclusive, equitable, decent, sustainable, global and competitive" (Alcaldía de Medellín, 2004a) values among the citizenry?

Pykett et.al. (2010) argue that the "good citizen" is a figure that tends to be framed from a certain perspective, and set up for a particular purpose, as for example, contributing to a violence-free cohesive community, or to an entrepreneurial tax-paying community. The authors hold that the frames within which good citizenship is enacted are co-constructed by the elite and ordinary actors. However, the framings of the elites (politicians, academics, commentators) are often more public and thus have bigger potential to constrain the manner in which citizenship is "lived" by the ordinary residents (p. 527). Elite actors such as governors and social leaders thus perform a key image that constitutes operative ideas of good citizenship, setting behavioural examples for the ordinary citizens. In this sense, both Fajardo and Salazar's performative speech on education, inclusion, and competitiveness could be considered as enacted good citizenship that fulfilled their ideas of what it requires to become a global competitive city.

In place branding literature, citizens are often seen as brand ambassadors (Kavaratzis, 2012; Braun et.al., 2013) who have intrinsic knowledge of the place and embody local culture and traditions through their behaviour and as such, should be involved in the governance processes. It is indicated that tourist destinations would benefit if citizens acted as goodwill ambassadors, advocating the positive aspects of the destination (Simpson & Siguaw, 2008). This way, they are key to spreading positive word-of-mouth information which is one of the most powerful forms of promoting a place in the current age. Considering citizens as place brand ambassadors with whom potential visitors can have encounters with underlines the behaviour of the locals ("good citizenship" at least in terms of social interaction) as fundamental for provoking positive impressions on the visitors, especially in a context where the city has experienced negative place perceptions due to violence and conflict. In this sense, the good behaviour of the citizens is not only

important for the standardization of the citizenry to facilitate their control (through declaring taxes, voting, following the laws) but it is also key to the city's external projection. In Medellín, after years of stigmatization as the capital of "drug trafficking and destruction" (Fajardo, n.d., cited in Camargo, 2013), a change in the perception of its citizens' behaviour was an important part of constructing the new narrative and image of Medellín.

CHAPTER 2. METHODOLOGY

This chapter explains the methodological approach of the investigation, discussing the selected research paradigm and approach and the exploratory steps that led me to opting for a constructivist grounded theory approach to case studies. Data collection and analysis processes will be covered together with the research methods used in this study.

2.1. Research paradigm

Due to the interdisciplinary character of the investigation, finding the adequate research methodology and methods that would fit the extent of the research was an uneasy task. For the scope of this research, two main issues were in the focus of the research. The first point of interest was to study the forms of interaction among participants of music lessons to see music making not only from the perspective of the aesthetic experience but, rather, as rituals that can contribute to the making of social space and create a sense of belongingness to a place (Relph, 1976). Using Small's definition of 'musicking,' the starting point of the research was to study musical practice as a social activity that involves both the performance and the preparative interactions of the performance, the playing and the listening; finally, Small sees musicking as social interactions that help develop definitions of the self, with others and with place (1998: 133).

In order to observe the relations developed in the music making, I was to opt for a research paradigm that focuses on the world of human experience (Mackenzie & Knipe, 2006:3 citing Cohen & Manion, 1994) and intends to disentangle it in its socially constructed multiplicity (Mertens, 2015). As Macknezie and Knipe (2006: 2) suggest, it is the choice of paradigm that sets down the intent, motivation and expectations for the research, given that the paradigm influences the way knowledge is studied and interpreted. The social constructivist paradigm sees the world of lived reality as constructed by social actors that, in particular places, at particular times, fashion meaning out of events and phenomena through prolonged, complex processes of social interaction involving history, language and action (Schwandt, 1998: 222).

The constructivist paradigm grew out of the philosophy of Edmund Husserl's phenomenology and Wilhelm Dilthey's and other German philosophers' study of interpretive understanding of meanings (Mertens, 2015: 16 citing Eichelberger, 1989). In social constructivism, individuals seek understanding of the world in which they live and work and develop subjective meaning of their experiences. These meanings are varied and multiple, leading the researcher to look for the complexity of views (Cresswell, 2007: 20). Often these subjective views are negotiated socially and historically and formed through interactions with others, hence the notion of social constructivism.

2.1.1. First phase of fieldwork: mapping out Medellín's spaces of music

Given the interest in exploring the relationship between music making and the territory it inhabits in a city that stood out for its innovation in educational and cultural processes applied for triggering social change to counter urban conflicts, the first phase of fieldwork was set out in an exploratory way in order to get to know the city and its territorial dynamics. With the help of my supervisor in the Universidad Pontificia Bolivariana of Medellín, we mapped out the spaces of music in Medellín and designed initial research questions for the directors of the music schools and the leaders of the social organizations I was to visit. In order to find entities across the city, we used the Mapa de Actores Culturales (Google, n.d.) of Medellín, a collaborative Google map that joins different cultural, artistic and social entities of the city.

The schools and social entities I visited were located across Medellín, in a total of nine different districts of the city, the visits included nine music schools of the Red de Escuelas de Música de Medellín [REMM; Network of Music Schools of Medellín] and five social entities that offer musical activities. The first four REMM institutions were founded in 1996 in the most vulnerable areas of Medellín where the rates of youth recruitment into criminal gangs were the highest. This way, the schools that gave lessons of classical music operated under a social and territorial strategy that aimed to keep children away from crime by giving them musical instruments and music lessons. Today, there are 27 REMM schools across Medellín, offering lessons of string and wind instruments to youth aged 7-19.

The social entities I visited offered different musical activities to different age groups. The activities varied from guitar lessons to Afro-Colombian percussions and rap music. The interview questions were constructed in a broad and general manner so that the participants could construct meanings in their process of reasoning (Cresswell, 2007: 21). In addition to the interviews that were conducted with key informants, I also performed participant observations and workshops of social mapping with groups of six to ten participants in six selected places: three REMM schools and three social entities. The full list of the interview questions can be found in the Appendix A, an example of a few questions is demonstrated in the table below.

QT: Territory-related question
QS: Questions related to social aspects

QT.1.: Are there any type of obstacles that may complicate the pupils' arrival to the music school?
QT.2: Which are the most problematic issues of this area?
QT.3: Do you believe these problems contribute to the obstacles the pupils might have in remaining in the school?
QS1: In your opinion, which is the significance of the school for the pupils?
QS2: Which is the biggest social impact that musical education has on the students?
QS3: Are there any other aspects in which the pupils are showing important progress?

Figure 1. Example of initial interview questions.

The interviews conducted in the REMM schools drew out a lead that suggests that music making is not just about individual virtuosity, but it can also be a practice that unites people with and for a common purpose, as the below extract illustrates.

> When I say that music is for a common good, I say it with a lot of profoundness, we don't leave anyone in the mud, we return for who falls in the mud, we take him out, we clean him up, and we leave. And if it's not possible, we carry him on our shoulders. That is what a community is, when you help one another.

> (Interviewee REM7, principal of a REMM school)

In addition to this sense of community that is created in collective music making, the outcomes of the first phase of data collection showed that it also triggers the formation of new relations that are established in the musical practice. Furthermore, it also showed that collective music making can help overcome fears and boundaries that individuals might experience. Some interviewees mentioned cases of autism or formerly bullied youngsters having recovered their self-esteem and opened themselves up to other members of the group thanks to the cooperative work done in the classes. This not only spoke of the psychological aspects of the potential benefits of collective music making, but it also allowed observing the construction of individual and group identities and how it forms part of the creation of communities or habitus that tend to be tied to place and subsequently, to the construction of social space both in its relational and physical meaning.

Principally, the interviews and observations carried out at the music schools allowed me to contemplate the spaces of music as a second home for many of its participants. Without an exception, all my informants confirmed the significance of music schools as a refuge to the pupils. This might also have to do with the fact that I was visiting schools that were often located in low-income areas with many single-parent and dysfunctional families, meaning that home did not always mean a place of serenity and peace. Nonetheless, this type of annotations allowed me to code the interviews and reach a series of concepts that complemented the initial sensitizing concepts. The central concepts developed during and posterior to data analysis are shown in figure 2 that represents the effects of musical training in conservatory-type institutions like the schools of REMM under three categories.
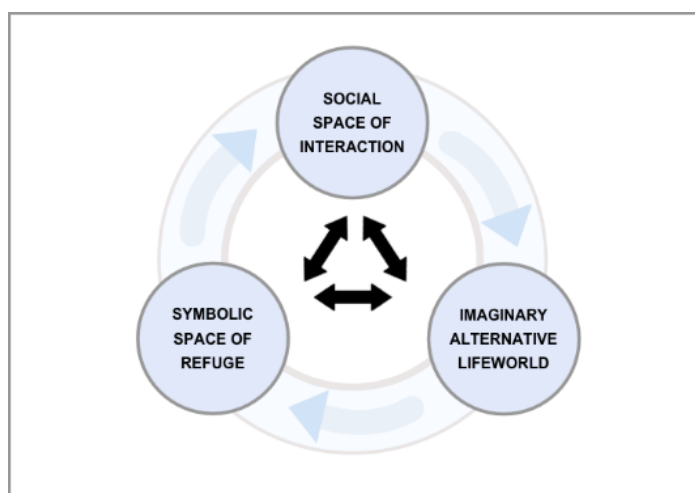
Figure 2. Effects of musical training. Compiled by author.

Firstly, we see the phenomenon of music space as a *symbolic space of refuge* which can often perform as an alternative protective space to the participant's home. Music space as a symbolic space of refuge has characteristics such as being a secure surrounding, a place of reference in terms of role models, or a getaway from everyday problems and a place that allows releasing tensions. This category explains what a music space symbolically means for its users: protection, a getaway and release from haunting preoccupations.

The second category explains the character of *music spaces as spaces of social interaction* where the individual relates to other companions and teachers and creates social links and networks. The music school as a social space of interaction is active both in terms of the individual who creates new social ties with others (friendships, couples, admiration towards the teacher) as well as for the group of pupils that constantly makes and re-makes the social fabric of the music making community. While the first category expresses the character of music space as a peaceful shelter, the second expresses the bundling character of music space as a place of sharing, of encounters, interaction, conflicts and their resolution.

The two categories merge in one and become interconnected insofar as a place of imaginary escape and getaway, as a "bubble where nothing bad happens" (*in vivo* code from participant REM7) and at the same time, where one needs to confront the social realm where potential conflicts between companions and teachers may emerge. Both, the symbolic and more passive character of the protective space of the refuge, as well as the interactive character of the social space that places the individual in a real world of social encounters, create the possibility of distancing from everydayness and constructing a different self and communal identity.

The merging of the music school as a symbolic space of refuge and as a social space of interaction allow the visioning of an alternative, transformed lifeworld that is reflected on the individual, communal and societal level. That is to say–a space that offers both protection, but also an exchange of ideas and experiences, helps the projection of the self and the community in a better future. This projected vision is a life about to come, a

potentially better tomorrow. It is where the individual has a better and healthier mentality, a more self-aware behaviour, stronger self-discipline and sensibility towards others. Community-wise, the alternative, imaginary lifeworld we see is free of violence, with a strong social fabric that denounces the mafia culture. It is a transformed and better society both on the inside and the outside, transformed from a violent to a pacific society.

Seeing spaces of music making as symbolic spaces of refuge and as spaces of social interaction that represent an imaginary alternative lifeworld came from the analysis of the research activities carried out in the REMM schools. These schools have substantial institutional and operative differences in comparison to the social entities where I conducted fieldwork following the same principles. While the REMM has a clear institutional structure with a fixed curriculum and periodic funding from the local administration, the social entities, most of which (4 out of 5) had emerged as bottom up grassroots organizations, either depend on voluntary work or on the sporadic funding of the Alcaldía or other organizations.

On the one hand, the data collected in the social entities that offer different type of musical activities was less clear and self-explicative than in the REMM schools, especially when speaking about the participants' personal relationship with music and its importance in their everyday. Music per se, or the presence of an instrument in an individual's life did not draw out so clearly among the participants of the social entities in the sessions of social mapping. This has several explications: firstly, the activities of the social entities are less frequent and do not require daily practice from the participants, as it is expected from the pupils of the REMM schools. The lesser frequency of music lessons and less time of individual practice may translate into a weaker or different relationship between the individual, the music (instrument) and the community around it, for which music might not be considered such an essential part of the individual's everydayness. In second place, the structure and content of classes, the pedagogical approaches and the individual's relationship with the content also determines his/her ties to music. The more personal and voluntary the relationship with music, the closer the tie and bigger the importance of music in the person's everydayness. In third place, the instability of funding is another factor that may limit the long-term plans of independent social entities that work with a limited budget and voluntary work force. Having little or no future prospect

for the continuation of the activities may be perceived in the motivation of the (voluntary) teachers, and also among the participants who, without concrete objectives such as a concert, might feel less motivated and disciplined to come to class. This air of uncertainty can be demolishing for the construction of a community around music. Lastly, depending on the degree of socio-economic difficulties, assistance to class may be complicated by intra-familiar problems or because of the lack of resources to get to class. This is another factor that influences continuity and the evolving of one's skills and habits that require certain discipline.

However, there are some outcomes of the data that make the meaning of the social entities similar among one another and also similar to the music schools. In first place, the places where I carried out research activities also proved to have the characteristics of a protective refuge from the outside world and everyday troubles, no matter the activity that was carried out in the house. Even more than in the REMM schools, the participants periodically meet in the social entities voluntarily and long to do it as it represents an alternative to the everyday spaces and practices. While the unstructuredness was noticeable in almost all of these entities and their activities, the physical existence of the houses was significant for their users as a place of reunion and interaction that allowed them to spend time away from home. This was demonstrated very clearly in an association located in the lowest income area of the city where the majority of the participants had seldom, if ever, left their neighbourhood. Being the only grassroots organization that offers activities to the children of the area, the house was depicted as an "oasis in the midst of concrete, brick walls and narrow streets," (*in vivo* code from the interview with EV1) where playing space is scarce. Following the majority of the local (migrant) ethnicity, the association offered classes of Afro-Colombian percussion music to children aged 6 to 14 on the second floor of a private residence. Even though the participants were clearly excited about the drum rhythms and being able to play the instruments, music per se was just an excuse to get together. Even though the assistance and punctuality of the children was inconsistent, a group of about ten children would always assist the classes, many of them showing up half an hour earlier and never wanting to leave the house. Unfortunately, as I was told by the leader of the association, for many of these children their house was truly a second and a much better home, given that several of them

practically lacked parental care or had experienced domestic violence. This way, the association with its two motherly figures was a temporary getaway that many of these youth needed.

The situation was similar in another social entity that offers workshops of rap music among other activities. In this cultural centre, the socio-economic profile of the participants was noticeably higher, and the behaviour of the youth was much less hectic. As a grassroots organization based on horizontal and voluntary work, the classes in this place were also open to everyone. No clear objectives were set, except for some participants' personal quest of finishing a song or doing a collaboration with another rapper. Because of the characteristics of this cultural house and because of the other parallel activities that they offer, this place was also very much of a space of reunion and exchange, offering to some of its male participants a space of physical protection while symbolically embracing other participants, youth and adults, for whom this place signified family.

While both the REMM schools and the social entities share the character of offering symbolic refuge and the exchange of social knowledge, the social entities proved to have much stronger ties with their home territory. Expressions such as "to take the territory", "to exorcise the conflict with music" or to "cool down the hot areas"[23] were used by several interviewees when describing the effects of music making in their corresponding home areas. Open-air concerts in public spaces were described as strategies of overcoming situations of territorial disputes among different gangs or, alternatively, as manifestations against the de facto power agents who maintained the pupils of a music school under a constant state of alarm in fear of their instruments being stolen. In situations of escalated conflict open air events had proved to be key to showing resistance to the dominant power paradigms. In this sense, music had also shown its capacity of empowering communities and agency within it, being capable of mobilizing participants into action. These cases showed that music is not something that is done in a determined place at determined hours; rather, it is a process that activates communities into action, taking its power beyond the walls of the rehearsal room into other parts of the city, if

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[23] A "hot area" (*zona caliente*) refers to a part of the neighbourhood where a conflict is blazing up.

necessary. Collective music making as a community that is fixed to place thus has the strength of pushing against the dominant power paradigms by forming alternative realities and empowering agency (Wood et al., 2007; Johnston, 2010). This way, music spaces can perform as *spaces of territorial action*. This is the third category next to music space as a space of symbolic refuge and a space of social interaction. Drawn from the observations and interviews conducted in the social entities that offer musical activities, the third category represents territorially responsive music-making, where music is made with awareness of the necessities and problematics of the local territory, and it is used, at least partially, as a tool to bring attention to these issues.

With these three categories in the centre of my theoretical interest, from the perspective of human geography, the spaces with a tight territorial connection drew my attention the
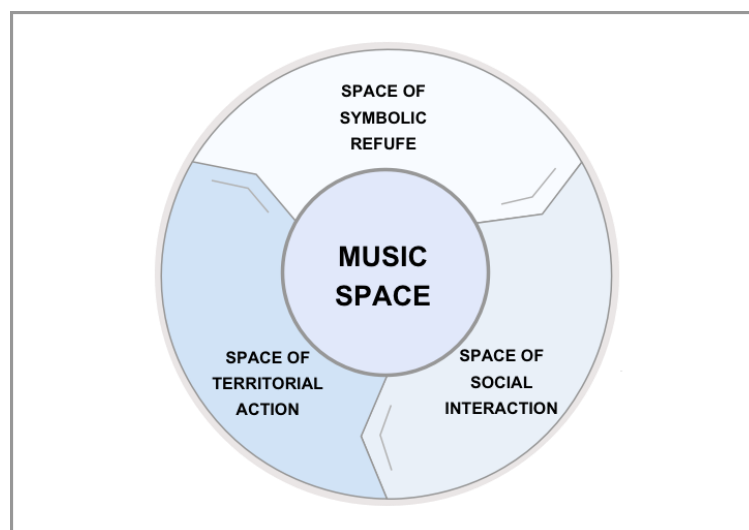
Figure 3. Music spaces. Compiled by author.

strongest as they seemed most empirically enrichening for the continuation of the fieldwork. It was this capacity of "reading the local territory" (Interviewee CM1), of paying interest to the constantly changing signs and significations of the everyday spaces that interested me in some of the musical entities' work. This capacity seemed to be stronger among the grassroots organizations that have been conceived from bottom to top–departing from local, place-based problematics and realities–; rather than other, top to bottom musical entities whose understanding of the space within which they operate is scarcer.

2.1.2. Second phase of fieldwork: hip hop in Comuna 13

Findings like this brought me to the decision of cutting the case studies down to two social entities: Agro Arte and Casa Kolacho that are almost fully independent from the administration, both offer lessons of rap music and operate within the same social and territorial context. Both entities emerged from civic activism within the context of conflict, using hip hop activities as a tool for engaging the local youth. The descriptions of the projects and its posterior analysis was done basing on data obtained through interviews with the key informants of both entities, with their participants, through sessions of participatory observation and collective song-writing and through the recording and filming of two music videos. Given that constant references were made to both groups' recorded music and videos in the interviews, the audio visual production of both entities was also entwined into the analysis of the data. In addition, I have maintained contact with the participants via social media, which has proved to be highly fruitful for keeping track of both entities' activities and for analysing their tactics in digital space.

a) Research questions regarding hip hop

With substantial information on how music making performs in a still-conflictive territory, focusing on one single genre and territory allowed narrowing the research questions furthermore. My aim was to see how representational space evolves in practices of hip hop and in the representations of it; how different representations of space are constructed through rap and graffiti; and how spatial practices mould places through hip hop. In a later, more mature phase of the research I also had to focus on how the practice of hip hop contributes to place image and to place marketing, given the strong interrelatedness of one of the case studies with public institutions. I asked what leads social processes (such as hip hop) to become instrumentalized and commodified and why some groups remain resistant while others become subjugated to commercialization. By extension, I also looked at the ways how hip hop can counteract its common function as a discourse of resistance and, alternatively, consolidate state-operated representations of space. Aiming to connect social and cultural processes with spatial practices, I asked in which ways can the social and symbolic capital of the underground hip hop groups become commodified in institutional processes of representing.

2.2. Research approach

I applied social constructivist grounded theory with a multiple case studies approach to best gather and analyse data. Combining grounded theory and case studies required examining both tradition's paradigm. Both case study and grounded theory approaches can be studied from either the positivist/post-positivist or constructivist paradigms. For example, Yin (2003) places case studies in the positivist/post-positivist paradigm, arguing that case studies allow apprehending a "real" reality, which opposes the worldview of social constructivists who believe that there are always multiple realities. On the other hand, in Stake's (1995) understanding of the qualitative case study, multiple perspectives of the participants are sought after, aiming to represent diverse notions of what occurs in the research process. Similarly, grounded theory originally emerged from a post-positivistic theoretical framework with Glaser and Strauss (1967) but has more recently developed an alternative, constructivist paradigm mainly in the work of Charmaz (2000, 2006). In this investigation, the case studies are designed following Stake's approach to case study methodology (1995) while the grounded theory framework is done drawing on Charmaz' work (2000, 2006). This way, the methodological framework avoids confounding between the different paradigms and builds upon the social constructivist view.

The constructivist grounded theory approach is a fairly recent development from Glaser and Strauss' original proposal of the grounded theory that was developed in the late sixties. The research approach was proposed by Glaser and Strauss as a general method of comparative analysis and as a set of procedures designed to generate theory from data that is systematically obtained from social research (Glaser & Strauss, 1967: VIII). Essentially, the approach seeks to move beyond description and generate or discover a theory, an abstract analytical schema or a process of action or interaction (Strauss & Corbin, 1998).

Instead of embracing the study of a single process or core category as in the Strauss and Corbin approach (1998), Charmaz proposes applying a social constructivist perspective to grounded theory, advocating the existence diverse local worlds, multiple realities and the complexities of particular worlds, views, and actions (Cresswell, 2007: 65). One of

the first differences between Glaser and Strauss' and Charmaz' approach to grounded theory is that the latter does not believe in "discovering theory as emerging from data separate from the scientific observer" (Charmaz, 2006: 10). Rather, she sees the researcher as part of the world that is studied and that the constructivist researcher must recognize the impact on the research of her own background and experiences.

Throughout the data collection I interacted with the research participants and this most definitely influenced their behaviour and answers, for which the outcomes of the research were not neutral nor separate from me, the researcher. What several constructivist authors (Charmaz, 2006; Mackenzie & Knipe, 2006; Cresswell, 2007; Lauckner et.al, 2012; Mertens, 2015) explicitly assume, thus, is that any theoretical rendering offers an *interpretive* portrayal of the studied world, not an exact picture of it. This is why it is often known as the interpretative approach where researchers intend to make sense of the meanings that others have about the world. This research did not, hence, pretend to construct *the* truth around the observed phenomenon, but propose a one single interpretation of it, influenced by my own life experiences, gender and socio-cultural background.

Another important suggestion of Charmaz is to use "sensitizing concepts" that can provide the researcher with points of departure for developing the initial ideas in the very beginning of the research where they can be used as tentative tools for developing ideas about processes that are defined in the data (2006: 17). Given that the music schools and the social entities that I visited were all located in low or middle-low income areas with abundant social problems, my first sensitizing concepts were as simple as "music and everydayness" and "music and territory" to develop an understanding of how music participates in the meaning-making of the participants that potentially encounter numerous challenges in their everyday spaces. Later, these concepts turned into more focused ones, such as music as a symbolic space of refuge and as a social space of interactions while the everydayness and territory merged into a potential alternative lifeworld. With the aim of trying to avoid many preconceived ideas on the data, such as "music being an alternative weapon within the urban conflict," which is something that is often promoted when speaking of the REMM schools and rap music in Medellín, I

followed leads that the data brought me and also applied new ways of collecting data (such as collective song-writing) to pursue the initial interests of the research (2006: 17).

2.2.1. Multiple case study approach

The case study approach has not always been fully recognized as a proper scientific method; however, it has increasingly become a common method in many scientific disciplines. Drawing on Dubois and Gadde (2002), case studies help understanding the interaction between a phenomenon and its context as it provides unique means of developing theory by utilizing in-depth insights of empirical phenomena and their contexts. In a similar way, Yin defines a case study as an empirical inquiry that "investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident" (2003: 13).

This study uses a multiple-case research design, defined as a collective case study with an instrumental focus (Stake, 1995: 3). Stake makes a difference between intrinsic and instrumental case studies, the first one being focused on a determined case because of the interest in that particular case. In contrast, the latter is *instrumental* to accomplishing the understanding of a phenomenon and does not focus so much on the intrinsic aspects of the concrete case. When several cases are chosen for studying a phenomenon, they will all be instrumental for learning about it, but there will be important coordination between the individual studies (Stake, 1995: 4).

Two cases were chosen, following Yin's suggestion that the chances of doing a good case study are higher in multiple-case studies than in a single-case study (2003: 53). One of the benefits of multiple cases is that there is a possibility of direct replication and reinforcing the analytic conclusions that rise from two cases. However, sometimes the cases may also represent contrasting situations, meaning that direct replication may not be possible. The two cases that were chosen for learning about the phenomenon of hip hop as a social means of constructing space proved to be representative of the latter, being considerably antagonistic in the research outcomes. According to Yin, if the subsequent findings support the hypothesized contrast, the results still represent a good start toward

theoretical replication, strengthening the external validity of the findings compared to those from a single case alone (2003: 54).

2.2.2. Case study selection criteria

The selection criteria for the cases followed three principles: 1) the geographical location of the organization; 2) the organizations' constitution and funding; 3) the musical genre practiced in the groups. The first criterion established the need of studying cases that are located and involved with the same district of the city to ensure a similar socio-spatial context for both cases. Consequently, both Agro Arte and Casa Kolacho are located close by in San Javier I neighbourhood in the district of Comuna 13. In second place, after visiting numerous institutional music schools and non-registered, NGO or foundation-type music spaces of Medellín, it was decided that the final cases must be representative of a non-institutional model, where funding is not (entirely) depending on the state. Both entities have received some sporadic subsidies from the Alcaldía, but maintain autonomous accounts and manage their own financing. The third criterion was established after witnessing the popularity of hip hop in the chosen territory and understanding its significance in terms of accessibility. Studying two organizations that are both involved in the same popular art form that uses similar aesthetics and expressions, made the comparison of the cases more coherent.

The unit of analysis was set as one urban social formation (USF), which is a mix of social and subcultural movements and consists of at least a small group of people assembled under a common name that has a significant record of social activism and uses hip hop in at least one of its social expressions. Daskalaki and Mould (2013) suggest that conceptualizing subversive movements as urban social formations decreases the risks of the movement becoming appropriated as a result of the subculturalization process that either marginalizes or illegalizes USF-s prior to its commodification. Nevertheless, methodologically it is important to bear in mind that USF-s have many things in common with subcultural and social movements. Gamson and Wolfsfeld (1993) characterize social movements as a "sustained and self-aware challenge to authorities or cultural codes by a field of actors –organizations and advocacy networks–some of whom employ extra-institutional means of influence (1993: 115). Tarrow, on the other hand, sees social

movements as networks that engage in sustained collective actions, have a common purpose and challenge the interests and beliefs of those with power (Tarrow, 2005, cited in Stein, 2009: 750) without necessarily aiming to "break through the system's compatibility limits" as Melucci defines in his view (Melucci 1996: 28, cited in Martin, 2013). Subcultures, on the other hand, are "relatively diffuse social networks that have shared identities, distinctive meanings around certain ideas, practices, and objects, and a sense of marginalization from or resistance to a perceived 'conventional' society" (Haenfler, 2014:16). In subcultural movements, resistance is consciously enacted by subcultural groups at the micro, meso, and macro levels (p. 408) and it can be both individual and collective, with the aim of strengthening the internal structures and achieving external results to their actions. Piotrowski argues that politically oriented social movements are more focused on the outcomes of their actions and subcultures tend to be more oriented towards their internal dynamics and focus on building the groups' strength and unity (2013: 410). Nevertheless, the line between one and another is not always very clear, and they don't necessarily have to be mutually exclusive, but share characteristics, objectives and values. In terms of methodological clarity, I prefer looking at the two case studies as urban social formations that have interests that operate within the confines of the existing social order (Martin, 2013) without necessarily intending to break the system's compatibility limits but *do* challenge the interests and beliefs of those with power. For this reason, throughout the description and analysis of both USF-s I will also be relying on literature focused on social and subcultural movements.

The timeframe for the initial data collection was June–August 2016, when initial informational data was collected and a first map of music spaces in Medellín was constructed. A second, more intrinsic fieldwork was performed in February–March 2018, focusing only on the two case studies and observing the territory in question.

Stake's (1995) suggestion of drawing out the main 'issues' of each case was applied with the aim of better contextualizing them. According to Stake, this is what helps maintaining the paradigm of multiple realities without having to force theory or preconceived concepts (p.17). As he argues, "issues are not simple and clean, but intricately wired to political, social, historical, and especially personal contexts. Issues draw us toward observing, even teasing out, the problems of the case, the conflictual outpourings, the complex

backgrounds of human concern" (p. 17). For example, an issue for both cases was "the balance between public funding and autonomy"; "social discourse versus social action" defined one of the cases and "tactics of resistance" was representative of the other. Outlining separate issues allowed writing separate research questions for each case to get closer to their processes (Stake 1995: 17).

2.3. Data collection methods & analysis

2.3.1. Elicited data

The methods used for data collection are all qualitative, data analysis being meaning-based. Consistent of the constructivist paradigm, Cropley (2002) argues that qualitative research methods allow investigations that depart from the perspective that 1) each person actively constructs an individual reality out of his or her own particular experiences; 2) that this reality differs from person to person; 3) the reality is shaped by interactions with other people. Altheide describes that the main emphasis of qualitative methodologies is on discovery and description, including search for underlying meanings, patterns, and processes, rather than mere quantity or numerical relationships between two or more variables (2000: 290).

While the qualitative approach applies well in both case study and constructivist grounded theory paradigms, the preferences of data collection methods vary in the two fields. Charmaz advocates gathering rich data and, above all, conducting in-depth interviews (2000, 2006). Stake, on the other hand, emphasizes the importance of case studies being noninterventive and empathic, with the aim of not disturbing the "ordinary activity of the case" and avoiding testing or even interviews if information can be achieved by "discrete observation or examination of records" (1995: 12). The nature of the phenomenon that is subject to the study required the use of mixed methods that would follow the principle of noninterventive research and, in the meantime, give a close enough understanding of the functioning of both social entities.

For this reason, participant and non-participant observations that often consisted of little more than "hanging out" with the participants, turned out to be the most valuable data

collection method. Conscious of my role as an outsider, marked by my gender, European looks and accent, my initial objective was to intervene as little as possible as a researcher. Here, my somewhat more creative side as a musician helped me get integrated into the group through conversations, activities of song-writing and rap rehearsals. When the opportunity rose, I offered to write and record a song with the participants, seeing it as a chance to get closer to the participants' rituals of music making. Nonetheless, the semi-structured interviews conducted with the leaders and participants of both social entities were of crucial importance to represent the participants' experiences and views. Lastly, extant sources of information, such as newspaper articles, blog posts and music videos were also important for contextualizing the study and analysing the means of constructing and representing places.

a) Participant and nonparticipant observations

The participant and nonparticipant observations were performed as a means of noninterventive data collection. Participant observation is a relatively unobtrusive qualitative research strategy for gathering primary data about some aspect of the social world without interacting directly with its participants (Williams, 2008). This method's principal difference from nonparticipant observations is, as the name refers, that instead of the researcher maintaining herself in distance or not even being physically present (in case of video recording), participant observation requires the researcher to be present and take part in the activity which is being observed. Jorgensen (1989) argues that participant observation is especially useful in studies where the research problem is concerned with human meanings and interactions viewed from the insiders' perspective; where the researcher is able to gain access to an appropriate setting; where the phenomenon is sufficiently limited in size and location to be studied as a case; and finally, where the research problem can be addressed by qualitative data gathered by direct observation and other means pertinent to the field setting. Jorgensen also states that the method is especially appropriate for exploratory studies and studies aimed at generating theoretical interpretations, as is the case of this investigation.

During the data collection of this research, not always was there a clear line between whether the observations were participant or nonparticipant. The difference of both were

marked down in the notes taken during and after the observations, putting emphasis on the researcher role in the activity and how it may influence other participants' partaking.

No prior sample for observations was set, but the final number exceeded seventy written documents, which were a mix of participant and nonparticipant observations. These were taken both during and after participating in activities such as song-writing workshops, rap rehearsals or walks in the neighbourhood with the social leaders. Each formal and informal conversation was complemented with memo-type observations that served for annotating my conversation partners' specific remarks, hints and body language. In addition, field notes were also taken during my observations in the more recurrent areas of the neighbourhood to study the symbolic interaction between local inhabitants and foreign visitors. All the observations were written down to a pre-designed observations' sheet, that helped organize their numbering, date, time, participants' names, my observations and subsequent interpretations.

b) Semi-structured interviews

The secondary method of data collection was structured and semi-structured interviews. While being time-consuming, interviews are perhaps the only method that allows the researcher to reach details that would otherwise remain unknown because they happened in the past or out of public sight (Weiss, 2004). Weiss holds that interviews are "the best source of information about people's thoughts and feelings and the motives and emotions that lead them to act as they do" (p.45). Advocating the use of semi-structured interviews, Qu and Duqay (2011) hold that this method is popular among researchers because "it is flexible, accessible and intelligible and, more important**,** capable of disclosing important and often hidden facets of human and organizational behaviour" (p. 246). Furthermore, the authors say that it is especially convenient if the objective is to perceive the social world under study, because semi-structured interviews allow interviewees to "provide responses in their own terms and in the way that they think and use language" (p.246). In this research, each interview was recorded using a recording machine and transcribed word by word, taking notes to write down the "issues" that arise in the conversation and lead to new topics to be explored.

During the first phase of the fieldwork seventeen interviews were conducted with the directors of music schools and leaders of culture houses. In the second phase, ten participants of both case studies were interviewed in semi-structured conversations; nine professionals related to Medellín's internationalization were also interviewed extensively to speak about the city's development in the recent years. In addition, nine social leaders of Comuna 13 that represent either institutional or non-institutional entities, were also interviewed in semi-structured interviews, focusing on the common assets and problems of the district.

The sample for interviews regarding the final case studies did not have age or sex restrictions, given that this principle is followed in both entities. It must be noted, however, that all the participants of both Agro Arte and Casa Kolacho are either White or Mestizo Colombians; very few Afro-Colombians took part in their activities during my stay. The age of the participants was mostly between 14 and 20 years, with the exception of a few younger members and several grown-ups (in the case of Agro Arte) whose role was something between facilitators and ordinary participants. Following Miles and Huberman (1994), the objective of the sample of interviews and observations was not representativeness, but to be able to gasp the participants' views and build one possible interpretation upon this data.

c) Analysis of elicited data

The elicited data collected during the research were analysed following Charmaz' comparative method of data analysis. Charmaz recommends the researcher to go back and forth between data collection and analysis in order to refine the emerging theoretical framework. This way, data collection, analysis and theory building or improving is not necessarily a lineal process (Dubois & Gadde, 2002; Charmaz, 2006; Lauckner et.al., 2012). Dubois and Gadde suggest that the researcher, "by constantly going back and forth from one type of research activity to another and between empirical observations and theory, is able to expand his understanding of both theory and empirical phenomena" (p.555). This means that the actual research process often repeats the different steps several times as new analytical issues arise. The main steps of the data analysis process

regarding elicited data are outlined in the below figure, following Charmaz' framework of constructivist grounded theory analysis (2006).

Figure 4. Elicited data analysis process. Compiled by author.

The diagram represents the fundamental steps of creating grounded theory. In classic grounded theory, Strauss and Corbin (1996) break the coding process down into three phases: open coding, axial coding and selective or theoretic coding. However, Charmaz' (2006) divides it in two: initial coding and focused coding. Coding helps the researcher move beyond concrete statements in the data and go towards analytic interpretations. As the interviews of the research were conducted on different topics and with different agents (participants of hip hop activities, social leaders, city officials), the process of coding, analysis and comparison initially took place in different divisions, until some categories started to overlap.

During the phase of initial coding the transcribed interviews and observations were coded line by line, naming segments of data with simple expressions, such as "feeling fear" or "living under crossfire" to make sense of what the participants express. These are essentially labels that simultaneously categorize, summarize, and account for each piece of data (Charmaz, 2006: 43), without yet interpreting it. In some occasions, these labels might be borrowed straight from the participants' vocabulary in order to symbolically mark the speech and meanings of the participants. In this case, they were annotated as *in vivo* codes (Charmaz, 2006). For example, the expression "taking the territory", was marked as an initial code and later elevated to a focused code as it was representative of the means of representing a phenomenon, using local terms.

The step following initial coding is the focused labelling of statements. Focused codes are more directed, selective, and conceptual than line by line coding. Focused coding starts after analytic directions have been established through initial coding and it serves for synthesizing and explaining larger segments of data incisively (Charmaz, 2006: 57). In this phase, theoretical codes may also be used if they help clarify and sharpen the

analysis. As an example, in this study I make use of De Certeau's (1984) idea of tactics and strategies to refer to rap as a tactical socio-spatial tool that is used by social organizations and performers, and "strategies of institutional invasion" to speak of the strategies that the public administration uses for alienating social processes.

Parallel to data collection, initial and focused coding is the writing of memos. The memos helped me explore and fill out qualitative codes, as well as to direct and focus further data collection, pointing at the lack of information in determined topics. They also helped making sense of what is happening in the field, what people are saying and why they are saying it, and to draw attention to aspects such as how do structure and context serve to support, maintain, impede or change participants' actions and statements (Charmaz, 2006: 80). In turn, the structuring of memos allowed charting observed and predicted relationships in the data and between the emerging categories. The memos were written immediately after interviews to annotate observations of the interviewee's behaviour, the settings of the talk and my own reactions and interpretations. The same was done during and after the activities of participant and non-participant observations. Advanced memos were written after focused coding in order to trace and categorize data subsumed by the topic and to write out the connections between the focused codes. Memo sorting and diagramming were fundamental for raising focused codes to conceptual categories, as well for making comparisons between categories, outlining core categories, and for placing them within an argument.

One of the last steps of Charmaz' procedural data analysis is theoretical sampling, which means seeking and collecting pertinent data to the created categories until no new properties emerge. In this research, this meant both going back to already existing data, as conducting new interviews and observations. As Charmaz points out, theoretical sampling pertains only to conceptual and theoretical development; it is not about representing a population or increasing the statistical generalizability of your results (2006: 101).

The collection of data, its analysis and building theory upon it (or improving it) is not necessarily a lineal process. For this reason, the schema is not necessarily static, and each abovementioned step may be repeated several times, in order to strengthen the emerging

theory. Following Charmaz' original diagram (2006: 11) that represents the whole process of carrying out a research based on grounded theory, the below schema (Figure 5) is adjusted according to the research steps that I performed.
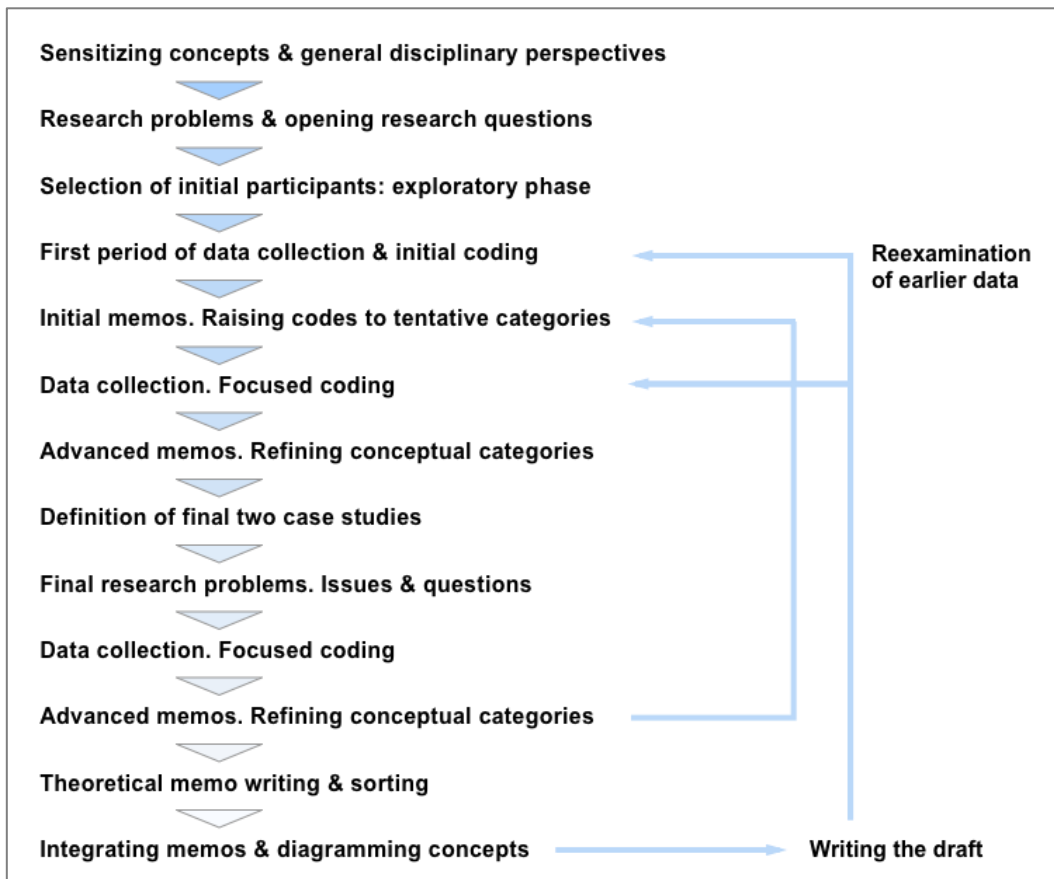
Figure 5. The performed research steps. Compiled by author.

The type of reasoning Charmaz suggests and that was applied in the analysis of data is abductive because it includes reasoning about experience to make theoretical conjectures and then checking them through further experience (Charmaz, 2006: 103). This is shown on the diagram with the "back-and-forth" method of data collection and analysis. Abductive reasoning differs from the deductive approach in that it does not seek to test predetermined principles. It also differs from inductive reasoning that develops conclusions from collected data by weaving together new information into theories (Dubois & Gadde, 2002). Rather, abductive reasoning seeks to find the simplest and most likely explanation for the observations of the researcher and can thus be defined as a "subtype of informal induction" (Bruscaglioni, 2015: n.p. citing Bruschi 1999). The difference from inductive and deductive reasoning lies in that it yields a plausible

conclusion but does not positively verify it. That is to say, abductive conclusions may have a remnant of uncertainty or doubt which, nevertheless, reinforce the constructivist view of multiple socially constructed realities.

2.3.2. Extant data

a) Music videos

Owing to the research interest of studying the role of musicking in place-making, an analysis of the two case studies' musical production was conducted in addition to the interviews and observations. Following Bennett, music videos are a "key medium through which individuals think about and visualize place" (2007: 77) and therefore offer a complementary tool to study the place-bounded relationship of the two hip hop collectives.

Knowing that music videos represent a tactical tool of socio-spatial intervention especially for one of the case studies, it was important to analyse how this tool is used and which messages are emitted through it. The elements that needed to be taken into account during the analysis were:

1. The quality of the video and the production. What means are used for making the video? Which resources and/ or collaborations appear?
2. The narrative of the video. What is being told and how is it told?
3. Visual and rhetorical place representation. Which places figure in the video as its setting or content of the lyrics?
4. Performance. Who performs the song and what does the way of performing it communicate?
5. Audience. Who is the song targeting and why?

Based on these questions, a list of criteria was drawn out to perform the analysis. It was not my priority to study as many songs as possible; rather, the aim was to analyse a diverse selection of videos that could show the different facets of the groups. The videos were studied in detail, bringing out common themes, styles and core topics. The temporal

criterion was set by the accessibility of videos on YouTube, with the earliest one being published in 2012 and the latest in 2018.
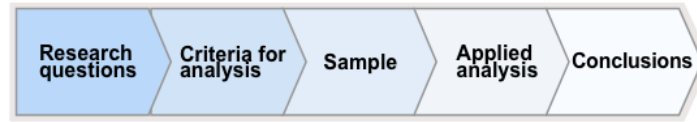
Figure 6. Video analysis process. Compiled by author.

To avoid the analysis from merely concentrating on the lyrics, I also followed the advice of Vernallis (1998) who proposes a multidisciplinary analysis procedure that takes into account the techniques of the camera, of musical form and structure, and the significance of the narrative and content. Vernallis holds that "even when at first glance a music video seems to orient itself toward the lyrics, on closer inspection other relations take precedence" (2002: 13). The intention was precisely to depict and study these "other relations" in combination with the lyrics to see what type of fictional and non-fictional notions the music videos evoke of Comuna 13.

b) News articles and social media

In addition to elicited information, one part of the research looked at the two case studies' standing in mainstream media and social media to analyse as an extension of their collective identity and as a means of gaining diffusion and sympathy among an offline audience. This helped answering the question of what type of networks do subcultural movements need in order to get validated and to gain symbolic capital.
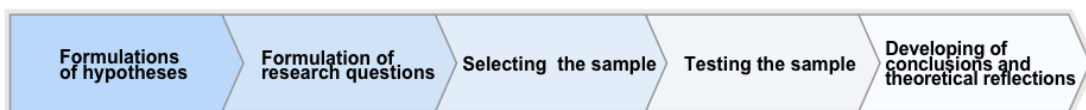
Figure 7. Media analysis process. Compiled by author.

To avoid qualitative media analysis from being a mere synthesis (Jensen, 2002), systematic procedures for the sampling, categorizing and interpretation were created. In first place, generic hypotheses and research questions were built upon sensitizing concepts such as "media sensationalism" or "cliché discourse" that were informed by my previous readings.

The hypotheses that led to conducting the media content analysis are the following:

a) Mainstream media have an important role in validating (subcultural) movements and augmenting their presence in the public discourse (Gamson & Wolfsfeld, 1993) and as such, are key to incrementing their symbolic capital.

b) The frames used for portraying the case studies are homogeneous and general, either seeking for political positioning or entertainment value.

c) The frames used for portraying the case studies contribute to the spatial imagineering of Comuna 13 as other than the epicentre of violence.

d) The beautifying frames serve two objectives: firstly, they contribute to the unofficial place branding narrative of the social transformation of Medellín which, in second place, is an "attractive message for destination marketing"[24] and for inviting new visitors and potential investors to the city.

Following the above stated hypotheses, the research questions were focused on the following:

1) Which media sources have published articles on the two cases in the last three years and what is their interest in providing the movements with media standing?

2) What do the media channels find as most newsworthy and which content is most emphasized and replicated?

3) Which arguments are used for validating the social organizations' relevance in Comuna 13?

4) Which images are used for illustrating the articles? What do they allude to and how do they contribute to the construction of the collective identity of the groups?

5) Do the social organizations benefit from the media standing? Are the framings positive and create sympathy in their audience or, on the contrary, depict them in a negative light?

The selection of news articles included news reports and feature stories, with the specific genre being annotated on the coding sheet. According to White, news reports are

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[24] Citing interviewee JMCB1, a specialist in destination marketing in Antioquia.

"grounded in communicative events such as speeches, interviews and press releases," which "act primarily to represent, not activity sequences, but the points of view of various external sources" (1998: 243). This way, news stories ought to maintain a more neutral position. In contrast, featured stories are considered as a "softer" form of news that may have a higher degree of involvement and personal style of the journalist (Star & Dunsford, 2014). The unit of analysis for news articles is one article.

Using a timeframe from June 2016 to July 2019 that coincides with my study period, and using the key words "Casa Kolacho" and "Agro Arte", I sought for news reports and feature stories, using Google News in Spanish and English, excluding pieces from news distributors such as PR Newswire or EFE. The selection criteria were: 1) avoid using the same media channel more than twice; 2) include coverage from different countries; 3) include generally recognized, mainstream media; 4) include alternative media publications that have a minimum level of recognition and professionalization, (e.g. a proper web-page). I used qualitative media content analysis (Lasswell, 1927; Altheiser, 2000) to query how behaviour and events are placed in context, and what themes, frames, and discourse are being presented, focusing both on the textual presentation (titles, subtitles, pull quotes, style) and the visual material that is used, also putting emphasis on the text's composition, metaphors and reasoning (Hijmans, 1996: 95).

I used a qualitative approach to content analysis, as the quantitative-representational aspect was not so fundamental in this part of the research because my aim was to show one possible reconstruction of the media projection. Following Miles and Huberman (1994), the sample was driven by a conceptual question, rather than by the concerns for "representativeness" (p. 29). Following, Hijmans (1996), the interpretative content analysis and its sampling was theoretically informed, and cases were chosen for strategic reasons because they represent the phenomenon under study in a particular way (Hijmans, 1996: 103).

In addition to the abovementioned criteria of sampling, I followed Miles and Huberman's (1994:34) three techniques to yield rich results in qualitative analysis:

1. Selecting apparently typical/representative examples;

2. Selecting negative/disconfirming examples; and

3. Selecting exceptional or discrepant examples.

Following the criteria of genre, language, regional and editorial diversity and negative and positive representativeness, 22 news articles were analysed. Posterior to the initial coding of each article, a second reading was done, considering the rhetorical and structural matters, such as text display, images or outlined excerpts, to study what the audience's attention is drawn to. Here, the following aspects of textual analysis were taken into account (Charmaz, 2006 37-38).

a) Who benefits from shaping and/or interpreting this information in a particular way?
b) How does its content construct images of reality?
c) Which realities does the text claim to represent? How does it represent them?
d) What, if any, unintended information and meanings might you see in the text?

The outcomes were developed from the central topics and core concepts that emerged from the comparative analysis of the texts.

2.4. Research validation

Research validation is a multifaceted question that each researcher faces and it regards the meaningfulness of the work, its accuracy and reliability, its empirical and theoretical contribution, and many other criteria. Creswell (2007) has resumed several authors' works and brings out alternative terms such as structural corroboration, transferability or paralogic validity. Eisner (1991, cited in Cresswell 2007: 204), for example, discussed the credibility or qualitative research, rather than using the term "validation". Cresswell himself considers validation to be "an attempt to assess the accuracy of the findings, as best described by the researcher and the participants" (2007: 206). Some of his criteria include the account made through extensive time spent in the field, the detailed thick description, and the closeness of the researcher to participants in the study (p.207). Following Creswell's validation strategies, this research has aimed to fulfil the following criteria of validity:

- Prolonged engagement and persistent observation in the field. This includes building trust with the participants, respect for their time and space preferences and checking for misinformation.
- Method and source triangulation to provide corroborating evidence and analyse the central issues of the research from different angles.
- Negative case analysis, refining the working hypotheses as the inquiry advances in light of negative of disconfirming evidence.
- Clarifying researcher bias from the outset of the study to declare any biases or assumptions that may impact the inquiry.
- Rich, thick description, describing in detail the settings under study.

CHAPTER 3. MUSIC, CREATIVITY AND CITY SPACE

Before the Industrial Revolution work was often wedded to song, for the rhythms of labour were synchronized with the human breath cycle or arose out of the habits of hands and feet. Singing ceased when the rhythms of men and machines got out of sync.

(Schafer, 1977:63)

This chapter is divided into three parts: firstly, the effects of music and music making will be discussed through a literature review on studies in different fields, including the sociology of music, geography and musicology. The second subsection focuses on space as a social phenomenon that is produced by social practices such as music making. Discussing the need of creativity and imagination both for making music and for creating lived spaces, the third part of the chapter will suggest music making as a social form of producing differential spaces that resist dominant representations of space.

3.1. Music (and the city)

A big part of contemporary Western music has urban origins, being closely tied to the conditions that human agglomerations provide through the socio-cultural exchange of knowledge and inquisitiveness. Except for the compositional work, music is seldom created alone, and even if so, it portrays or reflects the society that it inhabits. As a phenomenon that is fundamentally social, music is strongly tied to societal norms and struggles and as such, it provides a "rough sketch of the society under construction" (Attali, 1985).

The relationship between music, society and space has been studied in different fields of research, from ethnomusicology to social anthropology and cultural geography. The ethnomusicologist Alan Merriam's *Anthropology of Music* (1964) was one of the pioneering studies that demonstrated the influence of music on social behaviour and defended the importance of sound-analysis being conducted in its very own social and cultural context. While Merriam developed a theory and a method of studying music from an anthropological perspective, Tia DeNora (2000) focused her study on music and the sociology of the everyday to see the effects of music in different dimensions of social

agency and decision-making. Through an exhaustive ethnographic work in diverse social contexts, DeNora showed that music is a resource for producing social life, that it can influence how people compose their bodies and conduct themselves, and that it also affects their perception of time and the self (2000: 17). Music sociologist Simon Frith has also focused on the everyday and music, being particularly interested in popular music. His argument of music not only representing social relations, but also enacting and recreating them has been important for understanding music itself as a social process that produces popular values and defines spaces that lack boundaries (1996: 276). In *Performing Rites* (1996), he describes music's capacity of crossing borders by extending its sounds physically through walls, geographically beyond oceans and culturally across different nationalities and races. With it, he puts emphasis on an important aspect of music, which is that its textual context does not necessarily have to be understood; rather, it is the rhythm, the sonic vibration and melodies that make music so universally permeating. Frith also underlines how music can define places through the act of listening, arguing that we're only present in the place where music takes us, be it a club, concert hall or a rave (1996: 276).

While music fills a space and surrounds us in it, functioning as an extension of our body in the social space, it also has the capacity of taking us into new places and extending our reach in space. This is what cultural theorist Jody Berland (1993) suggests, arguing that we can easily be transported from the place we are physically in to completely new, unknown and imaginary spaces through music, its suggestive sonority that incites imagination, and through music videos that draw us into its narratives. In this sense, music has the contradictory power to "enter anyone's space, and to separate them from it" (Berland, 1993: 27); it can represent an escape from troublesome headspace, offering "music asylum" (DeNora, 2013), but it can also invade personal space. Speaking of invasive sound and the changing soundscapes of cities, Murray Schafer (1977) referred to UNESCO's 1969 resolution that unanimously denounced "the intolerable infringement of individual freedom and of the private right of everyone to silence, because of the abusive use, in private and public places, of recorded or broadcast music" (cited in Schafer, 1977: 97). Noise, the antithesis of silence, is by definition a sound that occurs where it should not, and disrupts the particular setting (LaBelle, 2010: 47). Music as the

organization of sound is, in this sense, a place-based phenomenon that represents codes of behaviour–of what is socially (not) accepted in a determined place–and the relationship of power between those who emit sounds and those who are silenced by it.

Jacques Attali's view on music was also sceptical, seeing it as an instrument of domination:

> Music is a tool of power: of ritual power when it is a question of making people forget the fear of violence; of representative power when it is a question of making believe in order and harmony; and a bureaucratic power when it is a question of silencing those who oppose it. Thus, music localizes and specifies power, because it marks and regiments the rare noises that cultures, in their normalization of behaviour, see fit to authorize.
>
> (Attali, 1977/1985: 19-20)

Preceding DeNora's sociological work, Attali suggested that as a cultural form, music is intimately tied up in the mode of production in any given society and that it has an exceptional capacity of foreseeing social and economic possibilities of change: "music, the organization of noise […] reflects the manufacture of society, it constitutes the audible waveband of the vibrations and signs that make up society" (1977/1985: 4). He also brings out the spatial dimension of music, saying that, as an organized form of sound and noise, music articulates space, the limits of territory and the way that we can make ourselves heard within it (p.6).

Christopher Small, on the other hand, speaks of music making as a means of defining societies and giving them social cohesion through musical rituals that create relationships "that we desire to exist and long to experience" (1998: 183). Seeing relationships among living beings as fundamental for self-definition and identity construction, Small believes that music has much to offer for the construction of a society. His definition of *musicking* allows looking at music in a manner that extends beyond its sonic qualities or individual talent; rather, he sees musicking as taking part "in any capacity, in a musical performance, whether by performing, by listening, by rehearsing or practicing, by providing material for performance […], or by dancing" (1998: 9). In addition to seeing all participants–performers as well as the audience–as part of the musicking act, he also defines it as "an activity by means of which we bring into existence a set of relationships that model the relationship of our world" (1998: 50).

During the act of musicking, the cultural familiarity of the songs is important for provoking possible relationships between people, place and the self. Ethnomusicologist John Blacking holds that music as bodily stimulus may portray motor impulse and/or nervous tension in the listener if the motion of music is related to the previous cultural experiences of the listener (cited in Bohlman & Nettl, 1995: 38). An important element of musical familiarity is rhythm, which can bind people together, turning listeners into participants and "synchronizing the brains and minds of all who participate" (Sacks, 2007: 266). This is made visible at concerts where spectators enter in seemingly coordinated motion, performing spontaneous choreographies, running at mosh pits or dropping their hands to the beat of the drums.

On a psychological level, Kaskatis and MacDonald (2012) have proved that active music practice releases endorphins that raises pain threshold which in turn results in elevated levels of affect. They affirm that in so far as endorphins underpin primate social relationships, active participation in musical events is likely to give rise to euphoric effects that may play a particularly important role in bonding large social groups in humans (2012: 698). The physical, embodied experience of musicking (Small, 1998) thus transforms into an emotional experience, from one individual to another, facilitating a sense of community and belongingness. As Sacks (2007) affirms, the primary function of music is collective and communal in all societies, it binds people together and thus has a crucial role in community making. In addition, collective experiencing of music can also be beneficial for communication, "generating collective feelings and collective thought, which is the basis of cultural communication" (Bohlman & Nettl 1995: 152).

Music clearly has a myriad of effects on the individual and collective level: from helping define our "self" through the aesthetic decisions of what we listen to or perform, to defining a community and its relationships through who we listen to and perform with. While sharing the experience of musicking can create affect and a sense of belongingness within a group, it also defines otherness by what is not valued or accepted. This way, music recreates social life and relationships in its diversity and complexity of leadership and subservience, domination and subordination. It is a social process of interaction in which meaning is given to the situations in which we act and to the phenomena we encounter in those situations (Blumer, 1969). As a social process, musicking is a vivid

experience of presence in a shared notion of time and space. Following Alfred Schütz's phenomenological approach, music making is a social relationship that is established by "the reciprocal sharing of the other's flux of experiences in inner time, by living through a vivid present together, by experiencing this togetherness as a "We"" (1951: 96). In addition, this togetherness–defined not only by the shared flux of other musicians but also of music itself–is experienced in a space that is both real and imaginary, ephemeral and enduring. Musicking as collective organization of sound that requires decisions of what is being emitted and what not, of what creates harmony and what produces dissonance, is also the organization of the imaginary and real spaces where it is created and what it recreates. Through the social agency it involves, music constitutes and is constitutive of space. Music is what people make it to be, and its meaning lies in the relationships that are established in the time-space where it occurs. Furthermore, it is not only about relationships that "actually exist in our lives as about those that we desire to exist and long to experience" (Small, 1998: 183) with the self, with others and with our surrounding environment. In this sense, in music lies a potential for what is yet to come, of a desired world impregnated with alternative, vivid moments of presence, and as such it can be the temporary realization of life as we would like it to be.

In a similar way, space is also what people make it to be both through the physical and symbolic meanings given to it, as well as through the narratives that are weaved upon its existence. Space too, is a collective process of exchange that is produced through social practices and representations, (Lefebvre, 1974/1991); it is a social phenomenon that receives its meaning through the social interactions performed among individuals (Blumer, 1969). But how exactly are music and space interweaved and how do they constitute one another? Which role does music play in our everyday practices, trajectories, and in the way that we inhabit the city? How do the relationships established and enacted though music participate in the production of space and in the construction of the meaning of places? Furthermore, how do the characteristics of a specific music style–such as rap music–and the codes of behaviour and performance it implies intervene in the evolving spaces of the city that operate under the uncertainty of public rule? Finally, in which ways can underground rap music subvert everyday notions of place, and negotiate new meanings and uses given to of urban space? Before heading to a deeper

discussion of rap music and how it articulates city space, we must first look at how the city as a social space is produced through spatial practices and representations.

3.2. The social production of urban space

3.2.1. Lefebvre's triad of the social production of space

With his triadic conceptualization of the production of space, Henri Lefebvre left an important legacy to the way space is understood in contemporary thinking. In his work, Lefebvre sought to provide a theory that could construct unity between the physical, mental and social space, dividing them between the perceived, conceived and lived space (1974/1991).

Lefebvre's "perceived space" was also theorized as *spatial practice*—the practical basis of the perception of the outside world (1974/1991: 40). Perceived space embraces "production and reproduction, and the particular locations and spatial sets characteristic of each social formation" (p. 33). As such, spatial practices are what ensure continuity and some degree of cohesion, which imply competence and a certain level of performance within social space (Lefebvre, 1974/1991: 33). Secondly, the conceived space is also known as *representations of space*, this being most closely tied to "the relations of production and to the "order" which those relations impose" (p.33). He names that this is the rational space of scientists, planners, urbanists, technocratic subdividers and social engineers, "all of whom identify what is lived and what is perceived with what is conceived" (p. 38). According to Lefebvre, conceived space tends to be the dominant space in any society or mode of production. Lastly, Lefebvre defined lived spaces as *representational spaces* that "embody complex symbolisms" and are often linked to the "clandestine or underground side of social life" (p. 33). This is what expresses the space of inhabitants and users who experience it "directly through its associated images and symbols" (p.39). Importantly, this is also the dominated space (by other forms of spatial practice) which "the imagination seeks to change and appropriate" (Lefebvre, 1974/1991: 39). Equally to the lived space that "overlays physical space, making symbolic use of its objects" (p.39.), the three forms of spatiality suggested by Lefebvre always intersect,

coexist and complement one another, contributing in different ways to the production of social and physical space.

3.2.2. The everyday and alienation at a time of the Spatial turn

The triadic concept of space was developed by Lefebvre in his most well-known book, *The Production of Space* (1974/1991), written after his decades-long concern with the mechanization of man and his submission to the alienating rhythms of the everyday on a par with his fixation with the growing abstraction of space, which he expressed along the three-volume *The Critique of Everyday Life,* published as separate instalments in 1947, 1961 and 1981. As Lefebvre annotates in the beginning of his 1974 book, writing about the *production* of space was also provoked by changes that had led to the Spatial turn in the Social Sciences and Humanities around the 1960-70's when opposition to the predominant Hegelian and Marxian historical analysis of past events grew stronger, giving way to new forms of analysis. During the post-World War II era important economic changes were introduced in Western societies, leading to their rapid capitalization through increasing levels of everyday consumption. The increasing number of automobiles and infrastructures created for their use also entailed significant changes in the spatial configuration of cities that were becoming increasingly more dependent on technology and mobility. In the meantime, despite decolonization, several Western countries were maintaining their spatial hegemony over countries of the Global South, contributing to the abstraction of space with new globalizing forms of manufacture relations that maintained the "developing countries" dependent on the former empires. The overall discontent with the enduring power hegemonies on a par with rising levels of inequality coincided with manifestations against the Vietnam war in the U.S., student protests against consumerism and imperialism in France, and opposition to the invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1968. These major events fuelled the thinking of Michel Foucault, Henri Lefebvre, Michel de Certeau and Pierre Bourdieu, among others, who proposed new ways of theorizing space and its role in the social world. Questioning the geometrical and Cartesian view of space as calculable and controllable that allows the social and technological domination of the population (Wilson, 2013: 368), the thinkers of the Spatial turn began considering space as social and as the place where social relations and hierarchies are produced and reproduced.

In his 1967 lecture "Of Other Spaces" Foucault contemplated that contemporary space, in contrast to time, has not yet been thoroughly desanctified, and that the presence of the "sacred" nurtures oppositions between private and public space, or the space of work and leisure (1967/1986: 23). By "sanctified spaces" Foucault referred to places that seemingly still have fixed, unchangeable locations and clear uses, despite the contemporary era being characterized by juxtaposition, the near and far, the side-by-side, and the dispersed (p. 22). At an era when our experience of the world is no longer "that of a long life developing through time than that of a network that connects points and intersects with its own skein," (1967/1986: 22) space, too, should be perceived as less hierarchical and intersectional. Foucault holds that the space we inhabit is not a void where individuals and things could be simply placed; rather, it is a heterogeneous space that consists of "a set of relations that delineates sites which are irreducible to one another and absolutely not superimposable on one another" (p.22.). Among these sites of relations (he mentions public transportation, cafés, beaches), Foucault is most interested in those where the relations that constitute the site aim to be neutralized or inverted. Among these, Foucault brings out two types of sites: firstly, utopias which are perfect sites with no real place, representing the society in a perfected form, or as a society "turned upside down" (p. 24). In second place, he talks of heterotopias as "other spaces", as places that are other than utopia and dystopia. Foucault argues that different types of heterotopia where culture and society exert its power of normalization, can distance the "free" individual from his reconstitution and proper discipline. As physical spaces, he brings out prisons, rest homes, mental institutions and boarding schools as examples of heterotopia that can control the free movement and behaviour of the individuals placed in them. Heterotopias are often invisible yet exist in all cultures and societies and as such, they serve as a way to hide the unrepresentative or invert their behaviour to enact an ideal society. In addition to cemeteries, hospitals, rest homes and boarding schools, Foucault also alludes to museums and libraries as "other spaces" insofar as they represent the infinite accumulation of time and of "enclosing in one place all times of all epochs" (1967/1986: 26). While Foucault's conceptualization of the heterotopia corresponds to his previous and posterior work on power, knowledge and control, the concept of spaces of difference is somewhat elusive because as it involves "everything and anything" with illustrations so wide and diverse that most social sites could share some aspects of being a heterotopia (Johnson, 2013).

On the other hand, it could also be argued that precisely in ambiguity lies the conceptual strength of Foucault's heterotopia–by offering overlapping classifications instead of strict delimitations, heterotopia expresses postmodern characteristics of simultaneity and fluidity.

While Foucault's heterotopian ideas of space reflected his concerns over concealed forms of control and surveillance, Pierre Bourdieu's philosophy of space has been marked by notions of social knowledge and practice. Bourdieu's view of social space as a symbolic space where interactions between different agents, groups and institutions take place (1989) contributed largely to the Spatial turn, especially with writings on the social significance of bodies and their physical placing in space (Kümin & Usborne, 2013). Bourdieu alludes to lifestyle–manners and habits of behaviour and consumption– as key to constituting different status groups that may encounter one another both in social and geographic space. "Social space tends to function as a symbolic space, a space of lifestyles and status groups characterized by different lifestyles" (Bourdieu, 1989: 20). But it also presents itself "in the form of agents endowed with different properties that are systematically linked among themselves" (p.19). In Bourdieu's understanding, symbolic capital–knowledge, education, manners, speech–is fundamental for achieving symbolic power. Following this, Bourdieu states that people are distributed in social space, firstly, according to the overall volume of capital they possess and, secondly, according to the structure of their capital (economic or cultural), in the total volume of their assets (p. 17). Bourdieu brings out that the closer the agents, groups or institutions are in social space, the more common properties they have; and the more distant, the fewer. As spatial segregation well shows, people who are close in social space also tend to find each other in geographic space. Nevertheless, those who are very distant in social space may still have encounters and interactions, even if very limited ones, in geographic space. For this reason, Bourdieu argues that geographic space and social space are similar only insofar as both constitute themselves on the basis of distinction and division (1989: 16). In continuation, he argues that geographically, distinction has emerged from sacred places and profane centres of administration in contrast to rural areas of production, urban centres of finance and commerce versus peripheral working districts. In social space, distinction is based on income, education, race, sex and many other social indicators of

pertinence. Bourdieu argues that "symbolic relations of power tend to reproduce and to reinforce the power relations that constitute the structure of social space," (1989: 21). Similarly, the physical centres of power and capital (such as banks, corporate offices, border control) are also reinforced and reproduced through symbolic power that is represented on street level through infrastructures (neat roads, walking space, green areas) and in particular, through (vertical) architecture that is the art of representation par excellence.

Bourdieu holds that the social world presents itself "through the distribution of properties […] as a symbolic system which is organized according to the logic of difference, of differential distance" (1989., 20). Distance comes from difference, and difference is created through habits and perceptions, which Bourdieu calls the habitus. The habitus is "both a system of schemes of production of practices and a system of perception and appreciation of practices" (p. 19). That is, within our habitus we constitute both our practices–habits, acts and interactions–and the criteria for evaluating others' practices. This way, the habitus implies a feeling of identification and a "sense of one's place" (Goffman, cited in Bourdieu, 1989: 17), but also a "sense of the place of others," that is, a distinction of otherness (Bourdieu, 1989: 17.).

Bourdieu has also argued that social space "tends to retranslate itself, in a more or less direct manner, into physical space in the form of a definite distributional arrangement of agents and properties (e.g. opposition between downtown and suburbs)" (1995: 12), meaning that symbolic power relations and structures eventually become imprinted on physical space. The various habitus–social practices and perceptions–thus translate into everyday space and trajectories, materializing the differences that exist in the social world into built environment. As in Bourdieu's social space where agents with similar properties (symbolic capital) remain close by, constituting centres of symbolic power (or lack of it), physical space, too, has the tendency of accumulation, ghettoization and segregation, creating difference between the space of "us" and the "others".

What must be argued, though, is that the production of the social world and space are simultaneous, not one following the other. All interaction takes place in a spatial environment and therefore, the production of space is not posterior but parallel to social

formations. In this sense, social space can't be merely "retranslated"–that is, adapted for the physical space. Rather, it is the physical space that embeds and moulds social interactions by the environment it provides, be it private or public, open or closed, mono-functional or multifaceted–these characteristics all influence how space is socialized.

The concept of social space was first developed decades before the Spatial turn became rooted in the Humanities and Social Sciences. Under social space, Émile Durkeim studied a person's position in sociological space, looking at social differentiation in relation to the social environment, without specifying anything about the physical settings (Durkheim, 1893, cited in Buttimer, 1969: 419). A decade later, George Simmel put social interactions in a spatial context in his 1903 articles "The Sociology of Space" and "On Spatial Projections of Social Forms"[25]. There, Simmel focused on how social interaction produces various spatial effects and forms, observing different domains of social structures and spatial formations, such as the organization of space due to social organization (e.g. political and economic institutions) or territorial control taken by the authorities and dominating forces (Fearon, 2004). Among his ideas on the spatial dimension of modern social structures and the modernization of space itself, he identified the trend toward a greater abstractness of space which contrasts the idea of space being one of the most "concrete" features of social life in terms of perception and experience (Lechner, 1991: 200).

The growing abstraction and homogenization of space and the way it allows disregarding differences was also a central concern for Lefebvre, who believed that it contributes to the instrumentalization and manipulation of space as a product. Lefebvre's definition of abstract space reflects the spatial dimension of his constant concern with abstraction taking over man's lived experiences, with "representational space" disappearing into the "representation of space" (Lefebvre, 1974/1991: 398). In Lefebvre's reading, too, the progressive abstraction of space is tied to modernization and to the accelerated process of urbanization that began in the 19th century and intensified in the 20th century with the

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[25] Both articles were first published in Simmel, G. (1908). *Soziologie Untersuchungen über die Formen der Vergesellschaftung*. Berlin: Duncker & Humblot. In English, they appear in Simmel, G. (2009) *Sociology. Inquiries into the Construction of Social Forms*. Leiden, Boston: Brill. Translated and edited by Anthoni J. Blazi and Mathew Kanjirathinkal.

technocratic development of urban fabric that relied upon the construction industry (1974/1991: 53). Through this primitive accumulation of territory into the hands of a few landowners and through the creation of markets, space became a "commodity just as any other" (Lefebvre, 1980: 214, cited in Wilson, 2013: 368). The divisibility of space into lots that are interchangeable not only gives it a sense of homogeneity, but it also turns it into a calculable Cartesian object that is free of natural and social content and at the same time allows social and technological domination (Elden, 2004: 183, cited in Wilson 2013: 368). This way, homogenizing, Cartesian representations of space are fundamental for the planned production of abstract space which "facilitates the manipulation of space as an exploitable resource" (Wilson, 2013: 368) that lacks any type of social content.

Seeing space as a void, as an empty container allows considering it "a neutral medium into which disjointed things, people, and habitats might be introduced" (Lefebvre, 1974/1991: 308). As such, it thoroughly ignores the idea of space being intrinsically social and socialized in the same way that society is spatial and spatialized from its very foundation (Soja, 1980). It also limits possibilities of comprehending space as a multitude of lived experiences and stories upon which individuals step on (Massey, 2005). Following Massey's suggestion of considering that former and present lived experiences are what constitute space, it would be impossible to imagine it as a mere product of exchange that is empty and lacks symbols, connotations or memories. However, portraying abstract space as divisible, fragmented and homogeneous favours its manipulation on two different levels: firstly, it allows space to be commodified and turned into profit; and secondly, it facilitates the manipulation of the society by controlling and exploiting existing differences (Lefebvre, 1974/1991: 282). This way, the abstraction of space serves both the political and economic elites for reinforcing and reproducing their power relations. The construction and enhancement of abstract space takes place in the everyday life through processes that are both materialized (urban transformations through new infrastructures, buildings, reconstructions) and representational (ceremonial acts of power, diplomacy, transactions, legal regulations). Ultimately, the abstraction of space serves nothing else than the need for the dominant form of space—that of the centres of wealth and power— "to mould the spaces it dominates" and "reduce the obstacles and resistance it encounters there" often using violent means (1974/1991: 49). The

detachment from significance and meaningfulness of space is what sustains its exchangeability and manipulability, and facilitates submitting space under transformations, renovations and rehabilitations, as if it were a mere question of tilted walls, instead of actual lives that are affected by the changes. In the background of these processes of exchange and transformation, individual stories are invisibilized and silenced by being grouped into homogeneous notions of social protest, while lived experiences get moulded into regulated, emotionless procedures, and the "lived" is conquered by the "conceived" abstraction of rational everydayness where regulations are the rule of law. Consequently, the negligence of the idea that human dwelling is what creates space and a sense of place contributes to consecutive placelessness (Relph, 1976), to the creation of "flatscapes" that lack intentional depth (Norberg-Schulz, 1969), and the replication of non-places (Augé, 1992).

Wilson argues that despite its aims, the state never manages to fully produce abstract, dominant space as a totality of spatial reality (Wilson, 2013: 374). He holds that "the contradictions of capital itself, combined with those that emerge through the projection of abstractions onto lived reality, together ensure that the materiality of abstract space fails to reproduce the rational coherence and social emptiness of its representations […]" (p. 374). That is to say, despite the constant efforts of proving space to be a merely Cartesian phenomenon through divisions, transactions and exchanges, the process of abstractioning also triggers a counter-movement that produces lived spaces. These become reality through the realization of the differential potentialities of individuals that are hidden in individuals' creativity applied on everydayness.

Individuals' potential of creating and maintaining "difference" was emphasized both by Lefebvre and De Certeau who saw it as key to resisting the "conquest of the lived by the conceived" (Lefebvre, 1974/1991) in the everyday. Michel de Certeau argued that the mundane everyday spaces are instances of resistance, escape and liberation from the grips of state and capital (1980/1984). For Lefebvre, a new society could only be defined concretely on the level of everyday life, as a system of changes in lived experience (Lefebvre, 1947/1991: 48). He defined everyday life dialectically between what man controls and what he cannot control, between submission to the system of production and sporadic moments of escape from it (p.48).

The "everyday" only became a constant characteristic of daily life in modernity, when economic-technological imperatives began colonizing space and time (Ronneberger, 2008) and created divisions between the time for work, leisure and rest. Modernity was the "silent catastrophe" (Law, 2015) of the early twentieth century when important innovations were introduced in science by Einstein; in painting by Picasso and other cubists that overthrew ideas of three-dimensional space; in music where classical tonality was dissolved by atonality, and finally with Russolo's noise-sound that predicted the "noisy catastrophe of the technological warfare of 1914" (Law, 2015). The modern era thus broke former cosmological views and perceptions of space and time, introducing a new notion of productive time that left man's inner biological timekeeping only secondary importance.

The division between time for work and rest and the controlled rhythms of the folding of the everyday led to the domestication of man and his time that was no longer configured by the rhythms of the nature, but by that of the fabric. As a phenomenon of modernity, everyday life was premised on middle-class consumption and production patterns– between the active time of production, and the passive time of consumption (Ronneberger, 2008). This dialectic provoked the contradictory folding of the everyday that caused conflict in man, between what he controls and what he cannot control.

However, just as the homogenizing abstraction of space doesn't manage to reach a totalizing effect because of man's capacity of creating lived spaces (Wilson, 2013), the "economic-technological colonization of the everyday" is also partial as some elements manage to escape its full domestication (Ronneberger, 2008: 135). It is thus the moments of the "full realization of man's differential potential" that allow him to escape both the abstracting colonization of the everydayness and with it, create a differential space–the space "possible within the real" (Wilson, 2013); the "other space" that is other than that of vigilance and control, as suggested by Foucault (1967/1986).

Even though Lefebvre saw differential space as a postcapitalist and postproductivist space, this being the only way of overcoming the subordination of the everyday to the rules of production (Wilson, 2013: 373), the somewhat utopian idea of a differential in-between space should be recovered to highlight man's potential of providing an

alternative to the dominating forces of homogenization through his differential capacity. But which are the conditions for creating such in-between-space, a space that is not representative of complete alienation nor aims for a complete *tabula rasa* and revolution; a space that holds subtle resistance to the mechanisms of control? The response of Lefebvre and De Certeau lies in everyday practices and, specifically, in the creativity hidden in those practices that always hold new, "immanent potential for new possibilities of life" (Harrison, 2000: 498).

3.2.3. Everydayness and creativity

There is a very clear dialogue between Lefebvre's *Critique of Everyday Life* and De Certeau's *The Practice of Everyday Life* where both theorize how man can show silent resistance to the hegemonic power exerted in the everydayness. For Lefebvre, the everyday maintains man under the grip of productivity and thus, under a constant hazard of alienation, yet it also makes man subject to sporadic and unexpected moments that occur within the social frame of everydayness, creating potential opportunities for change, for something different to take place. Imagination, conceived amidst exceptional moments, is what Lefebvre sees as key to resisting alienation and to disrupting the quotidian hegemony which he wrote extensively about in the three volumes of *Critique of Everyday Life,* as well as in his last writing, *Rhythmanalysis. Space, Time and Everyday Life* (1992/2004). Both Lefebvre and De Certeau find everydayness simultaneously as the enemy and the ally of man. For Lefebvre, the linear rhythms of the everyday are alienating, but amidst them also lies the possibility for escaping alienation through the extraordinary moments which man is more conscious of when putting attention to his inner, cyclical rhythms, as Lefebvre suggested in his methodological proposal of rhythmanalysis (1992/2004). For De Certeau, the threat of the everyday lies in the "strategies" which he defines as the calculated "manipulation of power relationships" (1980/1984: 35) of the "strong" through which the everyday practices of the "weak" are appropriated and institutionalized, gaining further control over the human body and the space it inhabits. In contrast, within the everyday we also find resistance to these strategies through the "tactics" of the common people–through their everyday (spatial) practices that create an ephemeral language that responds to the strategies that aim to suffocate difference (1980/1984: 36).

Lefebvre's reading of the everyday and man's alienation within it is in correlation with the capitalist state's production of abstract space (Wilson, 2013: 365). For Lefebvre, the danger of alienation was not only economic but, above all, ideological and political, distancing individuals from their inner time, rhythms and most importantly, from their creativity and individual thought which, for Lefebvre, were fundamental for deep, lived experiences and thus, for the creation of differential spaces. Imagination, creativity and its potential to create differential space were to counter the increasing abstractioning and homogenization of space that rapidly extends its presence under the logic of capital.

Both Lefebvre and De Certeau thus believed that the everyday strategies of the strong could only be defied through imagination and creativity. De Certeau considered that the only means of resistance to the strategies imposed by the centres of power were to be found in the habitual practices performed in the everyday. This included cooking and walking that are practices where "users make innumerable and infinitesimal transformations of and within the dominant cultural economy in order to adapt it to their own interests and their own rules" (De Certeau, 1984: 99).

> The long poem of walking manipulates spatial organizations, no matter how panoptic they may be: it is neither foreign to them […] nor in conformity with them (it does not receive its identity from them). It creates shadows and ambiguities within them. It inserts its multitudinous references and citations into them (social models, cultural mores, personal factors). Within them it is itself the effect of successive encounters and occasions that constantly alter it and make it the other's blazon: in other words, it is like a peddler, carrying something surprising, transverse or attractive compared with the usual choice.

(De Certeau, 1984: 101)

De Certeau believed that an act as common and quotidian as walking holds an important potential of transgression, creating "shadows and ambiguities" in the dominant system– in spatial planning–that dictates the forms of use and behaviour. Individual trajectories, strolling without an apparent aim, unexpected turns and detours constantly challenge the paths and sidewalks preconceived and designed for the rationalized movement of human beings in the limited urban space. In De Certeau's reading, walking is a tactical act of resistance that is not accumulative and thus lacks surplus value and as such, it is not subject to the commercial economy that is increasingly interested in finding profitability in the acts of the everyday. This is somewhat questionable today with the extremely wide

selection of specialized shoes and trainers made for walking, advertised as indispensable for moving around. Putting apart nocturnal mass hikes and other "healthy" endeavours, the act of civil disobedience that walking may represent doesn't seem to have been commodified so far. This way, the seemingly pragmatic and disinterested activity of moving about holds the power of resistance within it because of its inadaptability to the dominant cultural economy and because the spatial mediations "are ordered according to the properties of lived time" (Augoyard, 2007: 19) and experiences. The drift, as proposed by Guy Debord and the Letterist International, as well as stray walking are both expressions of the will of countering preconditioned forms of inhabiting the urban space. This way, no-destination is also a destination, the experience of the journey being what gives significance to the no-target.

De Certeau argued that in relation to the urban system, an individual's act of walking is not only capable of disturbing and convulsing it, but it also complements and enriches it. Walking appropriates space through its unpredicted trajectories and at the same time it performs space through the traces it draws and the narratives it creates. In addition, walking also implies relations of harmony or conflict among the movements of different bodies and their trajectories that encounter one another in space, in parallel flow or abrupt collision. De Certeau writes that while strategies are, to a certain degree, localizable and can take material figures (such as institutional buildings, theatres, banks), tactics can only manipulate and divert strategical spaces (1980/1984: 30). Tactics do not have a place, hence they depend on time; they have no spatial or institutional location and therefore no visible totality. As such, they depend on the opportunities provided by sporadic moments–the maximum power of spontaneity, imagination and ephemerality.

Lefebvre, too, developed his ideas towards a theory of moments as a time-space frame where change can occur. He claimed that "whatever happens, alterations in daily life will remain the criterion of change," (1981/2005: 41), insisting that a revolution either happens through quotidian acts or it will never take place. The micro-revolutions were to be achieved through self-realization in extraordinary moments that require full human presence, through intense moments of heightened reality. With this romantic tone of revolution, Lefebvre founded his "theory of moments" which he exposed in the second volume of *The Critique of Everydayness* (1961). There, he argues that in contrast to the

everyday acts that are repeated in time, a moment can never be repeated and it is a sense of revelation that may only arrive unexpectedly. "The moment, it's a superior form of repetition, of reprise and reappearance, of the recognition of determined relationships with others and with oneself" (Lefebvre, 1961: 344).[26] This way, in their pursuit of venerating differential, lived experiences, both Lefebvre and De Certeau sought for an answer that departs from the basis of irreproducibility in contrast to the forces of reproduction of the capitalist state. The tactics of De Certeau have no place and are thus not accumulative; the lack of "delimitation of an exteriority, then, provides it with the condition necessary for autonomy" (De Certeau, 1980/1984: 37). Lefebvre's moments, too, are untraceable and unrepeatable bits of time-space that cannot be appropriated; they can't be captured nor ruined by the capitalist mode of production. Due to the impossibility of repetition, moments cannot be commodified either, hence their importance in provoking a change in the dominating form of (re)production.

Even though Lefebvre and De Certeau had rather different academic trajectories, both scholar's sociological work has important elements that contemplate the expanding power of city planning as a technocratic practice that organizes the lives of inhabitants from above, imposing a univocal "proper meaning" to city space (De Certeau, 1984: 100), reducing "reality in the interests of power" (Lefebvre, 1974/1991: 367) to perpetuate the relations of domination. In the early 1920's, Lefebvre's ideas were nurtured by the Communist Party and by a Hegelian form of Marxism as well as by avant-garde movements of Surrealism and Dada, sharing many similarities with the Situationists and their founder Guy Debord (Ross, 1995). De Certeau, on the other hand, had a long trajectory of orthodox academic peregrination, staying in several Catholic seminaries and universities where he studied scholastic philosophy and biblical studies before joining the Society of Jesus in 1950, which encouraged him to earn a degree in philosophy and theology before becoming a priest in 1956 (Giard, 2006). It wasn't until the happenings of 1968 (in which Lefebvre also had an active role as a revolutionary Sociology professor at the campus of Nanterre of the University of Paris) when De Certeau suggested a reform to the university system and became a public figure, engaging with different social

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[26] My translation from the original text in French.

milieus and debates. Lefebvre's suggestion of the theory of moments and his conviction of man's differential potential being key to transformation, and De Certeau's argument of everyday tactical practices that divert space have an air similar to the situations and drifts proposed by the avant-garde movements between the 1950s and early 1970s. In particular, the Situtionists aimed to counteract and challenge the dominant power that was fragmenting city space through their imaginative, symbolic acts which expressed their opposition to the rapid changes that were taking place in the society of consumption. Holding a set of set of revolutionary devices–psychogeography, drift, *détournement,* situations, and unitary urbanism–they were certain they could recuperate spontaneity and playfulness against the sterilization of the world (Sadler, 1999). However, as they were unable to arrange them into a coherent program, it was paradoxically their unstructuredness (spontaneity) that put limits to their revolutionary proposals.

The imaginary, fictitious coherence of cities that contrasts with their increasing fragmentation, is most strongly communicated through the machinery of state institutions and channels of communication, built upon the conceived representations of space. However, the dominant spaces and the strategical modes of domination that consist of occupying the spaces and habits of the "other" trigger the appearance of counterdominant practices of lived experience that tactically challenge its opponent's expansion. As argued by Lefebvre, these creative practices occur in determined moments, moments of detention in time and space, that allow contemplating the rhythms of the outside from a distance (Lefebvre, 1992). Following Lefebvre's triadic theorization, a moment is a mediating term between presence and absence, alienation and revolution. It is the sporadic escape towards inner rhythms from the alienating rhythms of the outside, without ever losing sight of the motions of the maestro that conducts the urban symphony.

3.2.4. Creativity and everydayness today: the unproductive creative class?

The ideas of Lefebvre and De Certeau on city space and creativity emerged at an era that was largely marked by the explosive extension of a consumerist culture and capitalist practices that were only beginning to thrive towards neoliberalism. Today, when entrepreneurial forms of city planning and governance have established their strongholds around the world, the symbolic importance of imaginative and creative practices that

address the viability of such politics is perhaps even bigger. However, we must look at the role that creativity plays in cities today with a critical view, given that significant changes have taken place in the world economy and in the dominant modes of production and consumption.

What Alvin Toffler adverted in 1970 as the increase of the role of the immaterial for economic development was further developed in the 1990s as the experience economy to denote a socioeconomic system where aesthetic experiences, rather than goods or services, form the basis for generating value (Johansson & Kociatkiewicz, 2011: 392). The shift from productivist societies to consumerist societies has mainly been the result of deindustrialization and the concurrent rise of the service industry, advances in communication and transportation systems and the loosening of trade barriers (Edensor et.al., 2010) together with organizational changes in the production of goods and services where distinction between public and private has become increasingly more indistinct (Ashworth and Voogd, 1990: 3).

Globalization, often understood as the ultimate victory of capitalism over socialism, has apparently contributed to culture and immaterial labour being placed in the centre of economic production (Wilkie, 2011: 51). On the other hand, it has also been key to maintaining the Global South under the dominant power of the North through global systems of production, outsourcing and off-shoring, resulting in rising levels of inequality and sharpening class divide. Apart from consolidating increasingly hegemonic forms of production and supply chains, Appadurai (1990) argues that globalization has allowed the homogenization of culture that has left local vernacular practices in struggles of survival against global corporate forces. Here, it is important to underline that globalization is not undifferentiated, rather, it has articulated patterns that determine global capitalist activities and relations (Harvey, 2012), including both commerce and culture in determined geographical locations. Geographical specificity–the depositing of capital in one area instead of another, based on a series of place assets (Horlings, 2015; Oliveira, 2015) and lobbying power–is one of the most glaring inadequacies (Edensor et.al, 2010) of entrepreneurial city governance strategies that have been derived from the effects of late capitalism and globalization (Harvey, 1989).

The conditions of global connectedness and competitiveness have had a vast effect on city administrations across the world whose leadership decisions are increasingly more influenced by global flows of economic and human capital in the quest for investments and 'talented' workers. City governments' affinity with corporate enterprises began in the 1980s when city administrations began adopting neoliberal market principles to local policies as a way of keeping up with global competition and seeking for alternatives to the declining industrial production (Harvey, 1989). The shift from managerialism to entrepreneurialism in urban governance (Harvey, 1989: 4) meant the transition from problem-oriented planning that was focused on the local provision of services, facilities and benefits to urban populations (e.g. inhabitants, citizens, dwellers) to goal-oriented planning that focused on "delivering planned products" to different groups of "segmented customers" (Ashworth and Voogd, 1990: 23). Sharon Zukin (1995) has argued that capitalist cities compete on the basis of a symbolic economy, on how their attractiveness can be packaged and communicated. In it, she replicates Ashworth and Voogd's prior argument that the attractive assets of the city as a whole "*must be* commodified" (1990: 29).[27] In their definition, the symbolic economy of the city must be "treated as a product that must be positioned and viewed in terms of its competitive position" (Ashworth and Voogd, 1990: 29).

The principle of cultural and symbolic aspects of a place becoming commodified in the name of economic development was in a way also argued by Bourdieu who insisted that symbolic power has to be based on the possession of symbolic capital (1989: 23), that is–knowledge, education, habits, heritage, experiences–that have been universally recognized and legitimized as valuable within the exchange economy. Harvey (2012), too, adverted that collective symbolic capital—the special marks of distinction that attach to some place—have the tendency to attract the flows of capital within the paradigm of entrepreneurial cities. This way, symbolic capital creates both symbolic and economic power and consequently, it also creates physical spaces of power.

Conceiving a city's symbolic economy as assets that are essential for its economic development (Edensor et.al., 2010; Evans, 2015) and as such, for competing with other

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[27] My italics.

regional rivals, has been fundamental for entrepreneurial strategies of city governance whose dependence from the culture industry has been increasingly growing in the last decades (Vanolo, 2008; Edensor et.al., 2010; Johansson & Kociatkiewicz, 2011). Richard Florida's (2002) thesis on the creative class has gained special prominence not only within the Academia, but also among city leaders for whom his articulations on the benefits of promoting certain types of creativity (e.g. research, arts, technology) have justified the adoption of goal-oriented strategies that include regeneration and transformation plans that are to enliven the local economy. As a result, cultural districts and innovation clusters have been implemented in cities across the world, from Barcelona to Bangalore, Kingali and Medellín, with the aim of producing new regional Silicon Valleys that, in addition to offering diverse work opportunities of the latest kind, also stand out for their vivid and multicultural urban lifestyles.

The notion of the "creative city" was first introduced by Landry and Bianchini (1995) in their book entitled *The Creative City* and taken to a similar terrain with Florida's "creative class" what he defines as the "the dominant class in society" (2002: ix). Seeing cities struggle under the tensions of post-industrial transition, both theories point towards creative solutions for urban problems, solutions that differ from traditional investments being made only in the physical attributes of place and infrastructure. Ideas and creative solutions are to substitute the dependence from labour input and raw materials. Suggesting policies that would create a desirable environment for the creative industries and, consequently, images of a desired, creative city, have unfortunately tended to create exclusive and selective strategies that enhance certain neighbourhoods and activities while leaving others in marginalization (Vanolo, 2008). In essence, the type of creativity Florida's work promotes is that which relates to entrepreneurialism and to the skill of turning one's imaginative activities into profit, and as such, it leaves out a myriad of creative everyday activities that are conducted for reasons other than profitability. Furthermore, the creative city concept has had the "proclivity to promote only those cultural activities whose products are easily commodifiable in terms of intellectual property rights and copyright material, such as music and film" (Edensor et.al., 2010: 4).

What alternatives are there to the profitable and entrepreneurial creative practices that are in such favour of policy makers and place marketers who aim to weave modern, diverse

and innovative city images? In which other forms could creative practices contribute to the (not necessarily economic) well-being of the city?

In a way, returning to De Certeau's thesis, Paul Willis underlines the power of the "common culture", insisting that there is a "vibrant symbolic life and symbolic creativity in everyday life […] that (re)produces identities, places and vital capacities of humans" (1993: 206, cited in Edensor et.al. 2010: 9). Speaking of the everyday decisions that lead to rituals of romance and subculture, personal style or aesthetic preferences of music and magazines, Willis sees symbolic creativity as essential for performing the work required for everyday existence. This way, he awards it a somewhat utilitarian meaning, seeing creativity as a form of everyday survival. Similarly to De Certeau, he denies the banal character of everyday acts; rather, he endorses their potential of giving meaning to the little elements that constitute the everyday. Despite the apparent lack of political positioning of the aesthetic decision-making that Willis speaks of, these decisions do participate in the constitution of social space through different habitus, by providing a sense of one's place and a sense of the place of others (Bourdieu, 1989: 17).

Even though Edensor et.al. (2010: 4) advert that music is highly commodifiable, I believe that music making as an activity, rather than a product, is not solely guided by the logic of capital but by the need of alleviating the weight of the everyday. Music making, especially when performed as a hobby, as an activity where time and place are shared with others, qualifies as Willis' "common culture" where decisions of identity, community and place are enacted. Even though often overlooked, the value of pastime activities fundamentally lies in the relationships that are built with the self, others and the environment, offering a temporary experience of the world as we would like it to be (Small, 1998). The following excerpt of an interview conducted with experimental drummer John Stevens illustrates well the essence of collective music making:

> Music is a chance for self-development, it is another little life in which it is easier to develop the art of giving, an art which makes you more joyous the more you practice it. The thing that matters most in group music is the relationship between those taking part. The closer the relationship the greater the spiritual warmth it generates, and if the musicians manage to give wholly to each other and to the situation they're in, then the sound of the music takes care of itself. Good and Bad become simply a question of how much the musicians are giving […].
>
> (Stevens, cited in Scott, 1987)

Stevens turned from professional jazz music to a completely new, experimental form of group improvisation to experiment not only with sounds and their organization in time, but also with ways of experiencing music and the relationships that are established in the process. Turino argues that while both presentational and participatory music occasions connect individuals and identity groups, the level of engagement and intimacy is stronger in the collective making of music where there is no separation between artists and audience (2008: 61-62). His distinction between presentational and participatory music defines the first as a field that involves "one group of people (the artists) providing music for another (the audience) in which there is pronounced artist-audience separation within face-to-face situations" (2008: 52). We could roughly categorize the first as music that is commodifiable insofar as it consists of offering a spectacle and as such, has an exchange value. In contrast, participatory music lacks artist-audience distinctions, being mainly focused on the *doing* and involving the maximum number of people in some performance role (2008: 28). Also, social agency is much more mobile and permeable in collective music making, compared to presentational music where the roles of spectators and performers are restricted by established norms of behaviour. There is thus a difference between music as a product (commodifiable) and music making as an activity of shared time and space (non-commodifiable).

This research is mostly interested in music making as a social activity, rather than a commercial product, even though keeping the two separated is often impossible and unnecessary. Looking at music as a hobby that is practiced for enthusiasm and enjoyment rather than need, can provide a means by which people can share interests, engage in collective projects and friendships by creating something together (Edensor et.al., 2010: 10). Against the value criteria of Good and Bad applied on the musical product, music making implicates a great deal of creativity, be it in the process of composing, lyric-writing, self-expressional gestures, or in the interaction with others. Looking at it as common, vernacular culture, music making has the potential of revealing and illuminating the "mundane as a site of assurance, resistance, affect and potentialities" (Edensor et.al., 2010: 10.), and as such, it can change our perception of everydayness. Looking at music making as a tactic (De Certeau, 1984) that is built upon symbolic relations constructed in shared time and space, not only do we see music's capacity of transforming the everyday

through little imaginative acts, but also its power to create differential spaces that resist the institutionalization of everyday lived experiences.

To finalize, the following premises will be established as hypotheses and analytical parameters for the next chapters that will focus on rap music and its role in creating counterdominant spaces and place narratives:

1) Space is inherently a social phenomenon that is produced and defined through the interaction among individuals. The social process of meaning-making also defines the way we act towards and relate to space. The signification is manipulated and modified in interpretative processes developed by the person by confronting things in his trajectory (Blumer, 1969), through spatial practices where meaning is verified, eliminated, regrouped or transformed to the situation. The spatial practices involve both the strategies of the strong whose main aim is to reinforce and extend their symbolic power relations, and the tactics of the ordinary man who faintly aims to change and appropriate dominated space (De Certeau, 1984).

2) Accordingly, the enduring dynamic of space is that of territorialization and de-territorialization (Deleuze and Guattari:1980/2005), which keeps a territory always subject to appropriations, meaning that city space is constantly given new meanings and uses by social actors who perform differential practices in it and thus subvert the dominant meanings and institutions. This way, the meaning of space is constantly redefined through acts of domination and appropriation, through strategies and tactics.

3) Music making is inherently a social process of interaction enacted in moments of shared time and space, in which symbolic relationships with the self, others and the environment are established, being thus constitutive of the production of social space.

4) As the symbolic relations that constitute social space have the tendency to be retranslated into physical space, the relations established in the act of music making are also constitutive of physical space.

5) Music making as an (unproductive) form of creativity is capable of challenging and transforming the dominant form of representations of space by providing lived experiences and thus, lived spaces that overlay the conceived and perceived space.

CHAPTER 4. RAP MUSIC AND THE SPATIAL PERSPECTIVE

You can take your boy out the 'hood but you can't take the hood out the homie.

(Kendrick Lamar, 2015)

This chapter introduces hip hop and its historical roots, going into depth with rap music, its spatial practices and discourse to discuss how it forms part of city life, urban change and transformation. The first part of the chapter gives an overview of the history of rap music, including the origins of hip hop in the U.S.A., and its subsequent development into a commercial music form. In second place, different aspects of societal and technological change will be discussed to contextualize the emergence of the cultural form and its evolving into a global multi-billion business. Through the literature review of studies of rap music and space, the parameters to look at hip hop from a spatial perspective will be set, studying its spatiality from the discursive, textual, digital and organizational aspects. In the final section, the discussion will be taken over to Latin America and lastly, to Medellín, to show the expansion and posterior vernacularization of the musical form.

4.1. The origins of hip hop

4.1.1. Hip hoppers as spatial chroniclers

Rap music is perhaps the contemporary music genre that is most strongly associated to urban spatial origins, given its birthplace in the ghettoes of New York. Its emergence among poor black Americans occurred in the context of deindustrialization where economic decline gave way to social forces that had an important impact on the evolving of new cultural forms (Rose, 1994). In addition to the tradition of black music behind the evolving of hip hop, social inequality, poverty and spatial division all played a role in the

development of the cultural form that required little previous musical training from its practitioners. Rose contends that hip hop is a product of postindustrial meltdown where "social alienation, prophetic imagination, and yearning intersect" (1994: 21).

Despite deindustrialization creating the conditions of urban poverty which artists addressed, technological changes that were taking place at the same time were fundamental for the progress of hip hop, giving way to new disc-jockeys, sound systems and to sampling which differentiated hip hop from other genres. Similar conditions of economic transformation, social inequality and spatial segregation have fed cultural movements elsewhere in the world where hip hop has been adapted both among the city's rich and poor thanks to its accessibility as a tool of self-expression.

Transformations and appropriation of urban space were very central to hip hop's initial developing in New York where a part of the movement grew into a force of resistance to evictions caused by plans of urban redevelopment. Apart from hip hop's resonance in places that face exclusionary redevelopment projects, it is also particularly prominent for giving voice to the inhabitants of places where local dynamics such as immigration, regeneration or tourism have contributed to significant urban changes and widening socio-spatial divide (Baker, 2006). This is why studying rappers' spatial discourses and practices may prove to be especially fruitful, representing a force that can potentially counter (or confirm) place narratives and enrichen the social construction of place meaning. Place-specific rap tracks also identify and explore positive attachments to place, weaving place narratives that are not only destructive of the dominant spatial discourse, but also construct alternative meanings to the places under dispute.

Despite efforts of improvement, cities like Medellín and other regional capitals that attract inhabitants from the outside, are still important sites of spatial and social segregation between the urban poor and rich due to new forms of control that maintain the status quo. As a movement that from its very origins has consisted of appropriating the urban public space through its different artistic forms (break dance, graffiti or rapping), often carrying a political message, hip hop offers important insights to how urban spaces are constructed from below by challenging the status quo. Investigating spaces of symbolic power and systematic discrimination through the spectrum of rap performances and rappers' (spatial)

discourse helps broaden our understanding of the social construction of meaning of places. Thinking of the urban public sphere as more than the supposedly equal public space where traditional elites define their identity and community, guides our look towards other spatial realities and other public spheres where the definition of identities is achieved through complex confrontations.

As Forman observes, within the hip hop culture, artists and cultural producers often embody the role of "sophisticated chroniclers" who observe and narrate the "spatially oriented conditions" (Forman, 2002: 8) of troublesome existence amidst the urban conflict. In addition, their role in the shaping of topics and styles of narration is also fundamental for the development of local expressions and alternative discursive spaces that bring forth discourses that are otherwise lost in the dominating "noise" that Attali describes as the source of power (1974: 6).

To understand how these alternative discursive spaces are constructed, we must ask which are the social and cultural networks that mediate conflict and communicate the alternative voices of peripheral spaces. How much autonomy do the alternative institutions have and how do they maintain and reinforce their authority as representatives of minorities? How much interaction can be found between the centre and periphery, between the spaces of power and spaces of disperse domination? Which spaces are most significant for cultural forms and processes that emerge from the grassroots level and compose the hip hop culture, and which institutions express and articulate it?

4.1.2. Rap music in the Academia

Ever since its popularization and commercialization in the 1990s, plenty has been written on hip hop and rap music. One of the first academic inquiries on hip hop as an expression of black African American youth was conducted by Tricia Rose (1994), who mostly focused on issues of race and gender, emphasizing the role of technology in the development of rap music. Since then, many scholars (Quinn, 1996; Ibrahim, 1999; Clay, 2003) have focused on identity and race, with a focus on hip hop's globalization and its capacity of contesting local politics (Tickner, 2008; Naerland, 2014; Gonzalez, 2018) and small-town realities (Allaste & Kobin, 2010). Rap music has also been studied in

glocalized contexts to see how it portrays whiteness and authenticity in Britain (Bennett, 1999), or ethnolinguistic nationalism and masculinity in post-Soviet Estonia (Vallaste, 2012). Content analysis of rap lyrics and videos has been focused on from gender perspective, looking at misogyny and patriarchal hegemony (Armstrong, 2001), female body images and representations (Shelton, 2008; Zhang et.al., 2010) or 'unwomanliness' in rap music (Haugen, 2010). Research on hip hop has also been done from a theological perspective, focusing on spirituality and religious themes in holy hip hop (Pollard, 2010) or theological existentialism in non-religious mainstream artists' work (McLeod Jr., 2017; Linder, 2017). In addition, there is a growing body of literature on hip hop as an educational tool (Ballivían & Herrera, 2012) and as a means of youth empowerment (Sims, 2011), and it is also starting to be included in research regarding music therapy (Lightstone, 2012).

Despite the myriad of topics and perspectives to look at hip hop, the central issues discussed in the body of literature regarding hip hop are most often race, class and gender. These were already covered in an outstanding way by Tricia Rose in her pioneering study *Black Noise: Rap music and Black Culture in Contemporary America* (1994). Rose's work was seminal for associating hip hop's black origins with technological advances of the 1970s and 1980s, and she succeeded in giving rap music a more dignified value for the contribution it has made to popular culture. With impressive elicited data from hip hop's first generation artists such as Queen Latifah or Salt, her research addresses the black music industry and questions the white hegemony that reigns the industry. Her feminist analysis of North America's first wave of hip hop set the standard for future academic analysis of rap music by locating this cultural form in a framework of social, political and technological change.

What the book lacks, though, is a more extensive understanding of hip hop's spatial dimension, discourse and consequences. Except for a small chapter of urban contextualization where Rose touches upon the urban changes that were taking place in New York's inner city ever since the 1950s, she puts little attention on what rap music can tell us about space and place. While she acknowledges the importance of street culture in the development of hip hop, there is less recognition of the importance of hip hop for understanding the streets, the neighbourhood and spatial contestations. In this sense, her

writing fails to provide a framework for studying hip hop as a social movement that represents the voice of the underrepresented–the barely unknown, underground artists that seek for resonance despite the forces of the market.

More than a decade of substantial changes in the hip hop industry took Rose to publishing her second book *Hip Hop Wars* (2008) where she takes an important stance at what she calls the "trinity of commercial hip hop–the black gangsta, pimp, and ho" (p. 4), critiquing the loss of stylistic variety and the hyper-sexism ruling across the genre. Here, the author holds that hip hop's commercialization led to a corporatized, apolitical musical genre, which has largely served to enrich a few artists at the expense of the many. Maintaining her perspective of race and gender, she criticizes how the commercialized "angry stories about life in the ghetto" (p.5) are progressively used as proof of black behaviour recreating ghetto conditions. She judges both rap producers and the corporate market for leading to such misunderstandings and simplifications that feed the mass media's stigmatizing views of black rappers. With fierce critique on hip hop's purposeful commercialization and tilting towards the monotonous gangsta-pimp-ho topic, Rose calls for more committed and responsible analysis of hip hop, both from academics and music critics. As her previous book, *Hip Hop Wars* is also born from the perspective of cultural and African American studies, focusing on media representations and the music industry's manipulation of the black culture. While offering some insights to the spatial dimension of discrimination towards the underprivileged black population, she mostly looks at the issue from a socio-cultural perspective, leaving the spatial dimension aside.

Another key author and one of the first scholars to conduct ethnographic research on rap music was Cheryl L. Keyes. With focus on folkloric ethnomusicological aspects, Keyes wrote *Rap Music and Street Consciousness* (2002)*, building upon feminist and queer theory, as well as political and legal history. As the book's title reveals, Keyes sees rap music as a cultural form that was born out of the streets, and the streets were the providers of an alternative education, economy, ethics and identity for the black Americans that lived in a predominantly white hegemony. In contrast to Rose (1994), she does not define rap music so much in the context of modernity and technological change; rather, Keyes looks at it as a cultural process over time and as a "dynamic tradition" that is "anchored in a cultural history" (1996: 224).

Her work is distinguished for its ethnomusicological approach and contribution: through extensive ethnographic fieldwork across the United States, Keyes has brought out important links between rap music and African oral and musical traditions. For instance, she speaks of how Western linear time-keeping is not sufficient for analysing African music and adds that rap musicians use a similar non-linear time perception which is "unmeasurable but consciously experienced" (1996: 235). Another ethnographic aspect that she brings out is the African concept of *nommo* being present in rap music. Originating in Mali, nommo represents the generative power of the spoken word and the force that gives life to everything. Keyes holds that rap music was initially built upon this imaginary power of the word that helped black youth resist changes that were taking place in their everyday surroundings. Coinciding with Rose (1994), Keyes draws attention on the linguistic creativity of many rap musicians. She holds that the nonstandard language of African American street culture constantly reinvents and enrichens mainstream English. Apart from the rhythmic possibilities that linguistic inventions create, the "inner" language and style are often incomprehensible to outsiders and allows the performers to disobey the dominant power and market (Rose, 1994: 85). With an important contribution to understanding rap music and its themes from an ethnomusicological aspect, her writing falls short on providing a framework for examining hip hop from a spatial perspective.

Geoffrey Baker's work on rap music in Cuba (2006, 2011) weaves a strong tie between the local rap scene, the urban context and Cuba's aperture towards Western visitors that has influenced local artists' performing and style. Baker studies Habana's becoming into a socio-capitalist city through the hip-hop movement, introducing the roots of it in the 1990's with the Special Period that for the first time allowed the use of dollars and a certain cultural liberty for foreign influences. By discussing what he calls the nationalization of Cuban rap, Baker argues that hip hop communities' resistant identities and state ideology are not always on opposite poles in a society under transformation (Baker, 2011), thus challenging the predominant narrative of hip-hop as a historically resistant form of expression. This is perhaps one the biggest contributions of Baker's work: he avoids the dominant scholarly agenda that tends to seek for the prevailing "resistance" narrative when doing research on hip hop. Rather, he studies the wider hip hop community, including artists whose performance might "skew their own social reality

so that it conforms to tourists' expectations" (2011: 312) and cater to an audience that promises (larger) income. Despite Baker's training in musicology, his work on rap music in Habana departs from the perspective of cultural studies, leaving musicological aspects in the background. This way, he offers a comprehensive view of the evolving of a musical genre and the multiple social, economic and political factors that interplay in its development.

As exemplified by the writings of Baker, place and space are slowly emerging in the interest of scholars writing about hip hop. In addition to Baker's (2006; 2011) investigations of Cuban rap, scholars have also focused on the spatial rootedness of hip hop in big music markets such as France and Brazil. In Brazil, Pardue (2004) noticed rappers being increasingly focused on marginal urban spaces such as the favelas; while French rappers have constructed portrays of urban decay in peripheral Paris, exposing what has been termed "postcolonial urban apartheid" (Silverstein and Tetreault, 2005, cited in Baker, 2006: 217). Alternatively, in post-Soviet Estonia, the dominating stories of economic growth have been challenged by the hip hop artist "Kanye East"'s[28] imaginative representations of the capital's Soviet housing districts, showing an alternative image of the success-driven small country.

One of the first academic writings to look at hip hop from a more geographic perspective was Murray Forman's study *The 'Hood Comes First. Race, Space and Place in Rap and Hip-Hop* (2002). Forman (2002, 2004) has focused on hip hop from the spatial perspective to analyse the evolution of the cultural form in North America in 1978 - 1996. By articulating spatial issues and the significance of the homeplace of hip hop crews, he underlines that territoriality is a central element of the genre, for which it should be studied from a spatial perspective. Forman argues that rap tracks tend to have an obsessive preoccupation with place and locality, and through songs artists express how these places are inhabited and made meaningful (2004: 220). In *The 'Hood Comes First. Race, Space and Place in Rap and Hip-Hop* (2002), he introduced the Spatial turn to his study of rap music, applying a socio-geographical approach that allowed him to extend the "canon"

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[28] Kanye East is hip hop artist Tommy Cash's alternative name, which is aligned to his overall branding as a rapper from Eastern Europe. See his video representations of Estonia in "Surf" (Tommy Cash, 2017) or "Leave me Alone" (Tommy Cash, 2015) in YouTube.

of hip hop that had predominantly focused on issues of race, identity and gender. By examining the genre through geographic concepts such as scale and sense of place, he offered a new perspective on the discursive and spatial practices of hip hop.

While Forman's geographically informed writings opened a new horizon to understanding rap music from the spatial perspective, his articulations are often ponderous, making their comprehension difficult in comparison to traditional readings of hip hop. For those unfamiliar with the authors of the Spatial turn, his arguments may seem ambiguous and excessively complex. With a four-partite division of hip hop into textual, discursive, organizational and "real" spaces, Forman creates a framework that aims to explain the functioning of rap music through different spatial modalities. Despite the usefulness of some aspects of his framework, such as looking at the music industry as an organizational space of power, it lacks a meticulous understanding and description of music making, of how music as a social interaction creates what he calls "real spaces". By aiming to rigidly frame the different modalities of hip hop into separated spaces, he forgets that space is open, evolving, multi-layered and always in constant change. Forman barely observes the simultaneous production of space in different social contexts and thus ignores how these spaces interpenetrate one another and/or superimpose themselves upon one another, as Lefebvre suggested in his original work on the *Production of Space* (1974/1991).

Forman builds his theory upon Lefebvre's social production of space. He argues that "hip hop comprises a deliberate, concentrated, and often spontaneous array of spatial practices and spatial discourses that are both constituted by and constitutive of the spaces and places in which its primary cultural producers live and work" (2002: 42). Inspired by Lefebvre's tripartite division of space, Forman constructs a quadripartite modality of the spaces of hip hop, speaking of the discursive, textual, organizational and experiential spaces.

The discursive space encompasses both communication structures and sites, including the mainstream and alternative media, as well as academic publications that reflect upon hip hop (2002: 9). Forman sees discourse as the key medium through which the world of experience acquires meaning, including the formation of identity that the author finds

"fundamentally rooted in spatial relations" (p.10). Importantly, in Forman's reading discourse sets the stage for practice, and it is through the dynamics of discourse and practice that minority groups are spatialized and spaces are marginalized. Discourse is thus essential for the definition of identities, as well as for the spatial marginalization of (some of the) identities as it is through discourse that cultural authenticity and practices that express it are merged (Forman, 2002: 9).

In second place, Forman speaks of the textual space of rap music which is expressed in recorded form (songs, videos, TV-series, film and television) and through press coverage that focuses on rap and hip hop explicitly (p.14). Both comprise material products that are disseminated locally and globally within the practice of capital exchange and are thus part of the commodification of culture. Forman warns that hip hop's various texts do not necessarily represent the "whole story," rather, they are part of each individual's reading and understanding which relies upon the person's cultural capital (p. 15). For this reason, the analysis of the production of space in hip hop should not only rely on a reading of its textual modality as the outcome of it would be highly subjective.

In third place, organizational space is what Forman refers to when he speaks about geographies of power and of hip hop as an organized global corporate enterprise. This commercialized space of hip hop is in the domain of the global corporate entertainment industry and it represents authority and influence (p.19), or what Lefebvre would refer to as spaces of power (1974). Organizational space allows Forman to speak about both, the submission of hip hop artists to the capitalist logic of reproduction as well as of major record labels exerting power over smaller independent ones. Organizational space is where decisions of what actually sells and what is popular are made.

This leads to Forman's final spatial modality that speaks of the experiential or material spaces of "the real" (p. 22)–the space of human interactions and spatial practices–which Lefebvre called lived space (1974). These are the actual spaces of musicking, where music is made, prepared, heard, shared and exchanged. This is the space of the world around us, where social practices and relationships are enacted and through which physical space is rendered meaningful in cultural terms. Forman's real space also

encompasses the reproduction of the society and its forms according to how it's inhabited and experienced (p. 23).

When looking at the history of hip hop, Forman describes that its practices quickly evolved away from the central spaces of their origin, ending up in textual, discursive and organizational spaces where they became commodified and turned into market goods. This well explains the paradox between the lived spaces and the representational spaces of power, of how the latter appropriates meaningful spatial practices by incorporating them into its system. Amidst these dynamics of domination and control where whichever lived experience has the potential of becoming a market good, we may question the existence of creative practices that deliberately avoid crossing the space of representation in fear of content losing significance in the name of prominence. Are all artistic processes doomed to be carried out with the aim of self-design and productive narcissism (Groys, 2018)? Groys holds that the postmodern era of design that followed Debord's *The Society of the Spectacle* (1967/1994) has transformed society itself into an exhibition space in which "individuals appear as both artists and self-produced works of art" (2018: 15). Following Groys' idea, whichever element of the everyday, including our looks, is produced as an element of design, as a work of art, and as such, is subject to commodification in a commodifying society. This puts into doubt the possibility of pure, lived experiences or moments that allow an escape from the "devastating conquest of the conceived" abstraction of space and everydayness (Wilson, 2013: 366).

Craig Wilkins, with training in architecture, has also proposed a theoretical framework of the space of hip hop which he calls a "(w)rapped space" (2000). (W)rapped space is characterized by three main elements: firstly, the "sonic organization and use of space created in and by a distinct social context"; secondly, its dependence of "experience and memory, linked to time in the form of the past, present, and future"; and lastly, (w)rapped space is "defined and communicated by people through patterns of use in the built environment" (2000: 8). It remains unclear what Wilkins refers to by speaking about the "distinct" social context, whether he is addressing otherness or if he's giving resonance to Bourdieu's *Distinction* (1979/1996) and his thesis of aesthetic taste being legitimized by those who have biggest cultural capital. Referring to Mowitt (1987), Wilkins aims to conceptualize the "distinct sonic organization" as a social power of resistance to

standardized listening. According to Mowitt, music is socially important because of its capacity to create alternatives to the "socially sanctioned public structures of listening that define normal, or "proper" ways of making sense of what you hear" (Mowitt, 1987: 181, cited in Wilkins, 2000: 8). He emphasizes that standards of normalcy help define a social order and argues, in contrast, that an alternative sonic organization and alternative sounds promulgate alternative ways of listening, and thus, distinct ways of making sense of the noise around us. In Bourdieu's arguing, distinct classifications classify the classifiers: "Social subjects, classified by their classifications, distinguish themselves by the distinctions they make" (1979/1996: 6). The distinctions made by those with the biggest cultural capital tend to dictate what is good and what is bad taste. This distinction is admired by those who desire to possess the same amount of cultural capital and with that they confirm the standards legitimized by the (cultural) elites. Those with little access to the cultural capital defined as worthy of possessing are left disadvantaged and with little means of seeing their own cultural capital as valuable as long as the dominant distinction does not decide to appropriate elements of the "lower culture". Could the different organization of sound and new ways of listening and making sense of what is heard be a means of creating other social orders and other systems of distinction?

The second element of his (w)rapped space is something both Forman and Wilkins discuss only briefly–the importance of memory in the social production of space. Following Lefebvre's spatial theory, Wilkins explains that bodies that interact produce space and this "interaction is specific to a time, place, and social formation, but is also historical–it has a memory, a past" (2000: 9). The memory of the interactions carried out among people is what constitutes it as a distinctive space in their perception and in their posterior communication with the place, be it verbal or physical. Here, Wilkins cites De Certeau (1984) and his theory of "pedestrian speech acts" defining and communicating space. Wilkins argues that "space–like music–cannot be static; it is dynamic, adapted by its user for the communication of specific meanings" (p. 9). Drawing parallels with De Certeau who sees movement through space as a pattern that consists of symbols that communicate to other pedestrians, we can also consider music as a form of communication and interaction that is constitutive of space through shared experience and memory. This way, both movement and music constitute languages that can

communicate space. De Certeau expresses that the pedestrian street acts–people's movement in space–"secretly structure the determining conditions of social life" by implying interaction between a speaker and observer that communicates meaning" (De Certeau, 1984, cited in Wilkins, 2000: 8). Finally, Wilkins formulates that "within a framework of communication that is reciprocally transformed and transforms the elements of language (musical, verbal and pedestrian) are words consistently chosen, appropriated, adapted, and employed by people to communicate meaning that is unique to that particular group, space, and time" (p.8).

This leads to Wilkins seeing hip hop space as palimpsestic–constructed layer by layer– and being in constant change (2000: 7), as occurs in conversation. This way, he approaches Doreen Massey's (2005) view of space as a simultaneity of stories that is always under construction (p. 9) and open to change (p. 130). Similar to Massey, Wilkins also underlines human action, saying that hip hop spaces are constructed through performance (p.12), yet his idea seems to be more related to space as a stage of the public sphere, rather than looking at performance from a phenomenological perspective. He conceives of performative hip hop space as one that both provides the stage *for* and invites performance, with space being produced through the conjunction of people within it (p. 12). Fluidity, human interaction and performativity are all characteristics that Wilkins proposes as antagonistic to spaces that represent the power of oppression (p. 7).

Wilkins' theory of (w)rapped space holds strong as long as it remains a theory; however, by aiming to materialize it into an actual built space, he loses its fluidity and potential as a "space that will be". Despite nurturing his theory with Lefebvre and De Certeau's social approaches to space, Wilkins maintains a view proper to his profession: as an architect he intends to conceive a physical space for the performance of hip hop, yet he falls in the dichotomy of hip hop performance representing the ideal alternative world through its spatial practices, whilst the "indistinct" social context represents the threat of dominant power. He thus ignores that oppression and dominance go beyond physical and material expressions, often being more powerful in its discursive and organizational form. In any case, isn't the creation of a space destined to practices that are expected to be intrinsically oppositional to "the system" in contradiction with the purpose of the practice? Shouldn't hip hop ideally be nomadic, this way achieving an ephemeral, non-commodifiable

character? Or even a transitory non-space where things occur in the present moment, without leaving any physical traces? By creating or contemplating the creation of spaces specific for otherwise unaccepted practices Wilkins runs the risk of locating them in a context that facilitates their reproduction and appropriation by what they oppose to.

4.1.3. Rap music: a counterculture?

Rap music has come to be known as a phenomenon that was born on the streets of New York where black youth developed a new cultural form that was largely influenced by social, musical and technological changes (Rose, 1994; Keyes, 1996). Many of the movement's founding artists resided in New York's decadent neighbourhoods where people were experiencing structured discrimination and the destruction of local communities and evictions that were executed under the direction of legendary planner Robert Moses (Jacobs, 1961; Rose, 1994). Since its birth, rap music has thus been inherently social and spatial, emerging in conditions of societal change in a city where racial discrimination was nurturing segregation that further developed the spatial division between low class black Americans and wealthier white populations. Not only were the first hip hop groups comprised of the youth from New Yorks' underprivileged neighbourhoods, but these also became the scenario and the subject of the first hip hoppers' artistic expressions. In addition, rap music's extensively spatial character is not only indebted to the song lyrics that addressed inner city problems, but also to the genre's strong ties to graffiti and break dancing that have an eminently territorial character. This high degree of spatial awareness is one of the key factors that distinguishes hip hop from other modern cultural and subcultural youth formations (Forman, 2004).

Hip hop consists of four elements: DJ-ing, MC-ing, break dancing and graffiti. Born as simple pastime activities that joined people in rhythm, dance moves and "urban writing" (Creswell, 1996), hip hop eventually turned into a justice-seeking cultural movement that sought to oppose to urban regeneration projects that were taking place in the marginalized neighbourhoods of New York. Even though the first commercial hip hop song to top mainstream music charts was released in 1979 (Rose, 1994), some of hip hop's musical characteristics go back to the 1940's and rap music as an oral tradition goes further back to black African oral tradition.

Historically, the concept of rapping which means talking in rhythm over music or to a beat generated by the human body can be traced from African bardic traditions to the rural oral southern-based expressive forms of African Americans (Keyes, 1996: 225). Keyes suggests that in addition to making use of certain oral traditions of African ancestry, there are other aspects that prove the black origins of rap music, such as the perception of time in the performance of songs or the manipulation of timbre, texture and texts. Moreover, she uses the concept of *nommo* to speak of rap music relying on the "power of the word" that "transforms psychological suffering into external denouncements" and generates "verbal recognition of self-worth and personal attributes" (Baber, 1987:83 cited in Keyes, 1996: 234). Nommo originates in Mali and represents the generative power of the spoken word, being a force that gives life to everything. According to the author, nommo permeates orality throughout the African diaspora and provides rap music with symbolic power of resistance and self-recognition.

On the rhythmic side, rap music is based on three musical genres: rhythm & blues (R&B), funk, and disco (Romero, 2010). The first of them evolved in the 1940s from the so called '*race music*' that included jazz, blues and gospel music, mostly practiced and consumed by African Americans (Oliver, 2003). Ike Turner, Fats Dominio and Solomon Burke are a few of the most remarkable artists of that era. R&B was slowly taken over by soul music that appeared in the 1960's with Ray Charles, Marvin Gaye and Aretha Franklin who all left enormous footprints in the musical track that maintained its "gospelish" sound. Parallel to political movements such as the Black Panther Party and the notable influence of Martin Luther King, soul became the voice of black North America, demanding rights and justice in a period of intense racial discrimination and violence (Peters, 2014). Quickly after its release in 1964 Sam Cooke's *Change is Gonna Come* became the anthem of the Black Panthers.

With the passing of time, the justice-verbalizing tone of soul music was gradually substituted by more festive moods, characterized by faster rhythms and jovial lyrics. Soul fused into funk, and the two have ever since maintained very close ties. The essence of both genres is best demonstrated in the *Soul Train* TV episodes, that was broadcasted in the United States ever since 1971, featuring the latest trends in music, fashion and dance moves. In the TV episodes one can witness how James Brown, his *Sex Machine* and

other sensual funk tunes joined people in dance and diversion. As the genre evolved, synthesizers and rhythmic boxes were involved in the making of funky rhythms that would later define hip hop on the streets of South Bronx. The development and the use of technology became crucial in the evolving of hip hop, that would disregard orthodox music production in the name of new sounds, rhythms and means of expression.

An important step towards hip hop's eventual character is the introduction of disc jockeys who were in charge of choosing the background beat for the MC-s (microphone controllers). Picking the music and playing it in public originated in Jamaica with aficionados who'd often bring the newest sounds from the U.S. and play it in their mobile sound systems that essentially consisted of medium-sized vans with special sound equipment that turned the vehicle into a mobile disco. As part of a larger migrant wave that had started in the beginning of the 20th century and intensified during the 1940s with the British West Indies program (Zong & Batalova, 2019), the Caribbean communities were growing in areas circling New York, introducing their autochthonous cultures in the metropolis. Either lacking economic means to access clubs, or avoiding discos because it was becoming too dangerous due to gang violence, mobile discos were started to be performed in neighbourhood parks or schoolyards (Keyes, 1996). Musically equipped trucks and other DIY musical platforms that 'borrowed' electricity from the public utility poles to play music at open air parties became the veritable precursors of an urban movement composed of music and marginality (Toop, 1984). Two or more DJ-s would often connect their equipment to close-by poles and start battles for best sounding music, both in terms of volume and quality.

There seems to be general recognition that the final rhythm of hip hop was invented by the Jamaica born DJ Kool Herc who was famous for his ultra-powerful sound systems known as Herculords, as well as for his impressive record collection (Rose, 1994). Herc understood that the tunes he played at parties always had a climax point, causing a euphoric effect among the audience. Seeking to extend this moment, he picked two examples of the same vinyl and played that peak sound for several times altering the two records. He called it the *break beat* that would eventually become the percussion or the rhythmical base of hip hop. In musical terms, it's the four basic bars that define hip hop tunes. According to Rose, it was Herc's break-beats, played on the Herculords, that

inspired breakdancers' freestyle moves and sparked a new generation of hip hop DJs (1994: 52). Technological development and the experiments of the first DJs (of whom many were electricians) gave way to sampling–cutting whichever audio track to "recycle" it for a new song–, and "popping"–the use of old-sounding records in the mixing of songs–that made hip hop evolve into a new genre that was combing the tradition of different cultural forms with the newest of technology.

Besides DJ Kool Herc there were other central figures, such as Afrika Bambaata and Joseph "Grandmaster Flash" Sadler developing the first sounds of hip hop. Grandmaster Flash was a Barbadosian young DJ with excellent skills of street battles of DJ-ing. He introduced several new mixing techniques, such as backspinning and cutting, and his protégé, Grandwizard Theodore, invented scratching: moving a record back and forth in a rhythmic manner while the tone arm's needle remains in the groove of the record, thereby producing a scratch-like sound (Keyes, 1996). Since mixing records was becoming an art that required the use of nearly all body parts, the control of the microphone had to be given to fellow aficionados. This gave birth to MC-s who became the Masters of Ceremony–the vocal entertainers of the party. As hip hop parties had little or no protocol to be followed, the MC-s simply became Microphone Controllers, often announcing rather unrelated messages, such as "Say up jump the boogie to the bang bang boogie, let's rock, you don't stop" (The Sugarhill Gang, 1979), to liven up the public. The vocal entertainers' were initially influenced by funk and disco music's rhythm and often hedonistic messages; however, in time the discourse of the MCs became more coherent and politically conscious, addressing problems of poverty and discrimination in low-income neighbourhoods. Keyes explains that one of the reasons of rap's distancing from jovial disco music was that the latter had ended up sounding too accelerated and "white":

> In New York City in the mid-1970s, the dominant black popular music was disco as it was every place else. The difference about New York was that kids were funk fiends who weren't getting their vitamins from disco music. It was 'too nervous,' in their terminology, which meant, too fast. It was too gay. It was something, but it just didn't move them and so they were thrown back into their own resources and what happened was that they started to [...] play a lot of James Brown [...] His old records were [...] staples, and Kool and the Gang, and heavy funk like that developed. I mean part of it just had to do with there being a lot of neighbourhood parks in New York City [...] and what kind of music [was] played in those parks by the disc jockeys there.

Grandmaster Flash's emcees, The Furious Five (Melle Mel, Kid Creole, Cowboy, Raheim, and Mr. Ness), were the first ones to start MC-ing in a slightly more complex manner, "trading phrases" in a percussive, witty fashion, and in synchrony with the DJs' music (Keyes, 1996: 229). This way, MC-s stopped being the ordinary entertainers of the party and started to spread (socially) engaging messages to the public. *The Message* (1982) by Grandmaster Flash and The Furious Five was one of the first commercialized hip hop songs with lyrics that expressed a particular concern about the life in the 'hood.

> It's like a jungle sometimes
> It makes me wonder how I keep from goin' under
>
> ---
>
> Broken glass everywhere
> People pissin' on the stairs, you know they just don't care
> I can't take the smell, can't take the noise
> Got no money to move out, I guess I got no choice
> Rats in the front room, roaches in the back
> Junkies in the alley with a baseball bat
> I tried to get away but I couldn't get far
> Cause a man with a tow truck repossessed my car.

Describing the ambience of the Bronx, black rappers were giving visibility to the ghetto and its poor living conditions, speaking of low levels of hygiene ("pissin' on the stairs"), security ("junkies in the alley with a baseball bat"), and public services of waste recollection ("broken glass everywhere"), as well as of economic problems ("got no money to move out") and discrimination ("a man with a tow truck repossessed my car"). Rap music became the expression of the oppressed, depicting issues of class, race and gender, being most often associated with deteriorated city areas of New York. This way, the 1980s brought rap music back to the justice-seeking roots of urban black music of the 1940s where jazz and blues musicians would often narrate racial discrimination and other challenges experienced by the African Americans.

Besides DJ-ing and MC-ing, hip hop's development has also been strongly tied to break dance and graffiti and there has always been important intertextuality between the four elements of hip hop. Graffiti dates back to the 1960s when the first names, symbols and images were written on subway trains and public facades of New York. In the 1970s the

initial tagging (writing one's artistic signature) took on a new focus and complexity, with individual styles, themes and techniques being developed by graffiti artists who aimed to increase their visibility, individual identity, and status (Rose, 1994). Despite certain recognition in the Soho arts scene, graffiti quickly came to be known as juvenile delinquency and became part of the marginalizing narrative of New York's urban decay. As vandal acts of public disorder, graffiti became instrumentalized by the authorities through a discourse of differentiation of right and wrong, between "us" and "them". The material defacement of public property and the subversion of authority it meant, created further illusions of disorder, adding to the already existing problematics of housing and lack of public services.

Similar to rappers that created their own cultural codes and hidden transcripts (Rose, 1994), graffiti became another counterdominant narrative that challenged the power imbalance and allowed temporary triumphs of the "name over the nameless" (Creswell, 1996: 46). As Cresswell holds, "the presence of graffiti denies dominant divisions of meaning" (1996:47), the meaning of private property, of order in public space, and "proper" ways of behaving in the public sphere. By proposing alternative uses and significance for places, graffiti artists added to the social construction of meaning of places, opening a dialogue with the previously established spatial discourses.

A new use to public (and private) space was also given by break dance that emerged at the same time with the outdoor sound system parties. Rose has called this new style a "dance and musical pastiche" (1994: 47) that used disco music to focus on the break points, highlighting and extending the breaks in and between. The break points of music turned into dancers' performative moments to demonstrate innovative moves, inspired by African rite dances, acrobacy and martial arts, mixed with fashionable moves straight out of the dance hall. Much like graffiti, breakdancing developed a contradictory relationship to dominant culture, probably because it was often performed in public spaces and consisted of group meetings that represented threats to public order. This way, it summed to hip hop as a counterdominant movement, adding an even more embodied practice of spatial contestation to dominant place narratives.

4.2. Authenticity and representation

Baker argues that hip hop is too often "perceived simply as mirrors of reality, but "representing" is both a political and an artistic act" (2011: 312). This way, he calls for critical reflection when studying the political discourse and the resistance narrative or hip hop. He holds that the act of representing often takes place under external influences and what is being represented may actually be a staged authenticity (MacCannell, 1973). In his study of Cuban rappers, Baker saw that misrepresentations between authenticity and staged representations of authenticity occurred because of the growing pressure of tourists and foreign listeners that expected seeing oppressed artists, and this left the rappers no other choice than to incarnate that role in exchange for bigger record sales. These staged realities do not only occur in a context where the foreign audience seeks for exotic content–be it rhythms, textures, or stories of repression–but more generally in the genre of political, conscious rap where rappers are expected to be the "voice of the people" and to reveal uncovered stories of the disadvantaged.

In this sense, Forman (2002) could be criticized for considering rap music too light-heartedly as a reliable source of information that mirrors local realities and offers "alternative cartographies" of the city and its spaces of power and resistance. His idealized conception of rap lyrics providing "maps upon which young artists and their wider audiences might trace patterns of dominant hegemonic power and locate spaces where alternative or oppositional potentials can cohere and thrive" (Forman 2002: 60) leaves a black and white idea of rap music as oppositional to what he calls the organizational power space. While there is a strong component of territorial references above all in some rappers' song lyrics, very often the expressions fall into general topics of social injustice, state crime and criminal organizations' power abuse, without naming specific actors or spaces as a way of caution and self-protection. Even though many rappers, especially those from the 'hood, do have a different, often more detailed and embodied knowledge of the city thanks to traversing spaces that regular middle class inhabitants ignore, representations of those spaces are largely part of an imaginative process. This way, drawing (imaginary) maps based upon song lyrics would at best give us a Situationist notion of the city, fragmenting not only classical cartography, but also

hip hoppers' own experiences of place. Even if a rapper's experiences in the city do affect his perception of it, often times it is the imagination that fuels his observations and representations of place. Without putting in doubt the many autobiographic elements used in song writing, the act itself is a creative process that often borrows metaphors, common images and exclamations for either stylistic or metric reasons. In this sense, the frequently mentioned social barriers and discrimination are more often ubiquitous rather than place-specific. While it is important to seek for new narratives of representing space, I believe an "alternative cartography" contributes little to hip hop knowledge in the construction of better and more inclusive cities. Rather, the lyrics should be seen as a multi-dimensional dialectical process that involves different and synchronic representations of the city (Viñuela, 2010: 21). I advert looking at hip hop in terms of leadership, social interaction and not so much in terms of the musical production per se as I believe that it is the complexity of hip hop as a social and cultural movement that can tell us more about places.

The role of a rapper, as of any other performer that gets on stage or in the recording studio—both spaces connoted with symbolic power—depends on the expectations of the audience and the performer itself, and to fulfil the expectations, often times a different role, a mask is needed to perform the required identity. Layder argues that a person's self-identity is not limited to a singular "core" image; rather, "people have many different sides to their personalities, and they reveal different aspects of themselves to different people on different occasions" (Layder, 1994: 67). Frith (1996), on the other hand, argues that identity is something that we put or try on and it comes from the outside, not the inside. This way, it is the "outside" and its different occasions that influence our authenticity and identity. In Baker's study of Cuban rap, the specific occasion for a specific identity was the growing number of foreign visitors and audience who represented an opportunity of greater income and potential contacts outside Cuba. This is what motivated some rappers to deliver a new role: rappers less true to their original line and message altered their own social reality to cater to the wealthy audience's expectations. For this reason, the repertoire was designed accordingly to what the public sought for–the politically isolated artists' tough life experiences–instead of following their "own line" (Baker, 2011: 312).

The same has occurred with big artists who have designed their performance image basing on the stereotypes that are expected to be found in a determined genre and stage. Rose (1994) narrates how Robert Van Winkle (aka Vanilla Ice) desired to be a "white negro" and therefore lied about his childhood upbringing in the ghetto and hanging out with blacks, even though he was actually a middle-class white boy from Dallas, Texas. This, as Rose suggests, was Vanilla Ice's way of validating his status as a rapper and it speaks of ghetto-blackness being a critical code (1994: 12) for being acknowledged as a real "authentic" rapper.

Being conscious of the impressions our acting causes, we may seek to display (or invent) determined attributes of our "self," like the yearned "ghettoness" of Vanilla Ice, that is in accordance with the mask we are currently wearing. Goffman suggests that masks are the conception we develop of ourselves, and that in time it becomes our "second nature and an integral part of our personality" (Park, 1950:249, cited in Goffman, 1956: 12), meaning that the performer may end up being "sincerely convinced that the impression of reality which he stages is the real reality" (Goffman, 1956: 10). The success or credibility of a role thus depends on the conviction of the performer. This conviction, though, may be based on a person's "enlightened false consciousness" which is when the person knows that what he does misrepresents social reality, but keeps performing the role because of the "unavoidable and omnipresent consumer society" (Sloterdijk, 1993, cited in Vallaste, 2012: 7) that demands determined roles to be performed. Roles and masks thus take part of the reproduction of ideology ("the omnipresent consumer society") that commodifies the performance in the first place. Performance is thus a political act where ideologies are produced and reproduced, as well as an artistic act that is embedded in carefully chosen attributes and symbols that construct the performer's stage image.

4.2.1. Political and conscious rap

Tricia Rose opens her second book, *Hip Hop Wars* (2008) with a phrase that announces that hip hop is in a terrible crisis (p.1), alluding to the apolitization of the genre and its strong tendency towards hyper-sexist gangsta-pimp-ho monotony. By the 1980s, rap music–recordings, concert sales, television commercials and films–had grown into a billion-dollar industry (Keyes, 1996) and in the process of commercialization hip hop lost

an important part of its resistant discourse. More often, messages embedded in sexism, (gender) violence, and substance consumption were cultivated by a growing number of rappers, making the whole genre a target of criticism and stigmatization. However, rap music in its more political form had also grown into an influential means of resistance. Political rap, also known as conscious rap, has remained an important subgenre that calls its audience to social activism and political consciousness. Inspired by the success of De la Soul's playful Afrocentricity that masked its critical messages, artists such as A Tribe Called Quest, Brand Nubian, Black Sheep and Queen Latifah levelled up the socio-political content of their music, critiquing the American media and music industry that long resisted broadcasting black artists (Rose, 1994). Many of these artists used public live performances to address current social issues, media miscoverage and other problems that concerned especially black Americans. While Queen Latifah was one of the spokespersons for working-class black women with a consciously womanist view, Public Enemy became rap's first superstar group to profit from a publicly open black nationalist discourse.

With pioneering songs such as "Miuzi Weighs a Ton" (1987), Public Enemy introduced fierce political critique through black radicalism in their song lyrics, advocating for the recognition of the systematized discrimination of black Americans. The cover of their first album depicts the group in a badly lit basement, with tough faces and bodily postures, and two hands reaching towards the turntable that is set in the central part of the cover. Small letters that run across the album's lower part claim "The government's responsible," leaving little room for misinterpretation.

> I'm a Public Enemy but I don't rob banks
> I don't shoot bullets and I don't shoot blanks.
> My style is supreme, number one is my rank
> and I got more power than the New York Yanks.

The lyrics of the song address the discrimination of black youths as a general enemy of the state, with them easily being taken for thieves ("I'm a Public Enemy but I don't rob banks"); yet the only "crime" they admitted was that of shooting the best rhymes in town.

> Can't wait to read the headlines of my capture,
> accused of assault, a 1st degree crime,

<div style="text-align: center;">'cause I beat competitors with my rhymes.</div>

Politically conscious rap that systematically denounces the shortcomings of the state and the overall socio-spatial inequality, including the lack of social infrastructures and healthcare coverage, poor access to education, racial discrimination and gender gap also has its shortcomings. Some artists that oppose the systematic discrimination of (black) rappers and their constant policing lack coherence and fall short of providing equity in their own song lyrics where females are often treated as mere sex objects, illustrating a lavish (imaginary) lifestyle that is accompanied by luxury goods and substance use. These topics more often fall in the sub-genre of gangsta rap that is based on what Quinn calls the construction of an "urban mise-en-scène of drugs, rape, and murder" (1996: 69). With origins in the West Coast of the United States where the postindustrial economic redistribution of the 1980s had paralyzed a good part of the local economy, artists such as Ice-T, Dr. Dre and Ice Cube narrated experiences specific to life as a poor young, black, male subject (Rose, 1994). For example, N.W.A's (Niggers With Attitude) 1988 song *Gangsta Gangsta* explicitly expresses hatred among the different posses, mistreating of women and aggression against the police. There is frequent mentioning of drugs, alcohol and fire arms, while the word "fuck" comes up thirty-three times during the five-minute song.

Despite several success stories of gangsta rappers such as Ice-T, Tupac Shakur or 50 Cent taking pleasure from their fame ever since the late 1980s, this sub-genre has frequently been subject to fierce critique and has left rap music in a generally stigmatized position, often related to urban crime. Gangsta rap has earned a fair amount of attention among scholars discussing misogyny (Armstrong, 2001), racial identity (Quinn, 1996), commerce and consumption promoted in the song lyrics (Quinn, 2005; Watts, 2009). Plenty of criticism has also been launched on gangsta rap in the media where it has often been characterized as violence-fomenting (Brooks, 2005; Frosch, 2007; Schofield, 2005). News articles titled as "Colorado police link rise in violence to music" (Frosch, 2007) have had an important role in moulding the public opinion on rap music crews, linking them with higher rates of crime and violence. In 2007, Frosch worte for the *New York Times*:

> After a spate of shootings, and with a rising murder rate, the police here [in Colorado] are saying gangsta rap is contributing to the violence, luring gang members and criminal activity to nightclubs. The police publicly condemned the music in a news release after a killing in July and are warning nightclub owners that their places might not be safe if they play gangsta rap.

In the news release, music is portrayed as a means of communication that should be dealt with caution as it may put its listeners in danger or contaminate them with unsafe, evil ideas. In another context, American gangsta rap is associated with hatred speech among immigrant Muslim rappers in France who are seemingly leading the 2005 riots in the country's suburbs (Brooks, 2005). In France, groups such as Sniper and La Rumeur have been taken to court—unsuccessfully—for their provocative lyrics (Schofield, 2005). More recently, drill rap, the younger brother of gangsta rap that has similar characteristics in terms of explicit content, has also been subject to critique and stigmatization. In 2018, the London-based hip hop group 1011 was given a three-year court order that bans them from making music without a police permission and obliges them to inform the authorities prior to releasing new videos (Cobain, 2018). Similarly, the Mallorca-born Spanish rapper Valtònyc has had to seek refuge in Belgium after being condemned to three years of prison because of his anti-monarchist song lyrics.

The negative attention put on gangsta rap as a cultural form that incites violence among its listeners and crews has probably overshadowed many rap groups' politically and socially relevant messages, targeting rappers as generally dangerous members of peripheral subcultures. As Rose (1994) suggests, labelling is essential for interpretation because it provides a context and frame for critically analysing social behaviour. The label given to a singular phenomenon can easily pass on to represent the whole referential context, making all rap music seem belligerent. Looking beyond the contents that may seem fit for censorship, gangsta rappers, too, can diffuse messages that reflect the reality they witness through their embodied experiences. The 'problematic' music is part of a problematic society and muting the voices that express it will not resolve deep-rooted issues such as ethnic discrimination and unemployment. Often, as representatives of underprivileged and discriminated populations, their song lyrics contain information that is underrepresented but could be useful for designing youth policies and social programs.

4.2.2. Reproduction and the audience

The diffusion of music must also be looked at from the point of view of the audience. If a song falls flat among its possible listeners, it has little power of replication, and replication is key to diffusion. John Mowitt (1987) argues that the audience's listening choices are largely dependent on the cultural context and the mechanisms of reproduction: what we listen to is not so much the decision of the individual, but of those in control of the (mainstream) music industry. These, as Rose (2008) contends, underpromote the more sophisticated rhymes and play down their vigorous and well-informed analysis and criticism and instead promote the "businessman-rappers" who further consolidate hip hop's commercial trinity of "gangsta, pimps and hoes" (Rose, 2008: 8). The demand for such music is shaped by the cultural context that we inhabit, and this comprises both consumer trends and political consciousness (or the lack of it). The demand is shaped internally–by shared habits, values and cultural experiences–as well as externally, through determined aesthetics, fashion, dressing styles and postures (Rose, 1994). Mowitt insists that cultural contexts are organized by institutions (such as the music industry) and practices (concerts, individual listening, music that accompanies adverts) (1987: 173).

Ever since the 1990s companies such as Soundscan or BuzzAngle have worked for the music industry as sales measurement and estimation systems, providing information on consumer demand and encouraging record label investment in determined music styles. This sort of companies are largely behind consumer decisions. Following Mowitt's argument, listeners' objectivity and individual decisions are actually subjective group decisions that are shaped by the market that both creates and satisfies the demand. However independent and alternative our taste might seem, it represents and recreates our social group that is influenced by institutionalized practices. As for gangsta rap–if it is played in the nightclubs, it is because there is demand for it to be played, and this demand is developed within the local cultural context that comprises specific local issues, as well as by the institutions that shape our musical taste. In sum, violent-sounding gangsta rap is likely to be representative of the place-specific experiences and the discontent linked to it, while it also comes to reflect (global) musical trends that comprise timbre, rhythm, textures and other aspects that make up the aesthetics of a song.

One of today's best examples of 'inappropriate' rap singers whose work has been institutionalized by the music industry is Kendrick Lamar. Lamar is originally from Compton, the same low-class suburb of Los Angeles where N.W.A became pioneers of gangsta rap. He has been awarded with several Grammys and Bet Awards, and her has received honorary mentions from Billboard and Rolling Stone. In "Element", one of his many videos dominated by aggressive expressivity (Kendrik Lamar, 2017), the rapper appears in a white sweatshirt with blood stains on it. He and his companions are repeatedly shown in slow-motion movements where they are about to punch a fellow black man. With little alteration, the 3:33-minute video is full of sequences of intrinsic violence that urges to be liberated. There is no moderation, the video is a catharsis of accumulated tensions. "Element" is from Lamar's 2017 album *Damn.*, which has unanimously been praised by critics and in 2018 it won the Pulitzer prize, being the first non-jazz and non-classical album to achieve such recognition. Because of his humble background, he is commonly considered as the contemporary voice of poor suburban black youth, outstanding for his narrative skills of telling "the intimate specifics of daily self-defence" from his surroundings (Trammell, 2017). With messages that touch upon suburban poverty where he seeks for life meaning, often embedded in Christian themes of good and evil and the redemptive power of Jesus Christ, Lamar speaks to a big audience to whom his melodic preaching resonates.

To understand how artists like Kendrick Lamar set trends and legitimize certain type of discourses we must also look into the contemporary music industry. While platforms such as Bandcamp, Soundcloud or YouTube allow emerging artists to launch their songs and videos online with the hope of becoming viral and being discovered by a record label, the chances of success are low. Crowdfunding, individual record labels and free-access platforms have not been able to disintermediate the music industry; rather, it has been reintermediated by a new type of professionals known as music aggregators (Galuzka, 2015). Artists still depend largely on publicity made online or on radio shows, which also requires the intermediation of a professional. Similarly, however easy it may have become to produce one's own album, distributing it still happens through companies that hold contacts with concert halls and organizers. While YouTube does accept uploads from all types of users, monetizing the visualizations requires thousands of hours of watchtime and at least one thousand subscribers ("Monetization," n.d.). Even though Spotify pays

bigger royalties to its users, the artist needs to have a registered record company behind it to upload contents and even with that, new songs and artists get promoted through playlists where they need to be located by the aggregators. This puts into doubt the popular belief that the Internet has made intermediaries in the music market obsolete. Rather, there are a series of new third-party companies who individual artists and independent record labels must contract to make their music heard (Galuzka, 2015). The distribution of music has thus not become as horizontal as it is often expected to be in the digital era. Instead, the old hegemonic record labels (Universal, Sony, Warner) or the new intermediaries choose the artists they support, based on their conditions. This way, the artistic and aesthetic tendencies are still strongly influenced by the institutions that Mowitt (1987) was referring to, and they are likely to continue so, unless we completely change the cultural context where our subjective listening is developed.

4.3. Hip hop in Latin America

Tickner argues that hip hop offers evidence of the existence of a transborder space of symbolic expression and cultural construction that circulates globally, integrating fluid modes of expression that facilitate transatlantic and transethnic movement and interaction (2008: 128). Even though there are recurrent topics such as social injustice and racial discrimination that define hip hop as a global movement, Tickner underlines that the way how hip hop is vernacularized is intimately linked to how specific social actors experience the world as lived reality (Wade 1999: 457, cited in Tickner, 2008, 128). Consequently, Latin American countries have seen different expressions of hip hop that vary from *narcorap* in Mexico to Mapuche hip hop in Chile. Academics have also studied Latin American hip hop from a myriad of other perspectives.

In Mexico, Olvera Gudiño (2016) has studied rap music as a form of an alternative economy. He states that while in Northern Mexico narcorap can symbolically nurture criminal violence and misogyny, other forms of practicing this cultural form represent a space for the development of human rights and political activism. From his interviews with hip hoppers who have all used different forms of capitalizing rap music he derived

the conclusion that rap music represents a strategy of survival and a life alternative for those who live in the context of social collapse.

Alternatively, Derek Pardue (2004) focused his study of hip hop in Brazil on the pedagogical aspects of using the cultural form in disadvantaged social contexts. His research was conducted in a youth correctional facility with the aim of analysing how state institutional practices mediate hip-hop's educational projects in Sao Paulo, Brazil. Like in many other Latin American countries, hip hop emerged in Brazil in the mid-1980s first through b-boying and nightclub entertainment contests. Fernandes and Stanyek (2007) hold that one of the principal characteristics of hip hop of Brazil has been its concern with progressive politics. They contend that already by the late 1980s in Sao Paulo, hip hop manifested itself as a significant channel through which black Brazilians could exert pressure on the dominant public sphere for full citizenship and equal rights (p. 206).

Pardue tells that with similarities to Bogotá, in the 1990s Sao Paulo welcomed a new program of *ciudadanía cultural* which authorized the implantation of cultural centres throughout the Sao Paulo periphery, promising culture to be treated as a "right of all citizens" (2004: 414). This helped the implementation of popular practices of culture, such as hip hop, and increased the financing of projects and professionals related to hip hop. In his writing, Pardue argues that hip hop is a social "text" that can educate its listeners both inside and outside conventional classrooms, such as youth detention centres. He therefore advocates the use of hip hop as an educational tool especially in peripheral areas because of its heightened awareness and articulation of locality.

In their writing on hip hop in Cuba, Venezuela and Brazil, Fernandes and Stanyek (2007) look at the rise of hip hop as a parallel phenomenon to the politicization of ethnic and racial cleavages. They put emphasis on the creative aspect of hip hop as a conscious effort of reimagining and restructuring the political fabric of everyday life (2007: 200). Studying hip hop within the public sphere, they observe the evolution of civic dialogue as a result of marginalized groups that forge new social identities and demand political rights. The authors hold that rap music has become an important vehicle for the expression of political demands, the construction of new (black) social identities, and the creation of

alternative modes of leisure, survival and transformation in the three Latin American countries (Fernandes and Stanyek, 2007: 200). The authors tell that in Cuba, hip hop is shaped by a highly specific set of social and economic conditions, including the demographic restructuring of the urban metropolis and increasing racial inequalities in the so-called special period of economic hardships (p. 202). In some parts of the country, the increasing inequality has fuelled the emergence of blacks-only hip hop groupings that have used the cultural form for calling attention for the extending presence of racism in the supposedly racism-free country.

As in Cuba, the gradual insertion of Venezuela into a neoliberal global order required new forms of efficiency and competition that put pressure on the state-based development model pursued by previous governments (Fernandes and Stanyek, 2007: 203). This way, the emergence of rap in Venezuela also coincided with the increasing importance of the popular masses in the political process of the country (p. 204) and less tied to a racial recognition.

In a slightly different context, Rekedal (2014) speaks of the fusion of hip hop and the Mapuche[29] tradition in the Araucania region of Chile. The second half of the 1980s saw the expansion of hip hop in Chile, coinciding with the expansion of cities that were about to absorb the territories of the Mapuche ethnicity. This provoked the first Mapuche hip hoppers to write lyrics that spoke of dissatisfaction with the political order and the repression of the minor ethnicities and poverty. The author tells how the Mapuche hip hop movement started as a way of recuperating their territory and rescuing the indigenous people from falling into drug addiction, alcoholism, and other vices that the process of urbanization had brought along. This way, the vernacular hip hop form has been used for advocating rights for the local culture and official recognition of its language.

Importantly, the author brings out that Mapuche hip hop has demonstrated some important differences from Latin American hip hop where folklorization has often led to complete decontextualization. In contrast, in the region of Araucanía, urbanizing the

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[29] The Mapuches are a wide-ranging ethnicity and a group of indigenous inhabitants of south-central Chile and southwestern Argentina. In Chile, their biggest population is in the Araucania region.

vernacular rituals and ceremonies of the Mapuches has involved negotiations between the local identity and the political authority, as well as the participation of popular artists, such as rappers. This, in contrast to the dictatorial laws of the late 1970s that aimed to eliminate the territory and culture of the Mapuches, has augmented the popularity of the rituals that were considered a threatening protest in the 1980s. In the 2010s the rituals have often been celebrated in public, accompanied by Mapuche hip hop groups. The fusion between the Mapuche oral tradition and rapping has thus reinforced some aspects of the local culture. This allows Rekedal to consider hip hop as a cultural form that announces new networks of information and identity that articulate the old struggles of the Mapuche territory through its resistant poetry (Rekedal, 2014: 27).

The different studies of hip hop in Latin America have confirmed Tickner's argument that while hip hop shares many common characteristics and topics, its vernacularization depends on the lived experiences of the social actors of determined places. This way, local expressions have put more or less importance on the aspects of race, gender or local minority languages and rituals. However, what remains as a common line is hip hop's frequent use for social protest, be it against neoliberalization and increasing social inequality, dictatorial laws that aim to ignore minorities' rights, or heterotopian practices that lock minorities into detention centres with the aim of social hygienization.

4.4. Hip hop in Colombia

The adaptability of hip hop has made its popularity enduring in places that are very different geographically and socio-economically, with MC-s addressing both poverty and wealth, and calling for political activism or a hedonistic lifestyle. It can be said that hip hop is unique among other popular music styles due to the way it relates and adapts to everyday life in different vernacular settings, maintaining the genre's basic characteristics, such as the rhythmical recital of the MC-s or the use of samplers in the audio tracks. Musical, linguistic and corporal tools help develop local groups and forms of expression that include local vocabularies and musical influence and the use of vernacular instruments. While it contributes to the creation of local expressions and identity groups, it also forms part of a symbolic network that circulates globally (Tickner,

2008) through online music sharing platforms, international media images and record sales that stimulate new musical imageries. Contrary to the tendency of vernacularization, by which dominant modes of cultural production are reinterpreted in different contexts where they acquire a new significance (Appadurai, 1990), hip hop as a global phenomenon is largely the result of commodification and circulation by capitalist networks that create a homogenizing and denaturalized product (Tickner, 2008). Global broadcasters and record labels such as MTV and Universal have been key to the diffusion of hip hop from its birthplace in the USA to distinct parts of the world, including Colombia. Radio and TV channels that broadcasted foreign hits and films dedicated specifically to hip hop helped extend the global fame of hip hop through mass media. However, mouth to mouth and ear to ear music sharing was also important; music lovers who got to travel and bring novel records to their country also helped creating the first communities of hip hop fans who shared and re-taped the cassettes dozens of times.

Hip hop arrived Colombia in the mid-1980s thanks to the American film industry that cut profit from the movement by producing and distributing films such as *Beat Street* (Lathan, 1984) that featured the New York hip hop scenario of the early 1980s. *Beat Street* was played in cinemas across Colombia, introducing the cultural phenomenon to local youth, many of whom felt identified with the socio-economic conditions of the South-Bronx of the same time. In the mid-1980s, Colombian TV had different TV shows dedicated on dance competitions which brought the latest moves to the eyes of a wider public. For example, John Travolta's *Flash Dance* (1983) had inspired the creation of the local TV-show entitled *Disco* that travelled throughout the country, selecting participants for the final competition. In addition to *Disco*, there was *Baile de Rumba* on Canal Caracol, while Teleantioquia produced its own dance show *Estudio 80*. These programs helped the diffusion and popularization of break dance moves that local dancers had copied from North American movies. Cinema and TV emissions were also crucial for the diffusion of a homogenized break dance aesthetic, including head scarves tied to different parts of the body, camouflage trousers and Nike trainers, sweaters or other items that would visibly show the brand's logo. As various scholars around the world have observed (McLeod, 1999; Ilan, 2012), hip hop looks were commodified and commercialized from the early days of the movement, targeting millions of youths around the world who represented a

potential new market segment of consumers of hip hop music and its numerous accessories.

Romero argues that hip hop was first adapted in the peripheral neighbourhoods of Bogotá that had a similar problematic context of few job opportunities for the youth and high levels of crime (2010: 38). However, Medina (2009) holds that the arrival and vernaculization of hip hop was simultaneous in Bogotá and Medellín through the global media network that distributed images of pop culture from the USA. In both cities, hip hop was first adapted through dance, the Electric Breakers and the Bone Breakers being one of the first break dance groups that were active in Bogotá already in 1984 (García Naranjo, 2006; Romero, 2010).

La Etnnia is considered to be Colombia's first rap group to release a full album and to reach decent numbers of record sales throughout its career (Montoya et.al., 2006). Their hip hop trajectory also began thanks to the north American movies that gave inspiration for their first break dance moves that they would practice in their peripheral working class neighbourhood Las Cruces together with the crews Los Cristancho and Los Heartbreakers (Vallejo-Cano, 2016). Break dance introduced them to a new way of dwelling the city that consisted of gatherings that were aimed at exchanging knowledge of this new art form. A few years on, break dance provoked the necessity of making their own tracks with their own message in their own language. Learning to use the turntable, mixer and music production programs was all done in a self-taught way, through trial and error, until they reached enough experience to produce their first album *El Ataque del Metano [The Methane Attack]* in 1995. With the first album, La Etnnia aimed to "provoke a frontal attack to everything that had been established" (Vallejo-Cano, 2016)[30] with methane, a gas that emerges from the decomposition of garbage, which was their metaphor for the rottenness of the Colombian society of the 1990s. With this album, La Etnnia was the first recorded group to adapt American hip hop to local expressions and language, expressing the realm of their working-class neighbourhood in Bogotá.

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[30] My translation.

Accordingly to their need of confronting the Establishment, the first video of La Etnnia for the song "La vida en el guetto" ["Life in the Ghetto"][31] featured images that were filmed in one of Bogotá's landfills, together with violence-filled shots that portray daily scenes of inequality and abuse of power. This allowed the rappers to criticize the state's abandoning of the poor and its incapacity of stabilizing the country at a time when its levels of poverty, inequality and violence were plummeting. "La vida en el guetto" starts with the sound of a bullet shot, followed by some rudimentary rhythm machine sounds, before it starts narrating the rappers' views of the city, told from the ghetto:

Encuentras mucha violencia, poca incorrupción	You find a lot of violence, little 'uncorruption'
te lo cuento ahora yo en mi canción.	I'll tell you about it now in my song.
Un alto grave criminalidad lo vivimos a diario en esta sociedad	We live among very serious crimes every day in this society
(JA!) muchos de los cuales quedan impunes.	(HA!) many of which remain unpunished.
Grupos armados allí se unen	Armed groups meet over there
encapuchado la gente lo vio	people saw him hooded
de siete balazos el murió.	he died after seven bullet shots.
Se respira un ambiente	We breath an air
requeté sangriento	that is very[32] gory
mantengo su voz de movimiento.	I maintain his voice of movement.
Este es el comienzo de la partida	This is the beginning of the game
se te fue arrebatado el soplo de la vida.	the breath of your life rushed away.[33]

The rappers' contrived rhymes that have difficulties of finding the flow, compress the multiple scenes of everyday violence into four verses, recited by the howling timbre of the vocalists that express "an air that is very gory". The staging of the video in a landfill, alternating with disturbing shots of aggression in the cityscape puts the spectator in an uncomfortable position of having to absorb images of the 'hood that is replete with violence. Aggression grasps the spectator both phonically and visually, leaving him

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[31] The video was first published in 1994; find it under La Etnnia, 2012.
[32] In Spanish spoken in Colombia r*equeté* goes for "a lot", "very much", while its original meaning represents the voluntary Carlist militias who participated in the Civil war. I trust La Etnnia was referring to the Colombian use of the word, even though the latter wouldn't be too much out of context either.
[33] My translation from the original lyrics.

undefended before the malaise transmitted by the rappers. Here, the lyrics and the video function as a hidden transcript that are likely to upset the dominant public discourses (Rose, 1994) and representations of space with the way that the rappers portray their experiences in the lived space that is dominated by symbolic relations of power (Lefebvre, 1974: 39).

The violence and corruption that La Etnnia portrayed in their song was epidemic in the 1990s Colombia, where the state's incapacity to control the overwhelming crime rates was affecting all parts of the country, especially the low-income areas where crime related to drug sales and youth recruitment into gangs were the highest. Seeking for solutions to the armed conflict that had left deep vestiges both in rural and urban areas, Colombia passed a new Constitution in 1991, reinforcing the democratic rights to its numerous ethnicities and communities, as well as introducing new participatory programs that were to involve the citizenry in the decision-making.

4.4.1. The Institutionalization of hip hop in Colombia

Since the 1990s, many of the intents of pacifying the society have been done through strategic investments and instrumental uses of culture. Given the popularity of hip hop in Colombia in the 1990s, the former left-wing mayor of Bogotá, Antanas Mockus suggested the creation of Hip Hop al Parque [Hip Hop in the Park] festival in one of the public spaces of Bogotá. Hip Hop al Parque was first organized in 1996 as part of the *cultura ciudadana* [citizen culture] program that aimed to prevent and control violence in Bogotá. The festival that is now organized by Idartes, an entity that forms part of the Ministry of Culture, was also to raise tolerance and conviviality in public space (Mockus, 2001) through rap music concerts and competitions among performers who are pre-selected in regional contests. Somewhat paradoxically, the development and diffusion of the underground music of bands such as La Etnnia has been indebted to state-funded events such as Hip Hop al Parque. Throughout its twenty-three editions, the festival has offered hundreds of emerging bands the opportunity to present their music to a wide public and to share the stage with local and international bands. This way, the festival has managed to increase the popularity of rap music parallel to its institutionalization by providing the

spaces of performance and the evaluation criteria upon which regional and national winners are selected.

Hip Hop al Parque is Colombia's biggest hip hop festival that attracts around 100.000 spectators every year (Tickner, 2008; Valencia, 2016). The organization of the festival raises important questions of the centralizing power that state institutions impose through its bureaucratic procedures of paperwork and evaluations that imply inclusion and exclusion, leading to a standardized national criteria and to the homogenization of the cultural form (Valencia, 2016). However, it must be recognized being selected to the final competition in the capital city is one of the most outstanding recognitions that local artists can have, this way achieving further fame and appreciation in their home towns and across the country. It must also be recognized that the festival has been important for giving prominence to the vernacular sonorities of hip hop through bands that mix hip hop with local musical traditions. This is the case of ChoQuibTown, an Afro-Colombian hip hop group from the province of Chocó, who has managed to fuse hip hop with the musical tradition of the Pacific region of Colombia. The currulao music genre that makes extensive use of African drums, marimbas and the clarinet is an important component of their musical production that has gained international recognition, including two Latin Grammy awards. In 2005, they performed in Hip Hop al Parque, initiating their national career with songs such as "Somos Pacífico" ["We are the Pacific"]–a kind of anthem for the Pacific region of Colombia–that rapidly became a national hit.

While Hip Hop al Parque has been key to the state-wide popularization and commercialization of hip hop, similar events in other cities have helped the emergence and visibility of local bands with vernacular sounds and expressions. Medellín based examples HIP 4 and Revolución sin muertos festivals will be discussed further below.

4.4.2. The first hip hop spaces of Medellín

Medellín's rapper and cultural manager Medina and ethnographer Angela Montoya have done an extensive work compiling information on the history of hip hop in Medellín (Montoya, 2005; Montoya et.al., 2007; Montoya & Medina, 2008; Medina, 2009). Medina holds that hip hop arrived in Medellín the same time as in Bogotá in the mid-

1980s through the projections of *Beat Street* in 1984 (2009). As in Bogotá, Medellín saw the popularization of break dance before local artists started producing their rap music with rhythm machines, samplers and MC-s' recitals.

While the first spots of rehearsing break dance in Medellín were more of a domestic type– the patio, garage, terrace or the street corner–, the encounters later moved on to other city spaces as the phenomenon grew bigger. Medina (2009) explains that the very first public encounters of break dancers in the city took place in the mid-1980s in the Segundo Parque de Laureles (a public park in the neighbourhood of Laureles) where two US-born dancers taught their moves to the local aficionados. Simultaneously, the b-boying was starting to be practiced in other parts of the city, such as Itagüí, Estadio or Manrique. In the final years of the 1980s joint events of hip hop were starting to take place largely thanks to the collaboration between DJ-s, rappers and break dancers who organized and provided the materials necessary for carrying out the public events. Medina underlines that these first hip hop events were not proposed by state organizations or broadcasters who would aim to take benefit of the gatherings; rather, it was the artists' own initiative of exchanging experiences and creating networks that pushed the events forward (2009: 23).

In the late-1980s and beginning of the 1990s, much of the breaking' was done in more closed circles in the neighbourhoods, until it finally took over different public spaces of Medellín. By the end of the 1990s, the dance form was popularized through metropolitan competitions in places such as *La Mota* in the district of Belén, the Botanical Garden or in Palacio de Exposiciones. Events that were carried out in those places were tied to broadcasters and commercial brands that aimed to market determined products during the outdoor events that gathered hundreds of youths and potential consumers. Sport brands such as Nike, Adidas and Converse that supported the more outstanding practitioners, established a liaison between the b-boys and fashion brands that contributed to the diffusion of hip hop aesthetics through widely sold trainers, T-shirts and headbands.

Parallel to the sites where hip hop was promoted together with (or through) the merchandizing, other open air spaces of practice became popular among the growing number of Medellín's break dancers who sought for alternative grounds with suitable cover and some potential spectators. One of the central spots of rehearsal was the outdoors

of Medellín's most important public library Biblioteca Pública Piloto, born from the collaboration between UNESCO and the Government of Colombia. Equally important were the ground-floor of Medellín's most emblematic high-rise building Coltejer that hosts the city's Chamber of Commerce, and the Camino Real department store, both located in the centre of Medellín. This way, break dance was taken to private or semi-public spaces of commercial centres and administration buildings where dancers would overlay the physical representation of the centres of power with their symbolic and embodied use of the space.

4.4.3. The emergence of vernacular rap in Medellín

One of the difficulties of rap music's initial popularization and why break dance was adapted earlier was the language barrier that didn't allow many of the aficionados understand North American artists' work. The scarce vinyl records that were circulating in the city were taped on cassettes and later reproduced and shared with fellow aficionados; even translators were paid to understand the message of Public Enemy or NWA (Medina, 2009). This is what finally allowed the music fanatics to understand and find encouragement in the messages of the first rap artists who often addressed social issues. Language was only an initial barrier; other novel elements of the new music style, such as the use of turntables, rhythm machines and samplers were overcome through the sharing of knowledge among self-taught artists.

The local hip hop scenario was configured in the 1990s with hundreds of rap groups being born only during the first five years of the decade. Medina (2009) mentions Quintana and DJ Kingo as probably the first rappers of Medellín. Medellín's first rap album entitled *Civilización Perdida* [*Lost Civilization*] was released in 1997 by Sexta Inkamista under the Discos Fuentes label. This triggered the release of numerous other albums, LP-s and demos, produced independently or under registered labels.

Once again, the media had its role in making the cultural form popular. Between 1992-1995 Teleantioquia emitted *Arriba Mi Barrio,* a TV program that presented numerous hip hop groups of the city, consolidating the presence of rap music in Medellín. Even radio channels specialized in rock music began emitting weekly programs of hip hop that were

produced by artists and cultural workers that lived in the very centre of the nascent movement. This was a means of both playing the local artists and promoting hip hop related events. Nevertheless, it is important to underline that, given the lack of interest of the music industry, these programs were most often produced thanks to the self-organization of aficionados who saw in hip hop an opportunity of regeneration.

In the 1990s, La Alianza Hip Hop [the Alliance of Hip Hop] became an important driving force of Medellín's hip hop scenario. Among them, rap was understood as the "popular artistic revolution" (Medina, 2009: 29)[34], underlining its countercultural character. In 1994 the alliance developed a socio-cultural project entitled Poder Hip Hop [Hip Hop Power] that collaborated with Medellín's Youth Network and often operated in The Hip Hop Place–the first club of the city that was dedicated exclusively to hip hop. The club that also functioned as a cultural centre became the epicentre and the urban reference of hip hop in Medellín, being the place where north American novelties were shared together with local knowledge, artistic creation and research. In addition to musical exchange, the meetings were also to serve for the hip hoppers' socio-political training. La Alianza's activities rapidly gave way to new groups, such as La Clika Und, Rap Colombia y Black Heart who diversified Medellín's hip hop scenario. Simultaneously to the genre's consolidation in the city, groups that were organized under different leaderships started constructing their own studios to facilitate song recording and the creation of their own audio tracks. This meant a structural change from centrally produced music tracks to a more diverse and competitive musical scenario where each part of the city began cultivating its own vernacular features.

4.4.4. Consolidating Medellín's hip hop scenario

In the 2000s Medellín's hip hop scenario became more consolidated thanks to the artists' activism not only as hip hoppers but also as cultural managers, carrying out an important role in the development of the local cultural and social scenario. By 2005, there were 220 documented hip hop groups in the city, primarily in the low-income areas of Medellín (Montoya, 2005: 210) and this was strongly related to the proliferation of civic

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[34] Translated from the original text in Spanish, following the initials of RAP –*revolución artística popular.*

associations and NGO-s that were often targeting youth with the aim of turning them into strategic actors of the society (Brough, 2014). Many of the numerous hip hop groups were tied to civic organizations that saw hip hop as a tool for social transformation and used it for accessing youth in parts of the city that were still strongly ungovernable. Bean (2014) even argues that the emergence of the hip hop movement in Medellín was due to the Colombian state's inability to control the overwhelming levels of crime resulting from the decades-long armed conflict, corruption and the rule of the Medellín cartel in the city. She argues that not only did the state's withdrawal facilitate the intensification of violence in the hands of illicit agents; it also strengthened a political culture of civic participation and community problem solving, hip hop being one of the numerous community-based movements that emerged as a result of the laissez-faire politics of the state (2014: 26).

Telling from his own experience, Medina argues that in the mid-2000s a change of perspective took place among Medellín's hip hoppers when the virtuosity of a few connoisseurs was substituted by an attitude that emphasized the sharing character of knowledge to use hip hop as an educative experience. Hip hop as a collective form of doing and learning was strengthened by the collaborations between several cultural managers who'd created networks such as Poder Hip Hop that collaborated with the administration, especially in 2007 when the Participatory Budget program was focused on youth in order to elevate their involvement in the initiative (Fierst, 2012: 123).

One of the initial benefiters of the Participatory Planning and Budgeting program for hip hop events was Crew Peligrosos, a break dance group from Comuna 4 of Medellín, who initiated the hip hop event HIP 4 in 2005. In 2014, after nine successful years of organization, the festival HIP 4 was transferred to the centre of the city and celebrated in Medellín's convention centre Plaza Mayor with the support of Red Bull. In addition to HIP 4, festivals HIP 6 and Revolución sin muertos [Revolution without deaths] were also organized ever since the mid-2000s in different hillside barrios of Medellín with the support of the Participatory Budget.

CHAPTER 5. COMUNA 13. HIP HOP AND SOCIAL TRANSFORMATION

> *Guns blow doors to the system*
> *Yeah fuck 'em when we say we're not with them*
> *We're solid and we don't need to kick them*
> *This is North, South, East and Western*

> (M.I.A., 2015)

This chapter contextualizes the territory that is in the central focus of this research. The first part of the chapter will explain the urbanistic and historical development of Comuna 13, including the military operations and mass migration it has been subject to. The second part of the chapter introduces the hip hop movement of Comuna 13 and its role in the social transformation of this district.

5.1. Urban context of Comuna 13

Comuna 13 is located in the western part of Medellín and it borders with the corregimientos of San Cristóbal and Altavista. The north-western part of the comuna gives access to the highway that connects Medellín with Santa Fe de Antioquia and the port of Antioquia and the coastal Urabá region of the Carribean Sea. Nearly all the traffic to and from the coast passes through the comuna, making it a geopolitically contested area. For decades, this location has also been important for the guerrillas and paramilitary groups that have taken advantage of the route that connects Medellín with the guerrilla

Figure 8. Map of Medellín. Made by author

frontiers and self-defence blocs in the northern region of Urabá (Grupo de Investigación Memoria Histórica, 2011).

Comuna 13, San Javier, has a population of 138.000 inhabitants (Medellín Cómo Vamos, 2016) and a low average of 0.38 m^2 of public space per inhabitant, in contrast to the 9 m^2 of urban green space recommended by the WHO (WHO, 2012). The densely populated district is composed of 20 neighbourhoods; while those closest to the metro and cable-car station are classified as middle-low income areas (stratum 3) [35] and are sometimes referred to as the *gomela* [posh] part of Comuna 13, the upper hillside areas either fall in the classification of stratum 1-2 (low) or as undeveloped land owing to the high risk of landslides (Alcaldía de Medellín, 2010). Life conditions are hardest for those inhabiting the hillside barrios that have historically had the negative connotation of being *barrios de invasión* [informal settlements][36] that are often settled by economic migrants or displaced families with little economic resources and no housing opportunities. The unofficial division of the land characterized the development of the comuna in the 1950s and 1960s, whilst between 1979 and 1981 it experienced a rapid growth of informal slum settlements as displaced populations flooded in, fleeing the national armed conflict (Brough, 2014). Infrastructure and transportation have long been an issue in these areas of difficult access, creating further social isolation for the residents of the comuna. There are numerous housing problems as many families have moved to Comuna 13 because of the forced displacement in rural areas or other parts of Medellín (Fierst, 2012). In addition, the presence of illegal groupings has been constant in comuna 13 for decades. A 2012 study detected 49 armed groups in the district, with an average of 2.5 illicit groups per neighbourhood (Otálvaro et.al., 2012). At the meantime, Comuna 13 continues to be the number one district that expels the highest number of people because of forced displacements (Personería de Medellín, 2015). After years of decrease in homicide rates, 2018 resulted in an important increase in violent deaths in Comuna 13 where 91

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[35] Colombia uses a system of stratification, which classifies the households into 6 strata according to the inhabitants' income, stratum 1 being the area of lowest and 6 the highest income. The stratum determines the price of the communal costs, with the strata 4-6 paying a higher coefficient to support the low income households.

[36] The literal translation is "neighbourhoods of invasion" which is a marginalizing term that, nevertheless, runs through the local media with frequency.

homicides were committed (Giraldo, 2019), which is three times more than in 2015 (Personería de Medellín, 2015).

The complicated topography of the comuna that has uneven hillsides that reach 1650 meters above sea level, with slope inclinations of over 50 percent, has been a complicated terrain for the labyrinthine neighbourhoods that have often been built with DIY knowledge by migrants and people displaced by violence. The density of population as well as the irregularities of the area all make it a territory that is very difficult to access for the state institutions. These characteristics have been taken advantage of by various armed groups that have used Comuna 13 as a base for their operations, as a strategic corridor for the transportation of drugs and weapons, as a refuge for those persecuted by the justice system, as a hiding place of the kidnapped, and often as the "waiting room" before entering the rural guerrilla frontiers (Grupo de Investigación Memoria Histórica, 2011: 51). Poverty, exclusion and the lack of state intervention have all contributed to the favourable conditions for armed groups to install in the comuna. Throughout its history, the territory of Comuna 13 has been permeated by the urban militias, the guerrillas and paramilitary groups who have all imposed their regime of order on the local community.

The urbanization process of Comuna 13 started in the beginning of the XX century with the arrival of tenant farmers and peasants from different regions of the province of Antioquia who settled in the lower part of the hillsides, founding neighbourhoods that are now known as Villa Laura, Betania and El Salado. In the 1950s the area started to be inhabited by migrants who came to Medellín for economic reasons or because of the violence caused by political disputes between 1948 and 1953. The newcomers were often settled in illegally acquired "pirate" lots, often sold by local mafias that traded with state land; many of the invasive neighbourhoods were recognized as urban land only decades after the migrants' settling (Grupo de Investigación Memoria Histórica, 2011). In the late 1970s and beginning of the 1980s other territorial invasions took place, making way to areas that are now known as La Colina, and the neighbourhoods Las Independencias I, II, III and Nuevos Conquistadores. Official urbanizations were built in the 1970s in the neighbourhoods of San Javier and the area of Belencito, both located on the lower (and more easily accessible) part of the comuna. In the 1990s another important wave of

victims of forced displacement in the region of Urabá arrived in Comuna 13, further consolidating the sheltering character of the district.

In the 1990s, an intent of improving the life conditions of the informal settlements was introduced by the Consejería Presidencial.[37] The Programa Integral de Mejoramiento de Barrios Informales (PRIMED)[38] was implemented in three barrios of Comuna 13: Conquistadores, El Salado and Independencias. Despite some success, it lost political support and was discontinued under the administration of Pérez Gutiérrez in 2000 (Sotomayor, 2017).

Fundamentally, what has marked the history of Comuna 13 is its sheltering character for the displaced migrants and the alternating de facto power control of different armed groups. Grupo de Investigación Memoria Histórica (2011) proposes the following chronology that summarizes the presence of the illicit groups and their influence on the comuna.

- 1985-2000: A period marked by the presence of militias and individual forced displacements.
- 2001-2003: Increase of forced displacements within the city due to the offensive of the paramilitary groups Bloque Metro and Bloque Cacique Nutibara and the posterior military operation Orión ordered by President Álvaro Uribe Vélez with the aim gaining control of the territory of Comuna 13.
- 2004-2007: Continuous silenced forced displacements in a new context of withdrawal of the guerrilla and demobilization of the paramilitaries.
- 2008-2010: Emergence of *combos* that are responsible for causing more individual and massive forced displacements.

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[37] Consejería Presidencial was a series of programmes, set up by President Gaviria, allowing resources and personnel to find solutions for Medellín's crisis.
[38] PRIMED [Comprehensive Programme of Improving Informal Neighbourhoods] was a conjoint investment programme of the Municipal Administration of Medellín and the German Cooperation that undertook projects of neighbourhood renewal and housing upgrading among other interventions. It lasted from 1992-1996.

The installing of different groups of urban militias (such as Milicias América Libre, las Milicias Populares de Occidente) in Comuna 13 coincided with the general rise and expansion of the militia phenomenon in Medellín that was initially tied to the idea of self-defence and social clean-up against criminal groups that that were active in the barrios (Grupo de Investigación Memoria Histórica, 2011). The so called social clean-up turned into a factor that generated forced displacement of individuals and families who were labelled as presumed criminals. Being identified as a drug addict, thieve or other type of criminal became the principal cause of forced displacement of young individuals and sometimes of their families. Control, banishment or murdering of persons who ignored the social norms of the militia was the central means of social control which they communicated on the walls and in the gatherings where they expressed their territorial control (Grupo de Investigación Memoria Histórica, 2011).

The *Comandos Armados del Pueblo* (CAP) [Armed Commands of the Village], a group formed by former militias who maintained themselves independent from the guerrillas, became present in Comuna 13 in the mid-1990s. Their strategy was also based on social clean-up, pretending to benefit the poorest residents of the comuna with actions such as supplying construction lots in areas of invasion, distributing food and other goods, prohibiting the payment of public services, etc. (Grupo de Investigación Memoria Histórica, 2011).

In the end of the 1990s guerrilla groups such as the FARC and ELN also arrived in Comuna 13, welcoming the population's familiarity with anti-state discourses. The establishing of guerrillas in the city principally meant an opportunity to acquire bigger economic resources to support the guerrilla fronts in rural areas. The simultaneous existence of militias, the CAP and guerrillas in the comuna generated fear among the inhabitants and disputes between the members of the different groups. Overall, the widespread presence of the different illicit groups in Comuna 13 contributed to the popular imaginary of the youth of Comuna 13 being either guerrillas, militias or their collaborators, and over time this became part of the discourse justifying the military interventions undertaken by the state forces in Comuna 13 (Brough, 2014).

Adding to the already complex territorial dynamics, since 1997 right-wind paramilitary groups Bloque Metro, Bloque Cacique Nutibara and Frente José Luis Zuluaga began raiding the comuna with the aim of expulsing the left-wind guerrilla and taking control over Comuna 13 to expand their territorial power and their illicit activities such as micro-trafficking of drugs and fuel extraction (Grupo de Investigación Memoria Histórica, 2011). As testimonies of the research conducted in Comuna 13 show, the infiltration of paramilitary groups in the comuna released an open dispute for the control of the territory and its resources. Comuna 13 reached a peak of 1711 forced displacements between 2001 and 2003 as a result of the clashes (Grupo de Investigación Memoria Histórica, 2011: 72).

5.2. The pacification of Comuna 13

While in the second half of the 1990s and beginning of the 2000s the urban war between the numerous criminal organizations decreased in most of Medellín due to drug lord Don Berna's almost monopolistic power over organized crime in Medellín and his collaboration with the state institutions (especially with the newly created Office of Peace and Coexistence and the Convivir[39]) (Rozema, 2007); some areas in the northeast and west of the city remained in the hands of leftist militias.[40] In particular, Comuna 13 remained a stronghold for heavily armed fighters who wished to maintain control of the key location.

By 2000 the leftist FARC, ELN and CAP (People's Armed Command) all had bases in Comuna 13 (Rozema, 2007, Pachico, 2011). In order to eliminate the leftist fighters and to take control over the district, in May 2002 the state forces launched the first military Operation Mariscal on Comuna 13. The troops had to withdraw soon because of intense

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[39] The Convivir were neighbourhood-based committees that were legitimized by the Defense Ministry of Colombia. Established in 1994, they were strongly promoted by the former governor of Antioquia (1995-1998) and president of Colombia (2002-2010), Álvaro Uribe, despite critiques of legalizing uncontrolled self-defence groups. Both, the Office of Peace and Coexistence and the Convivir gave government backing to local security and vigilance units that were grouped alongside Colombian military and police. Read more in Rozema, 2007.

[40] The urban militias are leftist armed anti-state groups that work on a local level that developed their power bases in the city similarly to the rural Marxist guerrillas, claiming to provide security to local residents. Some have had ties with the guerrillas, others are independent. See more in Grupo de Investigación Memoria Histórica, 2011 or Maclean, 2015.

resistance. However, in late 2002 and early 2003 the Antioquian right-wing president Álvaro Uribe ordered further massive assaults to be launched under the name of Operation Orión and Estrella VI. Both were seemingly coordinated with Bloque Cacique Nutibara[41] and Bloque Metro[42] paramilitaries that remained in the backing forces to occupy the conquered areas (Hylton, 2007; Maclean, 2015). After the successful shutting down of the leftist bases in Comuna 13 which officially saw 17 people killed, 30 wounded, close to 400 arrested (Pachico, 2011) and 130-300 persons displaced or disappeared (Maclean, 2015), Don Berna had taken complete control over the city's gangs and militias (Pachico, 2011). "Murillo's [Don Berna] control was total, even during a peace process between the government and the paramilitary groups. In 2003, for instance, in order to keep up the appearance that Murillo was collaborating with authorities during that process, he ordered the combos to keep murder rates low. The peace lasted until Murillo himself was extradited in 2008" (Pachico, 2011). Operations Mariscal (May 16) and Orión (October 16) were the biggest military offenses, marking a new era in the urban warfare of Colombia owing to the number of troops involved and armoury used by the forces (machine guns M60, fusils, helicopters, artillerymen and snipers). The testimonies also speak of ruthless pointing at the civil society, resulting in the death of 9 inhabitants and 35 injured during Operation Mariscal (CINEP and Justicia y Paz 2003, cited in Grupo de Memoria Histórica, 2011). Operation Orión in particular inaugurated the strategy of *seguridad democrática* [democratic security] of the recently elected Medellín-born President Álvaro Uribe Vélez. With Uribe in office by August 2002, Mayor Pérez Gutiérrez asked for the direct intervention of the Central State to avoid the expansion of the armed conflict in other parts of the city. Operatión Orión started on October 16 and continued through November and beginning of December. It was carried out by the joint forces of the Army, DAS [Administrative Security Department], Police, CTI [Technical Investigation Corpus], the Prosecution Office and Special Counterterrorism Forces, summing up to 1500 combatants (Grupo de Memoria Histórica, 2011: 80). Furthermore, in addition to the official forces, paramilitary groups also participated in the mission, as confessed by Don Berna (Maclean, 2015). The presumed collaboration of paramilitaries

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[41] An organized group of paramilitary thugs under the control of Don Berna.
[42] A criminal group under the control of Carlos Castaño.

with the state and with the former president and governor of Antioquia, Álvaro Uribe, has had wide coverage in the media[43] since Don Berna's extradition to the United States in 2008 where he affirmed that Operation Orión was planned and coordinated conjointly with the paramilitaries and members of the IV Squad, ordered by general Mario Montoya who would later become the general of the Army of Colombia under Uribe's presidency (Guarnizo, 2015). On the other hand, the expulsion of guerrilla groups, militias and CAP during the military operations meant their substitution by paramilitary groups that continued with the forced displacements in the comuna, as pointed out by historical research (Grupo de Memoria Histórica, 2011).

In the early 2000s mayor Luis Pérez Gutiérrez proposed that Medellín should adapt a competitive city agenda to improve its potential for foreign investment and trade (Alcaldía de Medellín, 2001). However, in order to convince foreign investors of the new international image of Medellín, armed insurgencies had to be dismissed and crime rates were to be reduced. Hence the urgent and aggressive military interventions in Comuna 13. Once the district was "pacified" through the eleven military operations during which militias, the CAP and guerrillas were expulsed from the district, the presence of (para)military troops in the area was established (Grupo de Memoria Histórica, 2011; Brough, 2014).

The pacification also facilitated the implementation of future urban interventions. Investments in the regeneration of Comuna 13 that had been cut during Pérez Gutiérrez' administration increased notably with governors Sergio Fajardo and Alonso Salazar, making Comuna 13 the recipient of the biggest public investments (Fierst, 2012). The integrated urban project (PUI) for Comuna 13 was introduced in 2006 during Fajardo's administration. Among other changes, it involved the construction of San Javier Library Park, Line J of the Metrocable aerial transit system, new schools, sports fields, daycare centres, an avenue rehabilitation project, pocket parks, playgrounds, neighbourhood amenities, and the continuation of Ciudadela Nuevo Occidente social housing complex that was already under way before Fajardo took office (Sotomayor, 2017). At the meantime, the administration also aimed to further improve security in the comuna by

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[43] See Peña, 2012; Lemoine, 2015.

constructing centres for social intervention [Centro Integrado de Intervención Social], police stations, and the centre of immediate attention [Centro de Atención Inmediata] (CAI). The latter is one of the nine fortress-like buildings designed to maintain control in the peripheral hillsides of Medellín, allowing 24-hour presence of guardians in areas where police arrival would normally take long because of the difficult topography. Sotomayor (2017) holds that Comuna 13 is the district with the highest concentration of public armed forces in Colombia, with 7 police stations, 3 police centres for immediate attention, and 12 military bases. This means that there are almost 800 permanent troopers patrolling 23 neighbourhoods within a 7-square-kilometer radius (Sotomayor, 2017: 85). The latest piece of spectacular urbanism that was finished in the neighbourhood of Las Independencias in 2011 were the 6 sections of electric stairways that were installed in the midst of the steep and densely inhabited streets with the claimed aim of improving the mobility of local inhabitants.

Both, the construction of public infrastructures of transport and centres for policing are examples of urbanism as a tool of state control, as argued by Foucault (1972), Lefebvre (1974/1991) and De Certeau (1984). The CAI-s are a very exemplary materialization of state surveillance and control being performed from Medellín's mountain-top fortresses. Conceived by their designer as "lighthouses" that have become the "protagonists of the area," the towers aim to "transform and provide a sense of belonging in the territories where they are located"[44] ("CAI Periféricos," 2012). However, Serna (2011) argues that as a mechanism of control, the CAI-s have been constructed with the aim of avoiding the further expansion of informal settlements and not so much to create the sense of "belonging" and security in the territory. The policies of hygienization that the construction of protagonistic infrastructures often requires, imply practices of control and invisibility of the popular classes that often end up in evictions (Díaz-Parra & Cuberos-Gallard, 2018) because of the gentrifying effects that the urban sterilization may cause.

In Comuna 13, as in other parts of Medellín, social urbanism should be understood jointly with its three aims: 1) pacifying and gaining control over ungoverned city areas; 2)

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[44] The original text in Spanish was written and sent to Plataforma Arquitectura by the architecture team behind the design of the CAI-s. The designer of the project was John Octavio Ortiz Lopera, the architects belong to EDU.

improving the living conditions of the residents; 3) improving the image of the city and, consequently, its economy. Following this logic, the military operations of 2002 served the purpose of pacifying and ordering the terrain for future urban interventions and for the image change of Comuna 13 and the city as a whole.

5.3. Hip hop in Comuna 13

One of the first hip hoppers of Comuna 13 was the B-boy and graffiti artist Splid who was a member of the Alianza Hip Hop who had founded the Hip Hop Place in the centre of Medellín. The first local groups that emerged in the area in the 1990s were Poder Tresca, Los Profetas, and Sociedad fb7, uniting MC-s such as Jr Ruiz and Medina who are still active in the hip hop scenario of Medellín, both as cultural managers and artists. Many of the first songs did not get recorded due to the lack of resources to do it in a professional studio or to buy one's one equipment. The earlier recordings now available on YouTube are from the beginning of the 2000s, an era that marked the boom of hip hop in Medellín.

As argued before, the beginning of the 2000s marked a sharp increase in military repressions against the population of Comuna 13. Given the violence-marked circumstances of the early 2000s, the topics of the songs of that era were strongly influenced by the extreme marginalization of Comuna 13, the frequent homicides and disappearances of the artists' beloved ones, and the overall everyday challenges. For example, in 2005 the rap group CEA released a single entitled "Amargos Recuerdos" [Bitter Memories] that resumes various shortcomings of living in Comuna 13 in a five-minute song that is devastatingly negative:

Sobreviviendo en el barrio	Surviving in the 'hood
donde se escuchan disparos	where gun shots are heard
donde se muere la gente	where people die
por culpa de algunos cuantos.	because of many others.
El terror en mi comuna	The terror in my area
hizo parte del pasado	formed part of the past
dejando amargos recuerdos,	leaving bitter memories,
corazones afectados.	damaged hearts.

Several Comuna 13 rap artists, such as CEA [The Commando of Elite Attack], Comandante Cronos [Major Cronos], C15[45] and Aka[46] have purposefully associated their artist names with the vocabulary of war, positioning themselves against it by appropriating the military language. Also, notions such as *disparador de rimas* [the shooter of rhymes] or *reclutar soñadores* [to recruit dreamers] are common among the local rappers because of the enduring urban war. On a par with their presentation as militants of art, the MC-s of Comuna 13 tend to question the state institutions and Colombian democracy in their song lyrics because of the continuous hegemonic values and patriarchal modes of governing.

5.3.1. Networks and festivals: spaces of alternative discourse?

The armed conflict of Comuna 13, especially the multiple military operations of 2002 left a strong footprint on the local community and hip hop scenario. Many grassroots organizations emerged as a response to the militarization of Comuna 13 and to the rising levels of urban warfare in the area. This way, the state's withdrawal from stabilizing the situation in Comuna 13 not only facilitated the intensification of violence in the hands of illicit agents, but it also strengthened the political culture of civic participation and community problem solving, hip hop being one of the numerous community-based movements that emerged in the 1990s (Bean, 2014: 26).

In 2007, after the Participatory Budget program had failed to involve the proposed number of citizens during its two first years, a pilot program was introduced in Comuna 13 to raise the levels of participation and leadership among youth (Fierst, 2012). Strategically, this was part of a series of actions that were carried out in Comuna 13 within the programme of social urbanism, aiming to make up for the state's shortcomings in the previous years. One of the organizations that benefitted from the PB was la Red Élite Hip Hop [The Elite Network of Hip Hop] which became a central figure for organizing hip hop related events in Comuna 13 and elsewhere. La Élite was born after the military attack Mariscal in May 2002 and a month before the biggest military offensive, Operación Orion

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[45] C15 was an old model of airplanes for war.
[46] Aka's name refers to the Kalashnikov assault rifle AK-47.

in October 2002. With the collaboration of the NGO Asociación Cristiana de Jóvenes [Young Men's Christian Association], several hip hoppers of Comuna 13 were proposed to establish La Élite to unite the different hip hop entities of the district with the objective of accompanying young people through cultural practices. At its peak time, la Élite joined 85 artists of 25 different groups, including rappers, graffiti artists, DJ-s and break dancers. The network stated its aims as the following: training and professionalization, political participation, promoting gender equality, positioning the network and guaranteeing its self-sufficiency ("Red De Hip Hoppers Élite (Comuna Trece)", 2010).

The first important outdoor event that La Élite organized was in September 2002 when they held Operación Élite Hip-hop[47], [Operation Élite Hip Hop] in the middle of two of the biggest military operations held in Comuna 13. With a series of hip hop demonstrations on the streets, the event was to help overcome the fear of being in the public space of the area that had recently been overtaken and (para)militarized by the state forces.

In 2004, the second year of its celebration, the two-day festival got its final name Revolución sin muertos [Revolution without deaths]. That year it became an event for commemorating the events of 2002 and a tradition of celebrating peace, memory and no-violence in Comuna 13, celebrated through hip hop, photography, workshops and academic events (Londoño, 2010). On the webpage of the organizers, they described the festival as an event that aims to "express through music the situations of conflict and problems that local youth experience in their family, socially and economically. Also, [it is] a way of changing the bad image and representation that hip hoppers and their artistic production and music have in the city" ("Red De Hip Hoppers Élite (Comuna Trece)", 2010).

Here, it is important to regard the conflictual image that hip hoppers have often been perceived with in public discourse and mainstream media in Comuna 13 and elsewhere. Largely nourished by appearances that may, to some degree, be similar to that of gang

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[47] Operación Élite Hip Hop was clearly a word game to play with the denomination with the preceding military operations and to suggest hip hop activities as their counter-operation.

members, rappers' looks have often been associated with that of criminals. In addition, like criminal gangs, hip hoppers' activities are also fundamentally territorial, involving exploratory journeys to find new spots for drawing graffiti and consequently, to appropriate spaces through embodied practices. Hip hoppers' journeys through the city are often performed in the company of the crew, the fellow hip hoppers, which further increases the potential perception of them as illicit actors who are seemingly doing nothing and heading nowhere. Rose argues that hip hop crews' and criminal gangs' behaviour and identity are similar insofar as both form 'families' that mirror collective identities and function in a protectionist manner (Rose 1994:34). As among criminal gangs that compete for expanding their control over the territory, there also tends to be some level of rivalry among different hip hop groups, either in painting the graffiti, holding MC battles or in break dance competitions. Belonging to hip hop crews or criminal gangs can provide the same emotional support and sense of belonging (Bean, 2014: 44) to its members. Finally, the perceptions born from these apparent similarities are also reinforced by occasional news of conflicts between different hip hop crews, giving evidence that there is aggression among rappers.

Contrarily to the stereotyped perceptions, in Medellín, rappers who often act as social and cultural activists, have used their song lyrics to denounce crime, the presence of gangs, systematic extortions and bribes that take place in the neighbourhood. However, this has often turned them into targets of hatred among the illicit actors and as a result, the city has seen many of its male rappers being murdered. In 2012, El Duke, a member of Comuna 13-based group CEA and founder of the hip hop school La kamada, was the ninth rapper to be murdered in the district in just three years. Posterior to his death, around sixty hip hoppers left Comuna 13, because of threats from gang members who aimed to obstruct the hip hoppers' continued work on denouncing crime in the district (Parkinson, 2012). By 2014, two more rappers had been killed in Comuna 13, one of them, a 14-year-old boy who was an active participant in different activities of a local hip hop school.

All this is important for understanding that when the first hip hop events were held in Comuna 13, the organizers did not only fight for the right to reterritorialize spaces that had been occupied by the fear caused by the dominant illicit groups, but also against a widely spread stigmatization of the population of Comuna 13 as members of urban

militias or guerrillas. The image of the inhabitants of Comuna 13 as guerrilla fighters, militants or their collaborators in the early 2000s was reinforced by state authorities and the Public Force, using it as an excuse to perform violent and discriminating acts on the inhabitants of the area and in the territory (Grupo de Memoria Histórica, 2011: 68).

Despite these difficulties, throughout years of celebrating Revolución sin muertos, local and national artists have been able to apply to perform in the festival, and some well-known hip hop groups from elsewhere in Colombia or from abroad have been invited to the event when the budget has allowed it. At the peak of its popularity, Revolución sin muertos managed to draw 20.000-30.000 spectators (Brough, 2014:188) from different parts of Medellín, which is a significant number for an area that is otherwise rarely visited by those who do not reside in Comuna 13. The festival's location has varied along the different years; the first editions were carried out on the sport field of El Salado, in 2015 the concerts were held in the Pantalla de Agua park, while the 2017 event was announced to take place outside the San Javier library. Performing the event in each of these venues has been tactical insofar that it has helped redeem and underline the public character of public space in a district where it is not only scarce, but also often times misinterpreted and distorted through the presence of illicit actors and activities.

A 2011 survey that was carried out with the festival visitors showed that Revolución sin muertos has been successful in promoting peaceful coexistence that has positive impact on Comuna 13 and to the city as a whole (Brough, 2014: 190). As an alternative discursive space, Revolución sin muertos has determinedly re-dignified Comuna 13 by showing the capacity of the local youth to organize an annual open-air event that puts in value local artists' creation in a context where celebrating events in public space runs above-average risks of public disorder. Considering the common problem of crossing invisible borders[48] and its applicability to male youth who comprise the main profile of the festival visitors, Revolución sin muertos has been a courageous and symbolic act of bringing together

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[48] The invisible borders [*fronteras invisibles*] refer to the illegal and coercive territorial division between different street gangs that exert de facto control over a determined territory. These borders can create division between the inhabitants of the same neighbourhood when its territory is divided by different gangs who do not allow crossing the border for the members of the other gang, their supporters and family members. Read more in Duque Franco (2014) and González Quiros et.al. (2015).

potentially conflictive attendees. In this sense, the festival has contributed to breaking invisible barriers and negative perceptions through tactics that consist of providing public space scenarios for performing arts. The festival has thus been important for providing an alternative representative image to the often marginalized Comuna 13 in public discourse, while it has also set new role models through the influence of hip hoppers as social leaders and cultural managers.

It is also important to bring out that while the festival originally emerged as a response to the state-funded military offenses of 2002, it received funding from the Participatory Budget of the Alcaldía de Medellín ever since 2007 when the pilot project of the Participatory Budget for youth was implemented in Comuna 13. Between 2007-2011 La Élite, the main organizer of the festival, benefitted from the equivalent of approximately US$138,000 in contracts funded through the Participatory Budget where its members had positioned themselves as delegates (Brough, 2014: 130). While public money was useful for the diffusion of vernacular expressions of hip hop as it offered showcase opportunities to local artists who would otherwise go unnoticed, it also allowed establishing a greater presence of the state in one of the least governable parts of the city (Brough, 2014: 151), such as Comuna 13.

CHAPTER 6. AGRO ARTE AND CASA KOLACHO, TWO EXAMPLES OF THE HIP HOP CULTURE IN COMUNA 13

> *Compleja realidad la que vivimos en los barrios*
> *no entendemos por qué aquí se siguen matando*
> *almas van subiendo, cuerpos van cayendo*
> *mientras que nosotros nos hundimos en el llanto.[49]*
>
> (Semillas del futuro, 2018)

This chapter demonstrates the results of the fieldwork carried out in Medellín during the second phase, from January to early April 2018. The first part of the chapter will describe the two case studies and offer an overview of their structure and networks as well as their discursive space in the media. The second part of the chapter analyses their musical production through the textual and visual analysis of their song lyrics and music videos, discussing the ways that the videos represent and reconstruct the everyday geographies of the rappers. A final section of the chapter will offer a comparison between the musical production of the two underground rap groups and several Latin pop artists who have used Comuna 13 as a stage for their music videos.

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[49] It's a complex reality that we live in in the barrios / we don't understand why they keep killing each other here / souls are ascending, bodies are falling / while we are drowning in our tears.

6.1. Agro Arte

Agro Arte is a grassroots project that combines hip hop with horticulture and handicrafts, performing its activities periodically in Comuna 13 and also other parts of the city. One of the meeting points of Agro Arte is in Casa Morada which is an independent cultural centre located in the central-western part of
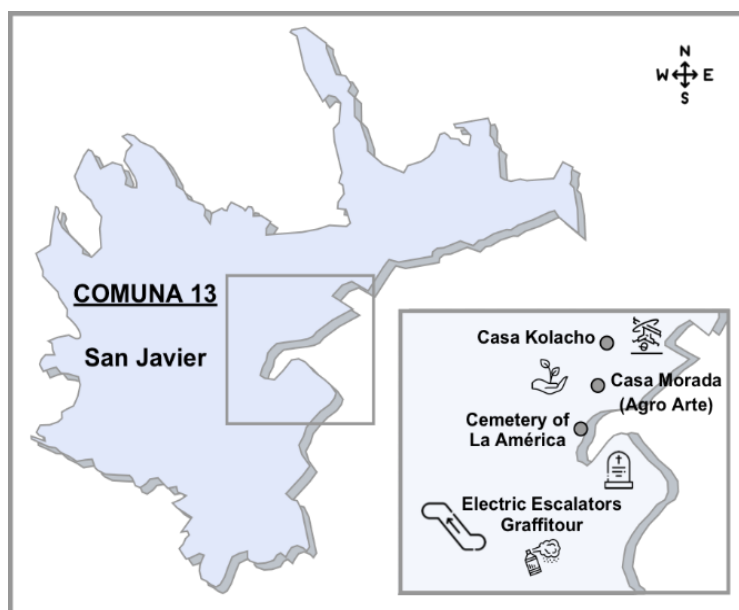

Figure 9. Map of Comuna 13. Compiled by author.

Comuna 13 in the neighbourhood of San Javier I. Casa Morada is a former residential building, now turned into a community centre that hosts various projects, Agro Arte being one of them. It is managed by Casa de las Estrategias, an independent centre of research, dedicated to investigations related to human rights, youth culture and citizenry. Casa de las Estrategias has been operating in the Casa Morada building ever since 2012 and currently receives around 190 adolescents a month in its diverse activities. Their activities in Casa Morada aim to strengthen the idea of cultural centres that are open to youth and multiply them in the territory of Medellín ("Polinización Morada," 2019). As a cultural centre, Casa Morada provides a space for a local radio broadcaster, talks, debates, movie nights, music rehearsals and concerts.

Agro Arte combines horticulture with rap music and other artistic forms of self-expression. Each of their side-projects (Cuerpos Gramaticales, Semillas del Futuro, Galería Viva) are based on what they call the methodology and philosophy of Agro Arte. This consists of involving all their participants in tasks of horticulture prior to participating in any other workshop that can go from creative writing to rapping. According to the leader of the project, it is through the act of planting seeds and taking

care of the plants that one understands what the earth gives us and learns to appreciate the organic process of life (personal communication with AA1).

"If the concept of hip-hop is the street, under the street we find the soil, and in the soil we find our stories, memories and battles,"[50] states the unofficial slogan of Agro Arte. For that reason, the leader of the project insists that whoever wants to learn to rap, must first learn to sow, as it is through the ground that the connection with memories and history is established. The soil becomes word and the word equals resistance: "we say we are the street plants that resist cement being thrown on them, because cement equals forgetting, it says nothing wrong is going on here" (Interview with AA1).

Agro Arte initially started as a personal process of learning and transformation for its current leader, a charismatic and stereotypically hip-hopper-looking young man who had been tied to some illicit activities in his adolescence. Two decades after leaving delinquency, he affirms that he currently "only shoots rhymes" and aims to be a positive example for other youths troubled by their involvement in criminal activities. The current leader of the group started working the soil, planting flowers, trees and herbal plants at the example of several women of Comuna 13 that were already practicing urban gardening in 2002. Together with seven ladies, he appropriated a hectare of land in the higher part of Comuna 13, La Loma, in a territory that has been especially conflictive, being situated at the municipal border and next to the highway to the Urabá region and other centres for trade. Taking the territory through gardening was a tactical means of performing citizen watch in the Escombrera[51] [the dumping site] area, which is where allegedly hundreds of disappeared bodies were secretly buried by the administration ever since and posterior to the military attacks on Comuna 13 in 2002.

> Up there [on the border of the municipality of Medellín] we had a space where the bodies were thrown so that the Police could find them. So we started taking over that space and it became like a common space together with the house. Then started the gatherings of people, and that way we activated the meetings. We started Semillas de Futuro [Seeds for the Future]. And there, with Semillas del Futuro, the concept of Agrarian Hip Hop was born.
>
> (Interviewee AA1)

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[50] My translation.
[51] Read more about La Escombrera in Caro & Álvarez, 2017; Juárez Rodriguez et al., 2017.

The civic activism that denounced what seemed to be state crimes, eventually evolved into meetings, public demands and manifestations, mainly led by the activist group Mujeres Caminando por la Verdad [Women Walking in the Name of Truth] that was consolidated in 2002 (Juárez Rodriguez et al., 2017). Agro Arte has maintained close ties with the female activist group ever since then, reclaiming a criminal investigation to be performed on the Escombrera case.

The observational activism performed by the women's group and the rapper developed into dynamics of meetings and voluntary work that eventually gave way to the first project that involved children in activities of horticulture and songwriting; this was called Semillas del Futuro [Seeds of the Future]. In turn, the experience of working with children, gardening and rap music set the basis for the concept of Hip Hop Agrario [Agrarian Hip Hop]–hip hop with concerns for the rural populations and struggles.

> We were sowing, rapping and doing interventions in the territory. But these could not be separate, distinct actions, sowing on one side and hip-hop on the other. No, it had to have a concept. And from there on it's been an academic search. And also a search for having a dialogue with the context, because we are from the neighbourhood, from the territory, of everything that functions in the territory. That is where we decided it must have several lines and that is how Agrarian Hip-Hop was born.
>
> (Interviewee AA1)

Later on, when they started denouncing what was happening in La Escombrera, the territory became "hot" and people were forced to leave la Loma and stop their observations around the dumping ground. Being forced to leave the territory and assuming the political dimension of his work, the social activist-rapper realized the necessity of creating networks between different parts of the city. That is when Unión Entre Comunas [Union Between Comunas] was created, marking new lines of collaboration in different districts of Medellín, such as Manrique la Cruz[52] where a big part of the songs are recorded in a DIY studio and where a library has been set for children.

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[52] Manrique la Cruz is a neighbourhood in the Oriental part of Medellín.

Networks, side-projects and collaborations are key to understanding Agro Arte and their philosophy: lacking institutionalized leadership seems to be a means of avoiding its institutionalization. Despite the outstanding charisma and character of its front man who is recognized as a social leader, tasks within the entity's activities are distributed in a horizontal way, encouraging initiative being taken among all its participants. Agro Arte is thus more than a one-man-project focused on one single dream and territory. Rather, as the rapper explained during the interview, their objective is nothing less than to "take over the whole city" (Interviewee AA1).

Currently, Agro Arte has three ongoing projects that take place in three different geographical locations of Medellín. Firstly, workshops of horticulture and rapping are done on a weekly basis, every Saturday in Casa Morada, Comuna 13. Saturday mornings tend to be an occasion for the reunion of both, those interested in practicing songwriting and rehearsing rap songs, as well as for those interested in other activities that may take place simultaneously, such as talks or workshops on handicrafts, cooking, horticulture and other topics. Prior to both, early in the morning, the roundabouts of Casa Morada that have been appropriated by hundreds of plants, both edible and decorative, must be taken care of. These tasks tend to be distributed in a half-voluntary, half-suggestive manner: newcomers (including researchers) must get their hands dirty, while long-time members can skip some turns with the excuse of being busy with other activities. The songwriting workshops tend to be given by two young men who have been practicing rap songs for years, giving classes in places as diverse as public schools and youth detention centres. Alternatively, the circle is sometimes led by Mamá Rapera, a female rapper and mother of two, who Agro Arte has encouraged as a role model for other females.

The activities carried out in Casa Morada and its roundabouts have drawn a lot of attention both among local inhabitants, youth and elderly, as well as among researchers from Medellín and abroad, and journalists who have portrayed Agro Arte's role in gaining the right to the city. In the recent years their grasp of the city has grown wider and new territories have been "taken," as the participants explain, in the opposite hillside of Comuna 13, in Manrique la Cruz. There, a former illegal landfill that was set right next to blocks of social housing, has been turned into another urban garden that Agro Arte aims to maintain with the help of the residents. This is done in hand with the second

137

important project currently in process, Sueños de Papel [Paper Dreams], a little collectively constructed library where recitals and workshops for children are done. There, another core member of Agro Arte and a well-experienced rapper on the buses of Medellín, gives children of the area rapping lessons parallel to the work in the former landfill. While Casa Morada is located easily accessible, being located close to the metro stop of San Javier, Sueños de Papel library and urban garden is a long and winding bus ride away from Medellín's hectic centre. Similarly to many other steep hillsides of Medellín, Manrique la Cruz has extremely low socio-economic indicators, being mostly classified as stratum 1. In third place, Agro Arte's latest project is called El Partido De las Doñas [The Ladies' Party], that gathers various activities under its wing. The Ladies' Party was launched in 2018, parallel to the presidential elections, alluding to the clandestine political intentions behind the women's gatherings for knitting, sowing and other manual activities. The meetings began in the neighbourhood of Pablo Escobar (named after the drug lord), situated in the Central-Eastern part of Medellín, but are now frequently celebrated in Casa Morada.

As for Agro Arte's musical side, which is what draws the attention of the majority of the young participants, there is no rigid methodology for anyone to become a talented rapper. Rather, it is largely about the shared process of songwriting, rehearsing and ultimately, performing. Concerts are held as often as possible; whenever an occasion occurs the participants are ready to perform their songs. Concerts are often organized either in small format in the patio of Casa Morada, in public events in the city or during other public performances that they organize. The scenarios can be as unexpected as the bank of a

Figures 10 & 11. Sueños de Papel library for children (on the left); constructing the community garden (right) both in Manrique la Cruz, west of Medellín. Photos by author.

hydropower station, or as the cemetery of La América[53] where many of their activities take place.

Newcomers get to practice song writing in the workshops held by some of the more experienced rappers of Agro Arte. In the workshop different psycho-sociological tools are used to gain the participants' trust in themselves and in the group. These may involve methods of play, drawing, or simply conversations that sometimes guide towards sensitive topics. Then, a common topic may be proposed by the leader of the workshop, after which time is given to each participant to write a couple of lines that can be voluntarily recited. Alternatively, sometimes an audio track is simply put on loop to suggest the flow and rhythm of the song and to guide the participants in their song writing.

One of the workshop holders described the process of songwriting as a ritual that seeks to establish contact with the self to discover one's personal experiences that could lead to a closer contact with the territory that we inhabit. This is perhaps why many of Agro Arte rappers' songs have repeating topics that focus on denouncing the malfunctions and aggression of the state and the illegal organizations, as well as the rappers' personal experiences within these realities. The philosophy of Agro Arte thus seeks to establish and improve place-based relationships among the participants and raise their territorial consciousness through musicalized narrations. By working both the soil and the body, the participants are prone to arriving to embodies narrations of personal stories that are strongly connected to place.

6.2. Casa Kolacho

Casa Kolacho is a hip hop school that is located in the same neighbourhood of San Javier I, only a few blocks away from Casa Morada. Casa Kolacho is now mostly independent from the state and finances itself with another type of activity–graffiti tours. Casa Kolacho is involved in all of the four elements of hip-hop: MC-ing, DJ-ing, break-dance and

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[53] The cemetery of La América is often called the cemetery of San Javier. Even though it formally belongs to the neighbourhood of La América and to Comuna 12, as a bordering space between the two districts, it has become part of Comuna 13 in the popular imaginary.

graffiti. Free weekly lessons of rap music and graffiti used to be given mainly to the youth of Comuna 13, aged 13 to 25.

The main team of the school consists of 15 persons, among them there are MC-s, graffiti artists, break dancers, a DJ, and there used to be people involved in photography and communication. Rap lessons used to be focused on breathing and vocalizing techniques in addition to songwriting, where the teacher helped participants set their rhymes and touch topics that are vital for the participants. The lessons used to be given by one of the MC-s of Casa Kolacho, who is also the main producer of C15, the four-member hip hop group of the school. In addition to rap, the school also gave graffiti lessons, teaching drawing techniques and the history of graphic art to approximately 8 young people on Sunday mornings. The graffiti lessons were given by a young artist who has painted numerous graffiti in Comuna 13 and other parts of Medellín. At the time of the second interview, however, he had decided to set himself apart from the school and start giving the lessons in places other than Casa Kolacho, either in San Javier library or in one of the municipal halls close to the electric stairway in order to bring graffiti closer to the young inhabitants of the higher part of Comuna 13 (Interview with CK2).

One of the founders and the current manager of Casa Kolacho is a vital and warm-hearted young man who frequently gives interviews to local and international news channels, in role as a hip hopper and social leader. Because of his activism, he has become an important spokesperson and representative of Comuna 13, receiving invitations at roundtables discussing questions regarding urban youth and entrepreneurship. He has given a TedTalk in Medellín and in Argentina and shared the stage with superstars like Juanes whose foundation Mi Sangre has also supported the hip hop collective La Élite. Incarnating the 'paisa attitude', he optimistically praises his neighbourhood, entrepreneurship and likes to dream big, for example of getting on big stages in Barcelona or holding a Latin-American tour with C15 (Interview with CK1). Having participated in the meetings of the Participatory Budgeting process between 2005-2010, he admits having developed organizational and communicational skills required for social entrepreneurship.

Casa Kolacho was founded in 2009 after the homicide of Héctor Pacheco (commonly known as Kolacho) who was one of the rappers and leaders of the cultural resistance of Comuna 13 that had begun right after the military operations of 2002. Kolacho had formed part of the hip hop group C15 and was an active member of La Élite, the hip hop alliance that was created in 2002 with the aim of joining the numerous hip hop entities of Comuna 13. The murder of Kolacho motivated his companions to establish the hip-hop school that was to continue his legacy. As the death of yet another rapper received plenty of criticism towards state institutions that were accused of leaving local artists without protection, the founding of Casa Kolacho was partially supported by the Alcaldía de Medellín that was also funding La Élite where various members of C15 were active. With the help of the strategic orientation of the Alcaldía during the administrations of Salazar (2007-2011) and Gaviria (2012- 2015) C15 and Casa Kolacho became a media channel that represented the local youth through campaigns, jingles, and cultural processes with an educational component (Casa de las Estrategias, 2014: 238). This way, the initial institutional backing helped the hip hop school reach the wide recognition and media coverage that Casa Kolacho benefits from ten years after its creation.

Casa Kolacho has collaborated with the administration in several occasions, for example in 2010 when the Alcaldía supported hip hop workshops that were held in different schools, in the library of San Javier and other public institutions, involving around 200 children in the process ("Escuela de Hip Hop," 2011). In 2014 they collaborated in the project "Techo una historia" that was funded by the Alcaldía and the beer company Pilsen who paid for the new asbestos free roofs of 37 houses. In turn, the graffiti artists of Casa Kolacho painted graffiti on the roofs, giving some extra color to the houses located close to the electric stairways.

> I made the first graffiti that are shown on the tour. I still make them. I get invited to conferences; we wanted to take the *graffitour* to other parts and so now we are doing it, we're taking it to other companies, other spaces. First, the companies invite us and then we invite them to the tour. […] We provide emotions and knowledge to people and they say "what did you do to resurrect? You know what resilience means here in the comuna? This is what we show them.

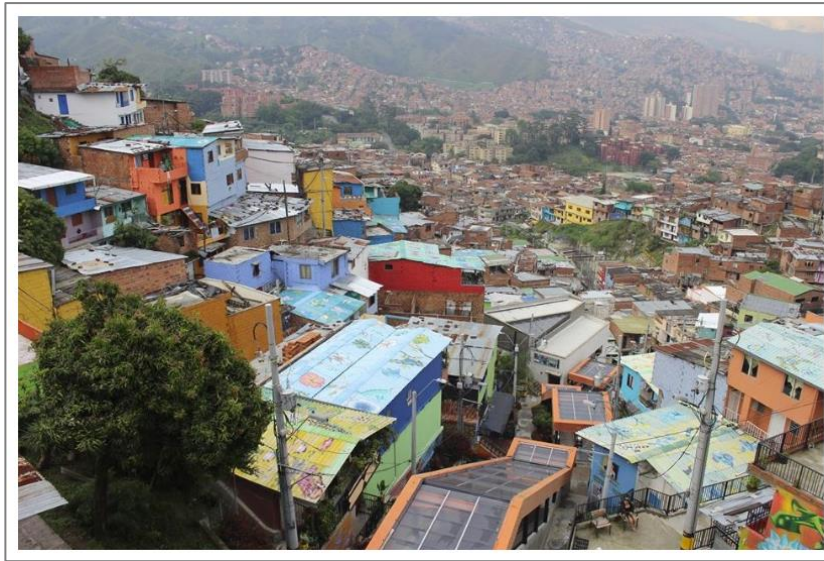> (Interviewee CK4, graffiti artist and tour guide)

Figure 12. The escalators of Comuna 13 and the painted roofs after the project "Techo una historia." Photo retrieved from Techo una historia, 2015.

Graffiti is what has helped Casa Kolacho gain prominence in Medellín and position itself as one of the instigators of social transformation in Comuna 13, with its members becoming influential social leaders and spokespersons of Comuna 13 (Notes from the community-based tourism meetign in Biblioteca San Javier). This has largely had to do with Casa Kolacho being the initial founder of the graffiti tours that are now organized by numerous tour operators and individuals (Pérez Mesa et.al., 2018), drawing hundreds of visitors a day to a few graffiti-painted streets of Comuna 13. The tours began in 2009 at the initiative of one of the graffiti artists of Casa Kolacho, who painted many of the first artworks that are now shown on the tour (interview with CK4) and one of the rappers and the current leader of Casa Kolacho. Back then, the members of Casa Kolacho started taking visitors from outside of Comuna 13 to the parts of the district where graffiti had been painted, and to other entities that were doing socio-cultural work in the area (Interview with CK1). This enabled them to show visitors their positive and artistic vision of the highly marginalized district and to prove that Comuna 13 was not necessarily a dangerous place.

Nowadays, the three-hour tour starts with a bus ride on public transportation to the higher slopes of Comuna 13. There, the guide (a member of Casa Kolacho) starts telling the violence-struck history of Comuna 13 through the graffiti that local artists have painted

with residents' permission on the walls of their houses. On the way, several stops are made, including the foot of a sliding slope that was installed in the neighbourhood as a ludic element for children. There, participants are asked to take slide down the slope in the name of the of the local children (Notes from the graffitour). However, the central attraction of the tour are the eye-catching escalators that were installed in 2011 to improve the mobility of the local inhabitants. Here, another hip hop crew (Black and White crew) periodically performs break dance moves, scheduling their show for the arrival of the biggest number of visitors at the platform that crowns the highest section of the escalators. In addition to the break dance show, visitors can enjoy panoramic views of Comuna 13 and the rest of the city from the platform that has become a common meeting point both for locals and tourists.
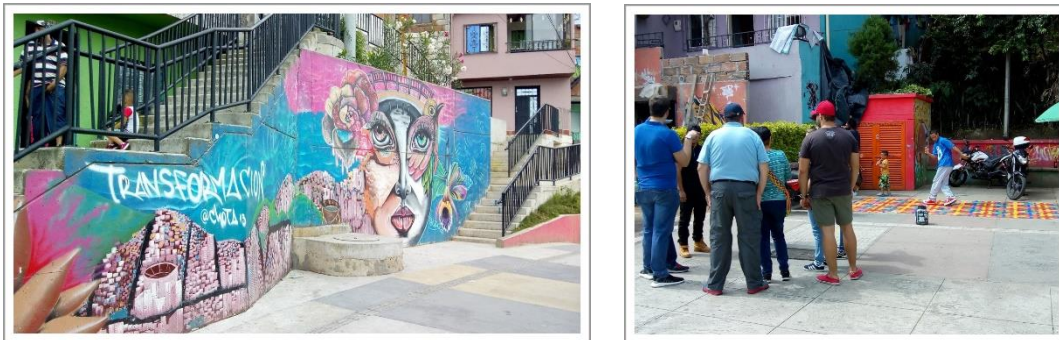
Figure 13 & 14. A graffiti titled "transformation" by the local artist Chota (on the left); the graffiti tour led by a guide of Casa Kolacho; one of the Black & White Crew members performs break dance in the background (right). Photos by author.

The escalators are located at what is commonly known as "*el Plan del Che*" [the flatland of Che], where the Comandos Armados del Pueblo (CAP) [People's Armed Command][54] had painted a big portrait of Che Guevara. In 2002, when the military forces arrived, this was symbolically erased as a way of eliminating the leftist thinking in the barrio (informant CK5).

The tour continues by descending the six sections of the electric stairways with more graffiti and stops on the way, including a coffee shop, several souvenir and street food stands and an ice cream shop. The tour finishes in the house of Casa Kolacho where

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[54] CAP was a leftist urban militia that operated in Comuna 13 between 1996-2002.

participants are asked to tag their name on the wall of the house to practice their graffiti drawing skills and to accompany the guide in his "improvised" rhymes by clapping the rhythm. After paying up, the group is given the chance to purchase C15-s album, T-shirts and caps of Comuna 13. The farewell includes the positive message that incites people to "never stop dreaming."

6.3. The discursive spaces of Agro Arte and Casa Kolacho

6.3.1. Social Media

The following sections will look at the role of social media and online mainstream media in the construction of the collective identity and the representational spaces of both hip hop groups. Following Castells' (2004) view of the network society being structured and built around digital networks, the habit of connecting to the Internet has important consequences on sociability, decision-making and its spatial dimensions. In the past decade or two, virtual space and especially social media have achieved a much larger share of the lived experiences of a big part of the global population. So much so that communication guidelines and formats have become the interpretive schema and guide to everyday social interaction, and thus form an integral part of creating, maintaining and changing culture (Altheide: 2015: 1). While physical spaces of interaction, such as urban public spaces have lost prominence due to privatization, accelerated life rhythm and increased mobility, virtual space has become key in nurturing daily sociality where concrete and abstract relationships with are formed (Lim, 2014). As people spend more and more time on the Internet and in social media, virtual spaces have become central to the articulation of individual and collective identities, while also serving as spaces where meaning-making is enacted and where definitions that are crucial to social order, social reality and social change are communicated through different forms of media. In addition, Turkle and Salamensky observe that there is a tendency, "a kind of expression of human desire, to make the boundaries between the physical and the virtual [space] more permeable" (2001: 236, cited in Williams, 2006: 194).

In his study of online straightedge subculture, Williams argues that virtual spaces become analogous to virtual conduits, connecting individuals from diverse locations and facilitating the growth of meaningful communities and identities (2006: 179). For many, the virtual space is a social space where personal and collective identities are given meaning and shared through digital interaction. Digital platforms have become ever more important for social interaction and social media platforms have successfully become "windows" into the private lives of others (Hogan, 2010: 379) where discursive identity work (Williams, 2009) is exposed and where the carefully curated "frontstage" (Goffman, 1956) of individuals can be observed.

a) The online identity of Agro Arte

The online identity of the hip hop group of Agro Arte, presented as Hip Hop Agrario on social media, emphasizes the plural identity of the group, given that the posts and images don't limit the participants to specific names or numbers. Rather, the information given in its YouTube account says the following:

> Hip Hop Agrario is a proposal that was constructed collectively […] as a reaction to the historical and quotidian violence of our country, we propose resistance and dignity through memory, the transformation of our surroundings and the return to work and habitat in communities.

> ("Hip Hop Agrario", nd.).

With this information, Hip Hop Agrario leaves a message of being something more than just a hip hop group; rather, it is a "collectively constructed proposal" of working against daily episodes of violence, using music as one of their tools. Their YouTube account contains almost thirty videos, posted in less than three years. The majority of them are full music videos that feature various rappers, and a few videos are teasers for upcoming releases. The Facebook account of Agro Arte is somewhat more disparate with several cross-postings from other Agro Arte accounts, using the transmedia (Jenkins, 2010; Jansson, 2015) and its increasingly interconnected and open-ended circulation of media content between various platforms and its users to promote events and activities that are in the central interest of Agro Arte. Here too, it is difficult to tell who the artists of the hip hop group are as the profile photo figures the (faceless) logo of Hip Hop Agrario and the cover photo is the logo of Agro Arte Colombia with its webpage and slogan. The same

goes for their Instagram account that figures both images and videos of their music, as well as of their social work done through horticulture. On the individual accounts most of the participants post photos of themselves either in situations related to recordings and performances or share posts of upcoming events as well as of articles published Agro Arte in other media. Some cross-postings mention other members of the group as a way of recognizing their work. In this sense, the social media accounts serve as a virtual space where the off-line identity of the hip hoppers is articulated and concentrated in a limited amount of temporal, textual and visual space. Here, the meaning of the phenomenon of being a conscious rapper is constructed through images and texts that are significant and representative for the artists, as well as through the interactions with their followers and online friends.

b) The online identity of Casa Kolacho

The self-presentation of the hip hop group of Casa Kolacho, presented as C15 in their social media platforms, holds the following:

> C15 is an airplane model that arrived late. We seem to be "created" or born in a neighbourhood, in a comuna where the war was and is a very latent option, in a city, in a country that legally and illegally recruits for war; but we, just as the tactical fighter aircrafts "C15," arrived late, we said we won't go to war and want to help out reconstructing and healing wounds.

("C15", nd.)

C15 has also created a self-description that doesn't even mention their music; rather, it expresses their objective of making a social contribution. With a cover photo that features the four members of the band, there are sixteen videos posted on their YouTube account in four years. Half of them figure steady artworks that accompany the audio track and three of them serve as teasers for an up-coming video release. The Facebook account of C15 is not very active, and when it is, it is used for announcing almost exclusively news related to their music, or other music-related events in the city. Several posts also refer to Casa Kolacho and the graffiti tour, including some online newspaper articles being reposted on the account. The content of Casa Kolacho's Facebook and Instagram is much richer, with many cross postings from other events and artists around the city. Here the graffiti tour is advertised as a service that they offer for 30.000 pesos. There are also links

to a book release, to music videos and to a public call of art in the public spaces of the city.

With C15 it is easier to identify who the artists are, given that the cover photo features the three MCs and there are several posts dedicated to presenting each of them. Their Instagram identity is similar and is used for images and videos of their past performances and for announcing events related to hip hop in Medellín. The individual accounts of the members depict them either alone or with their children (without the mother normally appearing anywhere), parents or friends. Some photos related to music making, concerts, recordings and also party and travel are posted.

Following Hogan (2010), self-presentation practices on social media can be split into performances, which take place in synchronous "situations" and artefacts that take place in asynchronous "exhibitions". The author explains that the synchronous situations are supposed to give a closer look into the "backstage" (Goffman, 1956) of individuals' lives by offering insight to their intimate experiences through images of their loved ones, celebrations, updates on life goals or career changes. While one of the groups does offer insights to their personal lives through images of the family and children and seem to forget about the solely "professional" identity as a hip hopper, the content that is published on social media is in all case posted with pre-selection, thus providing content only of the "performed" self. As Schwartz & Halegoua (2015) argue, social media users share only a portion of their daily life by curating their experiences and most often focus on situations that can shape others' perceptions of who they are and what they do. This way, social media platforms should rather be considered as asynchronous promotional exhibition spaces, where skilful users can be successful in improving their off-line identity online.

6.3.2. Online mainstream media

Following Gamson and Wolsfeld (1993), the media and social movements are interacting systems where each side of the transaction is dependent on the other. In the following, I apply their approach of media and movements as interacting systems to see the relationship between Agro Arte and Casa Kolacho with the media. Gamson and Wolfsfeld

argue that in the interacting systems between the media and movements, the politically activist formations need the news media for three major purposes: mobilization, validation, and scope enlargement (1993: 116), while protests, manifestations and the civil society's outcries provide valuable contents and possible profit for the media companies. As the Arab Spring, 15-M or the Umbrella movement have shown, mobilization of social movements is nowadays more frequently achieved through the use of social media platforms; however, the validation and scaling of the movements is still largely in the domain of mainstream media whose coverage of the events validates its importance in the public eye and offer social movements the opportunity to increase their symbolic power amongst those who they oppose to.

a) Casa Kolacho in the online mainstream media

Despite both groups being critical of the media because of their tendency to distort, negatively cast or ignore social movement viewpoints (Stein, 2009: 750), both Agro Arte and Casa Kolacho systematically appear in the mainstream media and in alternative press. Gamson and Wolfsfeld argue that what characterizes the transaction between movements (or other agents and organizations) and media is the struggle over framing which organizes the central idea that suggests what is at issue (1993: 118). Getting positive and adequate framing, however, depends on the movement's symbolic power and relevance, professionalism and prominence. Given that the institutional support of Casa Kolacho has been and continues being strong, they have been symbolically recognized and validated in the public eye as an important social organization of Comuna 13. Consequently, they have been guaranteed wide coverage and sympathy in the media. An overview of the online news (news programs and stories, feature stories) published in the last three years showed that Casa Kolacho has been subject to frequent media attention and their stories have been covered by prominent newspapers such *as El Colombiano* (Arango Holguín, 2017) *El País* (Hierro, 2016) and *The Guardian* (Watson, 2018), as well as by the publicly owned Teleantioquia (Teleantioquia, 2018) and Medellín-based news agency Telemedellín (Duque, 2019) that is operated by the Alcaldía de Medellín. Casa Kolacho also appears in numerous travel blogs, both local and international (Godoy & Castañada, 2015; "La Comuna 13," 2017; Pareja Escobar, 2018). In addition, Medellín's official travel web medellín.travel that is tied to the Alcaldía recommends the graffiti tour of Casa

Kolacho (Medellín Travel, 2015; 2016) as one of the activities where tourists can experience the transformation of Medellín. With very few exceptions, the framing of Casa Kolacho in the articles published on it tends to follow a very similar structure and narrative: an introduction to the past of Comuna 13 as the most violent district of Medellín; the military interventions Orión and Mariscal in 2002 and how the state violently tried to achieve control over the district, followed by how Comuna 13 has now turned into a territory of the artists and how Casa Kolacho contributes to the continuous social transformation of the district with social work done with local youth and by guiding the graffiti tour that shows the new face of Comuna 13. The topics covered in the articles largely divide in two: a) news stories or feature stories of the graffiti tour experience contextualized in the frame of civic initiatives and social urbanism as the origin of transformation (Bedall, 2017; Mendoza Turizo, 2017; Arango Holguín, 2017; Teleantioquia, 2018); b) other news-worthy stories related to Casa Kolacho, such as their members participating in some national or international event (Hierro, 2016; Orosa, 2017) or the inauguration of their new centre (Duque, 2019; Medina, 2019).

There are publications focusing strictly on the graffiti tour, such as the one published by the Canadian newspaper *The Star* (Bedall, 2017) that explicitly mentions that the journalist was hosted by Copa Airlines and PROCOLOMBIA,[55] thus being sent on the tour for promotional aims. Similarly, Peru´s correspondent for *El Comercio* (Redacción EC, 2018) also seems to have covered the graffiti tour for promotional aims, given that it is described in the section of travel advice on the best spots to visit in Medellín. Similar promotional effect is achieved with *The Guardian's* "10 of the best independent tour guides: readers' tips" (Watson, 2019)–a selection of the readers' recommendations from around the world, from Delhi to Medellín, where Casa Kolacho's graffiti tour is depicted as "informative, eye-opening and entertaining". This article in particular is especially effective in terms of destination marketing as it provides electronic word of mouth (e-WOM) information which is increasingly important for influencing positive destination image and gaining potential visitors' trust (Yudi Setiawan, 2014; Hernández-Mendez et.al., 2015). In a slightly different, yet also comparative manner, the article "How design

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[55] Colombia's national destination marketing agency.

can change depressed neighbourhoods torn by the war"[56] (Fajardo, 2018) also offers a look around the globe, from Johannesburg to Rio de Janeiro and Medellín, showing the best arts and design practices that have had a positive impact on city areas torn by the urban conflict. Following a slightly sensationalist tone, the article narrates the following:

> Medellín has turned into the new symbol of Colombia. What used to be the epicentre of drug trafficking during the years of Pablo Escobar is now a modern city that is internationally renowned for its infrastructures and for putting its stakes on innovation and culture. A good example of this transformation is Comuna 13 where a process of social integration is being carried out through rap and graffiti led by Casa Kolacho […] "Hip hop saved our life. Our objective is to support development through entrepreneurship and communal work," says Jeihhco, the director of the project and a rapper in the group C15.
>
> <div align="right">(Fajardo, 2018)</div>

The sensationalist tone is also used in other newspaper titles, such as "Casa Kolacho: violence is cured with hip hop" (Hierro, 2016), "Hip hop against violence in one of the most dangerous communes of Medellín" (Orosa, 2017) or "Casa Kolacho and its art that defeated the conflict" (Mendoza Turizo, 2016).

In several articles the interviewees manage to position their views and influence the framing of the media coverage towards their interests. Apart from the seemingly unquestionable frame of Casa Kolacho as the symbol of communal work through hip hop, they also position themselves against the "dark tourism" (Jaramillo, 2017)–referring to the distorted tourism phenomenon caused by Netflix's portrayal of Pablo Escobar that has had an important role in drawing foreign visitors' interest toward Medellín. In their self-portrayal, they put emphasis on entrepreneurship and on being agents of change that want to modify the common imagery of Comuna 13 (Hierro, 2016; Jaramillo, 2017): "We [Casa Kolacho] try to provide light in a territory where the days are often dark. We also need to fulfil our dreams so that the guys could see it. Our dream was to take the hip hop of Comuna 13 to the world" (Orosa, 2017).

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[56] My translation from the original title in Spanish. All the translations of the media resources from here on are translated by me.

Another clarification that has been stated several times is that they are completely independent from the administration, and that they finance their activities through the graffiti tours and talks where they are invited to (Hierro, 2016, Orosa, 2017). While not completely true, this positioning seems to be important for Casa Kolacho for maintaining an anti-state identity, as if not opposing to the government would withdraw their status as a subcultural organization. Despite their antagonism toward the state that was demonstrated in the interviews, during the tours and in the press, they have been capable of using the media of state-funded news channels for wider standing and for gaining sympathy among the local audience (TeleAntioquia, 2018; Duque, 2018).

Gamson and Wolsfeld (1993) argue that organizations that dedicate time (and resources) on communication are more prone to achieving more media standing, favourable framings and media sophistication which, in turn, attracts future coverage from other media channels. In this analysis, Casa Kolacho has proven to be a media-friendly social organization that has provided a wide number of mainstream media channels a story–one story–with few exceptions of newspapers that have published more than one article regarding Casa Kolacho within a period of three years. While they have been validated by the power institutions and the mainstream media as a prominent civic organization, their standing in the media comes from a wide range of media channels that mostly replicate a very similar positive narrative which proves Casa Kolachos' success in achieving favourable framings and sympathizing portrayals among the audience. However, the media coverage of Casa Kolacho is rather monothematic and little news in terms of new information and novelty is provided in the framings of different sources. The difference depends more on the style and tone of the media channel, and how entertainment-focused it is. The latter also influences the amount of visual material that is provided, sensationalist media and the new media (travel blogs, vlogs) being especially interested in the high entertainment value of visual spectacle.

b) Agro Arte in the online mainstream media

Agro Arte, too, has a rather wide standing in the media, being validated by big media channels such as *Deutsche Welle* (Weckner, 2017)*, El Colombiano* (Restrepo, 2018) or *El País* (Pineda, 2018). The main difference, however, is that the contexts in which Agro

Arte appears are very variable, going from feature stories that portray Agro Arte solely (Calle, 2017; Weckner, 2017; Editora Antioquia, 2019); to news stories that feature Agro Arte in the context of other newsworthy events where the group is involved ("Colombia: piden no olvidar," 2016; "Colombia no," 2016; "Los recuerdos," 2018; Agamez Lombana, 2018; Editora Norte Santander, 2019); or as part of news stories that include Agro Arte in their comparison of other similar initiatives (Restrepo, 2018). The general framing of Agro Arte is always positive, the project being portrayed as a civic organization that works both with youth and the elderly through memory, gardening and rap music. This way, the media coverage creates sympathy toward the project, giving it visibility and further symbolic capital in the eyes of the apparent antagonists: the state and the illegal gangs to whom they most often oppose to. Their positioning and critique towards the state and the illegal groups is subtle, yet more pronounced than that of Casa Kolacho. The condemning voice is more than present in articles where the leaders of the project speak of the actors behind forced displacement ("Colombia: piden no olvidar, "2016; "Colombia no," 2016), the military attacks of 2002 (Weckner, 2017), the Escombrera (Editora Norte Santander, 2019) and the role of the civil society organizations in general as opposed to the state.

> We [Agro Arte] believe that in Medellín the issue of violence has been improving but it hasn't been thanks to the state. In administrations like this one [of mayor Federico Gutiérrez] mediatisation has been very important […] but we are seeing no integral solutions there. Medellín has been a city where architecture has been used for saying "nothing's going on here," like the electric stairways that are a landmark object instead of resolving territorial issues. A lot of tourists arrive there; they say that the state is present there, the flag has been hoisted. In reality, this architecture is for hiding many things that are happening around there.

> (Editora Antioquia, 2019)

In the article cited above not only does the interviewee take a critical position towards the current administration, but the journalist, too, adds a condemning introduction to the writing:

> Medellín started the year with it its streets tainted by blood. 159 homicides were registered only in the first three months, 19 more than last year during the same period of time according to the Sisc [the Information System for Security and

conviviality]. Meanwhile, the politics of security of Federico Gutiérrez that are focused on territorial control through vigilance and deployment of armed forces has improved the problem.

(Editora Antioquia, 2019)

This article is an exception in comparison to other media where the accusations are generally not as defined as they are here. This online newspaper is an alternative left-wing media channel that represents the contrary to the majority of publications of the mainstream media where opinions are delivered in a much more neutral tone. Gamson and Wolsfeld (1993) argue that the narrower the movement's demands, the more likely it is to receive coverage that presents it sympathetically to a broader public; on the contrary, if movements challenge powerful groups, institutions or cultural codes in severely fundamental ways, they risk being denied standing altogether.

Some titles that speak of Agro Arte are similar to those published on Casa Kolacho and sound sensationalist: "Agroarte and the alternatives to homicides in Medellín" (Editoria Antioquia, 2019), or "Resisting through art" (Editora Norte Santander, 2019). These two, however, were also published by the same alternative left-wing media channel *Colombia Informa* that denominates itself as the Communication Agency of the People. Other headlines are more neutral, such as "Peace, plants and hip-hop in Colombia" (Weckner, 2017), "The rappers that plant vegetables in Comuna 13, Medellín" (Pardo, 2016) or "'Let's hug Medellín,' an initiative that aims to fight fears" (Agamez Lombana, 2018).

Various articles mention Agro Arte in the context of the commemoration events partially organized by them: The International Day of the Victims of Forced Displacement held in Bogotá on 30 August 2016 ("Colombia: piden no olvidar," 2016; "Colombia no," 2016); the commemoration of Operation Orión in Medellín on 16 October 2018 ("Los recuerdos," 2018) and the Cuerpos Gramaticales ritual performed in Barcelona on 16 October 2017 (Pineda, 2018). Other articles speak of other events related to Agro Arte, such as the opening of their new community centre in Cúcuta[57] (Editora Norte Santander, 2019) or the

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[57] Cúcuta is a town bordering Venezuela in the North of Colombia and is experiencing a massive inflow of Venezuelan migrants.

inauguration of the new murals on the cemetery walls of la América (Frecuencia Estéreo, 2019).

All in all, it can be said that similarly to Casa Kolacho, the media frames in which meaning is given to Agro Arte and its work as a civic organization are positive, allowing it to raise sympathy and interest toward the group. In this sense, the transaction between the organization and the media has been favourable for both–Agro Arte making use of the networks of diffusion for increasing its symbolic power, and the media channels taking advantage of the stories they provide, be it for channeling the company's own clandestine political views through subtle critique made by third parties, or by broadcasting the voice of the 'common people,' thus fulfilling the criteria of democratic media diversity. Finally, what distinguishes Agro Arte from Casa Kolacho is that it is presented in many different contexts and from different angles, with its multiple sub-projects being represented. This shows that the organization has been capable of maintaining its own voice and communication agenda, avoiding just one single role being bestowed to the group or becoming a monothematic antagonist to the state.

Responding to the research questions raised in the beginning of the research, the study has shown that both groups have been successful in managing the mainstream media as their ally to get validation, standing and positive framing. Major newspapers such as *The Guardian, Deutsche Welle* and *El País* have dedicated either full stories or mentioned one of the groups in their articles. As the media coverage has come from very disparate sources that vary organizationally and ideologically, it is hard to tell what exactly motivates each channel to dedicate space for the subcultural organizations, but a part of it has to do with the proper process of reproduction and processing of media, by which formerly validated stories and organizations are more likely to receive media attention again. The content that was most replicated varied from one organization to the other: while almost all the articles published on Casa Kolacho mentioned the graffiti tour as a successful entrepreneurial and cultural activity and provided photos of it, while the group itself was portrayed as a civic organization that works for the pacification of Comuna 13 using hip hop. In the case of Agro Arte, it is more difficult to point out the most replicated content as the events regarding Agro Arte that were covered in the media were diverse. What resounded from the majority of them, however, was the peculiar combination of hip

hop and gardening, together with portrayals of the project's charismatic leader. The arguments that were used for validating both organizations' relevance in Comuna 13 had to do with the fact of working with the local population, including the young and the elderly, and providing them with activities that help strengthen the social fabric of the district. Other factors, such as the number of years they have been doing social work, the number of youth that has been trained and the collaborations and networks they have established all verified their relevance and prominence as social organizations and spokespersons. The images used in the articles also varied according to the group and the content. As the majority of articles on Casa Kolacho had at least something to do with the graffiti tour, most of them also attached photos of the graffiti walls that are on their tour. Alternatively, images of the tour guides ('hip hoppers' of Casa Kolacho) accompanied the reports. The images attached to the articles regarding Agro Arte were diverse and varied from the Cuerpos Gramaticales performance that showed women sowed into ground, a commemoration act celebrated with other organizations, or photos of some of the rappers of Agro Arte filming a new video. Finally, as it has already been argued, the framing of both organizations is generally positive, creating sympathy among the potential audience and giving diffusion to the collective narratives of both groups.

6.3.3. YouTube

YouTube has become the dominant platform for online videos worldwide, and an important location for some of the most significant trends and controversies in the contemporary new-media environment (Burgess, 2011), including debates related to the politics, economics, and (sub)cultures. YouTube was the pioneer in encouraging the publishing of original, often times DIY audio visual content, including music videos. With the growth of digital media, music videos have become a separate creative medium that represents much more than just the musical product; rather, the videos have become a key medium for transmitting hidden transcripts via oral and visual language.

Similar to platforms such as MySpace or Soundcloud, it has been an important communication tool not only for major artists, but also for underground and subcultural groups who upload their videos on the free-access platform, using it for diffusion as well as a space of interaction and feedback. Music videos are not only reconstructions or

mediatized representations of the artists, but also a "key medium through which individuals think about and visualize place" (Bennett, 2007: 77). Music videos can thus evoke complex and heterogeneous notions of space and place—through the artists' representations' of it—thanks to the seductive hold they can achieve over the geographical imagination (Bennet, 2007: 70). Viñuela (2010), on the other hand, has suggested that video clips can contribute to the construction of spaces of representation; their analysis therefore allows us to study the significance and the changes taking place in a city. Following Bennett and Viñuela's theoretical suggestions, the following section looks at the music videos of Agro Arte and Casa Kolacho with a focus on the "real" and "fictional" images they evoke on Comuna 13. Given that both entities have a strong tie with the district where they operate, the aim is to see what type of visual narratives their musical production creates of the territory and see how they contribute to the social construction of new, alternative geographical imageries of Comuna 13.

a) Agro Arte on YouTube

Similar to Agro Arte's numerous social and cultural undertakings, its musical performances are gathered under different accounts in YouTube, the main sources being Barrio Bajo Producciones and Hip Hop Agrario. Hip Hop Agrario is the common label for the music they produce and refers to its strong connection between hip hop, the word, the streets and the ground below the streets that have traditionally been worked by the peasants. On the other hand, the same artists also appear under other labels, such as Unión entre Comunas. This is used for projects that work with participants from different comunas of Medellín with the motto of joining the different parts of the city through hip hop. Another umbrella label is Semillas de Futuro that unites the work that is done with smaller children, seen as the 'seeds for the future'. Lastly, the most recent subgroup and project launched by Agro Arte is the Partido de las Doñas [the Ladies Party] that is focused on working with women. The different subgroups indicate to Agro Arte's horizontal character in terms of organizational management and funding, mostly based on voluntary work, knowledge exchange and collaborations with numerous local and international associations and professionals.

First of all, what stands out in the audio visual production of Agro Arte is its quantity and the diversity of its artistic collaborations. It is remarkable how many music videos they have published in YouTube. In 2018 alone,[58] Hip Hop Agrario published five music videos that featured different participants of Agro Arte and its collaborators. In 2017, the equivalent number was fourteen.

The videos of Agro Arte are divided into various themes. Firstly, there are songs that are either performed by small children or depict childhood for its vulnerability and its potential for change. This is the case of "Realidad" (Semillas del futuro, 2018), where four pre-adolescent children speak about the complex reality of their everyday, where they see "bullets flying and friends dying."[59]

> Compleja realidad la que vivimos en los barrios
> no entendemos por qué aquí se siguen matando
> almas van subiendo, cuerpos van cayendo
> mientras que nosotros nos hundimos en el llanto.
>
> It's a complex reality that we live in in the barrios
> we don't understand why they keep killing each other here
> souls are ascending, bodies are falling
> while we are drowning in our tears.

"Realidad" is a somber, heartbreaking song because of the contrast of the rappers' still childish voices and the devastating lyrics that speak about how the incessant homicides sweep away children's hopes of "dreaming without having to fear" for their present and future. Similarly, "No más de lo mismo"[60] (Hip Hop Agrario, 2018b) begins with images of children playing war on the streets, with a subtle reggae tune playing in the background. Soon, one of the adult rappers appears, singing in the cemetery of San Javier: "no more wars […] we want thoughts that can construct the present and end the anger that makes us confront one another."[61] The song is dedicated to an adolescent who was assassinated during an activity that Agro Arte had organized as a manifestation against homicides.

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[58] As of November 28, 2018.
[59] Translated from the lyrics of the song.
[60] "No more of this"
[61] My translation from the original lyrics "no más muertes […]queremos pensamientos que construyan el presente […] que acabemos con la rabia que nos pone frente a frente."

Both songs denounce violence by alluding to the innocence of childhood and its symbolic potential for change.

A third example of the work done with children is "Casa Oscura,"[62] (Semillas del Futuro, 2013) that was the first song created by and for Semillas del Futuro. Here, nine young boys tell their story of resistance to become part of criminal groups. The song starts with the legend related to the "dark house", known as the place where the popular saint Madre Laura once appeared. Along different periods of time the Casa Oscura was identified as a meeting place for the local delinquents, the militias, members of the paramilitary groups and finally, of the bacrim.[63] Portraying an old worn out house and a small boy, the music starts with the boy narrating how footstep are heard in the hallway of the abandoned building that has blood scattered on its walls. After setting the scene of the haunting place, another young rapper goes:

Escucha comuna, debajo hoy	Listen, comuna, today, down below
tocamos tus fosas y proponemos un mañana	we touch your graves and propose a tomorrow
donde juntos podremos hacer	where together we can make
cambios reales de sueños de transformación.	real changes from dreams of transformation.

In contrast to "Realidad", this song maintains the voice of hope until the end, despite the dark everyday scenario that overshadows the boys' aspiration for a "real transformation" to take place.

A second topic that is recurrent in the music videos of Agro Arte and hardly escapes any of their songs, including those recorded with children, is state corruption and political violence. This is exemplified most explicitly in "Insurgentes" (Insur-Gentes HIP HOP AGRARIO, 2016), where the introductory text says the following:

> Aquí están los hijos de los campesinos que no pudiste hacer arrodillar, dignos en su vida y obra, quienes hicieron este puto país, los barrios, los primeros caminos. Antes que cualquier gobierno legitimara con muerte su mandato, aquí estábamos, gente de la prole, caminantes de laderas. Escucha pueblo: nuestra mayor venganza será juntarnos.

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[62] "The Dark House."
[63] Drug trafficking criminal groups.

> Here are the children of the peasants who you did not manage to kneel down, dignified in their life and their doings, the ones who made this damn country, the *barrios*, the first trails. Before any government legitimated its mandate with deaths, here were we, people of the proletariat, itinerants of the hillside. Listen, people: our biggest revenge is uniting us. [64]

In this song, the introduction sets the scene for confrontation between the "we"—the proletariat—and "you"—the government. This air of conflict is also noticeable in the song's audio track that repeats three notes (F4, C4, Db4) throughout the song, creating a hypnotic repetition that transmits a sense of agitation. The same nervous feeling is transmitted through the rappers' flow, and rapid rhythm of intonation when singing.

Interestingly, while the message of the song is centred on critiquing the local neoliberal government, the video itself is composed of numerous images from different cities of the world that contrast with the colourfulness of the streets of Medellín. This way, the rappers do not appear as local agrarian messengers, but as if they were well-travelled proletarian revolutionaries. The protagonist of the song is portrayed in different cities and museums as well as in front of several art pieces, apparently questioning the wider concept of global power and its hierarchies. This coincides with Huq's view on the modern media imperialism, in which globalization and localization coexist in a complex web of network flows, showing progressive cultural homogeneity while ensuring that identity and specific values are ever more crucial in understanding popular culture (Huq, 2006, cited in Feixa & Guerra, 2017:4). Globalized values and trends–such as travelling and visiting museums as a form of knowing other (institutionalized) cultures–appear in this video too, as if trying to show that these rappers can be anything, that they also know how to speak the language of globalization; yet they maintain their identity as agrarian hip hoppers. The song finishes with another explicit text that openly targets the Colombian government:

> Gobierno escucha: aquí estamos los hijos de los campesinos que nunca se humillan a tu poder. Mientras nos sigas persiguiendo y matando, seguiremos la siembra. Azadón y machete nuestro legado. Nuestra mayor venganza será juntarnos. #guerrilladelpueblo

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[64] My translation.

Government, listen: here we are, the children of peasants that will never be humiliated by your power. As long as you keep persecuting and killing us, we will keep on sowing seeds. Mattock and machete. Our biggest revenge is joining our forces. #guerrillaofthepeople[65]

Here, the power abusing government is addressed in second person while the "us" has turned into "the force of the peasants" who protect their rights with a mattock and machete. There are clear indications of the song authors' political ideology: referring to the proletariat, "the children of peasants" that join their forces with a mattock and machete give notions of Marxist thinking that longs for the uprising of the oppressed classes.

Without ever publicly holding partisan speeches, or declaring their political alliances, the struggles of the peasants and labourers against the hegemonic class is present in the songs and activities of Agro Arte. Denouncing the government and its deficiencies is one of the most common themes in their repertoire. While not always being the main topic of the song, there doesn't seem to be a way of getting around without mentioning the corrupt government, state crimes, persecutions and other topics that are common in the subgenre of politically conscious rap.

One of the earlier songs of Agro Arte, "Escúchame" (El A.K.A Guerra de Guerrillas, 2013) also aims to raise awareness among its listeners, this time using a screaming voice to express the near-desperate concerns of the rapper. In this video the protagonist appears alone, surrounded by walls covered in newspapers. Carrying a safety helmet, his face is covered in dirt and soil and his body language is distressed. The rapper is illuminated by a single focused light that turns on and off while he yells that "his voice isn't lost despite all the suffering".[66] His body is tense and his face and arms express constriction when he begins the song with a double chorus that shouts: "listen to me, listen to me […]" for six times. During the first verse the rapper gesticulates his arms, expressing fury; then, his hands start rubbing soil on his face. Subsequently, he begins another chorus as he reaches for more soil to seed down a plant into his helmet as a sign of a new beginning. Before

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[65] My translation
[66] My translation.

concluding the song with a final chorus, the rapper addresses the audience, saying: "Listen, people: while you fall, my anger grows bigger. I haven't forgotten about the force as the memory remains intact. Force, power and dignity for the common people!"[67]

In "Escúchame," the rapper performs his distress alone. Another rare single performance of Aka, the same protagonist, also dates a few years back. "Qué es arte" (El Aka HIP HOP AGRARIO, 2014) essentially consists of the rapper's personal reflections the meaning of art. The video starts with contrasting images of Comuna 13 and other parts of Medellín. Brick walls, clothes hanging on the doorstep and a barking dog are followed by images of glass windows and tall concrete buildings. As in "Escúchame," the song begins with a double chorus that goes:

¿Y qué es arte? ¿Sino referencia a la lucha?	And what is art without a reference to the struggle?
¿Y qué es arte? ¿Si no sirve a la comuna?	And what is art if it doesn't serve the *comuna*?
¿Y qué es arte? Expresión de mi cultura, calles, aromas, experiencias vividas.	And what is art? The expression of my culture, streets, aromas, lived experiences.

The contrasting images between the centre of Medellín and Comuna 13 (and perhaps some other peripheral comuna) are recurrent throughout the video. While the rapper strolls through the city, he says: "it is different to know the path, rather than passing through it," expressing his condition as a person who knows the city inside out–the itinerant hip hopper who has seen it all. During the interlude, the rapper narrates his vision of the meaning of art, looking at it as a matter of social action, of having the courage to take alternative paths.

> Arte es lo que haces cuando creas un nuevo comienzo, rompes cadenas y te juegas por la vida. […] Arte es lo que tú haces cuando te atreves a caminar. Arte es cuando tú decides la libertad.
>
> Art is what you do when you create a new beginning, when you break chains, undress lies and decide to out your bets on life […] Art is what you do when you dare to keep walking. Art is what you do when you decide for freedom.

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[67] My translation.

These reflections represent the artist's personal philosophy that contemplates art as a social process that is closely related to the community, to the surroundings and to the city that they inhabit. At the meantime, the rapper questions the meaning of the type of art that does not serve the interests of the comuna, nor speaks of the struggle of the common people. He puts into doubt the artistic expressions that are merely self-reflective and decontextualized from their social and territorial origin.

"Qué es arte" is somewhat atypical to the musical production of Agro Arte as it focuses less on denouncing the state and also because it is performed alone by the rapper Aka. However, as a rule, their songs are interpreted at least by two persons, even if the featuring artist only sings a few lines or the chorus.

"América" (El Aka feat. Metan-o, 2017) is a song that is protagonized by Aka and featured in the chorus by another rapper with the artist name of Metan-o. In terms of art-direction, this is one of the most complex songs of Agro Arte. The video starts with Aka waking up to the sound of the news in the background that speak about the eviction of the native communities. He gets out of bed and while he washes his face, the music starts. Aka's face appears in the middle of an audio visual projection that shows images of indigenous people protesting against the police. After that, other images of protest appear projected on the rapper's motionless face, while his voice starts to sound in the background:

<div style="margin-left: 2em;">

Es la hora precisa	It's the right time
de cantar mis canciones,	to sing my songs,
son letras subversas,	the subverted phrases,
contenido de cañones […]	the content of cannons […]
Las inclemencias del destino	The inclemency of the destiny
desgranaron esta hierba	cut off the kernels of this herb
que se convirtió en maíz.	that turned into maize.
Aunque la violencia nos corte,	Even if violence cuts us
seguiré a la raíz.	I'll carry on from the roots.

</div>

While the rapper retells the stories of resistance, images of different human rights' assaults in Colombia are projected on his face. Then, his face blurs into one with those of the peasants, women and youth taking part of the Cuerpos Gramaticales performance. Subsequently, the projected images convert into a starry sky while the rapper declares his reason for doing hip hop:

Hip hop para el barrio
 hip hop para las gentes
del trabajo campesino,
para las madres ausentes.
Hip hop movimiento—
filosofía de vida
que te marca coherencia
en estar en la tarima
Decir algo,
tus letras generan chispazos,
que retumbe tu boca
más allá de los balazos.
Que no seas payaso
de nuestra cultura,
que seas capaz de retener el Poder
manteniendo la altura.

Hip hop for the 'hood
hip hop for the people
of agricultural work,
for the absent mothers.
Hip hop movement—
a life philosophy
that marks coherence
when being on stage.
Say something,
your words create spark,
make your mouth resound
more than the bullets.
Don't be a clown
of our culture,
be capable of restraining Power
and maintain your height.

As in "Escúchame," this song alludes to the rights of the peasants, the indigenous communities and other vulnerable members of the Colombian society who are often overlooked. However, as the title of the song indicates, it is conceived as a common issue of the whole American continent. It thus introduces the question of local issues of inequality and human rights that they perceive as problematics that are reproduced at the global scale, with part of the South American populations being maintained under enduring power hegemonies.

Slightly different from the previous videos, the songs "Situaciones" (Unión Entre Comunas ft. Ney et.al., 2017) and "Mi barrio" (Hip Hop Agrario, 2018a) represent Agro Arte's more collective character. "Situaciones" is performed by seven persons from different ages, men and women. The video is filmed in the cemetery of La América, Comuna 13, that also figures in many other videos of Agro Arte. This time, the art-direction and the plot are rather simple: an elderly woman is portrayed visiting the

cemetery. While she crosses the circle-shaped ground, views of Comuna 13 appear. Stopping at the fence, she nostalgically looks at the city. Almost as if being lost, she wanders around the cemetery, seemingly thinking back on old memories. Then, images of an indigenous peasant working the ground appear, these seem to pay an homage to the rural past of Colombia. The text that introduces the song says: "in a city that is constructed over dead bodies, we have decided to convert every word into a memory for the future."[68] In one way or another, alluding more to the present than to the past, the rappers of this song speak about the importance of resistance in their everyday, about overcoming challenges such as drug abuse or the loss of a child. The rappers appear individually in front of different graffiti and mural paintings that cover the walls of the cemetery. Each of them tells a story of situations in the city that have made them feel uncomfortable and required an attitude of resistance to avoid giving in to life's difficulties.

The cemetery was also a central filming spot in "No más de lo mismo" and it also appears several times in the song "Mi barrio," which is fundamentally an homage to the barrios and hillsides of Medellín. Mainly narrated by four male rappers, the song is about sharing memories of the neighbourhood. Different from many Agro Arte's songs, "Mi barrio" has an optimistic sound both in the lyrics and the audio track. The whole song is accompanied by simple, happy-sounding piano chords that follow a reggae beat, making the track sound easygoing. The chorus, sung both in Spanish and English, has a welcoming message that says: "This is my neighbourhood, you're welcome my man, going up and down is something that we do every day. And if my lips are singing the truth, it's because we are coming from the 'hood."[69] As in "Qué es arte," here we can also contemplate the rapper as the itinerant city inhabitant that has an insider's knowledge thanks to living in the 'hood. The boys that narrate their stories in the hood' do it with a lot of flow; perhaps it's because of the reggae beat that guides the track or maybe it's the familiarity of the topic– their neighbourhood, their own territory.

This video lacks a clear lineal narrative; rather, it is an itinerant visual journey through Comuna 13, depicting its people, streets and rooftops. The song begins with some

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[68] My translation from the original text posted in Youtube.
[69] Original English lyrics.

digitally edited images of a graffiti that moves its eyes and mouth. A shiny 3D hummingbird flies over the wall and invites the spectators to another shot that overlooks the comuna, its endless brick walls and the prominent cable car. The following shots focus on the streets of the barrio, depicting its inhabitants: elderly men sitting on the street corner, mothers taking care of their children, boys and girls playing. Photographic and colourful portraits of the neighbours alternate with images of the rappers singing in the cemetery of La América and on a rooftop that offers views over the comuna.

As might be expected from the title, "Mi barrio" is the video that offers most images of Comuna 13. One of its filming locations is the cemetery that has already appeared in several videos of Agro Arte. However, there are also drone shots of the comuna, offering aerial views of the hillsides that the rappers often refer to and identify themselves with. Additionally, one can identify the street front of the metro stop San Javier, the already mentioned cable car and the architecturally distinguishing schoolhouse of La Independencia. Both here and in "Situaciones" many graffiti and mural paintings appear in the video, being part of the visual heritage and local pride of the neighbourhood that the artists have found worthy of including in their narrations.

The analysis of the musical production of music videos of Agro Arte has revealed several organizational aspects of the group. Firstly, the group is very active in producing videos and distributing them online. In 2017 and 2018 alone, nineteen music videos were published and many more have been uploaded in the years prior to 2017. This leads to another aspect of quantity: the number of artists that perform under the umbrella name of Agro Arte and Hip Hop Agrario is up to 10 persons, three of them being the most active publishers. This makes Agro Arte other than a regular hip hop group that would maintain the same format. Rather, the collaboration between the different rappers depends on whether a common topic has been worked on in a group, in couples or individually, and if synergy is found among the artists. There is a stronger core that consists of three male rappers that are also more active on the organizational side, giving workshops of song writing in different places. They are more experienced both on the artistic and pedagogical side and this can be told by their flow. However, collaborations are done with whomever worldviews are shared, and in this sense, little prominence and egotism is found among the artists of Agro Arte. After all, "what is art, if it ain't for the comuna?"

All in all, the people involved in Agro Arte's videos sum up to tens of girls and boys, men and women, which speaks of the entity's very open character and its productive use of hip hop as a social tool. However, as one of the interviewees told me, the high artistic productivity in terms of audio visual outcomes and the involvement of numerous participants in them is a communicational strategy of actively posting new content and that way announcing their incessant work. It shouldn't be forgotten that Agro Arte's music is mainly politically conscious and seeks to raise awareness and denounce injustice. In that sense the numerous videos are a continuous form of protest, and involving numerous people in their production is a strategy of visibility and multiplication.

In second place, what characterizes Agro Arte's videos is the considerably high quality of the audio visual production and art direction. Except for some videos, the clips are not necessarily simple, especially considering that many of them are created with no money at all or with very low budget.[70] While the camera resolution is not always very high, the videos tend to have a relatively well developed plot using different filming locations in Comuna 13 and elsewhere. Also, different formats of filmed material are often combined, including digital illustrations and effects, which require a proper amount of post-production work.

In third place, the analysis has shown that there are some common spaces that are recurrent in the videos through which Agro Arte represents Comuna 13. Firstly, and most commonly, the cemetery of San Javier appears in many of their videos, probably owing to its connotation as a place of memory, but also for its aesthetic value thanks to the graffiti that are on the cemetery's walls. The protagonists inside the cemetery are the graffiti and mural paintings, as well as the folkloric and popular niche decorations that make it a colourful place. Typical images of the cemetery used in the videos tend to overlook the comuna, given its location on a hillside, creating a horizon that allows the spectator to intuit the immensity of the peripheral and popular neighbourhoods of Medellín.

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[70] Based on a personal conversation with one of the members of Agro Arte.

The cemetery is also an important place for Agro Arte in terms of tactics of resistance, as its territory has been appropriated with years of work that first started with graffiti and mural paintings on the entrance wall and later evolved into weekly acts of urban gardening, a permanent seedbed where plants are reproduced, and more mural paintings in the interior walls. Regarding the changes taking place in the surrounding areas, it has also become a place of resistance to speculative urbanism and one of its outcomes–tourism. The significance of the cemetery will be analysed more in depth further on in another subsection.

The second common feature of the neighbourhood that can be detected in Agro Arte's videos are the narrow and steep streets of Comuna 13 and their endless stairs that figure in a couple of videos. The labyrinthine streets appear in shots filmed either on the streets or on the rooftops. Both give a sense of the vastness of the neighbourhood with its endlessly replicated brick-walled houses that are tied to one another. For an outsider it is difficult to tell the difference between the buildings and everything melts into a homogeneous mass of red brick that scales up the hillsides that have lost their natural green chromatics.

In third place, the common images of Comuna 13 in Agro Arte's videos also count with panoramic views of the comuna, filmed with a drone camera. These are important because of the way that fly over the comuna, its rooftops and semirural areas, giving a more intimate look into the homes and houses of those of the area and at the same time, provoke a feeling of immensity of the human urbanization. The panoramic views of the slum are also to be noticed as an aesthetic element that seems to have become popular not only among local groups who identify themselves with those hillsides, but also for external agencies that use them for destination marketing both for tourism and as filming spots.

b) Casa Kolacho on YouTube

The music videos related to the rap group of Casa Kolacho, C15, where three rappers and a DJ participate, are mostly found in YouTube under two accounts: C15HipHop and Jeihhco Caminante. C15 was born in 2004 and its long-term members are MC-s Jeihhco, Jairo and Juda. While Jeihhco is the most recognized public figure in the group, Jairo is

the so-called artistic director of the songs who is also in charge of creating the audio tracks.

A few aspects outstand in the analysis of the audio visual resources related to Casa Kolacho. In first place, considering their trajectory, the amount of music and music videos that the members of Casa Kolacho have produced is relatively small, especially compared to Agro Arte's high productivity. It also strikes out as surprising, considering the huge amount of mass media coverage on Casa Kolacho that portray it as the main entity of Comuna 13 that has been saving youth from violence by using hip hop.[71] With merely three videos on the band's YouTube account, one on an external account and a few recordings of live shows, the audio visual representation of C15 is rather scarce.

In second place, what stands out from the group's videos is the interest in recording with featuring artists. One of the collaborations has been done with a Moroccan hip-hop star Dizzy Dros who is relatively popular in his country and has more than half a million Youtube subscribers (in contrast to the 423 subscriptions of C15). "De lado a lado" (C15 ft. Dizzy Dros, 2014) was recorded with Dizzy Dros as part of an exchange programme that allowed C15 to visit Morocco. The second collaboration appeared on C15's latest album *Irse* (2016) where Maite Hontelé, a famous Medellín-based Dutch trumpet player features the song "Vándalos" (C15 ft. Maite Hontelé, 2016). Both songs have a simple black and white music video in the style of a making of. The first one portrays the studio recording process with many close-ups of the singers' faces. The second video shows the Dutch trumpet player in the beginning and at the end of the video while the rest of the clip depicts the making of a new wall painting inside Casa Kolacho. The same drawing is also on the cover of the album *Irse*. While in the first video there is some camera movement and changing of shots inside the studio, "Vándalos" is mainly filmed with a still camera that records the wall painting process.

Neither of the songs tell much about Comuna 13. The collaboration with Dizzy Dross is mostly self-referential and narrates the reason for making the song. "De lado a lado" means from one side to another and expresses the act of joining the forces of hip hop from

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[71] Check Hierro, 2016; Turizo, 2016; Arango Holguín, 2017; Bedall, 2017; Gutiérrez, 2017; Pareja, 2019.

one side of the world to the other. The second collaboration is also somewhat self-referential, this time aiming to prove through the lyrics that hip hoppers are not vandals and that living in the barrio doesn't mean being a criminal. Some topic sentences arise, such as "hip hop is our destiny, we follow the path, a Latin soul that entrusts itself completely."[72]

In addition to the above mentioned collaborations, the leader of Casa Kolacho, Jeihhco, has also had a short stage appearance with the Latin Grammy-winning Colombian artist Juanes (Juanes and Jeihhco, 2012). Of this, however, there is only a very low quality telephone camera footage that shows the one-minute-long appearance of Jeihhco at Juanes' charity concert.

What characterizes C15's 2016 album *Irse* is its hedonistic message and sonority. Topics such as love and partying are central to the lyrics of several songs. However, street crime, the marginalization of the periphery and youth violence are also recurrent in other songs. Another outstanding element is the use of the accordion, folkloric wind instruments, and Latin rhythms in a few tracks. These innovative elements are rather uncommon in Colombian conscious rap, which tends to be more rough-sounding. Musically speaking, their 2016 album was thus a step forward from their previous recordings as well as a courageous musical experiment compared to other groups with similar means of production. During interviews, two members of C15 expressed their ambition to become musically more professional, and to leave behind the "typical ghetto rap that nobody listens to" (Interview with CK1).

While several songs of *Irse* do maintain the tone of consciousness-seeking rap, a few of the tracks are much more about enjoying life. This is the case of "Block Party" (C15, 2017a) which is essentially an ode to partying and an invitation for others to join it:

Aquí estoy amigo a disfrutar la fiesta	Here I am friend to enjoy the party
La mejor posible mientras viva en la tierra.	the best possible one as long as I live on earth.
Creo que también ese es tu deber	I think this is also your duty
destapa la botella y por favor ven a beber.	open the bottle and please come and drink.

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[72] My translation.

From the same album, "Una rosa" (C15, 2017d) also has a lighter and hedonistic tone that guides listeners into think about falling in love and the risks it might bring.

Quién iba a decir	Who would've said
que llegaría a amarte.	that I would love you.
Quién iba a pensar	Who would've thought
ohh que daría la vida por besarte	ohh that I'd give my life away to kiss you.

C15's earlier songs "Homenaje"[73] (C15, 2013b) or "Almas en guerra"[74] (C15 ft. GHO, 2012) were much closer to the peripheral conscious rap style than their latest album. The lyrics of both songs aim to raise awareness against violence and insecurity, focusing on issues in the barrio. "Almas en guerra" is one of the first songs of C15 that does have a video and offers images of Comuna 13. The audio track begins with string instruments that cause a feeling of nervousness and uncertainty in the listener. The written introduction of the video in YouTube also describes the sentimental agitation of the rappers: "from the deepest hillsides of C13 arrive the voices of the souls that are at war, in conflict; souls that debate because they don't want their bodies to participate in a war that they reject."[75] The video begins with images from the barrio: elderly men playing domino, the rappers gesticulating in front of the library of San Javier, a young man covering a graffiti with blue painting. Finally, the four rappers appear in front of a group of young people who synchronically move their arms to the music, waving their hands as if they were at a manifestation. In continuation, more images from the barrio and its people are shown with emphasis on graffiti and their making. Images of children on rooftops, alternating with the agitated rappers, until a chicken that is transported on a bus becomes the protagonist of the video, being turned into a traditional stew (*sancocho*) that is prepared on open fire. The video ends with a boy eating the stew and others passing the plates to share the dish. At the very end, a photo of Kolacho, the friend who was killed in 2009, is added to the video as a way of homage.

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[73] "Homage"
[74] "Souls at War"
[75] My translation of the lyrics.

Mi estructura es la más pura	My structure is the purest one
enfermo de la vida y ese rap es mi cura	sick of life, this rap is my cure
me domina aquí en la tierra	it dominates me, here in this ground
emergen mis raíces por estas almas en guerra	emerge my roots for the souls that are at war
en la selva se protege	in the jungle one must protect himself
el hip hop nuestra corteza	hip hop is our bark
prisionero del destino porque la razón nos pesa	prisoners of our destiny because being [conscious is tough
nuestro rap–expresión local.	our rap–a local expression

"Desde el silencio"[76] (C15, 2017c) and "Cumbia de barrio"[77] (C15, 2017b) that were released several years after "Almas en guerra" also allude to the neighbourhood. The two songs speak of the barrio in rather contrasting ways. The first song begins with a phrase that is common among rappers of Medellín who claim social justice, using their music to denounce forced displacements and war:

Desde la periferia nacen estas historias	These stories are born in the periphery
de una calle llamada Medellín, Colombia.	on a street called Medellín, Colombia.
Luchas, fuerzas, años de guerra,	Struggles, forces, years of war,
desplazados, desaparecidos abundan en [mi tierra.	the displaced, the disappeared are abundant [in my land.
Hablan las calles y gritan: "VIDA PERRA!"	The streets speak and scream: "LIFE'S A BITCH!"

In this song the streets have been personified and given implicit knowledge of what happens when no-one is around; the streets are the "testimonies without a voice […] that witness the horror and pain of seeing a son die."[78] While the aim and the topic of the song is common in terms of portraying the threats that dominate the streets of Medellín, the audio track of the song is fast and happy-sounding, lacking dramatic string instruments or aggressive vocals, like the ones in "Almas en guerra".

"Cumbia de barrio" approaches the barrio using different artistic ways. Here, the authors have added a folkloric character to the song by using the rhythm of cumbia[79] and its typical instruments like the maracas. The lyrics of the song do not speak of critical issues;

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[76] "From Silence"
[77] "Cumbia of the Neighbourhood"
[78] My translation.
[79] Cumbia is a traditional rhythm and dance that originates in Colombia.

rather, they allude to an idea of national or even continental unity, the Caribbean rhythm being the point of union for the region:

> Cumbia de un barrio de Medallo que nace en la periferia
> Es mi cumbia, es tu cumbia, de mi tierra, de tu tierra.
> Somos latinos, somos Colombia.
> Yo soy tu tierra, soy tu calle, soy tu cumbia
> Somos latinos, somos Colombia
>
> The cumbia of a neighbourhood of Medallo[80] that is born in the periphery.
> It's my cumbia, it's your cumbia, from my land, from your land.
> We're Latinos, we are Colombia.
> I'm your land, your street, your cumbia
> We're Latinos, we are Colombia.

Here, the authors have allowed themselves to express a couple of stereotypical elements: apart from the romantic idea of cumbia representing the Latinos and all Colombians, some other phrases of the song also reproduce preconceived ideas, such as coffee being the "aroma of the country that lives with passion" while "the voice of the barrio is cumbia with rhythm, rum and heart."[81]

Es mi calle, cumbia, Colombia	It's my street, cumbia, Colombia
te invito a que vivas esto	I invite you to experience this.
ven tómate un café	Come and have a coffee
y escucha esta canción.	And listen to this song.
Siente el aroma de un país	Feel the aroma of a country
que vive con pasión […]	that lives with passion [...]
son la voz del barrio	they are the voice of the barrio
cumbia, ritmo, ron y corazón	cumbia, rhythm, rum and heart.

Sounding almost like a jingle for promoting the country, "Cumbia de barrio" is original in its sonority, yet it completely lacks a good hip hop flow and rapping rhythms; many of the rhymes are forced, as well as the leitmotiv itself. Nevertheless, the positive outlook of the song is representative of Casa Kolacho's philosophy. During the interviews several members of the school underlined that they consciously work with more positive

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[80] Medallo is the "nickname" that locals sometimes use for Medellín. It plays with the word *medallón* that stand for "medallion" and expresses some affection towards the city.
[81] My translation.

messages and sonorities as they became tired of so much negative information around Comuna 13.

All in all, it appears that despite Casa Kolacho's frequent representation in the local and international media, their own musical representation of the neighbourhood that they often refer to, is somewhat scarce. It was also impossible to find works where they'd involved the local youth. With no signs of communal work being done during my stay (and months before it), with very few videos of the formal hip hop group C15 and none with the students of the school, there is reason to ask why the hip-hop school has become such a reference in Comuna 13 and what exactly maintains its reputation high. Is it the communal work that they do in the barrio (which was halted at least during my stay) or is it the discourse that is reproduced during the graffiti tours where hundreds of local and foreign tourists participate every week, taking back home the story of the social transformation of Comuna 13 and Casa Kolacho as the main reference of that change?

On the musical level it is difficult to estimate the social impact of Casa Kolacho and how its music making has contributed the social construction of space. However, looking at their standing in online mainstream media, they have clearly been validated by power institutions and media companies as agents of change and transformation, offering positive framings of Casa Kolacho as one of the key civic organizations that have guided the social transformation of Comuna 13. The following section will look at the interaction and impact of both entities on determined spaces: Agro Arte in the cemetery of La América, and Casa Kolacho in the areas surrounding the electric stairways that fall within the route of the graffiti tour.

6.4. Representational spaces under a lens

This section takes a focused look on the representational spaces of both entities, describing their presence in places of Comuna 13 that have a strong symbolic significance and for which they have become important sites for the dissemination of their discourse. The second part of this section will take a turn towards a few mainstream artists who have also used Comuna 13 as the setting for their music videos. The aim is to compare the

audio visual representations of the two underground rap groups and the mainstream artists to analyse the role of Comuna 13 in their spatial narratives.

6.4.1. Agro Arte and the cemetery of La América

Figure 15. A mural painting inside de cemetery of La América
illustrating the violent processes in Comuna 13 and the rituals of healing.
Photo by author.

The cemetery of La América is one block away from Casa Morada; constructed following neoclassical inspirations, it has a circular shape that ascends from the entrance stairs towards the central part, formed by another circle, and continues ascending until a third, rectangular part that is separated from the rest of the area with a wall, nowadays locked away from ordinary users. Right behind the upper, rectangular part, lies the former detention centre Bon Pastor, currently under construction and on its way to becoming a university campus for approximately 8000 students. The entrance gate gives access from carrera 96 [street nr. 96] which connects the central part of Comuna 13, including the library of San Javier and the metro stop with the western hillside barrios 20 de Julio and La Independencia. The entrance wall was covered with mural paintings and a vertical garden years ago. The right side of the entrance wall depicts indigenous peasants, painted by Jomag, a graffiti artist that collaborates both with Casa Kolacho and Agro Arte. On the other side, there is an image of Mocho, a 14-year-old rapper who was killed a few years ago.

Inside the cemetery there are other homages to young boys who have been killed in the armed conflict of Comuna 13, and whose mothers have turned to Agro Arte, asking for a ritual to be paid to honour their death, given that the boys' dead bodies were never found. These rituals may consist of a mural painting or a graffiti being painted somewhere on the cemetery's wall; some plants to be planted while sermons are recited, or a rap concert being given in the cemetery. Out of these rituals the new pedagogical project called Galería Viva [The Live Gallery] was born. The aim of it is to conserve the mural paintings and graffiti by showing them to schoolchildren and to the local inhabitants to raise awareness of the significance of the cemetery. Withstanding the pressure of tourism, the Galería Viva has become a counter-tour to the graffiti routes that pass the cemetery. During the visits that are mainly held with school groups, participants are asked to take part of the gardening tasks and later, during a route around the cemetery, the graffiti and mural paintings are interpreted. Many of them portray people from Comuna 13, but some also allude to the recent history of the district, showing the Escombrera, the warfare, helicopters and the search for the displaced and disappeared.


Figure 16. A rap concert held inside the cemetery of La América. Photo by author.

The cemetery is also used for concerts that pay homage to the deceased. In one occasion, a rap concert was dedicated to a recently killed young man who never had a funerary service held. At the request of his girlfriend, the concert was held as a ceremony of condolence. Yet at the same time it was also a way of reclaiming the significance of the cemetery as a popular space of memory. Mainly through songs that condemned violence and crime, young rappers performed their musical creation, sometimes alone, at times with other rappers accompanying them. Meanwhile, the bass line of the playback music

reached even the furthermost burial stones of the cemetery, many of them anonymous, many covered with photos of young men.

When asking about the intentions that they have with the cemetery, Agro Arte leaders underlined that they have no aim to open their space to a wider public through paid tours as they find the touristification of Comuna 13 unethical even if it could fund their other, community-focused activities. Following other urbanistic changes taking place in the district, the members of Agro Arte fear that soon the entire cemetery will be closed to the public and become a victim of urban speculation.

6.4.2. Casa Kolacho and the graffiti tour
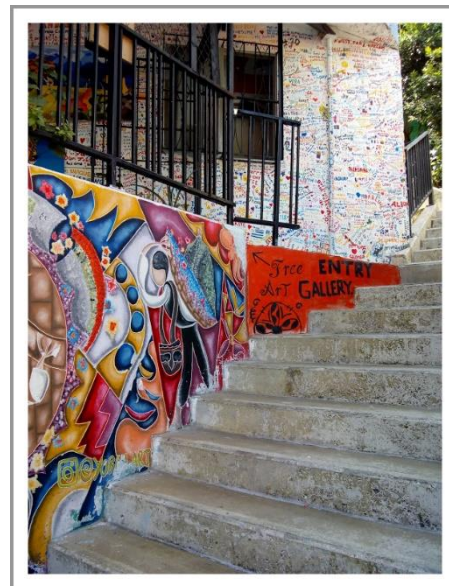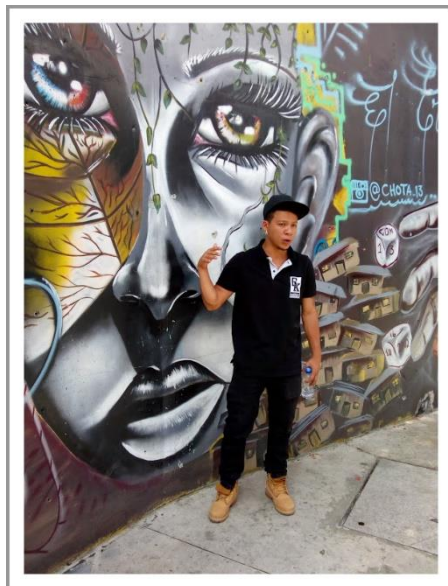
Figures 17 & 18. Tour guide of Casa Kolacho explaining one of the graffiti during the tour (left); the first art gallery of the area inviting travellers to enter. Photos by author.

The territory of Comuna 13 that can be considered as appropriated by Casa Kolacho is more far-reaching than that of Agro Arte; in this case it is an area that is not enclosed by four walls, but by other territorial laws. The graffiti tour comprehends a territory that goes through several different neighbourhoods of Comuna 13, starting from the metro stop of San Javier, where visitors meet (San Javier II neighbourhood), ascending by bus to upper neighbourhoods (Las Independencias) where the group walks through several mainly pedestrian streets until reaching the escalators which take them down to the neighbourhood of 20 de Julio from where the group walks down to the final point, the

house of Casa Kolacho in the neighbourhood of San Javier I. Here too, the area has been largely appropriated through graffiti that were started to be painted in the mid-2000s on the walls of the houses of the district. By now, however, it has become the biggest reference point for local and international graffiti artists and the most solicited place to paint, with more than hundred graffiti pieces in a territory of a little more than one square kilometre. The graffiti tour trajectory is the territory of Casa Kolacho, given that they were the first ones to invent the tour and are still the main spokespersons and key references to anything to the majority or new articles that have to do with Comuna 13's social transformation through art.

The tours are led by hip hoppers that *must* be locals to incarnate their own lived experiences of violence and posterior salvation. The tour of the social transformation is performed on a daily basis; the experience of what it meant to live in the 'hood two decades ago is transmitted through stories of bullet holes in mattresses and accompanied by the numerous graffiti, many of which express transgressive messages. As the groups walk through the 'hood, several participants dare to glance into the windows of shacks which they would otherwise never get to see, satisfying the very human need of experiencing the anticipated "backstage" (Goffman, 1956) of the everydayness of local people. With some critical notes on the past governments (without necessarily mentioning any names if the tourists don't ask for it), the guides show the first tags were written by the leftist militias, for which it took time for later, more artistic expressions to be received as not hostile. Nowadays, whenever new graffiti are painted, the artists are said to receive strong local support, given that it has brought an important social and economic change to the streets of the graffiti tour.

With the recent booming of tourism in Colombia, Medellín has also had its share of visitors from abroad. In November 2017, the number of foreigners that visited Medellín grew 26,7% in comparison to the previous year (SITUR, 2017). In 2016, the electric escalators of Comuna 13 were incorporated to the list of Medellín's main tourism attractions as the number of visitors of the escalators had grown very rapidly. In 2017, the overall number of visitors of the escalators and its roundabouts was 48.715, 107% more than in 2016, 60% of them foreigners (SITUR, 2017). In 2017, the escalators were the number three most visited site of Medellín after the Botanical Garden (89.987) and

Parque Norte (56.745). These numbers give reason for considering both the escalators and the graffiti tours as important instigators of tourism in Comuna 13. In an interview with the professionals of the Secretary of Tourism of Medellín, the informants confirmed me that the electric escalators and the graffiti tours are "an attraction that they have been promoting here [in the Secretary of Tourism]" (interviewee ST1). On the other hand, the destination marketing manager of Medellín Convention Bureau insisted that "the social transformation of Medellín is a key message for the promotion of the destination" that attracts both "MICE tourists as well as leisure tourists that come for adventure to a city where others might not go" (interviewee MCB1). One of the city's promotional materials (Medellín Travel, 2018) also uses the message of transformation as a slogan: "Be part of the transformation," while a panoramic image taken from the graffiti route of Comuna 13 illustrated the messages.

There have also been efforts of promoting the area around the escalators for another type of cultural events, such as the international Downhill Challenge bike race in 2018 where a new Guiness Record was established in a "trajectory that runs through the famous Comuna 13, the cradle of Pablo Escobar's hitmen" ("Downhill Challenge Medellín," 2018). It has also been promoted as a filming spot (Comisión Fílmica de Medellín,[82] 2018), it is a common place for the visits of international delegates, such as the participants of the World Cities Summit of 2019 ("La Comuna 13," 2019), and as the next section shows, it has also become popular among Latin artists for filming their music videos.

6.4.3. Mainstream artists in the 'hood

The textual and visual analysis of the musical production of the two hip hop groups has brought out some common topics as well as some differences in their social and political positioning. As groups that started practicing rap music because of its character as an oppositional movement, the question of their transcripts having to be critical is an eminent one. Both groups' musical and audio visual representations of place are influenced by

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[82] Comisión Fílmica de Medellín is a publically funded organ that is part of the Economic Development Strategy of the Alcaldía of Medellín, aimed at promoting Medellín as a site for local and international film shootings.

their underground character and by their interconnectedness with the corresponding social organizations and goals. In which ways does this focus allow their musical production to challenge the more widely reproduced representations of Comuna 13?

In my exploration of Comuna 13-based rap music, I came upon several artists from Medellín and elsewhere, who have filmed at least part of their production in Comuna 13. This includes one of Latin-America's most prominent reggaeton artists of the moment, Maluma, and his two love-affair driven videos (Maluma, 2017; 2019); Latin Grammy-awarded Juanes and his song dedicated to women's rights (Juanes, 2018); Enrique Iglesias and Nicky Jam's awkward love triangle (Nicky Jam and Enrique Iglesias, 2015) and local reggaeton artists' colour-loaded female-body-worshipping video "Volverla a ver" (Pipe Calderón et.al., 2019). In addition, a quick panoramic view of Comuna 13 also appears in Pharrell Williams' seemingly "socially conscious" (Simpson, 2015) video "Freedom" (Pharrell Williams, 2015) that was nominated for the Best Music Video Grammy. In the following subsections I will describe three of the above-mentioned music videos to analyse *their* representations of the spaces of Comuna 13, after which I will come back to the comparison with the local rappers' musical production.

a) "El Perdón" by Nicky Jam and Enrique Iglesias

"El Perdón" (Nicky Jam & Enrique Iglesias, 2015) is a song by the North-American reggaeton star Nicky Jam and the Spanish Latin pop star Enrique Iglesias. The third protagonist of the video, a local TV-star Sara Uribe, is the only native representative of Medellín. "El Perdón" is a song about regret, where the two singers express their guilt for not having treated the girl right. In a rather topical and melodramatic manner, the song takes place on the narrow streets of Comuna 13.

The video starts with some ambience sounds and far-sounding percussions while the spectator is visually introduced to the barrio. We see loose electricity lines, Nicky Jam sitting on the stairs of the descending street, observing it just as if he were a member of the local combo and had to keep an eye on the invisible borders. A girl walks down a street that has graffiti on the wall. In continuation, Enrique Iglesias appears with his back towards the camera, slowly walking through a narrow brick-walled street. Lastly, the face

of the female protagonist is portrayed right next to a wired fence—a symbol of female vulnerability? Three young boys are sitting on the stairs, playing drums with plastic containers; another shot displays older boys (one of them wearing a cannabis-figuring T-shirt), sitting further away on the concrete bench, doing nothing in particular. In the final shot of the introduction to the video, the camera goes back to Nicky Jam who's now leaning against a wall, still observing the street, while a lady passes him with a wash basin full of wet clothes in her hands. The camera gets back to the three small percussionists and the music starts.

Figure 19. Nicky Jam casually observing the streets of the 'hood. Photo: screenshot from the video of Nicky Jam & Enrique Iglesias, 2015.

During the first four beats we see shots of the streets of the barrio, alternating with images of the inhabitants of the neighbourhood—including Enrique Iglesias—who finally starts singing "tell me if it's true, they told me you're getting married, you don't know how much I'm suffering, this I have to tell you."[83] Nicky Jam takes over the singing and continues: "tell me, your farewell was hard for me, is it that he took you to the Moon, I didn't know how to do that."[84]

The rest of the song is very much the same with images altering between Nicky Jam and Enrique Iglesias in different locations: either sitting on the stairs, walking down the street, leaning upon a wall next to a broken window, or looking into the horizon. The female protagonist also appears in different places, either in front of her presumed home or

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[83] My translation.
[84] My translation.

leaning upon the wire fence, with her seducing gaze directed into the camera. Narratively, the video doesn't have much of a plot, apart from showing the streets of Comuna 13.

In the second half of the song, the initial daytime scenario becomes dark and two women that wear lanterns in their front enter the scene, riding BMX bikes in bikinis. The two singers also appear in the dark, sharing the scenario for the first time. As they sing about how much they hate losing the woman they love to another man, the love object suddenly appears in a dark and smoky room, wearing a wedding gown (and six-inch pole dance type of shoes). At one point she joins the palms of her hands to pray, showing her furthermore Virginesque and vulnerable character. The video ends with Nicky Jam and Enrique Iglesias lamenting their bad luck in the darkness, while the woman walks away in her big white dress.

In this video, the comuna, or the way it's imagined by the creative team, is the protagonist of the video, as the story itself lacks a deeper narrative plot that would go beyond the topic of heart-break. The environment and its socioeconomic aspects dominate the scenes, making the spectator understand that this unfortunate love story took place in a *barrio popular,* a humble neighbourhood. However, why are these surroundings necessary for the video clip? Would it be less successful if it were filmed in a middle or high class area? Do the multimillionaire musicians have to pretend being from the 'hood to make the unfortunate love story more credible? Would we feel less empathy for the abandoned guys if they were rich?

b) "X" by Maluma

The second music video that is partially filmed in Comuna 13 is part of the short movie *X* (Maluma, 2017) that joins three songs of the Medellín-born reggaeton and trap star Maluma and several other featuring Latin artists. The first part of the movie coincides with the single "GPS" that tells the love story of Juan Luis (Maluma)—a young man from the barrio*,* on his way of becoming a superstar. He meets a pretty girl to whom he swears to be truthful forever; however, things go the other way round.

The prelude starts with aerial images of Comuna 13 and Moravia neighbourhood,[85] then, one by one, the featuring artists that take part of the short movie are introduced into the show. The spectator is given a little glimpse of what will happen throughout the 26-minute video with accelerated images of the *barrio,* of racing motorcycles and half-naked women dancing in a club.

Once the red title *X* is presented, the film begins with the gathering of the boys who are on their way to a motorcycle race. In the midst of the rally, police start chasing them down and they boys must flee. They all make it to the 'hood, where they start discussing who's the fastest of them all. At that very moment Juan Luis spots the pretty girl. She first rejects him because of being a "dangerous trap singer," but the artist manages to defend himself saying that "he must act strong as this world is evil."[86] Finally, he conquers the girl's heart, which is illustrated by various love and sex-filled scenes where Maluma gets very explicit in his lyrics. Subsequently, images of "Juancho" as a teenager appear. Even though friends call him over to play football, he leaves the pitch to rehearse with his father who hands him a golden microphone, a mic "that can take him away from this "bullshit" and take him "all over the world".[87] This is where the story of José Luis, the miracle boy and superstar wh|o was born in Comuna 13, really starts.
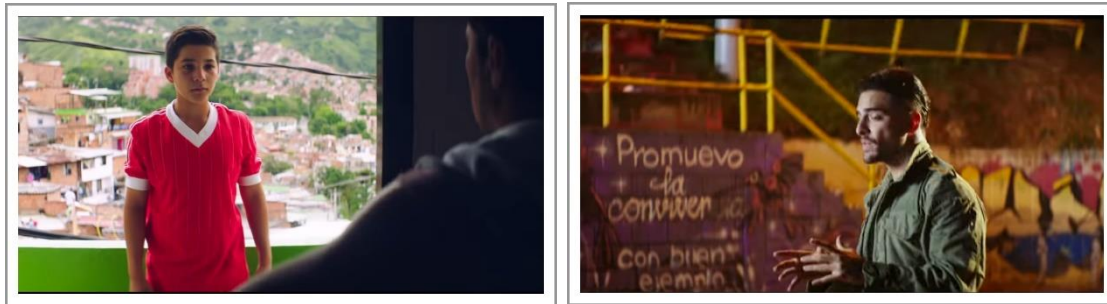

Figure 20 & 21. Maluma as a young boy (left) and later as a renown artists (right) returning to the 'hood to perform on the basketball pitch of Las Independencias in the video for "GPS". Photo: screenshot from the video of Maluma, 2017.

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[85] Both Comuna 13 and Moravia neighbourhood (that is part of Comuna 4) have recently become frequently visited by local and foreign tourists largely thanks to urban regeneration projects that have had an important role in making the areas more attractive and secure for those from outside the barrio.
[86] My translation.
[87] My translation.

The following images tell his growing success as a musician that unfortunately leads to the couple being apart for a long period of time and him cheating on the girl (a topic that Maluma the womanizer has been criticized for in real life). The girl ends up working at a striptease bar where José Luis accidentally sees her months after their break-up. He heroically rescues her from the place, but they get stopped by angry-looking bodyguards who shoot the singer dead. After the funeral scene, a new song begins that is very much self-centred, showing the reincarnated Maluma singing about his fame and money. This time, images of luxurious houses and clothing dominate the scenes.

In this video, the barrio is significant and necessary for narrating the popular dream of becoming someone important and famous despite being from the poor 'hood. Calling for compassion towards the protagonist, the artist who worked hard to fulfil his dream and became a well-earning musician is unfairly shot dead only minutes after he saved his ex-girlfriend from a shameful job as a lap dancer. There are important elements that glamourize crime with certain characteristics that echo from *narcoestética*. Narcoestética[88] is a term that is commonly used for referring to the aesthetic legacy left by the drug lords and their preference for sumptuous, expensive material belongings, as well as their female companions' keenness for plastic surgery. Barely dressed and strongly operated women, shiny jackets, colourful sunglasses, expensive cars and motorcycle races all speak of a subculture closely related to drug sales, which is a subcultural image of which Medellín has aimed to distance from.

c) "Pa Dentro" by Juanes

The third music video "Pa Dentro" (Juanes, 2018) is from the Colombian Latin pop star Juanes, who filmed the video of "Pa Dentro" in Comuna 13 and several other parts of Medellín. In "Pa Dentro," Juanes is accompanied by tens of women and the video is marketed as one that "celebrates the diversity of female beauty and supports inclusiveness and empowerment over objectification" (Guerrero, 2018). Artistic scenes that take place on the basketball pitch of Las Independencias and in other, more better-off areas of

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[88] Read more in Rincón, 2009.

Medellín, depict women in different scenes and choreographies that speak of female empowerment.

Figure 22. Juanes singing on the basketball pitch of Las Independencias in the video "Pa dentro". Photo: screenshot from Juanes, 2018.

There is not a very clear lineal narrative in terms of an introduction, development of the plot and conclusion; rather, the video resourcefully plays with colourful scenes that depict women in numerous situations. In the prelude Juanes dances among a group of girls doing a choreography in the basketball pitch of Las Independencias that is fully covered with yellow flowers. While the girls move somewhat robotically, the spectator can see the brick-walled buildings in the background of the pitch. The video continues with more images of women stepping over men, flying in the air, outbalancing men, until a final scene where a red-haired woman leaves Juanes sitting on top of a car full of smoke and walks off. In the middle of the song, a woman appears in front of a wall full of posters that say "The message is the medium," reversing McLuhan's 1964 phrase "The medium is the message," which controversially held that media messages are hidden in the medium, rather than in the content. With that Juanes seemingly aims to communicate that in his work it is the message that counts, not the looks and the format.

In "Pa Dentro" the significance of the barrio seems to be mainly about contrasting images with the very modern part of Medellín and its functionalist architecture to show that female empowerment is taking place all over the city, in its poor and wealthy parts. In that sense, Comuna 13 is here representative of the barrio, the popular settings where the common people live and thus also resonates to a large part of Juanes' listeners. Apart

184

from providing a sense of empowerment to women, filming the video in the barrio also empowers its inhabitants, raising a feeling of pride over their home area.

6.4.4. "Performing" the barrio: the real and the fake?

By using the deprived and peripheral settings, the pop music videos could possibly diversify and challenge elitist images of the city by making another type of urban realities visual. This way they could open up questions of political economy of urban poverty or engage questions of social justice. Even though Juanes' video has the intention of reinforcing female empowerment, the video is capitalizing on the idea of female empowerment itself, applying a gender-focused artistic approach to a theme sang by a man whose lyrics fail to transmit the transformation: "your body and my body know it, my chest can feel your respiration and the heart-beats are the same."[89] Nicky Jam, Enrique Iglesias and Maluma also fail to do other than "perform" the barrio through staged confrontations and failed love stories.

Viñuela argues that audio visual representations in the popular media can help the construction of imaginary thirdspaces (Soja, 1996, cited in Viñuela, 2010: 25) by reproducing selected imagery of determined social situations and tying them to place. Once the thirdspace is established in the collective place imaginary, the place itself may become subject to commodification through these elements. The above-mentioned music videos have a series of common imagery and use the urban settings in a way that either exoticizes the poverty of Comuna 13 or reinforces the urban imaginaries associated with the poor neighbourhoods of Medellín. Topics such as young hitmen doing illegal motorcycle races (Maluma, 2017) or barely-dressed beautiful women (Maluma, 2017; Nicky Jam & Enrique Iglesias, 2015; Pipe Calderón et.al., 2019) representing a hybrid between the Virgin and the mother (Rincón, 2009) appear in several videos.

The banal representations contribute to the "ethno-cultural othering" (Steinbrink, 2012) of Comuna 13 by sustaining various imageries of the periphery that are fashioned for the voyeuristic appreciation of the "other" and for transnational consumption (Freire-

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[89] My translation from the original lyrics in Spanish.

Medeiros, 2011; Linke, 2011). The aesthetization of poverty (Roy, 2003) favours the commodification of urban deprivation (Dürr & Jaffe, 2012) and further shapes the culture of narcoestética and "favela chic" (Freire-Medeiros, 2008) through videos filmed in places that least represent the multimillionaire artists. In addition, the stereotypical and fiction-inspired representations reinforce the homogenizing place imaginary that ignores the ethnic, social and economic differences of the local populations.

Freire-Medeiros argues that it is pointless to oppose so-called native place representations to those produced transnationally, or "real" to "fake" encounters (2011: 30). Similarly to Viñuela (2010), she argues that the cinematic representations and narratives constructed in the favelas give way to the emergence of a "mobile entity, a space of imagination" that travels with the travellers. But which are the "native place representations" and what makes them different from the transnational imaginary thirdspace? In which ways have the underground rap groups managed to provoke questions on social justice and counter the visual, discursive and material homogenization of the city?

Figures 23 & 24. Enrique Iglesias lamenting the loss of his loved one (left); Hip Hop Agrario rappers walking through the 'hood. Photos: screesnhots from the videos of Nicky Jam & Enrique Iglesias, 2015; Hip Hop Agrario, 2018.

The audio visual production of the rap groups related to Agro Arte and Casa Kolacho includes numerous localizations that also appear in the popular artists' videos. Visual elements such as the narrow streets with brick-walled houses, climbing stairs and the drone views showing the whole comuna are present both in Hip Hop Agrario's songs, as well as in the videos of the above mentioned Latin artists. In terms of locations, it is difficult to tell the difference between "native" and "transnational" narratives as the spaces where the videos are filmed are often the same among the popular artists and the local rap groups. The streets and the 'hood are also the most common spaces in reggaeton-

artists' musical production (Dinsey-Flores, 2008) where videos are usually performed in somewhat deprived urban surroundings, in clubs or in other spontaneous settings for dancing. In this sense, the fact that reggaeton artists Maluma, Nicky Jam and Pipe Calderón filmed their videos in Comuna 13, which at its most basic meaning represents the 'hood, is natural insofar as it is in accordance with the place imaginary and the representational codes that typically correspond to reggaeton and its "blin-blin sensibilities" that express the duality between the poverty that the Latinos have historically suffered and the fact of having made it to a better life (Dinsey-Flores, 2008: 55).

Instead of seeking difference in the filming locations, the audience numbers are what separate the pop-stars from the underground rappers. Nicky Jam and Enrique Iglesias' video "Perdón" (Nicky Jam & Enrique Iglesias, 2015) with its more than a billion views on YouTube by far surpasses "Mi Barrio" (Hip Hop Agrario, 2018b) with its mere six thousand visualizations. The artists who are well-established in the organizational space of music business (Forman, 2002) can have a much wider impact with their audio visual production. Nevertheless, I fear that instead of drawing attention on questions of political economy of urban poverty, they shape a culture of "blin blin" and "streets, sex and struggle" (Daddy Yankee,[90] cited in Dinzey-Flores, 2008: 36). Their staged dwelling in the 'hood fails to provide what Dinzey-Flores calls "a different gaze" into urban poverty from those managed by the media and political outlets (2008: 56). It is important to bear in mind that as a space that has received important funds for redevelopment projects and as "one of the most attractive film locations for international shootings in Medellín" (Comisión Fílmica de Medellín, 2018), Comuna 13 is also part of the elite imaginations and of the institutional discourse of Medellín's transformation.

Another important point of difference relies is the musical genre and the topics it covers. Except for Pharrell Williams' piece, all the above cited songs can be considered a mix of Latin-pop or reggaeton, where the most popular themes are "sex, dancing and partying, experiencing love, lyrical prowess, violence, and heartache" (Dinzey-Flores, 2008: 47).

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[90] Daddy Yankee is considered the father and king of reggaeton and he is often credited as the first person to make it an internationally popular genre with his album *Barrio Fino* (2004) and hits such as "Despacito" (2017).

Differing from the other representations, Pharrell Williams' song shouts for freedom and aims to "fight against oppression" (Kreps, 2015) with contrasting images of black slaves, factory workers, mannequin-like women and the countless slum roofs of Comuna 13. The five other reggaeton-influenced songs are themed around love (or the loss of it), generally of male figures intending to win over the deified female to dance or to have sex with her. In contrast, Hip Hop Agrario songs speak of ending the war, of the tough realities that dominate the neighbourhood, and of other topics that provoke thoughts on social justice. C15's themes are somewhat more mixed between concerns for the 'hood and more hedonistic expressions of love and amusement. Nevertheless, neither of the local rap groups have thus far produced artistic expressions of the treatment of women as mere objects of sexual desire, nor used the deprived urban surroundings to stage the love stories in a more dramatic manner. This recalls Baker's (2006) reflections on underground rap music in Cuba, where it is considered as too serious to be danced to. Similarly, among the socially conscious rappers of Comuna 13, sensual pleasures seem to be considered as too banal and insignificant in comparison to the serious and critical messages that correspond to their genre.

The comparison of the audio visual place representations of the popular Latin artists and the underground rappers shows that the most consistent resistance to the trivial and homogenizing representations of Comuna 13 are found in the rap groups' textual and discursive space. The infrapolitics (Scott, 1990) that could challenge the representations of the dominant cultural economy and the logics of spectacle and entertainment are found in the semi-hidden transcripts of the song lyrics, in negating the mainstream music industry and certain aesthetics that represent it.

Underground hip hop groups with their underground music production and promotion only have limited capacity of weaving counter-narratives to the homogenization depicted by the media and political outlets. As grouping that are interconnected to social organizations and their social goals, managing alliances with the media and holding timely collaborations with state institutions are key for growing the symbolic and social capital. Also, their power of contrasting the public discourse is often times located in the digital media space and in social networks that help reproduce the alternative voices of the peripheral spaces.

CHAPTER 7. RAP MUSIC: ¿Y SI NO SIRVE LA COMUNA?[91]

> *A social transformation, to be truly revolutionary in character, must manifest a creative capacity in its effects on daily life, on language and on space–though its impact need not occur at the same rate, or with equal force, in each of these areas.*

> (Lefebvre, 1974/1991: 54)

In this chapter I will proceed to revising and resuming the research outcomes with the aim of giving responses to the research questions that incited the pursuit into the relationship between rap music and the city space. The chapter discusses the reasons for participating in a hip hop group and the implications it has on the individual and collective level and how that affects the environment that the hip hoppers inhabit through their spatial practices and discourses.

7.1. Why participate?

What is it that makes Medellín youth participate in hip hop activities, what is it that makes it attractive? The observations carried out among the two hip hop groups allowed distinguishing several factors that influence the decision to participate in the music making process. These can be divided into the social, artistic and geographical categories; however, the motivations are strongly interrelated and coexistent. For this reason, they are always to be thought of as multi-layered and fluid.

7.1.1. Personal virtuosity

Among the social reasons for participation, there were mainly two answers: firstly, some participants sought for personal virtuosity and success in the music making, feeling strongly connected to the rap scene and having dreams of cultivating a professional career in music. For some, collective music making may stimulate individual quests, such as pursuing a personal success as a hip hop artist, creating a solo album and seeking for a

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[91] In English: "would if it doesn't serve the comuna?" Taken from the song lyrics of "Qué es arte?" (Barrio Bajo Producciones, 2014)

higher grade of professionalism. In these cases, the musical collective might just be an initial supportive environment that is necessary for the take-off of the individual talent. The individual pursuit of greater artistic expressions and means of monetizing the musical production may differ one's aims from the principles of the social organization and potentially lead to a rupture. This was the case of a few male participants who admitted dreaming of having a musical career which differed from that of the entity's leader whose primary motivation was always set on the collective. When I asked one of the participants who has recently created his own YouTube channel and is producing his songs on his own, how come he no longer sings with the others, he admitted that "he's always been a little bit more on his own," adding that he likes to create his own audio-tracks and that he simply works better alone (Participant AA5). Despite still coming to the weekly gatherings of the hip hop school, his participation in the activities was partial and his 'status' had changed, especially ever since he was working as a guide, doing graffiti tours and having economic obligations. The fact of becoming economically somewhat more independent became a differential element in comparison to other participants who are either about to enter the labour market, are unemployed, or work with precarious projects and contracts. The feeling of emancipation and self-realization can thus become a barrier in the collective music making of an organization where internal structures are very horizontal and collective objectives are superimposed over those of the individual.

The possibility of emancipation and personal virtuosity as a rapper was important for only a few of the "real" rappers for whom rap music and the rituals related to it played a significant role in their everydayness and their social identity, allowing them to define themselves as similar to other members of the rap community and the artists they admire, and at the same time, as different from those who do not share their social identities (Vryan et.al., 2003: 369). Being a rapper was thus significant for their personal identity in terms of what makes them different from each other and unique as individuals. However, the discussion wasn't so much about being a rapper (which seemed to be unquestionable independently from whether the person was actually dedicating time to the music or not) as it was about the type of rapper one is. Here, the respondents of the two groups had a very important distinctive element: while the members of Hip Hop Agrario emphasized the need of writing critical lyrics and creating conscious rap, the

rappers of C15 avidly defended their music that celebrates life as equally valid to political rap and emphasized the positive message of their songs as something strictly differential and characteristic to their music. The discussion of rap having to be either political and serious or, rather, positive and entertaining was an important one and often emerged without my insinuations. This standpoint was thus an important one to define one's identity as a rapper.

> If you are socially very conscious, but musically you are bad, your music is bad. Here, we take care of it a bit; we want the boys to learn things, to see the world and to be conscious of many things. For example, the [singing] technique. […] We also want to form part of the–musically speaking and not politically speaking–of the musical scenario. And we want to form part of it with our colour and essence and our rap, without doing what rap has often done which is that it has become a ghetto, because one doesn't even consider it music.
>
> (Interviewee CK1, social leader)

Here, one of the members of Casa Kolacho expresses his opinion of conscious rap having become too much of a "ghetto" and lacking musical value. His idea of music making is other than just the expression of the social concerns, rather, it is a pursuit for distinction and professionalization. Virtuosity, dreams of a professional career and the ambition of monetizing the musical production were topics that were generally more noticeable among the hoppers of C15 that has a more closed structure in terms of their artistic formation. Compounded of three MC-s and a DJ, their performances seldom include other persons, expect for professional collaborations. From the beginning of the conversation with one of its leaders, it was left clear that their ambitions were "more artistic and professional" (interview with CK1), rather than social. For them, doing rap that would be artistically valued meant distancing from the politically conscious rap that was defined as "ghettoization". It also meant testing new styles and seeking for strategic collaborations in order to form part of the musical scenario of Colombia.

Being a rapper in Comuna 13 is thus a uniting and a differentiating role; united in the struggle for recognition of their music, their social work, and their often marginalized territory, and differentiated in their styles, ideological views, political stances and commitment. As late-modern and postmodern scholars argue, identities are multiple,

191

increasingly fluid and interchangeable, meaning that most individuals regularly put on and take off the identity (Peterson and Bennett, 2004: 3, cited in Williams, 2006: 189), which allows being related to different habitus (Bourdieu, 1989). There is thus no singular, authentic identity corresponding to what it means to be a rapper in Comuna 13 given that the motivations are diverse, as are the life stories that have led people to become part of the subcultural form.

7.1.2. Collective: sharing the flux of time and space

The second social reason for forming part of the activities related to rap music was collective. For this group of people, the motivation for taking part of the musical activities was principally the social aspect of doing something–anything–as far as it was done in a group. It was the opportunity of interacting and exchanging ideas with others that motivated them to take part of the musicking activities, without necessarily seeking for a concrete personal benefit or virtuosity, nor being particularly interested in rap music. I have named it as the realization of the collective identity because in this case, musical practice itself is of secondary importance. It is about belonging to a group and forming part of a social process. It is about being inside rather than outside. During the collective performance of the individual and group identity, artistic preferences and behaviour are learned and unlearned. This is especially important for youth at a time when the Self is in constant construction through doubts and affirmations. This was the case of several girls who would come to the song-writing workshops or rehearsals, without ever reaching for the microphone or reading out loud their written thoughts. When asking them for the main motivation for participating in the activities their answer was unanimous: the presence of friends.

For those whose motivation for participating is principally collective, making a band or a hip hop group primarily consists of the social process that it involves. In this case, what motivated the participants to take part of the rehearsals and song-writing activities was the presence of their friends, boyfriend or family members. For these participants, rap music was not such an essential element of their everydayness; rather, it was a once-a-week activity performed amidst the company of friends with whom they share a certain trajectory. While rap does play a role in their social identity insofar as it allows them to

relate to the group, it played a minor or inexistent role in their personal identities and in their quest to mark difference from other individuals (Vryan et.al.: 2003: 369). The reciting skills, the flow, the lyrics and gestures were not performed competitively as it was less about the virtuosity and more about participating and sharing the flux of time and space with others. Independently of whether the participants were "real" or "wannabe" rappers, two factors were markedly important for all of them: firstly, the ability to socialize with other members of the group, and secondly, the emotional and bodily liberation experienced in group.

There were also participants who would come to the meetings and rehearsals without practically saying anything nor seeking for much visibility. However, this does not mean that the process of socializing was not happening or that the participant was not engaged; the participatory process might just have been more interiorized. This was exemplified by a few younger male participants who refused to get into details during our talk, but shared a little bit of their troublesome past. One of them had been involved in criminal activities, being in charge of asking the vacunas from local businesses, due to which him and his family had been forced to move out of their neighbourhood twice. With dreamy eyes more focused on his inner world than toward the outside, he would quietly assist the song-writing workshop and avoid being in the centre of attention or speaking in public. However, as I later discovered through music videos, his singing proved to be very talented and dedicated. When asking about what motivates him to come to the weekly reunions, he briefly replied "aquí se está bien" [one feels good here], adding a little later that "nobody comes to bother me here" (Interviewee AA4).

> The rap we cultivate speaks about the stories of the guys, of violence; it's practically the voice of the common people. We can't stand in the middle of a square and scream out what we feel, but we *can* sing with all our soul about what's happening at our homes, in the cities, in all the places.
>
> (Interviewee AA3)

In the above extract another participant expressed how the rap lyrics that they compose collectively (between three family members) allows them to express things they could otherwise not communicate, if it weren't through the music. This connects the collective

aims of music making with the idea of rap music as the "message of the common people" and as "a question of class struggle," as the respondent told me (Interviewee AA3). This extract is from an interview with an elderly female informant who has had an important symbolic role in one of the hip hop groups, without herself performing rap songs, but writing the lyrics for her adult daughter who is a single mother of three. She speaks in plural as she talks in the name of her two daughters and grandchildren that also form part of the hip hop group. In her tone there is recognition of their voices being those of the "common people" who only get to participate in the public life and debate through their song lyrics. As she also affirmed during the interview, their only interest is to make politically conscious rap, this being the way of denouncing injustice, corruption and state crimes. So much so that other, commercial forms of rap were judged negatively and as something that "doesn't serve the community".

7.1.3. Rap as musical habitus

As for the artistic reasons for participation, these were reflected in the fact that the participants found themselves more related to hip hop, rather than to classical music or guitar lessons that are also offered for free in the same district of the city. The fact of rap music allowing them to express themselves freely without requiring too much effort and practice was an important factor for several participants. In some cases, the preference for rap music also came from being the preferred music style to listen to, in contrast to other popular genres, such as reggaeton or trap music. In fact, there was a solid confrontation between those who "dared" listening to trap or reggaeton—a genre often associated to sexist lyrics—and the rap "purists" who excluded the two other genres completely because of their hedonistic, misogynous and morally unacceptable content. The idea of rap music having a better and a more critical criterion for relating the everyday was thus an important aspect as it represented a way of thinking that was other than hedonistic, misogynous or sexist. In contrast, rappers were meant to be self-aware, to have political and territorial awareness and use their music to denounce the ruling political realm. The artistic aspect is thus strongly tied to a series of self-perceptions, perceptions of the everyday environment, and habits developed within this environment. Rap as a musical habitus provides a system of practices and perceptions based on the differentiation of the "we" and what it relates to, and the "others" with their differential

practices. The artistic reason is thus also a combination of social elements, not just a mere question of taste.

7.1.4. Place-attachment

The geographical aspect of participation brought up the question of place-attachment and the feeling of belongingness that is developed in the course of the activities. Given that many participants come to the weekly activities from other parts of the city despite often lacking the resources for transport is meaningful and speaks of the sense of place and community that has been created among the participants and the project leaders. This way, it is not necessarily the geographical proximity of the cultural house that motivates youth to participate in the activities, but rather, the meaning of the house and its surrounding space for the community; its meaning as a second home and as a refuge, a meaning that is the result of the interactions among the people who dwell in it, and a result of collective action, of hours of writing, rehearsing, discussing, gardening and performing together.

The main centres where both organizations gather—the house of Casa Morada and the house of Casa Kolacho—are their symbolic spaces of refuge and of social interaction, given that they provide a peaceful shelter, as well as a bundling environment for learning and sharing experiences. The existence of this sheltering and bundling space for exchanging ideas and experiences has been key for inviting new participants to hang out and to dwell in the facilities of the organizations and it has also been fundamental for the growth of both collectives and their corresponding collective identities. On the other hand, it is the act of hanging out that turns these spaces into such welcoming environments, showing that dwelling is constitutive of sheltering spaces where the interactions among people define the meaning of the space, while space also constitutes their interactions in it. This recalls Bachelard's words of all truly inhabited spaces bearing the notion of a home which is what "shelters daydreaming, protects the dreamer and allows one to dream in peace" (1958/1965: 5-6). By extension, Bachelard also articulated that it is the values that belong to daydreaming that mark humanity in its depths and allows visioning alternative realities. Dwelling, then, gives whichever space the notion of

a protective shelter, emboldening the deepest shades of human beings and providing them with imaginative alternatives for what the everyday offers.

Among the members of Agro Arte who would participate in the weekly activities in Casa Morada on a regular basis, the house was often seen as a second home, while the collective was referred to as *familia,* and *parcero* ["bro" or "mate"] was used for turning to other participants, expressing a feeling of brotherhood and familiarity. As Feixa and Guerra (2017) argue, in organizations where the aim is to provide support to one another, the feeling of brotherhood articulates feelings of affection and also speaks of the process of constructing collective identities in search of a sense of protection.

7.2. What makes a collective a community?

Two aspects stand out as motivational for the youth to participate in the hip hop activities: belonging to a community of music making, and the sheltering and inspiring environment around it. But what is it that makes a collective feel like a community?

7.2.1. Collective identity

As the observations showed, an important aspect of a community is its collective identity, the sense of "we-ness" that is constructed and given meaning in the process of interaction. One way of understanding musical communities and collective identity is through interaction and action, in "being together". According to Melucci, collective action is constructed by means of "organized" investments where individuals define possibilities and limits while activating their relationships that give sense to their "being together" and to the goals they pursue (1995: 43). By extension, collective identity is a process where the action system is constructed; it is an "interactive and shared definition" of the actions, their orientations and the opportunities they see in them (Melucci, 1995: 44). The sense of collective agency triggers action and the pursuit of common interests within the collective (Snow, 2001). These actions are defined among different members who interact, communicate and influence each other in a group. As a process that is constituted

by interactions in a group, collective identity must be understood as multiple and fluid, under constant redefinition.

During the research, I was able to observe more closely the group dynamics of Agro Arte in their rap rehearsals, song-writing workshops, when cooking together, during talks and gardening tasks and in other everyday situations. While it would be easy to reconstruct their self-narrative based on how the group leaders define the mission of Agro Arte, the collective actions spoke much better for it. On the one hand, the activities that the group organizes and gets involved with are decided among a few leaders who make the strategical decisions of where to invest their time, which performances contribute to their social and symbolic capital, and which political agenda they should support. All these decisions define the core-meaning of Agro Arte and its political standing as a social formation. This way, the principal directions of the group and its formal identity are marked by its leaders. Nevertheless, the performance of the activities always involves a big number of participants among whom partaking is never forced; rather, it is inspired by others' actions or at most, by subtle insinuations. Decisions of who performs what are made according to the relationships established among the participants; some rappers have developed more "flow" among each other because of a similar artistic style or interests, others perform together because of a family link or because of a friendship and the urge to reinforce it by singing together. All these relatively flexible decisions and the overall understanding of the horizontal functioning of the group is what also shapes the identity of Agro Arte. The collective identity is fluid and interchangeable; while certain directions are marked by the leaders, the realization of the patterns is done in collective action where a bigger plurality of voices is involved, complementing, enhancing and challenging the group identity.

Apart from being in constant re-definition, the collective identity also comprises other, social and personal layers. The first one situates the individual in the social space that are grounded in established social roles—such as a musician—and helps him identify the "other" as a social object. Personal identity stands for the unique self-narrative (Vryan et.al., 2003) and meanings attributed to the self, regarded as personally distinctive (Snow, 2001). Collective identity, which overlaps with the personal and social constructs, thus depends on the will and capacity of the "I" to form part of the "we", which is nurtured by

197

the feeling of being together and corresponds to a sense of collective agency (Snow, 2001).

In the act of music making, the three layers of identity are performed and reformed: the "I" as the individual with his or her personal life story and particular means of being; the social identity as the rapper with skills and knowledge to perform in determined situations, and finally, the "we", the crew of rappers who are defined by their musical style, their song lyrics, their performance style. The personal and social identities overlap particularly, given that being a rapper is both part of the construction of the Self, as it is of the social identity of rappers who are connoted, defined and recognized with determined characteristics, such as their corporal behaviour or dressing. Finally, the collective identity of the group is defined both by their collective actions, their interactions within the group and with the external world in determined situations.

The three layers of identity are enacted through music during performances in public as well as in the rehearsal room. Both situations reinforce the collective identity in different ways: in the rehearsal—the "backstage" (Goffman, 1956)—the collective identity is under revision, it is negotiated through the planning of the performance, through questions such as the setlist, of who gets to do solos, who intervenes with speeches, what is said during the performance. These are all decisions that form part of the process of meaning making, of what the community is and what it represents. On the "frontstage," the collective identity and agency are challenged and put under pressure by confronting the critical eyes and ears of the audience, by encountering problems of sound or memory, by forgetting the lyrics or the entrance to a song. On stage, the discussions of the rehearsal room cannot take place; the gestures and postures must be adequate for the space of representation to communicate self-confidence; the clothing must be in line with the collective appearance and identity to communicate togetherness. The difficulties found along the performance must be overcome with dignity and naturalness in order to be artistically convincing. However, even though performing on stage may suppose challenges for the unity of the collective, by moving and sounding together, the sense of "we-ness" can be reinforced by overcoming fears and difficulties. This way, collective action on stage with all the challenges it may suppose, can empower the collective identity as much as it can damage it.

7.2.2. Collective sonic agency

Looking closer into the act of music making, be it in the rehearsal room or in public, the deep "embodiedness" of the act of making music constructs a sense of time and presence and the sense of "being together" in that time-space (Schütz, 1951). Because of the way music envelopes the body and installs inside it, it has a high potential of calling for collective sonic agency (LaBelle, 2018) and triggering action to pursue the goals defined by the collective. Embodied music can act as "reverberant intensities" that articulate struggles through vibrations and echoes "that pass over or around structures of dominance to embolden the voices of the few, enabling strained articulations or actions to gather momentum and to take up residence within a multiplicity of territories and languages" (LaBelle, 2018: 2-3). Music making as a social process both triggers and is triggered by collective agency and by the sense of "being together": while rappers who perform in a group enact their collective identity (gestures, postures, messages), their performance also calls for a sense of "togetherness" among the audience. Once it gathers momentum, the collective sonic agency—now shared with the public—can overtake new spaces in order to expand their hidden transcripts and public discourses.

7.3. Which is the role of rap music in social organizations?

Apart from helping fulfil individual goals of personal growth and artistic virtuosity, which is the role of rap music in urban social formations that work on the basis of place-based objectives?

7.3.1. Rap as socio-spatial interventionism

As it was discussed in the previous section, music making in a community that is connected through a collective identity, upon which decisions and action is taken, may lead to collective sonic agency. This is what can turn rap music into an effective means of socio-spatial interventionism that marks its own space by denouncing and revealing social protest against the social reality (Feixa & Guerra, 2017: 17). Both Agro Arte and Casa Kolacho began as projects where rap had an instrumental and pedagogical use with

one major socio-spatial objective: to decrease youth involvement in crime in the territory of Comuna 13. The power of music to install inside the body of the performers and the audience and to trigger collective action was thus used for achieving determined objectives, such as changing the social dynamics of the crime-struck city.

Rap music as socio-spatial interventionism can be divided into two categories: rap as a tactical tool for spatial resistance (physical; discursive); and rap as a tactical tool for social work (psycho-social; political). Just like the motivations for doing rap, these two divisions should be understood as interrelated and simultaneous.

Returning to De Certeau (1980/1984), tactics are a sum of quotidian weapons of resistance that the citizenry can use against the institutional strategies of appropriation. These acts may seem small and insignificant, but through repetition their effect can reach significant goals in contesting the dominating socio-political, economic and territorial order. It is important to clarify that the "tacticalness" of rap and hip hop as a socio-spatial tool is more often assumed by those who propose and deliver social activities using hip hop for approaching the youth. The participants of the pedagogical hip hop programs are not necessarily aware of the tactical purposes of the activities and take part of them for reasons that differ from the agenda of the social leaders and/or the organizations that provide the activities. In contrast, for the social leaders, rap music can be an efficient means of youth engagement and empowerment that is, in turn, necessary for fulfilling the goals of their socio-political agenda.

> "We just had to go to other places and plan with all the strategies like videos, movie nights, and moving ourselves in different neighbourhoods. And [doing] actions that would conclude with the appropriation of public space. […] We started Semillas del Futuro. This is the process of generational renovation. This way, the aim was to gather all the stories of the neighbourhoods and turn them into songs."
>
> (Interview with AA1, social leader)

The above excerpt is from an interview with one the social leaders who explains how local gang members had forced him and his companions to leave the territory they had occupied through urban gardening to observe possible illegal action being taken in the territory. The interviewee expressed the "tactical need" of expanding and reproducing

their work, demonstrating awareness of the relationship between the media, music and space and their potential of challenging the dominant power (the local street gang) that was alarmed by the activists' growing knowledge and presence in the territory. Posterior to their displacement, the everyday tactics of walking the 'hood and hanging out, simply being present, *tomando el tinto* [drinking coffee], sowing seeds and doing tasks of horticulture were replicated in another part of the city. Additionally, as he explains in the excerpt, he created a side project focused on children and youth, using rap music to engage them into the social process and to teach them to reflect upon their everydayness by writing song lyrics. From there on, music videos have been used as means of reconstructing their views of the everyday. In another occasion, the informant confirmed me that the priority of their organization is to produce as much material as possible to reach as many spaces of Medellín as they can by reproducing their work model.

a) Rap as a tactical tool for spatial resistance

Rap music, in its form of spatial resistance, encompasses territorializing actions such as rehearsals, concerts, MC-competitions, strolling around the city, video shooting or music recording. All of these require the physical relocations of the rappers and their sonic agency that simultaneously territorialize the city and its quotidian spaces, conforming instances of resistance, escape and liberation from the grips of state and capital (De Certeau, 1980/1984). However, it is not only the state that the rappers oppose to; in the context of the territorial conflict of Medellín where land is still predominantly divided by street gangs and the invisible borders that divide their territories, the rappers' physical movement across the city is an accomplishment on its own, an achievement of resistance to the fear sown by the illicit actors. As one of the participants explained, by walking the 'hood, listening and knowing the stories of the barrio, the neighbourhood "gives him a new song every day" (Interviewee CK1). Another respondent emphasized the role of the street corners [la esquina][92], insisting that hanging out on the corners is an important creative space of exchange where many songs find their initial inspiration (Interviewee CK2). Territorializing acts through sonic agency also occur when determined spaces are

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[92] The street corners of low-income neighbourhoods tend to have a negative connotation where they are often perceived as the meeting point of illicit gangs and as the spots for drug sales.

"taken over"[93] (Interview with AA1), even if only for short instances, for holding concerts or other public events that allow expressing their discourses, their hidden and public transcripts.

Apart from this type of embodied appropriations, the discursive dimension of resistance can be divided between three spaces: the textual space (Forman, 2002) of the song lyrics; the digital music space where the songs are staged and visualized; and the social media space. The latter is used for the presentation of the "online self" and for the dissemination of everything that the group is aligned to and thus conforms its identity. The use of the fast-connectivity of social media platforms has been fundamental in reinforcing the existence of both entities in their corresponding representational spaces and for amplifying their hidden transcripts, public narratives and representations of space.

Music videos, on the other hand, empower the artists with a tool that allows them to "enter" and "visualize" places (Bennett, 2007) their way and to create counter-narratives to the elitist visions of the city by visualizing under-represented urban spaces in the comuna. Videos, as well as song lyrics, are political and artistic reconstructions of the place narratives where rappers build their meaning of their everyday geographies through their interactions with it. The analysis of both groups' music videos showed that often times the spaces that the underground groups depict as "theirs" are also used in mainstream artists' videos, leaving the task of "differentiation" to the song lyrics. While the videos do manage to express topophilia towards determined urban imagery, such as the narrow streets, street corners and the cemetery of San Javier, it was mostly the topics of the songs that distinguished them from the more hedonistic and pleasure-seeking themes of the mainstream artists. On some occasions, the song lyrics can explicitly target social, political and territorial issues, narrating the artists' concerns with their everyday geographies. In others, they can be more hedonistic and pleasure-seeking. In this question, there were important differences among the two groups; these will be discussed in the section dedicated to the politicalness of rap.

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[93] *In vivo* code from the interviewee's expression "nos tomamos el territorio," literally meaning that "we take over the territory".

b) Rap as a tactical tool for social work

The psycho-social and political dimensions of rap ("rap as a tactical tool for social work") are enacted in the pedagogical activities that employ different psycho-social methods to work with the youth. These methods follow principles of growing leadership based on each individual's personal capacities and to a large extent, Paulo Freire's principles of the pedagogy of the oppressed that is based on co-operation, dialogue and critical thinking (1970/1993). Song-writing is one of the methods that proved to be inseparable from constructing the voice of the "self" and for developing critical thinking.

For song-writing lessons to work, the teacher needs the participants' trust, and also has to know how to achieve their engagement and stimulate their creativity. In terms of social work, it can be an empowering method insofar as it helps structure one's ideas and encourages establishing an interior dialogue that youth might not be accustomed to having. Workshops where participants are asked to express some personal emotions through different techniques, such as drawings or bodily movement, require confidence, and it is only through the process of trust-building that the individual and collective identity can be built and strengthened. Song-writing requires expressing one's intimate ideas with the self and with others. From the point of view of the person who guides the activities of song-writing, it allows access to each participant's inner world and their vulnerability. The participants' expressions are developed largely following the guidelines and examples of style, tones, expressions, topics, intentionality, corporality and dressing. This way, the artistic outcome of the young rappers can be dependent from the social facilitation work and guiding that is done during the workshops. Here, it is also important to have in mind that song-writing activities can occur in pedagogical contexts that are ideologically influential and therefore the examples set by the leaders can have a more-than-artistic influence. In general lines, the research showed that depending on the political agenda of the workshop leaders, the participants' creation may be influenced towards political messages of protest that claim social justice, seek for softer expressions of intimate feelings or lead to narrating more hedonistic life experiences.

In addition to increasing participants' self-awareness in the process of song-writing, raising their spatial awareness was another important aspect of the social work done with

the participants of Agro Arte. This was achieved through their methodology of combining rap workshops with horticulture tasks which puts the participant in contact with the soil, the local ground. The contact was not only physical, though, awareness of the territorial issues and conditions were also discussed during the workshops of song-writing as well as during other talks and activities that accompanied the group's weekly meetings.

> Many boys know what goes on in the comuna, but it's not the same as asking yourself what happened to the body and to the skin. I can tell numbers, etc, but those are data. They're data like those that arrive through Whatsapp, mere information. But this is not data, this is life. When you see that it is life that is in threat, it goes beyond and transcends on the paper, it goes beyond data because it's your story, it is your body. One of the things we've learned is that it is necessary to narrate [these stories].

> (Interviewee AA1)

Sharing his view of what hip hop means in the Latin-American context, the leader of Agro Arte explained his idea of doing hip hop and "finding his lyrics" and meaning of resistance from the local ground:

> The concept is that if hip hop is the street, under the street is the soil, and the soil has our history, our memories and our struggles. And music is a good way of working with these memories. We then say that we are those street plants that resist cement being thrown on them, because cement means oblivion and the cement says that nothing's happening here.

> (Interviewee AA1)

This fragment expresses the informant's awareness of the link between hip hop and rural space and it expresses his view of "agrarian hip hop" that aims to dig out the memories of the urban dwellers' ancestors. In this case, territorial awareness does not refer so much to the streets and street corners being referred to in rap songs, but rather, to a historical understanding of the evolution of the socio-economic inequity in Colombia, where land has been privatized from the peasants and farmers to the hands of a very limited number of landowners.[94] In its pursuit for territorial awareness, the rap workshops of Agro Arte aim to transmit part of this historical complexity to the young rappers as a way of making

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[94] It is estimated that approximately 80% of the land in Colombia is owned by 14% of land owners (Ibáñez & Muñoz, 2011).

them aware of the territory they inhabit and turn them into responsible participants in the construction of its present.

As a tool for social work, rap music proved to be effective in recruiting youth into the social organization as well as in improving their self-esteem. This is mainly because it is affordable and accessible to anyone and because it gives visibility to the participants. Despite not knowing how to sing in tune, or playing no instruments, even the most beginners can easily download an audio-track, write some simple lyrics, start MC-ing almost immediately, and feel like an artist who expresses one's very own ideas. Memorizing the lyrics and managing some rhythm is sometimes all that it takes to appear on stage, which is symbolically the space of the empowered, of those who dare to get in the spotlight and perform in front of a potentially critical audience. On the other hand, the face-to-face rap scene is also an embodied form of informal, collective resistance to other, dominating realities, be it related to mainstream music, or to "mainstream" activities, such as hanging out on the streets without a particular aim. However, the stage is not only a site of resistance, but also the source of resistance-based identity (Williams, 2006) that is enacted through postures, gestures, dressing, song-lyrics and forms of recital.

The feeling of getting on stage, somewhere higher, distanced from the rest of the ordinary people, from those who do not dare to leave their comfort zone, produces a feeling of recognition and empowerment. In addition, it can have a more intimate and introspective significance. The meaning of doing rap music may fundamentally be based on self-realization for the young performer who has recently obtained the skill of song-writing– of expressing one's thoughts with the self and with others. On the other hand, for someone without any previous stage experience even the smallest performance is an opportunity of self-realization by overcoming the fear of being visible. And this is what resulted highly attractive for some participants, especially for those coming from dysfunctional families and lacking models of positive leadership. Performing one's own rap songs was not only defined as empowering because of the stage-effect that ascends the performer to an elevated status, but also because it offers a loudspeaker to those who otherwise don't have the opportunity of making their opinions heard, or generally feel that it is of little importance. On the other hand, it also represents the opportunity of becoming a new role model as someone who dares to speak out and vanquish personal fears.

7.4. Which are the factors that influence the growth and replicability of musical collectives?

The previous sections have shown that the reasons for participating in a rap group are diverse and can be motivated by individual and collective aspects. In addition, the two case studies have proven to use rap music as a socio-spatial tool for raising self-awareness, spatial awareness, and as a tactical tool for resistance, taking advantage of rap music's accessibility for the youth. But which are the factors that influence the growth and replicability of musical collectives? Which individual and institutional relationships can contribute to or damage the scalability of the collectives to new territories? How does their political standing influence their participation in the social construction of space? The following section looks at what brings musical collectives into existence, what allows them to grow and what keeps them together.

Following the symbolic interactionist approach, social institutions–such as communities–are social habits that occur within specific situations and practices performed by those involved in the situation (Blumer, 1969). Different collectives are thus subject to change as the signification given to the community is constantly recreated through the processes of interpretation that is enacted during the interaction with others. Similarly, Snow argues that collectives are "constituted through ongoing internal and external interactions and the challenge of resolving tensions that arise because of these interactions" (2003: 814). Alternatively, the idea of community must also be understood through the process of Othering and opposition, of what the collective is not; what and who it rejects. In the case of subversive urban formations like Agro Arte and Casa Kolacho, their self-definition is marked by their (critical) rap music and by their frequent anti-institutional declarations.

Historically speaking, the two case studies of the research came into being because of concrete social and territorial circumstances that called for social and cultural action that could counter the high levels of criminality and at the same time, create a stronger youth community in the territory. With this aim on the horizon, hip hop was used as a tool of social intervention. In this sense, the "specific constellation" for the birth of both groups were the military operations of 2002 which triggered social activism as a response to the disproportionate amount of state violence performed in Comuna 13. The habits that were

developed from opposing to that constellation consisted of periodic gatherings, of organizing community events, concerts and festivals like Revolución sin Muertos, of creating and performing together, and determined spaces that became symbolically representative for both entities. Over time, some of these habits have evolved and changed in the process of reinterpretation of what the community is and what it signifies for its members and what its aims are.

7.4.1. Networks

Agro Arte has gradually grown into an urban social formation with numerous networks and side-projects that spread all over Medellín, with some events being performed in other cities of Colombia and abroad. By resisting being limited into a simplified formula, they have grown from a collective of one young man and a few ladies who started their observations in 2002, into a movement that has six persons working in its core on a daily basis, carrying out activities in Casa Morada, in public schools, in centres for the elderly, in youth detention centres, in two community gardens and a library for children, and most recently, in a youth centre for the recently arrived Venezuelan migrants in Cúcuta. Apart from its internal networks between the side-projects of Semillas del Futuro, Unión Entre Comunas, Cuerpos Gramaticales, Sueños de Papel and Partido de las Doñas, they have received the support from three museums dedicated on conserving collective memories– Museo de Memoria Histórica de Colombia, Centro Nacional de Memoria Histórica and Museo Casa de la Memoria (all public institutions). In addition, in Spain they have been supported by the Museo de la Paz of Guernica and the International Catalan Institute for Peace. Finally, in Medellín, important strategical support comes from Casa de las Estrategias (a research company) and Casa Morada (non-profitable culture centre) that assess Agro Arte in its multiple doings, and in its strategical positioning. Following Daskalaki and Mould, collaborations between subcultural movements and other organizations are "indicative of new territories that emerge and offer possibilities for imagining a new set of social relations and a context for social change" (2013: 8).

Casa Kolacho, too, has grown. As of 2018 they have 15 employed workers who periodically give graffiti tours in Comuna 13. They define themselves as a school of hip hop or as a cultural corporation, however, in practical terms, the main activity carried out

under the name of Casa Kolacho is corporate, earning profit for the maintenance of the school (interview with CK1) and for the workers who perform the tours. While some of the members of the Casa Kolacho began as local activists in 2002, organizing the first hip hop festival through the recently born hip hop network La Élite, the school was not founded until 2009, when it did operate as a hip hop school, giving workshops of break dance, rap, MC-ing and DJ-ing in local schools.

Throughout the years, Casa Kolacho has also developed a series of networks and collaborations with public bodies such as the Alcaldía de Medellín, the Spanish Agency of International Cooperation of Development (AECID), and the Asocación Cristiana de Jóvenes (publicly funded NGO). Over the last years the networks have been multiplied towards the private sector with the help of Greater Medellín Convention & Visitors Bureau (public-private corporation), Medellín Travel (the official travel guide of Medellín, tied to the Convention & Visitors Bureau) and private travel companies, such as Colombia Travel Operator, Toucan Cafe and Palenque Tours[95] who subcontract the guides of Casa Kolacho for the graffiti tours they perform in Comuna 13.

7.4.2. No-structure as structure

In which ways has the self-definition of the groups and their networks influenced their evolving over time? Snow argues that "movements arise, evolve and decline in relation to and through interaction with other sets of actors within their environment of operation" (2003: 814), accentuating the importance of how movements interact and position towards other actors. Therefore, the organizations they collaborate with, the type of (economic) sources they accept as support, the way they position towards antagonistic actors and institutions and the political stances that are made public define the evolution of movements and their symbolic power. Daskalaki and Mould (2013) hold that the more fluid the organizational body of the subversive movement, the smaller the risks of becoming appropriated and institutionalized as a result of the subculturalization process. The authors argue that in the first phase of appropriation, urban social formations (USF-

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[95] The collaboration with Paleque Tours is particularly striking, given that the company organized tours on the legacy of Pablo Escobar which both city officials (interview with the Secretary of Tourism) and the members of Casa Kolacho have denounced in various occasions (various interviews).

s) tend to be marginalized through a process of "othering" and illegalization. In the second phase, "homogenization forces proceed to formalize them and incorporate them as part of dominant practices," which leads to USF-s being re-branded as "cultural products subjugated to commercialization processes within a rationally bounded (and tightly regulated) urban landscape […]" (2013: 2). To avoid appropriation and institutionalization, USF-s should maintain rhizomatic, fluid structures in order to be able to reinvent themselves and move between different urban sites (Daskalaki and Mould, 2013: 2).

Following Daskalaki and Mould's (2013) theory, Agro Arte and Casa Kolacho entered the hip hop scene of Medellín when it was already experiencing the second phase of appropriation, that is, when hip hop was conceived as potentially instrumental and useful for new forms of participatory governance. In the beginning of the 2000s, when La Élite was formed and the first hip hop festivals of Comuna 13 were taking place, the state was supporting the promulgation of hip hop to gain the sympathy and co-operation of the civic society to facilitate the future social and urban transformations (Bean, 2014; Duque Franco, 2015). Under the leadership of Sergio Fajardo and Alonso Salazar and their measures of social urbanism, Medellín implemented progressive world city policies that aimed to be inclusive with (some) peripheral subversive practices in order to turn them into productive units of creativity "through their embeddedness into regulated and formalized platforms of social activity" (Daskalaki and Mould, 2013: 6). This way, the emergence of both groups coincided with policies that were favourable of social organizations and events related to hip hop, and despite their expected antagonism, supported their growth. By addressing violence and crime in their activities and songs, hip hop groups communicated a message that was also central in the agenda of the state that aimed to decrease the prominence of criminal gangs by implementing pedagogical and cultural measures. Baker holds that rappers can reinforce the ideological positions of the state, while the state can provide spaces that rappers use to criticize government institutions and representatives (2011: 102), meaning that receiving funds and support from the administration does not imply that artists couldn't be judgmental with the institutions. Rather, it is a question of how critical they are and how often they communicate it, recalling Gamson and Wolsfeld's (1993) thesis that the wider and radical

the movement's political demands, the more likely it is to be refused standing in the public discourse. On the other hand, the relative ideological confluence among the hip hop groups and the state also makes the institutionalization of the subcultural movement more likely, precisely by providing "appropriate" times and spaces for the subversive expressions.

By maintaining its "no-structure as the structure" (interview with AA6, coordinator of Agro Arte), Agro Arte has managed to maintain its relative fluidity and its rhizomatic build-up, sending out roots and shoots (new participants, new leaders) from its new nodes (Partido de las Doñas, Sueños de Papel, Semillas de Futuro) across the city, establishing timely connections with social actors, parallel struggles and organizations of power. While there are instances of appropriation, such as the temporary collaborations with some institutional organs, Agro Arte tends to conceal their support by avoiding the institutional 'stains' (signatures, logos, texts) from appearing in any of their documents or visual materials (personal communication with the coordinator of Agro Arte).

Casa Kolacho has also been secretive of its ties to the administration, underlining that they do not receive money from the state (interview with CK1) as if being dependent form public funding could reduce their status and their symbolic power as a subcultural organization. Instead, they are proud of financing their organization with the graffiti tours, through sales made at their shop and through invitations to other events and fairs where they can sell their merchandizing. Despite their public identity as an independent and entrepreneurial hip hop school, Casa Kolacho's discourse of social transformation through hip hop has been appropriated by the state and its communication organs that promote Casa Kolacho and the graffiti tour in their travel recommendations (Medellín Travel, 2016; Alcaldía de Medellín, 2018) as the place to discover Medellín's makeover. The elevated sympathy of Casa Kolacho in the media and its skilful self-portrayals through transmedia have led Casa Kolacho to elevated levels of social and economic capital, yet it has lost its fluidity and capacity of reinventing its structure to discover new urban territories and realms that could challenge authoritarian urban discourses and create new contexts for social change (Daskalaki and Mould, 2013).

As the numerous entities collaborating with Casa Kolacho and Agro Arte show, networks are fundamental for understanding the power and functioning of urban social formations. Furthermore, the different geographical features of the networks play a decisive role in shaping the specific functions of social movements and the relational dynamics that unfold within them (Nicholls, 2008: 78). Nicholls brings out that place-based relations and networks can influence the solidarity and cohesiveness of collective political action and forge trust, loyalty and duty that facilitate the mobilisation of resources and tighten solidarities (Nicholls, 2008: 79) within the urban social formations. The social capital and scalability of the underground rap groups and the social formations they are aligned to has proven to be strongly tied to the entities' capacity of networking, of creating strategical and timely connections, and extending their rhizomes in different directions. On the other hand, the strength of the organizations is also dependent of its inner structure and motivation, its collective identity and its capacity of mobilizing its members for a common purpose.

7.4.3. Scalability

The two entities have shown contrasting models of growth and replicability. Agro Arte has maintained a fluid model based on no-structuredness, aiming to grow in volume and in the number of collaborating members and alliances in different parts of the city. Their expansion is facilitated by the diversity of activities they capture new members with, be it gardening or knitting, and the diversity of places where they perform their activities. Music making is often a lateral activity in their new spaces of territorial action, sometimes it is performed for entertainment, sometimes as a "message" and as a tool to gain the curiosity of new participants. The individual relationships that have allowed the group to grow also have to do with its no-structuredness and lack of hierarchy which has permitted the different members and workshop holders to be treated as equals. Nevertheless, it mustn't be overlooked that the charismatic character of the leaders of both Agro Arte and Casa Kolacho also has its importance in raising admiration among new participants, as well as in achieving institutional contacts and support. Both of them have attention-calling appearance, speak serenely with a slightly philosophical tone, and importantly, both have gathered years of experience in cultural production, showing a strong capacity of mediation with different social groups. Therefore, the figure of a strong and charismatic

211

leader should not be underestimated in the shade of the importance of networks and internal organization.

Casa Kolacho's growth scheme has been somewhat different, given that the goals of the rap group have been more professional and less community-oriented, and also because the hip hop school has converted more into an entrepreneurial tour company, dedicating less time on social goals. Being dependent on the fixed relationship with direct clients and tour companies that collaborate with Casa Kolacho, it has had to go through a phase of structuring and professionalization, and create formal labour division between the ordinary guides, a manager and an accountant. In a way, the growth of Casa Kolacho as a tour company has impeded its development as a musical collective, given that the professional duties are time-consuming (interview with CK2) and little resource is left for collective creation and practice. A more professional and business-led thinking was noticeable in Casa Kolacho's attitude of capitalizing their social and territorial knowledge for the tourism business and it was also present in their musical production where more commercial sonorities have been sought after, and where collaborations have been held with professional and renown musicians. Both aspects speak of their aim of raising their musical production to a higher level that would go beyond the "on the corner MC-ing" (interview with CK2). In the case of Casa Kolacho, scalability has thus been more a question of the capacity of progressing from a sporadically-funded grassroots organization to a self-sufficient business model, rather than replicating the hip hop school model in other parts of the city to expand their social work.

7.5. Which are the spaces that rap constitutes?

It has thus far been discussed that in the underground form or rap music, especially when tied to a social organization, there is a component of spatial resistance. This can be itinerant, enacted by the movement of the rappers through the city, as well as it can become "temporarily permanent" in spaces that are appropriated by the rappers. Which spaces and which factors influence the spatial expansion of the musical collectives throughout the city? What allows us to think of a space as resistant and what is necessary for its endurance?

7.5.1. From refuge to resistance

Both Casa Kolacho and Agro Arte have come to esteem determined places where they dwell regularly; their presence in these spaces both forms part of and is the result of the social process of music making that the groups are in involved in. Spatial practices have thus become the materialization of their social space and of the interactions that occur within it. The existence of these symbolic spaces of refuge and interaction also provide the circumstances for the birth of another type representational spaces of territorial action. These are experiential spaces of resistance where resistant identities are articulated and enacted through physical and symbolic actions.

Casa Morada is a symbolic space of refuge where domestic actions of collective care-taking, gardening and cleaning make up a form of inhabiting a collective space. However, the roundabouts of the house that have corn, herbs and flowers planted on the occupied sidewalks and in the annexed cemetery go beyond the territorial limits of the "home". These spaces have been territorialized and appropriated by Agro Arte in its collective sonic agency and they have become the experiential spaces of resistance where "complex symbolisms" of "clandestine or underground episodes" (Lefebvre, 1974/1991: 33) are enacted. These experiential spaces have been rendered meaningful and given cultural significance in the social process of meaning making; they provide unique experiences that are interpreted through the memories and the empirical experiences of its dwellers (Pallasmaa, 2017: 61). The imagination and creativity in terms of the uses given to this experiential space have thus far managed to maintain it as a differential space, countering the homogenization that is taking place in others parts of the comuna through the "tourism-oriented imagineering" (Baker, 2011). Notwithstanding, the possibility or re-appropriation is always there, making it an in-between space, given that other forms of spatial practice and private tenancy have another type of imagination and intentions with the urban plot as a potential "growth machine" (Molotch, 1976). It is the fact of not actually owning the cemetery space nor the sidewalks that have been symbolically appropriated that maintains them as an in-between space, because what doesn't exist cannot be eliminated; the lack of "delimitation of an exteriority, then, provides it with the condition necessary for autonomy" (De Certeau, 1980/1984: 37).

Scott (1990) argues that spaces of resistance that are autonomous at least to some degree, provide a medium within which practical and discursive negations may grow and where patterns of resistance are formulated. In Agro Arte, these patterns are formulated by negating commercialization, redevelopment projects and banal tourism, often hidden in their transcripts and subtle insinuations such as their slogan: "we are the street plants that resist cement being thrown on them".[96] Scott contends that the hidden transcript of subcultural groups exists "only to the extent it is practiced, articulated, enacted and disseminated within the offstage social sites" (1990: 119). The experiential spaces of resistance, be it physical sites or discursive spaces, are thus fundamental for the hidden transcript, the political and social standing of subcultural groups to come to life. On the other hand, the spaces where the hidden transcript is enacted "are themselves an achievement of resistance; they are won and defended in the teeth of power" (Scott, 1990: 119). Like the rappers' physical movement' around the city, their more permanent presence in places like the cemetery of San Javier is a territory that is gained from the dominance of "others" who aim to maximize the patrimonial capital (De Certeau, 1980/1984). The plants that decorate the cemetery and the streets around Casa Morada, the mural paintings inside and outside the cemetery walls, and the concerts that are held in these spaces all make "transformations of and within the dominant cultural economy in order to adapt it to their own interests and their own rules" (De Certeau, 1980/1984: XIV). Despite these transformations being potentially fleeting, given that the tactics of the "weak" are always performed on the territory of the "strong" who counter-attack through their strategies of domination, the symbolic presence of subordinate actors is a victory of its own. It is the materialization of its hidden transcripts and of its political agenda and the social processes it supports and what it opposes to.

Agro Arte has been relatively open with newcomers, welcoming student groups, certain journalists and researchers like me into their symbolic refuge and to their spaces of resistance. However, they have always required the newcomers' involvement in the maintenance tasks. While the doors of Casa Morada are open to anyone when Agro Arte holds its activities there, what happens outdoors, especially in the cemetery has been more

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[96] The original text in Spanish says: "somos aquellas plantas callejeras que se resisten a que les echen cemento."

carefully curated. In order to conserve it as a space of rituals, collective memory and as a place where pedagogical activities are carried out, lucrative visits have been rejected in order to avoid the cemetery becoming another sightseeing spot and part of the dominant experience economy that subjugated to tourism and commercialization.

While Agro Arte has been somewhat restrictive with its experiential spaces to conserve their relative autonomy as spaces of memory and resistance, Casa Kolacho has opened its spaces to the wider public and to commercialization. The representations of space of Casa Kolacho also extend over a large territory in Comuna 13. While they also have their "home" and refuge inside the house of Casa Kolacho, their symbolic presence is stronger in the territory that is conceived as the graffiti tour. This involves both the discursively and physically experiential spaces of resistance. The graffiti tour runs through several neighbourhoods of Comuna 13 where visitors can walk through the "real" streets of Medellín and experience the local people's way of living through their own eyes. The discursive space of resistance that Casa Kolacho disseminates relies in the not-so-hidden transcript of the tour guides who publically condemn many of the major errors that past governors committed during their leadership. Most importantly, the military attacks of 2002 are in the central focus of the guides' narrations who illustrate their own embodied experiences of resistance and of the rebirth of the comuna through the graffiti. This discourse has also been largely supported and reconstructed with the help of transmedia that has helped to establish a new place narrative that counters the decades-long marginalization of the area. Improving this image was one of the main concerns of Casa Kolacho.

> I believe that one of the biggest achievements of Comuna 13 was to turn around its bad image. We still need to change realities, but at that moment [in the early 2000s] the bad image was massified, because let me repeat myself, it was a reality that they were telling, but here there were many realities, very good ones. And these they did not tell. We now tell these other realities.
>
> (Interviewee CK1)

Casa Kolacho's influence on re-branding Comuna 13 as the territory of artists, where hip hop has saved youth from the war has been so significant that nowadays graffiti tour and

hip hop are the first things that come up when performing a simple online search on Comuna 13. This is largely the result of the communicational work of Casa Kolacho, its networks and their collaboration with the administration that has shown a deep interest in turning Comuna 13 into the symbol of change and transformation that could materialize the ideological discourse of Medellín's rebirth.

The common interest of the city administration and of the members of Casa Kolacho to overcome the negative image of Comuna 13 has allowed the conflictual cooperation (Giugni & Passy, 1998) between the non-state actors and the state institutions that work together on a common goal through the exchange of competencies. Giugni and Passy argue that this type of intermediation is common to complex and self-reflexive societies where the governors understand that the knowledge and skills of the civil society are necessary for the coregulation of the society. This is reaffirmed by Daskalaki and Mould's (2013) theory of subcultural movements becoming institutionalized when they are conceived as instrumental and somehow useful for the state, given that members of the social organizations or the whole organization can be aligned to state-led processes. As a result of this confluence of interests, socio-cultural actors receive economic and symbolic support for their projects and the administration can possibly deliver positive numbers of change and improve its reputation among the civil society. This was particularly true in the beginning and mid-2000s when the hip hop union La Élite was created with the support of the state-funded NGO ACJ-Medellín as a way of empowering local rappers of whom many were cultural producers and social activists. Similarly, the later adopted Participatory Budgeting has been serving as a measure to approach the civil society and involve them in the decision making of the allocation of public funds.

The question is, then, what do the graffiti tours oppose to nowadays? Which reclamations do they make towards the state and the illicit actors? In which ways do the graffiti maintain their transgressive force and help the realization of a differential space that could echo the voices of those in disagreement of the peripheral politics? It is true that the trajectory that covers the route of the graffiti tours is now free of crime[97] and that it has

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[97] By the time of this research I have not learned of any incidents that would have happened in the territory of the graffiti tour, nor of any tourists having been subject to pickpockets or other petty crimes. However, as several of my informants confirmed, many of the illicit actors that collect vacunas in the territory also

opened the path to small entrepreneurs who sell their products in the tourist setting. In this sense, the constant flux of visitors has distanced the dominant power-holders at least from this limited part of Comuna 13 and this is a victory for those who inhabit the space. However, despite the symbolic and social capital that Casa Kolacho has gained throughout the years, they have failed to use their extensive "frontstage" time and space to pressure the government on issues such as the still-missing bodies of the military attacks of 2002 or the Escombrera. Neither do the hip hopper tour guides narrate that murder rates have increased in the last year and that frequent homicides are still committed outside the tourist settings, and that street vendors that operate in the territory of the graffiti tour still pay vacunas to the mobsters who ensure security on the streets only because it guarantees them more income. Nor do they tell that owing to tourism and the improvement of the façades of the buildings that surround the tourist setting, the stratification of the houses has been raised, meaning higher taxes to the local inhabitants, bringing the first effects of gentrification to the still very low-income area.

Instead of accomplishing a space of resistance, Casa Kolacho has constructed an in-between space of collective imaginary, which is reinforced only through a limited number of symbols, (images) and discourses (place narratives) that are compressed into a small territory of the tourist setting. It is in between the old forms of territorial dominance where street gangs control the commerce and everyday activities, and the new form of a commercialized space where the idea of transformation is the leitmotif of the spectacle. It is collective insofar as the interconnected media platforms have helped accumulating visual and narrative imagery through the online interactions of travellers who have visited Comuna 13 and validate the narrative of transformation through collaborations on social media.

This way, the graffiti areas that once represented a source of transgression have now become commodified pieces of art that become the gentrifiers of Comuna 13. Cresswell (1996) argues that the significance of graffiti and its transgressive function gets lost once it enters the museum. In its presentation to the foreigner, the space of the graffiti tour of

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collaborate with the tour companies and guides, "providing them security" (interview CK3), which shows the emergence of a new type of power relations among the apparent social actors of change—those who lead the tourism business—and the mobsters.

Comuna 13 is little more than an open-air museum where tourists are taken around in an orderly manner during visits that take place at determined hours and where the "museum" is closed for the night, not so much to protect the artworks as the proper visitors, given that the dark hours of Medellín are unpredictable. This way, graffiti has gone from being a "tactic" of the dispossessed that temporarily insert their place meaning on the built environment, to becoming the "strategy" of the empowered in their control of the discourse, of place narratives and meaning. Paradoxically, because of its highly visual content, graffiti is high in entertainment value, and because of it, it is especially valuable within the experience economy that pushes travellers to new "undiscovered" and "authentic" places where the "real" urban realms can be experienced.

On the contrary, its highly visual content is low in "resistance" value to the dominant cultural economy (De Certeau, 1980/1984: XIV) that seeks for spectacle and entertainment. While it is true that the presence of graffiti denies dominant divisions of meaning (Cresswell, 1996: 47) and allows alternative representations of place to be displayed, it is also true that when graffiti is performed in spaces destined for it, it loses its transgressive power and can only add authorized narratives. While the power of graffiti as transgression lies in its ability to reveal topographies of power that surround us (Cresswell, 1996: 174), graffiti tours as staged routes of transgression enforce and strengthen new topographies of power that have absorbed the manifestations of defiance. In the route of transformation of Comuna 13, hip hop has lost its defiant power of questioning ideological discourses and become part of the intentional communication of the city image, with performances of break dance, graffiti and MC-ing forming part of the landscape of transformation that is otherwise materialized by the colourful escalators and house façades.

7.6. Rap music: political or not?

The observations drawn on the music making and the musical production of the two groups have shown that rap music is often times too easily classified as an artistic expression that opposes to the state, probably because of its historical origins as a movement that denounced unwelcome urban development projects and the injustice

218

targeting the urban poor. However, just as there are numerous different motivations for doing rap, there are also diverse significances given to it, political content being only one of them. What is behind the political subtlety of rappers and which spaces is it articulated?

7.6.1. Disguised messages and infrapolitics

While it is true that there is an important component of criticism in both groups' discourse, the target of their critique is not always and not only the state but also crime and violence in general. While the state is more easily to be personified as a target of critique for its inoperativeness, the denouncements made towards street gangs are often impersonal, targeting a ubiquitous yet unknown source of evil. While it is true that the state is largely responsible for the uncontrolled crime rates and for the continuous recruiting of youth into gangs, it is at the same time a source of potential subsidies, for which the critique directed at it cannot be overly strong or straightforward, as overly demanding statements may deprive social movements from getting coverage in the public discourse (Gamson & Wolsfeld's, 1993). The engagement between the artists of Casa Kolacho and Agro Arte and state institutions is complex and goes beyond dialectic confrontations. At different times appropriation can be seen from both sides–either it is the state giving itself credit for the social work done by the local organizations and artists, or the artists underplay the efforts of the state to gain trust among the residents and systematically conceal the (partial) public funding of their activities. At other times, support is seen in the relationship between the state and hip hoppers, even though positive expressions are more likely to come from popularity-seeking governors than from the hip hoppers towards the politicians and state bureaucrats. Despite the many differences among the two hip hop groups, there seemed to be an agreement on the current mayor being the worst political leader that the city has seen in the last two decades, corresponding to the common framing of his figure in the leftist media. The country's former right-wing president Álvaro Uribe who is credited for the military attacks of 2002 is also a common target of repulsion among social leaders and artists and so is his descendant, the current president Ivan Duque Márquez. While the abovementioned figures received critical notes of their performance in our private conversations or during the semi-public graffiti tours, the same tone would hardly ever be used in the media. Similarly, while state organizations are never praised by the rappers in their public

discourse, in our private conversations partial credit was given to some of the state institutions, such as the publicly funded museums that have supported the actions of collective memory of Agro Arte. Alternatively, Casa Kolacho brought out a positive collaboration with the government of Anibal Gaviria (2012-2015).

Another reason that seems to have motivated the rappers to use disguised messages and be less hard on the state institutions is that they share a common enemy. The illicit street gangs are both negative for the status and trustworthiness of the governors who have failed to decrease crime rates, but they also represent potential limitations for the freedom of movement for the itinerant rappers. Opposing to criminals and decreasing their role in the neighbourhoods is a common goal for the social organizations and for the state institutions. This way, the existence of a common goal that aims to promote peace and conviviality among the residents brings sporadic opportunities of collaborations where the social organizations can organize their events with (partial) public funding, for which they cannot allow themselves direct confrontation with the state organs.

The fluctuating political positions speak to Perry's opinion of hip hop being "too flexible and too fluid to imagine that it might have one sort of political or social influence" (2004: 197, cited in Baker, 2011: 352). I believe that rap *can* be influential in the everyday politics of its listeners and practitioners, yet it depends on the degree of social and territorial engagement of each artist. Scott suggests looking at the everyday politics of non-dominant groups as "infrapolitics", expressing the unobtrusive character of their political struggle (1990: 183). Instead of seeing the shifting political standing as a question of overly flexible values, the infrapolitics also use the tactics of the "art of political disguise" (Scott, 1990: 136) where either the message or the messenger of the oppositional group is disguised to insinuate resistance through semi-hidden transcripts. Scott argues that "most of the political life of subordinate groups is to be found neither in overt collective defiance of powerholders nor in complete hegemonic compliance, but in the vast territory between these two polar opposites" (1990: 136).

This vast in-between territory of infrapolitics is not necessarily found in the literal words of the song lyrics, but rather, in the representational spaces of social media, in the everyday decisions and in the collaborative networks that are created. Also, the symbolic

meaning of the city spaces that the hoppers appropriate can tell a lot about the rappers' political positioning, given that their spatial practices give shape and support to a determined type of local development.

The analysis of the textual, discursive and physical spaces of both groups that started practicing rap precisely because of its oppositional character, has brought out some comparisons that speak of two urban social formations that have developed antagonistic directions over the years: hip hop as a form of socio-spatial activism and hip hop organization as (social) entrepreneurship. It is important to understand political engagement of the groups as the degree of commitment with the territory, through decisions that are made in relation to place, given that this was their point of departure and remains in the centre of their collective actions and discourse. In the political field, this is translated into the processes and projects that the members of the group support or criticize, on their positioning towards changes that take place in the neighbourhood, on how they reflect or ignore these changes in their discursive space.

CONCLUSIONS

In the Ideal city all power to imagination!

(Marcuse, 2015)

This research began with the aim of exploring the relationship between music and city space, between music making as a collective practice that allows escaping the everyday rhythms and imagining alternative "other spaces" that are differential from the often times overwhelming, vertically-governed city spaces. Drawing on Lefebvre's (1974/1991) concerns with the capitalist state's production of abstract space and how it tends to absorb man's lived experiences, music making as a creative practice was suggested as a means of escaping from the alienating everyday rhythms of production. For Lefebvre, the main danger of alienation was ideological and political, distancing individuals from their inner time, rhythms and most importantly, from their creativity and individual thought which were seen as fundamental for deep, lived experiences and for the creation of differential spaces. Imagination and creativity were to counter the increasing abstractioning and homogenization of space that rapidly extends its presence under the logic of capital. Contemplating music making as an imaginative and creative act that is built upon symbolic relations constructed in shared time and space, it can provide a means of challenging the homogenization of the everyday and its spaces.

The pursuit to study the dialogue between music and urban space under capitalist logic took me to Medellín, to a city that has been creative at reinventing itself and its history, but also hegemonic at pacifying and educating a new generation of exemplary citizens. A revision of previous publications and institutional documents showed that social urbanism that was founded upon a set of changes in the local institutions, in increasing participatory democracy, investing in education and culture, and constructing outstanding urban infrastructures, has become Medellín's brand and its strongest selling point. Despite the discursive emphasis on the socially inclusive side of the city's new form of urbanism, an important part of it was also directed towards the international markets and multinationals potentially interested in a new Latin-American playground. In imagineering a city that is "democratic, pacific, governable, inclusive, equitable, decent, sustainable, global and

competitive" (Alcaldía de Medellín, 2004a), the good citizenry was to become obedient to the new realm of the globally competitive city.

Despite Medellín's pursuit of international distinction throughout its transformation of the past two decades, several parts of the city have ended in homogenization, with its symbolic landscapes and cultural experiences approximating to numerous other cities, such as Singapore or Bilbao, where substantial urban redevelopment policies have been applied with the aim of carving the city's name on the map of destinations worthy of visiting. As tourist spaces—themed city areas that are safe and attractive because of the presence of a determined cultural element—several parts of Medellín now perfectly fit in the global neo-Bohemian aesthetics with their pricey cafeterias and recycled-looking design that provides familiar surroundings that keep people enthralled and "in a state of integrated mass" (Baudrillard, 1982, cited in Zukin, 2009: 10).

This standard distinctiveness is symptomatic of global cities' intentions of creating landscapes, built infrastructures and cultural experience opportunities that stand out and communicate a differential city image, often times at the cost of its differential spaces getting lost in the midst of the "tourist gaze" (Urry & Larsen, 1990/2011). However, as Zukin (2009) argues, within the logic of city branding, most efforts of distinction end in homogenization because of the same success formula being replicated across the world through policy tourism leading cities to develop not-so-imaginative creative districts, innovation hubs, restored industrial areas or waterfront developments.

Even though the narrative of Medellín's metamorphosis has been successful, as have many of the measures of social urbanism, the city's subcultural grounds have had countering visions of what transformation means. Seeking for the peripheral voices that could narrate differential views of the city, in my study I focused on Comuna 13, Medellín's north-western district that has long been marginalized because of the presence of diverse illicit groups. This peripheral territory has lived under the conditions of institutional oblivion, urban guerrillas and leftist militias, episodes of urban war, military operations, forced displacements and oppressions of paramilitary groups, and despite all these adversities, it has also come to be known as the territory of artists. Over and over

again I heard stories of how the abundance of artists and social activists have made the area resilient to all these hardships.

A revision of writings on hip hop in its birthplace in the U.S, on its social manifestations in Latin America and its history in Comuna 13, Medellín, gave insights to the forms of resilience that this musical genre can provide when it is aligned with other actors in social networks. On the one hand, it is true that hip hop is often created within a transborder space of symbolic expression that circulates globally (Tickner, 2008) and allows its understanding across the world, yet on the other hand, its vernacularized forms are what offer opportunities to hear the local narratives of resistance. The transatlantic and transethnic expressions (Tickner, 2008.) maybe constitutive of a universal hip hop aesthetics that is dictated by global (often North-American) trends, but the local expressions—topics, sonorities and idioms—are what allow rappers and their listeners to get into the deeper layers of the music.

Contrarily to many stereotyped perceptions of hip hoppers as gangsters, the rappers of Medellín have often acted as social and cultural activists, using their song lyrics to denounce crime, systematic extortions and bribes that take place in the neighbourhood. Targeting the gangs in song lyrics and advocating youth to quit participating in the criminal structures has often turned the conscious rappers themselves into targets of hatred and persecution. In this mutual targeting, the hip hoppers of Comuna 13 found an unexpected ally—the state—for whom the illegal power holders also represent significant inconveniences. In this conflictual cooperation both the hip hoppers and the administration have benefitted, and so has the territory of Comuna 13 that has seen an increasing interest towards its socio-cultural heritage that has largely been created through civic activism.

As the fieldwork observations and interviews showed, despite or perhaps because of its still delicate territorial dynamics and fragile peace status,[98] the socio-cultural heritage of

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[98] In April 2018, shortly after the end of my fieldwork, I learned that tourism in the graffiti tour area had completely shut down for a couple of weeks owing to the re-emergence of a conflict between different criminal organizations that were in dispute for control over the territory. As a result, 200 extra policemen and 120 soldiers of the national army were temporarily brought to the area in order to patrol in different neighbourhoods of Comuna 13 to "enforce civic order" (Redacción Judicial, 2018).

Comuna 13 has not only been built upon its street art. The collective capital also relies on violence and poverty as a distinctive place asset that attracts the tourist gaze as well as the entertainment industry with its commodifying mechanisms. No matter how strong the intentions of "changing the skin" of the city (Echeverri and Orsini, 2010; Salazar, 2011) might have been, the interest towards Medellín's dark past is an important niche in the local tourism industry (Van Broeck, 2018). Furthermore, the obscure history of Medellín has been tightly weaved into the lineal narrative of its transformation and it is strongly rooted in the collective memory which resists being eliminated even through the most intense practices of place imagineering.

The two case studies of this research showed parallel yet contrasting models of conserving and disseminating the collective cultural heritage. One of them has resisted their symbolic spaces from being staged and acted upon in order to provide an intended experience to the temporary visitors. Rather, their focus has been on pedagogical and infrapolitical actions to work towards the social transformation of the city, towards a shift in the ways of being, rather than representing change. The conservation of the collective memory and impeding the elimination of individual stories and "histories" that make up the city has been one of their ways of imagining a disalienated society with creative freedom. In contrast, the second group has propagated some of the symbolic spaces of Comuna 13 to enter in a wider circulation of the place narrative, diversifying the city imagery, yet failing to challenge the hegemonic place narratives and the modes of production.

Notwithstanding, both groups have had a significant role in the social reconstruction of space in Comuna 13. Similarly to the roots of hip hop as a movement that in its very origins consisted of appropriating the urban public space through spatial practices and discourses that reclaimed the city for those often forgotten by the elites, hip hop in Comuna 13 has also offered insights to how the city can be constructed bottom to top. While both groups have identified hip hop as a form of socio-spatial interventionism, one of the case studies had especially close ties with the very initial hip hop practices in times when music was actually made on the streets, without any permission, and in tight networks weaved among different actors of the neighbourhood. The socially conscious rap of Hip Hop Agrario that is produced in networks of collaboration, represents the revival of hip hop's origins as a form of social protest. On the other hand, it also

introduces innovative forms of doing hip hop by combining rap with horticulture and activities performed with elderly ladies and those affected by forced displacements. The modes of making music among the participants of this group is strongly marked by collaborations and knowledge exchange. Furthermore, there is a very strong territorial and political component in their lyrics that question the status quo and proposes other visions of the city, which is another characteristic that takes it back to the social origins of this musical form. Lastly, their musical production as well as the events that they hold as part of their social organization have determinedly resisted commodification and the alienation to the dominant capitalist logic.

All these efforts, these alternative ways of doing and inhabiting the city require creativity to imagine other forms of coexistence in which the everyday geographies are co-created. The vernacular form of agrarian hip hop that one of the groups has developed based on their experiences of the world as lived reality is also a vernacular form of creativity that illuminates the everyday "as a site of assurance, resistance, affect and potentialities" (Edensor et.al., 2010: 10) for creating differential spaces. These in-between spaces that are other than the allegedly equal space of democracy where traditional elites define their identity, represent other public spheres with another type of identities that are multi-layered and fluid, as is the space where they are constructed. What the research showed is that these spaces of resistance that can be both discursive or physical sites, are fundamental for enacting the hidden transcripts that contain the infrapolitics and the often invisible identities of the subcultural groups. The musicalized rituals that were performed in one of these spaces were just one example of how identities are constructed and enacted in performing and making music together. These rituals that were carried out in places that have been appropriated by the social actors, yet remain in a legal grey space, were also acts where ideologies were produced and reproduced, affirming Scott's premise that the hidden transcript of a subcultural group exists only to the extent it is "practiced, articulated, enacted and disseminated within the offstage social sites" (1990: 119).

Performance not only allows enacting identities and ideologies, but it also contains potential for triggering collective action. Music making both triggers and is triggered by collective agency and by the sense of "being together." Rappers who perform their collective identity in the shared time-space of the scenario also have the power to provoke

a sense of "togetherness" among the audience members who enter the circle of sonic vibrations. If the performance is convincing, the collective sonic agency (LaBelle, 2018) can gather momentum to take over new differential spaces that can challenge authoritarian urban discourses. Subsequently, the more differential spaces exist in the city and the more they become interweaved, the bigger the potential for a differential, polyphonic city where a greater diversity of voices and visions can be involved.

What this study on one city through one form of musical practice has shown is that the work of constructing and maintaining diverse and inclusive cities is a constant effort of reimagining alternatives, while keeping present the knowledge of those preceding us. If the aim is to construct diverse cities, then the recognition of collectiveness in the process of its making must be more deeply propagated to understand that city spaces, too, are spaces of the reciprocal sharing of the other's flux of experiences in inner time (Schütz, 1951). This is perhaps how creative cities should also be reconsidered—as cities that are diverse and embrace difference in its significance of simultaneity, parallel existence and ways of being, as multiple and fluid, under constant redefinition—instead of replicated practices of hubs of creativity that favour one type of creativity, that which can "create" surplus value. What music making, as well as other embodied, collective expressions of creativity can teach urbanists, geographers, planners, architects and city leaders, is that lived spaces are constituted through collective action and through shared momentum in which the "we-ness" can become materialized into symbolic spaces that offer refuge and disalienation, both aspects that allow man to dwell meaningfully.

Future lines of research

Departing from the experience gained during this investigation, I would like to suggest lines of research that could have been complementary in this project and might prove to be useful for other, similar enquiries. In first place, on a personal level, a terrain that was only partially explored was the practice of collective song-writing with the participants of the research. A methodological approach that is somewhat common in art-based

research and in music therapy,[99] I believe that it could also be an adequate method for the line of research performed in the relatively young field of geohumanities that proposes researchers' own artistic works as research methods.[100]Collective creating, however, could provide a more "participative" understanding to questions common in urban studies, even more with today's technological advances that offer very simple music production applications that make recording the instrumentals and vocals a fun participatory activity. The exploratory opportunity I had with recording three songs on topics proposed by the participants—religion and power (Connexión Irreverente feat Maria, B-Jay, Louise, 2017); women's role and situation in the society (Hip Hop Agrario, 2018c); and life in the 'hood (Hip Hop Agrario, 2018b)—all gave me the opportunity to learn more closely from other participants' views on these topics as well as experience the actual creative process of writing, recording and performing with them. Had this been repeated in more occasions with a clearer line of guidance in terms of topics to look at and ways to analyse the process, it could have proved even more useful for comprehending the participants' understanding of their everyday space and the changes it is experiencing. Nevertheless, the few experiences of sitting down together, discussing the initial ideas, inspiring one another, learning from the more experienced rhyme-creators and paying attention to the way the words poured out of their minds, is what gave me the feeling of sharing the flux of time and space with them. Also, the chances I had recording in their DIY studios, both of which are located high up on the semi-rural city borders of Medellín, made me understand their process of recording, most often done through voluntary collaborations with self-taught musical producers. Lastly, the moments of shared walks with the rappers through places I would have otherwise never visited, allowed me to have more intimate talks while actually experiencing their trajectories. All of this, had it lasted longer, could have served for a much more comprehensive study of the spaces of creativity and resistance.

In second place, and also tied to the collective making, I believe that using the recording of music videos as a way of learning about the representations of space through the participants' eyes and through the locations that are selected, could also be an efficient

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[99] Consult Day et.al. (2008) for an example of song-writing used in music therapy.
[100] Consult Hawkins (2018) for the guidelines of new research methods in geohumanities.

and creative means of participatory research on place and space. As part of the creative process of music making, shooting videos involves a whole different type of visual imagination of representing and could be especially interesting in contexts of urban change where, by facilitating the participation according to gender and age could inform us of the differences of how we experience space and how the changes are perceived.

The third line of research I would like to suggest is one focused on music urbanism, a term that was coined by Dr. Shain Shapiro, the CEO of Sound Diplomacy, which is an international consultancy focused on studying the effects and benefits of the musical industry to the city economy. With a clear entrepreneurial approach, their work has thus far focused on promoting comprehensive strategies that could help cities enliven their economies through the music business. As such, they also focus on the "highly commodifiable" aspect that Edensor et.al. (2010) were discontent about. In my view, music urbanism would be a more inclusive term if it looked into the social process of music making, into the didactic lessons it can give us to be better citizens. Within this line of research of music urbanism, questions of urban economy and social justice could and should be asked, beginning with matters such as how to redistribute the damages of the demographic pressure performed during mega-festivals; how to involve the more vulnerable populations of the society in the events and how to give them a voice; how could music-induced tourism create more inclusive cities, instead of creating gentrified neighbourhoods.

Lastly, in line with the growing role that tourism has in the world economy and the type of environmental threats it represents, music tourism is a line of research that could contribute to more sustainable forms of travelling. This far, music tourism has been more extensively covered in ethnomusicology, in tourism and in some anthropological studies.[101] However, it has room to expand in the literature of cultural geography, when looking at the power of music in tourism imaginaries shaping their identity of places as destinations. It could also give better insights into community tourism and to the unanswered questions of the present research, where a few local actors and several

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[101] Consult Macy (2010), Guilbault (2014) and Guilbault & Rommen (2019) for more recent studies on music tourism.

national companies have benefitted from the hip hop-related tourism, while the majority of those whose home streets are constantly invaded by the tourist gaze have not seen the fruits of this new economy this far. How can music (tourism) contribute to more equal neighbourhoods, if not whole cities? What type of institutional interventionism does community tourism require for it to "serve the comuna"? If music tourism and urbanism aim to contribute to the construction of diverse and equal cities, it must be through perspectives that focus beyond the economic aspects.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A

Interview questions for the teachers and directors of REMM music schools

<u>Introducción / *Introduction*</u>

1. Me puede decir su nombre, encargo y entidad en la que usted trabaja?
   Could you tell me your name, position and the name of the entity you work for?

2. ¿Cuál es el significado de la escuela para usted?
   Which is the significance of the school for you?

3. ¿Cuál es la línea formativa de esta escuela?
   What type of musical education does this school offer?

   Perfil del estudiante / *The student's profile*

4. ¿A quién se dirige la oferta musical?
   Whom are the musical activities directed to?

5. ¿Cuál es el perfil socioeconómico del alumnado?
   Which is the socio-economic profile of the pupils?

6. ¿Todos los estudiantes de esta escuela pertenecen sólo a este barrio?
   Are all the pupils of this school from this neighbourhood?

7. ¿Hay algún tipo de obstáculos que puede dificultar la llegada del joven a la escuela?

   Is there any type of obstacles that could complicate the pupil's arrival to school?

   <u>Impacto educativo / *Educational impact*</u>

8. Según su opinión, ¿cuál es el mayor impacto personal que tiene la formación musical de esta escuela a sus alumnos?

   In your opinion, which is the biggest personal impact that the musical education can have on the pupils of this school?

9. Según su opinión, ¿cuál es el mayor impacto social que tiene la formación musical de esta escuela a sus alumnos?

   In your opinion, which is the biggest social impact that the musical education can have on the pupils of this school?

10. (Más allá de la formación musical) ¿Hay algún otro aspecto en que los jóvenes demuestran avances significativos?
(Beyond the musical education) Are there any other aspects where the pupils have shown significant progress?

11. Según su opinión, ¿cómo contribuye la disciplina que requiere el aprendizaje de un instrumento a los hábitos cotidianos del joven?
In your opinion, in which ways does learning an instrument contribute to the everyday habits of the pupils?

12. (Más allá de ser un lugar de formación), ¿para Usted, cuál puede ser el significado que ha tenido la escuela de música entre los estudiantes?
(Apart from being an educational centre) What do you think is the significance of the music school for the pupils?

13. ¿Cómo ha evolucionado la idea que se ha tenido de la escuela de música desde su conformación hasta hoy, desde los habitantes del barrio?
In which ways has the idea about the music school changed among the inhabitants of the neighbourhood ever since its constitution?

14. Según su opinión, ¿cuáles son los asuntos más problemáticos de esta zona?
In your opinion, which are the biggest problems of this area?

15. Según su opinión, estos problema se ven reflejados en los obstáculos de los estudiantes para estar en la escuela de música?
In your opinion, do these problems have to do with the obstacles the students might have for attending the music school?

Perfil del educador / *Profile of the teacher*

16. ¿Usted es de la misma comuna?
Are you from this comuna?

17. ¿El ser o no de esta comuna, le ha generado ventajas o desventajas en el relacionamiento con los estudiantes?

Has the fact of (not) being from this comuna generated any benefits or disadvantages for you in your ways of relating to the students?

18. ¿Podría dar un significado a las siguientes palabras?
Could you give a definition to the following words?

-Territorio / *Territory*
-Barrio / *Neighbourhood*
-Comunidad / *Community*

Appendix B

Interview questions for the leaders of social organizations

1. Me puede decir su nombre, cargo y la entidad en que trabaja?
    Could you tell me your name, position and the name of the entity you work for?

1. Cuál es el principal objetivo de la programación musical?
    Which is the main objective of the musical activities you offer?

2. Cuál es la programación de actividades musicales de esta escuela?
    What type of musical activities do you offer in this school?

3. A quienes se dirigen las actividades musicales (edad/sexo/pertenencia)?
    Whom are the activities directed to? (age/sex/district)

4. Si se puede diferenciar, qué grupos tienen mayor actividad?
    If you can make a differentiation, which groups tend to have more activities?

5. Cómo funciona la programación, quien lo propone y como se obtiene la financiación?
    How does the programme work, who proposes it and how is it financed?

6. Cuál es el vínculo de la escuela con el Estado?
    Which is the connection of the school with the State?

7. Qué tipo de garantías y beneficios ofrece esta vinculación a los participantes de las actividades?
    What type of guarantees and benefits does this connection offer to the participants of the activities?

8. Se vincula las actividades musicales con algún tipo de objetivos sociales?
    Are the musical activities tied to any type of social objectives?

9. Qué espacios se utiliza para los ensayos? Los podría conocer?
    Which spaces are used for the rehearsals? Could I visit them?

10. Se hace otro uso de las mismas salas?
    Are these spaces used for any other purpose?

11. En qué ocasiones (tiempo, lugar) los grupos musicales tienen la oportunidad de tocar fuera de la escuela? Qué pretexto debe haber para tocar en espacio público?
    In which occasions (time, place) can the groups perform outside the school? What type of pretext is required for performing in public space?

12. Hay grupos musicales externos que han querido vincularse con la escuela?
    Are there any external groups who have wanted to create ties with the school?

13. La Escuela reparte clases/actividades musicales en otros espacios del barrio o de la ciudad?

    Does the school organize activities in other spaces of the neighbourhood or somewhere else in the city?

Appendix C
Observations template

Número de registro:			
		Fecha:	Hora Inicio: Hora Salida:

INTRODUCCIÓN Y OBJETIVO *Comenta el lugar y lugar escogido.*	

DESCRIPCIÓN: Aclare acontecimientos observados con una presentación de los hechos y situaciones observados		*INTERPRETACIÓN:*

Convenciones	
Conductas no verbales	/ /
Lenguaje textual	" "
Lenguaje casi textual	' '
Opinión del observador	( )
Ausencia de registro por perdida u incapacidad de acceder a él	[...]

CONCLUSIONES *Analice e intérprete los datos recogidos*	