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Agua! The flourishing of Latin Music in Melbourne, Australia

Abstract

The Latin American migration experienced in the late 1970s involved numerous and diverse nationalities that found new homes in Australia. Yet, they were largely perceived and collectivised locally as 'Latin Americans'; a homogeneous social group because of their shared language and regional proximity. Their arrival and settlement met with an already socially and musically typecast identity fashioned via early European oriented 'continental bands'. This socio-cultural demarcation by the Anglo-European mainstream in Australia encouraged this new wave of Latin American migrants to 'band' together under the shared characteristics of language, culture and impromptu music-making. Following the trajectory of the first Latin band in Melbourne, Australia, this qualitative study explores the musical and social meaning-making of five foundational members of the Melbourne Latin music scene. Today's thriving scene reflects a dynamic ecology in which a sense of community amongst musicians is central, in a city that harbours a vibrant live music scene that not only celebrates South American cultural diversity but also a diverse multicultural participation by musicians, dance studios and wider audiences. However, new immigrants and younger formally educated musicians have begun to develop unique creative voices unburdened by the politics of exile or economic hardship that defined the old-guards' raison d'être.

The perpetually disrupted and dynamic nature of the live music industry means performance opportunities for these foundational immigrants is being eroded. This study reveals interconnection between various bands and musicians that represent a diverse and complex multi-generational community that negotiate heritage and modernity; musical connectivity and Latino/a solidarity; the socio-political, cultural and aesthetic needs of the older generation; and, the changing cultural expectations of 21st century audiences and the diversification this necessitates. It offers implications to music education regarding the changing nature of Latin music, its diasporic influence and the increasing sophistication that reside in populations towards Latin music-making.

Introduction

Urban Australia in 1986 reflected a vibrant and dynamic time of social and cultural change. As Australia planned for its national bicentennial and Commonwealth games only two years away, it began to reflect and reimagine, perhaps for the first time since the initial revoking of the White Australia policy in 1973 upon what a modern multicultural society looked like, acted and represented to itself and to the rest of the world. Despite mass media promulgating narratives of hegemony and acceptable 'difference' mainstream television and print promoted subliminal and more overt messages about Anglo domination and its view toward immigrant nationalities as "culturally shared, and hence more social... which feature the stereotypical information (of) members of a culture or group" (van Dijk, 1988, p. 228). These related to ethnic stereotypes and fictional modes of representation, traditionally involving caricature and recognition of certain shared 'models' and 'scripts' relating to both their own and other nationalities- that was usually negative and derogatory in nature.

Such inherent and prevailing social values were becoming more questioned and disrupted in Australian cities through the arts – via film, theatre, and music. Don Featherstone's ABC film Babakiuerea (1986), depicting Australian Indigenous Aborigines portraying colonial invading unsuspecting Anglo families both mocked the colonial apparatus as well as aroused debate upon first nations' perspectives. The 1987 stage show 'Wogs out of work' and its national success marked a turning point in the naïve perception of ethnic minorities as they exercised a defiant affirmation of their ethnicity, the vocabulary of the terrain, and the artistry of their cultures. Its blending of Greek, Spanish and Anglo sensibilities reflected a quasi-Derridean deconstructionist 'wog chaos', but also valorised aspects of difference and Freudian notion of fetishism of ethnic cultures amongst the population - what Bhabha (1983) describes as "that 'otherness' which is at once an object of desire and derision"(p.19).

Melbourne in September 1986 rang to the sounds of Madonna's 'Pappa Don't Preach', Chris de Burgh's longing for his 'Lady in Red', as well as Aussie John Farnham's anthemic 'You're the Voice'. However, a group of Latin American immigrants had gathered at the small and unassuming 'Carlton Club Hotel' on Gertrude Street, Fitzroy to play music. The friends, families, and close-knit Melbourne Latin-American community had learned through word of mouth that the prophetically named 'Combo la Revelación' were playing. Just a stones-throw from the Spanish Club – the inner-city community gathering place for South Americans, was where plans were laid to spread Latino musical, cultural and social

wings. Within a year at least five bands, and just as many venues on the northern fringe of the city became established – what became known as the Spanish Quarter of Melbourne and a thriving hotbed of Latin American music, dance, food and sociality.

This study investigates the birth, development and expansion of Latin American music in Melbourne, and the evolution of a diverse and significant musical community in the city's live music scene. This study explores five participants who were at the forefront of the initial 'first contact' between Latin American music and the wider non-Latin audiences to which Latin music found acceptance, enthusiasm and possibility. These performers, part of the 'old guard' hold tightly their traditions and cultural tenets and performance aspirations. Their participation in music performance can be predicated on the basis of two distinct but entwined forces: the collective need within the multinational Latin American migrant community for music to articulate a shared sense of cultural identity and belonging, and, utilising the local mainstream reception of 'Latin' music as a 'new' globalised commercial music representing a glocalised reterritorialization of Latin music within the vibrant Melbourne live music scene.

Investigating their musical and social practices in the bands they played together in, this study shows how their music making is linked to ethnicity, identity and cultural markers past and present. This interconnection of musicians and bands, though not unique, actuates an ecology of Latin American musics and cultures that continues to develop and evolve through new audiences and new practitioners. Findings revealed a community connection between musicians and bands that represent either heritage or modernity; pervasive musical connectivity and the need to be inclusive of others; the need to reproduce known repertoire catering to the social, cultural and aesthetic needs of their generation by maintaining old ways; and the changing cultural expectations of audiences. Latin American musicians in Australasia have now begun to develop a unique creative voice, largely undertaken by new migrants or by Australian born and raised children of migrants unburdened by the politics of exile or economic hardship that defined their parents' raison d'être.

These findings are interpreted as cultural identity, continuity and connection and the Future. The notion of cultural identity refers to self within the immigrant Latino community and the iteration of political and social concerns regarding their homeland, and their departure form it; the affordances to performances concern the cameraderies and friendships forged through decades long performance together, and of witnessing and being a part of a once fledgling musical development that has become a significant aspect of the Australian

music industry. These musicians and ensembles are a complex, evolving musical community that face pressing challenges of aging within a fast-changing world.

Latin American music in the Australasian context

Long before the establishment of Latin American migrant communities in Australasia, externally projected cultural assumptions about Latin American music, dance and sociality provided local audiences with enduring preconceptions and expectations of popular Latin-American performance. Latin elements synthesised within globalised ballroom and social dance in the 1920s and 1930s, in jazz repertoire of the 1930s and 1940s, and in Hollywood and Broadway productions in the 1940s and 1950s led to the local interpretation of Latin repertoire that had already become popular internationally. Prevailing fictitious U.S depictions in film and television (Clark 2002, p. 253) promoted defining and containing musicians and audiences within unambiguous racial and ethnic categories- particularly in the production of Latin-themed films in post-World War II USA (Clark 2002).

Australia had a culturally preconceived idea of South American music - that of a re-contexualised middle-class entertainment established at the turn of the 20th century. Whiteoak (2003) suggests the 1913 tango craze –popularised through stage demonstrations, humorous parody acts and stylised versions of Argentine tango recently arrived from London, Paris and New York initiated local audiences. Latin American and Spanish music often appeared in the repertoire of popular 'continental' or 'Gypsy' bands, and locally "some Italian-Australian performers adopted Spanish or Spanish-sounding names in the 1950s and 1960s" (Whiteoak 2009, p. 16) as a way of boosting their appeal within (and outside) the Italian-Australian community, performing Spanish, Hungarian, Russian 'Gypsy' " musics (Whiteoak 2008, p. 19).

Latino migration to Melbourne

The globalisation Australia experienced post 1945 contributed to a rapid change to Australia and its society. The abolition of the White Australia Policy in 1947 and increased labour demands within the country impressed that immigration from Britain alone would not suffice in sustaining Australia's economic and demographic growth. Large-scale immigration from Europe in the 1950s and 1960s saw mass immigration from Greece, Italy, and Malta, in 1960

representing half of Australia's immigrants as non-British. World-wide recession in the early 1970s contributed to the arrival of immigrants and refugees from parts of Latin America.

Several South American nations experienced political and social instability at this time, with the toppling of the Allende Government of Chile in 1973, military coups in Argentina and Uruguay in 1973 and 1976 respectively, and civil war in El Salvador war in 1983. The first 'big wave' of Latin immigration heralded from these countries so that by 1986, there were 5,356 Chileans, 3,000 Argentines, 1,637 Uruguayans, and 1,275 Salvadorians living in Australia (Australian Government, 2019). Many of these migrants came seeking political asylum, and their experiences imbued local Latin American music making with both a social and political consciousness. These South American immigrants and refugees contributed to the country's expanding cultural diversity, and the flourishing of Hispanic culture in Australia and Latin music in Melbourne.

In many cases these first-generation Latin American migrants remained in the suburbs close to the immigration centres to which they arrived, or within the public housing estates that many were allocated to (Burnley, 2001). Regardless of the social or professional position that they held before migrating, most first-stage Latin American migrants found themselves economically marginalised and able to only undertake unskilled blue-collar employment and minimum wages (Burnley, 2001). Perceived by the wider Australian society as a homogeneous social group because of their shared Spanish language, they experienced a socio-cultural demarcation by the Anglo-European mainstream. Migrants from many different Latin American countries banded together under the shared characteristics of language and culture– a context in which collective community music making became an important marker of shared identity.

Early musical communities and audiences

The group Combo la Revelación played an eclectic mix of salsa, merengue and cumbia and established the first weekly Latin night at the Carlton Club – a block away from the Spanish club. Other bands such as 'Bahia', 'Tropical Dreams', 'El Barrio', and 'Kenny Lopez Sex Mambo' all established performances around the inner-city Spanish Quarter, in clubs such as The Copacabana, The Stage, The Bullring, and the Night Cat. Most migrant performers had little or no formal musical training and their performances approximated the emulation of available recordings rather than on learned or inherited musical knowledge. This 'reportorial standardisation' (Ryan 1998) allowed music and dance participation accessible to most members of the Latin American migrant community, giving migrants the opportunity to

participate in a strong and binding cultural activity without having to learn the very specialised and technically difficult skills of a professional musician or dancer. Playing popular songs of the time, these bands rarely expanded their repertoire (excepting global Latin cross-over hits). It also facilitated success with the wider non-Latino audiences.

With venues located near University accommodation precincts and a sprawling middle-class, a sizeable number of Italian, Greek and Anglo cultural backgrounds felt a particular affiliation with Latin music and contributed to the development of the Latin music scene. Many Latinos, and people who identified as being Latinos took up dancing as a result of this emerging salsa scene. This mixture of Latino and non-Latino patrons and performers, in their various socio-cultural configurations, immersed in and shaped an eclectic mix of Latin music that would set the precedent for the way the scene would unfold in the years to come.

The scene was helped by global hits that helped rejuvenate the scene. World-wide latin influenced performers such as Ricky Martin and Jennifer López placed Latin artists in the forefront of the wider public, and the 'Gipsy Kings' tour of Australia and Wim Wenders' movie 'Buena Vista Social Club' provided nuance to Latin music listeners and dancers beyond salsa and cumbia styles.

Methodology

This qualitative case study explored the understandings and meanings of band membership held by five foundational and long-standing members of the Melbourne Latin music scene. In case studies researchers collect deep data from a small purposively selected group of participants to explore phenomena (Merriam, 1998; Yin, 2009). Data collection was undertaken via a series of semi-structured interviews in English with individual participants. English was chosen because the members of the ensemble speak a range of languages and use both English and Spanish as lingua francas. The author conducted the interviews which lasted about 30-40 minutes, depending on the participants. With ethical permission, interviews were recorded aurally and then transcribed. Interview questions included, 'When did you first start playing music?' 'How you became involved with the band?' 'What do get out of playing in band?' 'Why do you keep playing in the band?'. Depending on participant response, questions were modified to pursue depth of inquiry. The transcripts were returned to participants for confirmation and amendment where possible. The transcripts were then read, re-read, and then coded. From the coding a series of themes were identified both by emphasis

and frequency. Each interview was analysed separately before overarching themes were generated.

The author, as a practising musician familiar with the ensembles and the musicians utilised an approach to intentionality and interpretation known as 'bridling' (Dahlberg, 2006). This form of epoché asserts "a validity that will always move with and through the researcher's intentional relationship with the phenomenon" (Vagle, 2009, p.585). As a reflective process the author acknowledges that valid knowledge "is via a subjectivity reflexive of the researcher to the subject and the phenomenon" (Giorgi, 2002, p. 17). Having an insider position supported trustworthiness and credibility of the interpretation of the data and my position as researcher. The participants range in age between 60 and 70, These founding members are all men, reflecting the predominant cultural musical practices from the first wave migration.

Participant Vignettes

Before discussing the themes, a series of vignettes is offered that introduce the voices, the personal histories, and the meanings of community to the participants.

Jose: I arrived in Australia November 20, 1971, the first of seven children to emigrate. The feeling in Chile was not good, and I wanted to explore a new place. I learnt bass playing in some rock bands here but formed my latin band 'Bahia' – we did our first gig in February 1986. We played cumbia and merengue rhythms at the Chile and Columbian clubs out in the western suburbs. We followed 'Combo'into the city- the lambada dance craze in the summer of 1986 brought latin music and dancing into the Australian publics' imagination.

Jorge: I grew up and played in bands in Peru, and in Melbourne started a band to make new friends and have BBQ's. We started 'Combo la Revelation'at the Carlton Club in October 1986- we were the first to take our music to the city edge. No-one else knew how to play salsa rhythms, and only a few Columbians knew how to dance properly. A few people came each Friday, and we thought about stopping- but summer came, and it just exploded.

Pedro: I was part of the 'suspended generation' in Chile. I came to Australia in 1984 with my young family and a guitar my father gave me. The latinos I met talked about a band playing at the Carlton Club- it was a gathering of the whole Latin-American community, and that's where I met Manuel and Jose, who started 'Bahia'. We listened to the classic songs and learned them from memory. We were the first ones to play this music here- but now my son plays in other latin bands- a new generation doing different things.

Manuel: I grew up in El Salvador- we had lots of parties with singing, guitars, violins, and from the age of 6 I got a guitar. My high school teacher was a guitarist and we did gigs together and then I joined a band that worked across Central America. But there were kidnappings of family members and we came to Australia. Through joining Bahia I have made lifelong friendships, there is a brotherhood amongst us.

Gualberto: I came to Australia and found South American musicians and bands. I played folkloric shows, but salsa was in my blood, and I did percussion and crafted my voice to the classic singers- Lavoe, Barreto, and Colón. Their songs had a social consciousness that resonated even to Australian -South Americans. This part of our history is important to acknowledge, but also the sense of community building and connection to each other.

Findings

The data revealed a complex community with generational layers of understandings of music, culture and community. Whilst they remain happy performing the repertoires that first brought them popularity, they are aware of the accretions of time, of maintaining relevant in a changing and predominantly younger Latin music scene and maintaining a musical curiosity and energy through additional musical projects. The themes are presented under three broad headings: Cultural identity, continuity and connection and the Future.

Cultural Identity

The Latino presence in a largely anglo-centric society allows for the fleshing out of hegemonic and oppositional forces as well as moving past reductive definitions of musical style according to static notions of nationality, ethnicity or social class. It extends investigation to notions of cultural hybridity, identity and musical 'boundary-riding' (Higgins, 2012) and the examination of the place of Latino/a music and musicians within an urban Australian setting. Their participation in music performance was therefore predicated on the basis of two distinct but entwined forces: the collective need within the multinational Latin American migrant community for music to articulate a shared sense of cultural identity, and, accommodating the local mainstream reception of 'Latin' music as a globalised commercial music (Negus, 1999), which provided commercial opportunities for migrant performers. Pedro describes playing with his latino compatriots:

> We were from different places- Chile, Peru, Argentina, El Salvador, Bolivia, and we found music a common enjoyment that bound us together in friendship. It took us back and reminded of the sense of connection and community we had back home, but also to what was possible in this new land.

Latin music made a huge impact, particularly on young audiences, and Jose discusses the less than conventional and desperate business practices latin bands endured that were used to secure them:

> Some Italian businessmen came by the Carlton Club and wanted 'Combo' to play at their restaurant- Rosati's in the city- it was a huge success there people dancing on tables and out in Flinders Lane. Their manager from Sydney wanted a slice and took over, so one night just before the music was about to start they organised for two double-decker buses to stop outside and take the band and all the people from Rosati's to their two new Clubs in Carlton- Café Cliquot and Stringfellows. Soon there were crowds around the block waiting to get in.

Many of the early 1970s migrants to Australasia were refugees who, for political or economic reasons were unable to return to or maintain contact with their homelands. The bands performed renditions of popular latin recordings, the lyrics articulating a social commentary that resonated with a pan-Latino/a audience. As Gualberto Casas, sonero and leader of Melbourne salsa group del Barrio recalled:

> We started performing salsa already known from recordings because this is what was popular and because people could identify with the sentiments expressed in these songs.

An interesting characteristic of this 'cover' repertoire was that it enabled bands like del Barrio to perform to political exiles and entertainment seekers simultaneously. Jorge articulates his thoughts towards the various styles latin bands played.

> Most of the cumbias and merengues were about relationships- romantic songs, but there was something about the lyrics of the salsas that were popular-the story telling, the politics of the time and social struggle, they were more meaningful, and really resonated with the larger latino population- we were united in that struggle and music was a way of bringing a sense of communion.

Continuity and connection

The burgeoning popularity of latin music found that musicians were in demand as numerous night clubs developed latin themed nights or became designated latin music hubs. There was healthy competition between the bands and musicians needed to be portable, adaptable and knowledgeable of a vast repertoire of songs as many performed in several bands as demand required. Bands such as Rumberos, Sonora America, Tropical Dreams, Kenny Lopez Sex Mambo, Gringo Stars, Furia, and Peligro sprang from membership and inspiration from the first bands. Jose recalls this time:

> It was an exciting time to play latin music- we were playing 3-4 nights per week, there was the Melbourne International festival every year that brought latin bands and sounds to the

> masses, Babalu Bar in the Regent Hotel catered for the city crowd, the Johnston St Festival became an annual latin themed event that showcased latin music as well as the venues of the area- the Bullring, Copacabana, Boleros, Spanish Club- it was a time where we could meet the other musicians and enjoy each-others music – we saw and were proud of what we had helped create and accomplish in this city.

The latin music scene was propelled by a growing familiarity with Latin American music in the mass media, instigated by the Gypsy Kings Australian Tour (1989), the movie Mambo Kings (1992) and the Buena Vista Social Club phenomenon (1998) (Wyndham & Read 2003). This popular interest in presumed 'accurate' or 'authentic' performance of perceived-traditional styles generated among fans of Latin music increased the cultural capital of newly arrived latin music performers in Australia.

The possibility of running larger bands with horn (brass) sections ebbed and flowed with the economic viability at hand. Sometimes venues provided a budget that could include trumpet, trombone, saxophone despite the impossibly small stage are designated for a 7-piece band. At other times bands adapted, as Jose remarks:

> One place -it was just a bar, and the budget meant we had a synth instead of our usual four-piece horn section. We were a hit there -it was packed, so when they could afford it the horns played above the on a platform above the doorway.

Latin Bands established connections across the Australian-South American community in Melbourne, but also consolidated firmly multi-ethnic 'Australian' audiences. Bands played at various Latin nights, that included Columbian, Chilean, Peruvian Independence Day celebrations. Jorge discovered opportunities to expand on this performance activity:

> Some organisers came to our gigs and invited us to play a Meredith Festival- this was mainly rock and pop. Well, I said ok, so we went there and played to 40, 000 people, and they loved it. We've been there every year for over 20 years now.

Being the first to establish an audience for 'modern' latin music, Jorge explains this development, connection and continuity he has established with both audiences and the musicians he has developed within the Latin music scene in Melbourne.

> Remembering my first experience in 1986, bands played old style and folkloric music. I asked people why they don't play salsa, and everyone said, "What is salsa?" Then five years later, we were playing to one thousand people in clubs full of Australians. They have been our staple audience- we started the band wanting to have fun and make our community and we bring fun into their lives- yes, we are an exotic escape. But now, there are more bands, and less money. I've had over 200 musicians play in my band, and they've gone on to play and start others and they have their own specialised sounds.

The Future.

The situation for latin music has changed considerably since the turn of the 21st century. Where first-generation bands tended towards a generic repertoire of danceable cover songs, often performed in an approximated style, second-generation performers and recent migrants have expanded the scope of popular Latin music performance to include more 'authentic' performances of localised styles, and even created a wealth of original compositions.
As Gualberto remarks:

> My audience comes for the classic salsa songs, with themes that we must not forget, but the young generation tap into new rhythms and sounds; bands like Quarter street Orchestra write their own songs, there are many more Latinas that are part of the scene with their own bands and they are telling new stories that are relevant to the concerns of their generation.

The future of latin music in Melbourne remains a complex and evolving blend of impacts. Inner city gentrification has impacted on several major venues. Many inonic venues have gone due to the gentrification and rationalisation of inner-city development. The older musicians who were once hungry for performance have been usurped by a younger, more entrepreneurial and savvy younger generation. This younger generation compose songs relevant to their young university crowd audiences unencumbered by the social and political histories of past generations of Latino musician. Many are institutionally trained professionally oriented musicians who are able to record, market and merchandise far more adeptly. This younger generation of Latino musician is eager to adopt and adapt new rhythms that rankle with the older generation. Jose remarks:

> One thing that I dislike are the new rhythms- bachata and reggaeton- they are so rhythm heavy that the lyric is almost totally irrelevant - of course these things come and go, but we as a band cater for our crowd- and they are slowly thinning out. There are many that are not with us anymore.

The younger generation of Latino musician are also mobile and willing to tour and promote audiences across cities to develop their markets. These younger bands have established strong performance profiles and have been able to use media to promote their music and brand, in many ways pushing the older generation of musician out of the existing band venues. The older generation have had to become adaptable to this disruptive and changing dimension, finding new ways of performing. Manuel talks about this adaptation:

> There are not that many gigs for the band so I work with one, two three others and operate in a Mariachi group. We saw the economics of the industry changing and we still wanted to play. Mariachi was an aspect that was underdeveloped in Australia, and we are very popular with corporate events restaurants and private Latino house parties. There is another Mariachi group and we have an agreement about the territory in which we play in- and we both seem to

> do very well by this. This is the way the new phenomena of Latin music- its much more portable, personal and the conditions are much better than the loud bands.

Discussion

Music and migration are universal phenomena and "migratory peoples tend to take their music along with them, especially if there are sufficient numbers of them to sustain its practice in a social context" (Sorce, Keller & Barwick, 2012, p. 225). Both phenomena cross borders and music can assist migrants to find economic viability and social cohesion between their old and new cultures. Migrant experiences have been depicted, as "as a kind of package of attributes carried across from the homeland" (Bottomley, 1992, p. 4) where ethnic identities in multicultural societies provide opportunities for people to cross boundaries. Ethnic identity is anchored to shared cultural, linguistic and religious core values (Smolicz, 1998) and the maintenance of cultural identity is paramount with original national identity and circumstance embedded upon this identity through the socially conscious music that they continue to play.

The translocation of people and music has been widely investigated between Latin America and Africa (Shain 2002; Wade 1998), European diasporic contexts (Eisentraut 2001; Román-Velázquez 2002) and the USA (Salazar 2002). Less consideration has been given to the extent of Latin American musical influence beyond these trans-American and trans-Atlantic routes into the Asia-Pacific region (Hosokawa, 2002). The establishment of sizeable Latin American migrant communities in Australasia from the 1970s onwards has led to the creation of localised Latin communities and music scenes that represent a developing transnational and cultural hybridity.

Acknowledging the complexity of immigrant travel allows us to see migration not simply as a finite act of relocation but as a continuous cultural process, where the "importance to connections, place, homelands', even if only imagined, are of central importance to migrants' lives" (Gupta & Ferguson 1992, p. 11). In many instances, as Glazer and Moynihan (1970) assert ethnic groups do not 'melt', as planned, but rather re-form and transform their original sources of identity. The reforming nature of migrant populations in new lands has been described through 'transnational communities' (Portes, 1996; Smith, 1998) or 'binational societies' (Guarnizo, 1998) that allow an understanding of migrant movements and actions. These lenses of understanding allow detailing of the way choices and affordances to motherland routines and norms effect, curtail, facilitate and shape new migrant behaviours, views and functions towards music making and music meaning, how

things were done ‘at home’ and how they may mediate, disappear or strengthen in a new land.

These Latino migrant musicians therefore not only “consciously reconstruct practices and beliefs carried across with them, but also literally embody certain predispositions” (Bottomley, 1992, p. 138). These foundational members of the Melbourne Latin music community have in some ways adhered to the motherland tenets, behaviours and musical manifesto expressed by well-known and famous Latin American musical performers, remaining enmeshed in the culture of their place of origin, and the musical era of their departure. Understanding the meanings of home-town attachment is crucial to understanding the actions, meanings, culture and traditions the participants celebrate and derive from their activities in the Latin music community.

Observing these Latin ensembles as an envoy of multi-national and ethnic expression offers a significant insight into the way the ensembles operate as a unifying force in how migrants organise cultural and social activities. This has the effect of maintaining two long-standing cultural processes – the re-iteration of a national sentiment and the formation of this as a popular tradition in a new, multicultural landscape. This reification of homeland, the musical valorising of those in resistance and the memorialising of past military atrocities legitimises such rituals as an implicit or overt evocation of historical traditions and continuity with the past (Hobsbawm & Ranger, 2012).

Rather than asserting a ‘global’ grand narrative espousing “cultural messages’’ which emanate directly from sites of world power, (such as the USA, or South America), glocalisation allows for the distribution and multitude of ontically secure communities and their ability to differentially receive and interpret, absorb and redefine beyond general ethnic and nationalist traits. Though the Latin diaspora has swept across numerous nations, ‘local’ groups absorb communication from the alleged ‘centre’ in a great variety of ways (Tomlinson 1999).

Glocal perspectives affirm the idea of a world-space in which we consider the local as a **‘**micro**’** and detailed manifestation of global variety, and how localised communities carve out niches both within their cultures and inter-culturally. Glocalised musical creativity evinced by these foundational musicians of the latin musical community represent a ‘fortress community’ that can assert/resist influence, and maintain identity, flow of ideas and practices (Hall 1991; Abu-Lughod 1991). This glocalised perception reflects a multicultural/poly-ethnicity and/or nationality within contemporary 21st century global movements of people, ideas and culture.

Coda

Despite the aging of these older musicians, their repertoire selection and the growing diversity and sophistication of new, younger latin bands grasping of audiences, the performing environment remains a reflection of mainstream expectations and circumstances where 'Latin' is still considered a homogeneous entertainment music category. The global mass-mediation of Latin American folkloric and popular music styles that has occurred since the turn of the 21st century has helped to create niches for second generation and new migrant performers unburdened by the exile and oppression experienced by earlier migrants.

Ultimately these influences have contributed to the development of a rich environment for Latin American migrant musicians and their multi-culturally replete musician colleagues to engage, share, and develop a localised identity for Latin American music. While mass-mediated forms of Latin American music have had a historical presence in mainstream Australasian popular music, the late 20th century and early 21st century migration of Latin Americans to Australasia continues to infuse live Latin music with a sense of social purpose.

For first-stage migrants of the 1970s and 1980s, this was reflected in musical responses to the political circumstances behind their migration, as well as the challenges posed by adapting to life in Australia. For their Australasian born children and second-stage migrants post-2000, the music also reflects the interests and desires of a growing intergenerational and multi-layered community striving for a sense of shared identity and belonging.

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