

Bagpipes and digital music: the re-mixing of the Galician identity,

“In this moment in time, in which Galicia struggles to set itself free from the yoke of an imposed colonialism, it is necessary to recover completely the bagpipe, our national musical instrument”.¹

With the granting of Autonomy in Galicia in 1981, issues concerning identity became less restricted to nationalist politics and were incorporated into a more open and public debate. Activities seen to show a kind of Galicianess started to enjoy official support with the aim of gathering momentum around the new institutions. Symbols and marks of identity once only used in the nationalist discourse started to be appropriated and in some cases reformulated and redesigned by the new institutions. It has been and still is a complex set of processes characterized by controversy which affected the writing of the language, the symbols of the nation and even the names of the institutions.² It is in this context that the practice of playing bagpipes has experienced a steady growth and has become prominent in Galician music of the nineties.

Since the discourse on a distinct Galician identity began in the XIX century³, the bagpipe has always been associated to Galicianess and Galician identity occupying the place of the "traditional" and the "true" expression of the Galician soul⁴. However important their role may have been, in reality bagpipes were not the main mark of Galician identity, since Galician language took on that role. But the mid 1990's, after a steady growth through the seventies and eighties, saw the bagpipe emerge to the forefront of Galician music, and in doing so, it became the battlefield

in cultural struggles to define issues concerning tradition and identity. Several facts have to be taken into account in order to understand this new prominence.

Firstly, despite the fact that Galician folk music epitomized by bagpipes emerged in the seventies and by the eighties the band Milladoiro⁵ had already gained international recognition, it was actually in the mid nineties that Galician folk music was perceived to be successful in the Spanish and international arena: the bagpiper Carlos Núñez obtained a gold record in 1996 with “A irmandade das estrelas” [The brotherhood of the stars] in which artists such as the Chieftains and Ry Cooder collaborated; the band Luar na Lubre toured with Mike O’field in the presentation of Tubular Bells Three, and The Chieftains obtained a Grammy in 1996 with the record called “Santiago” (after the capital of Galicia) in which not only Carlos Núñez collaborated but also all the material is based on Galician music.

Secondly, in the field of folklore music, a new type of bagpipe band emerged parallel to the “traditional” bagpiper bands, which incorporated new styles of dress and bagpipe design, new musical arrangements, and a marching military style in opposition to the festival in the “traditional” formations. The emergence of this new formation would soon provoke a split in the Asociación of Gaiteros, between "puristas", defenders of the tradition, and "innovadores". This split entered the public arena provoking a lively debate known as "the war of the bagpipes" in which issues of tradition and authenticity were at stake . The new bands were criticized for being a mere copy of Scottish bagpipers; the fact that they were supported by public funding and occupied the space of institutionalized music was also controversial.⁶

Thirdly, the president of the Xunta for the conservative party, Partido Popular, Manuel Fraga Iribarne has helped the process of bringing the bagpipe to the centre of the cultural debate celebrating his elections victories of 1993 and 1997 with gatherings of thousands of bagpipers and an event that started to be known as the “gaiterada”.⁷

In the first part of this article I will try to explore the role that bagpipes play on the Galician imagination and how they became to be part of our idea of identity. My aim is to trace the emergence of the bagpipes from a context of celebrations in rural communities to a new context of mass market and popular music. The theoretical approach for this part is borrowed from seminal work in the field of cultural studies which challenges notions of tradition and identity as stable and clear concepts as seen in the work of Hobsbawn, Ranger and Stuart Hall. In the second part of the article I will explore how some musicians have used bagpipes in order to challenge our notion of a stable and static identity and home. In a community such as the Galicians which has a very important experience of Diaspora caused by massive emigration, bagpipes are closely associated to the idea of land, place and home. For the second part I will look into concepts of postmodernism and performance in order to understand those practices.

The role of the bagpipe within the realm of the identity is linked to the perception of it being a traditional instrument. Tradition is usually presented in an unproblematic manner as what is preserved through the times up until the present. This conception has been problematised and shown to be a more complex process by Hobsbawn and Ranger. In their book *The invention of Tradition*⁸ they explore the modernity of the kilt in Scottish tradition, and suggest that far from being a old tradition it was an

invention of the XIX century. Similar case can be found in the invention of sardana in Catalonia as the national dance.⁹ The case of the bagpipe in the Galician context is not exactly the same case; bagpipes were played and well spread in Galicia. What the bagpipes shares with the aforementioned cases is not its invention but the process of ritualisation and conferring meaning to the practice. Stuart Hall outlines in general terms the problems that the term tradition presents:

“Tradition is a vital element in culture; but it has little to do with the mere persistence of old forms. It has much more to do with the way elements have been linked together or articulated. These arrangements in a national-popular culture have no fixed or inscribed position, and certainly no meaning which is carried along, so to speak, in the stream of historical tradition, unchanged.”¹⁰

It is this set of processes of linking, articulating and conferring meaning to the practices of playing bagpipes what allows us to see the bagpipe as traditional. The development of bagpipes has been subject to a double movement, on the one hand players have been innovating and changing to keep apace with new musical trends and popular tastes, and on the other hand, defenders of the tradition have been trying to keep the practice unchanged as proof of the persistence of the Galician culture and soul.

Galician bagpipe music has been through a process of change since the XIX century until now. Some of the developments have to do with changes in musical techniques, changes of dress, repertoire, and other changes have to do with the position that bagpipe and bagpipers occupy in Galician culture. In this article I am mainly concerned with the shifts in the position that this type of music has experienced. To

identify those shifts I will be using the signs of "place" and "occasion" as suggested by Raymond Williams to identify art as a social form.¹¹ It is important to note that when I identify some shifts that allow to show a change in the way bagpipes are played and perceived, does not mean that previous practices disappear. In fact all the different practices that I will be outlining have been living concurrently up until now.

The first records that we have about bagpipes suggest that it was played by a solo "gaitero" in "festas" and "feiras", country markets, etc...¹² They suggest old forms of social organization and entertainment, in which music is incorporated as part of communal activities, events and celebrations. The gaitero was a known member of a small community in the same sense as the "matarife", the "curandeiro" and the "cacique" were. Following Williams's marks of space and occasion, bagpipes were played in communal spaces like the market square, the church "porche" marking local occasions like family festivities and peasant's activities. The bagpiper mingled with the public, without a stage as part of the same activity or celebration.

It was in the XIX century, the period known as Rexurdimento galego, that the bagpipe began to gain some attention as a Galician instrument. The struggle for the legitimization of the Galician language, the definition of Galicia as a Celtic country and the defense of rural culture, seen as the base of the Galician soul, were the main traits of this discourse aiming to create a Galician identity.¹³ Urban and industrial culture were threatening and rapidly changing old ways and customs. The bagpipe was incorporated into this discourse as authentic part of the rural culture under threat and as resistant to those changes. It is therefore not surprising that the book usually regarded as the first of the Rexurdimento galego published in the 1853 was entitled

"A gaita gallega".¹⁴ Important figures of the Rexurdimento like Rosalía de Castro¹⁵, Lamas Carvajal¹⁶ and Curros Enríquez¹⁷ were to follow suit and publish poems about bagpipers establishing the link between them and Galician soul and home.

The bagpipe, as an instrument made of wood and textiles, and the bagpiper as a member of the rural community participating in communal activities could represent perfectly the realm of the rural, nature and landscape, the places where Galician identity was to be found. This association between bagpipe and nature and landscape still runs deep in the Galician imagination and evokes powerful resonances nowadays as we can see in the words of Carlos Núñez: "El árbol sigue vivo en la gaita [The tree remain alive in the bagpipe]".¹⁸

However if the bagpipe was to play a part in the creation of Galician identity it had to be promoted, legitimized and preserved. Several competitions were launched at the end of the XIX in which organizers saw it necessary to remind competitors to stick closely with tradition in matters of clothing and bagpipe designs.¹⁹ Regionalist writers criticised changes and innovations introduced by some bagpipers, and encouraged the perpetuation and repetition of what was seen as marks of the traditional bagpipe and bagpiper.²⁰

The value attached to bagpipes by regionalist writers and the competitions both helped to see the bagpipes in a new light. They were not any longer an instrument only played in local and religious festivals. Now it was also a valuable activity that had to be kept on its "authentic" form in order to represent the Galician soul.

In spite of attempts to keep the practice unchanged bagpipers continued their process of transformation. The bagpiper as the solo musician or accompanied by one drum which were predominant in the XIX century would open the way to formations with two bagpipes and two drums by the end of the century. The quartet formed by two bagpipes and two drums became the most spread formation and regarded as the traditional. At the beginning of the century new formations appeared which introduced new instruments such as the clarinet, accordion and violin. These new formations also enlarged the repertoire to include new rhythms and songs.²¹ At the same time the old way of playing the bagpipe known as "dixitación pechada"²² was disappearing. Individual bagpipers continued their own process of transformation with regards of dress, bagpipe design and repertoire.²³

Nationalism in the 1920's was still embracing bagpipes as the true expression of Galician identity as we can see in the following words by one of the most important Galician intellectuals of the time:

... O fondo mesmo de todol-os pensamentos e de todol-os sentimentos da y-alma galega. E como a nota grave, sostida, monótona do ronco, sobre da que se deseñan logo os sinxelos arabescos da gaita....[The depths of all the Galician soul's thoughts and feelings. It is like the continuous grave note of the "ronco (a part of the Galician bagpipes)", over which the simple bagpipe's arabesques are designed]"²⁴.

In this period in which nationalist discourse sought to emphasise the separation between Castilian and Galician, the Galician bagpipe was situated in opposition to the Castilian guitar. Castelao, in one of his drawings wrote the caption "para a tocar a gaita fan falla máis folgos que para tocala guitarra [to play the bagpipe requires

more breath than to play the guitar]".²⁵ In 1924 Avelino Cachafeiro was chosen as the best Galician bagpiper by Galician intellectuals and Castelao refers to him as "prototipo da rexeneración gaitística".²⁶ The Galician intellectual Jaime Quintanilla in his article "O nazionalismo musical galego" equals the notes of the "zanfona" and bagpipe to those of the Galician soul²⁷ and encouraged new musicians in the creation of a Galician high music based on traditional and religious music according to the same ideas that can be found in the Spanish "regeneracionismo".²⁸ Bagpipe bands started to perform in acts linked to nationalist activities marking a clear shift in the mark of "occasion" appearing now in political events with the aim of promoting Galician culture and identity.

The franquist period (1939-1975) had an impact on bagpipe bands as they were used and promoted as "folklore", an unthreatening Galician cultural manifestation, proof of this is the fact that the "Sección Femenina" introduced this activity. While Galician language and literature were seen as suspicious and were persecuted and censored, bagpipes were included in the official franquist culture as a means to incorporate an ambiguous and undefined Galician identity which posed no threat to Spanish hegemony. It is in this period that the colours of the Spanish flag (red and yellow) were introduced into bagpipe design.²⁹ Bagpipes were incorporated into institutional activities and some institutions had their own bagpipe bands.³⁰

Community associations and schools as well as Institutions had often their own bagpipe band or Escola de Gaitas, where they taught bagpipe. In the emigrant communities abroad bagpipe bands were very popular and helped to keep a sense of belonging and home. These new uses of social integration and participation derived in increasingly bigger bagpipe bands, usually accompanied by dancing troupes. By

the end of francoism the most visible gathering of bagpipe bands was in the annual competition in Santiago supported by the Caixa de Aforros de Galicia called "Encontros de Folklore" which would bring together participants from emigrant centres abroad, local community groups and officially supported bands.

An important shift occurred in the seventies and which developed in the eighties with the emergence of Galician folk³¹. A new type of musical formation appeared, playing bagpipes and other traditional instruments, they started to participate in musical events opposing francoism. It was a shift that took time to develop as there was a clear resistance even from nationalists as bagpipes were seen as backwards folklore:

"... estabamos nun canto perigoso, eramos xente que tamén loitaba polas libertades, comprometida politicamente pero que por outro lado ao mellor iamos vestidos de traxe de gaiteiro que sonaba folclórico no peor sentido da palabra e moitos progresistas non acababan de asumir o noso papel [we were in dangerous ground, we were people who also fought for freedom, politically committed, but who also were wearing bagpiper dress what was seen as folkloric in the worst sense of the word, and many liberals were not able to understand our role]".³²

The shift consisted of incorporating bagpipe music as an effective mark of resistance against francoism and defending Galician identity. It also introduced the bagpipe into a new set of practices which was to develop into a new trend: folk-Celtic music³³. Recompilation of the people's music was practiced by many of those groups adding the values of tradition and antiquity to the music they played. This new folk trend would soon start to incorporate Celtic influences from what were regarded as

brother Celtic countries.³⁴ This musical movement which combined people's music and Celtic roots is best exemplified by the group Milladoiro and the Festival Internacional Celta de Ortigueira³⁵. There are changes in the marks of place and occasion as outlined by Raymond Williams. Folk music was performed either in political or folk gatherings and not at communal activities. When they performed as part of local celebrations, they did so on stage. This shift allowed the bagpipe to enter the postfrancoism period as an effective and positive instrument while still representing the identity. To absorb Celtic musical influences was not seen as alien but as an incorporation of influences from a common legacy to which Galicia belonged by right.

So far I have been identifying the main musical movements and developments in the practices associated with bagpipes. However these do not explain the whole picture. The truth is that even at the height of the folk-Celtic trend of the eighties, bagpipes as a positive symbol was still contentious and it was common to talk about bagpipes in a derogative manner and as a methapor for inward looking: Galician TV was known as telegaita, and a scandal of Galician lottery was known as lotogaita. As for the musical trends, the folk movement was not hegemonic in Galician music, it had to compete with other trends, mainly pop-rock, for the favour of the public. Rockis and folkis (as they were known) played alongside in festivals competing for the same space and public.

A change in the perception of the bagpipe had developed in the nineties prompted mainly by the factors I mentioned at the beginning. However there also other factors that show the changing and important role of the bagpipe: in the last couple of years women bagpipers like Mercedes Peón, Susana Seivane and Cristina Pato started to

gain recognition performing in a field that has always male dominated; the band Milladoiro as mentioned in the note 5 had increasingly entered in the space of Institutionalised and high music, composing for orchestra, performing in events and places reserved for high music like the Auditorio de Galicia that, coming back to the marks of “place” and “occasion” marks a clear shift from the humble origins of the country market bagpipe within Galician culture. The bagpipe, through the work of Milladoiro in the latest development of their career, entered spaces reserved for high music and to mark institutional occasions linked to high culture, inaugurating Museums and macro exhibitions.

This change of perception goes hand in hand with the reorganization of the musical landscape. In the field of popular entertainment (mass culture) Galician folk and the bagpipe have benefited from the interest in ethnic and World music and a new and very lively wave of bands which use traditional music occupy central stage in Galician popular music. However, while there is an almost universal agreement on the fact that globalization and interest in World music had a positive impact on Galician music, included in the broad label “panceltismo”, there is also a certain controversy that this phenomenon could make Galician music not only too dependent on fashion and commercialism³⁶ but also that the signs of identity could become loose when producing music for a global market. The last record by Carlos Núñez “Os amores libres”³⁷ helped to stirred the waters as he mixed Galician music with flamenco music. Anton Seoane, member of Milladoiro, has been the most outspoken critic of globalization and “mestizaxe”.³⁸

The rivalry that existed in the eighties between rockis and folkis seems to have diluted. It is not only that folk music is at the forefront of Galician music but that

there are some signs of diversification, with separated venues and means of production and distribution for each music.³⁹ It is worthy to note that a new trend emerged in the nineties called rock bravú⁴⁰. At first it was perceived as a cross between rock and folk however it later proved to be a more complex trend. Rock bravú in fact became a territory of crossings between rock and folk, literature and music, politics and culture⁴¹, and has enlarged the idea of traditional music, incorporating popular music played by “orquestas” in "verbenas" never seen before as part of Galician traditional music.

It is in the field of “folklore” where the “guerra das gaitas” emerged. A new type of band, sponsored by the Diputación de Ourense, was criticized for not being Galician but a copy of Scottish bands. While the Celtic influences introduced in folk music were seen to be assimilated and part of the same legacy, in the field of bagpiper bands, this new band was criticized from the beginning as “alien” to the Galician tradition. The criticisms point to the new type of dress, kilts, drums, bagpipe designs, musical arrangements and most important of all to the spirit of the band which was seen as military. In fact the critics referred to the new bagpipe as “gaita marcial[military bagpipe]”. The director of the Real Banda de Ourense was expelled from the Asociación de Gaiteiros de Galicia and traditional bagpipers staged public protests in events in which the new bands were performing.

The importance of the bagpipe as a symbol of the tradition can be seen in the following words by the Asociación de Gaiteiros de Galicia:

"Isto non é só unha liorta de gaiteiros: é algo que atinxe ó conxunto da sociedade, a aqueles que cren que Galicia ten que estar no mundo con voz propia [This is not only

a struggle among bagpipers: it is something that concerns society as a whole, and those who believe that Galicia has to be in the world with its own voice]." ⁴²

This combination of facts has changed dramatically the way bagpipes are perceived. They do not represent only a link with the past and the true nature of the Galician soul, but are seen as forward looking and able to represent a changing and developing future Galicia.

We have seen that the tradition of playing bagpipe is not a mere persistence of old ways but a complex process which implies a double movement. On the one hand there is the endeavor to ritualize and repeat a set of practices and marks that allow the bagpipe to be seen as traditional; intellectuals have to attach meaning to the bagpipe aiming to inscribe a link to the past and the Galician identity. On the other hand there is a continuous movement of change that allows the bagpipe to be relevant to new audiences. There is a clear difference between a song played in a communal activity by a bagpiper and a song that is now performed in a enormous stage by professional musicians, with modern arrangements and combining new instruments for a big audience who spend their free time listening to music and in the knowledge that that music has the added value of past and tradition. Whatever the differences between these two practices there is still a set of marks that have been articulated to show them as part of the same line, that they are part of the same tradition.

All those developments have consolidated the bagpipe as a symbol of Galician identity, but in doing so the bagpipe has also become the place to challenge and subvert identity. In this second part of the article I will focus on two songs: "Miña

terra galega”⁴³ by Siniestro Total and “Sitio distinto”⁴⁴ by Os Resentidos in which bagpipes are used to challenge stock notions of identity. They both belong to a trend that emerged in the eighties with influences ranging from punk and rock to hip hop and rap, which signified in some ways a fracture with tradition, so they used bagpipes in some sense from outside the tradition. They were the main protagonists of what was known as “movida viguesa” or “movida galega” which took over from the “movida madrileña” at the beginning of the eighties and lasted until 1986 when the Universidad Menéndez Pelayo dedicated a summer exhibition to it.

Siniestro Total [a possible translation would be “beyond repair”] appeared in 1981 as a punk band. They denied the artist as creator and performed publicly the act of copying and plagiarism. Most of their hits were undisguised seminal R&B songs that they remade with different lyrics. They also denied the narrative of rock&roll as "working class kid rebels and get rich and famous" engaging in a mischievous role playing, performing in some periods as almost a "sex pistols" tribute band, changing nihilism, self-destruction and revolution in the sex pistols for irony and controversy and a cynical attitude. Their first hits are full of songs banned by comercial radio stations and they stirred criticism from feminists with songs like “las tetas de mi novia tienen cáncer de mama”⁴⁵, hippies with “matar jipis en las Cies”⁴⁶, gays with “Más vale ser punkie que maricón de playa”⁴⁷; they also satirized Galician folk with the song “Fa, fa, fa, fa”⁴⁸. The punk period ended when a member of the band got badly hurt with a bottle thrown from the public in one of their gigs, prompting the band to use motor-bike helmets and covering the front of the stage with a net. Since then they somehow smoothed out their performances with more elaborated songs. By that time, mid eighties, they were one of the most successful bands in the Galician and Spanish arena obtaining their first “disco de oro” in 1990, and one of

the few bands to have successfully survived from the “movida” of the eighties. Their last record “Cultura popular” published in 1998 is a compilation of Spanish popular songs hits.

They rarely used Galician in their lyrics although many of their songs not only have Galician cultural references but deal directly with Galician subjects. Their use of bagpipes is almost anecdotal but very interesting. They used the bagpipe image very effectively on the cover of the maxi single “Me pica un guevo”, in which a gaiteiro smashes his bagpipe recalling the cover of The Clash's "London calling" in which a member of the Clash smashes his guitar⁴⁹. In the song "Miña terra galega" (1984) they make constant references to the music played with bagpipes and traditional music. The following words by Alberto Casal are very illustrative of the place of ST in the Galician/Spanish scene:

"Sempre vin en Siniestro Total unha sorte de grupo/aduana. Unha ben engraxada bisagra-rock entre o galego e o foráneo...Abandeiraban a trincheira da barbaridade atlántica no Foro, caótica e críptica galeguidade en pé de guerra: na viaxe a conquista de España. Pero ó mesmo tempo aquí había quen consumía os seus contrasinais como se os cociñase á galega un grupo madrileño [I always saw in Siniestro Total a kind of group/frontier. A well lubricated rock/hinge between the Galician and the outside. Waving the flag Atlantic barbarians' trench (Galicians) in the Forum (Madrid), chaotic and cryptic Galicianess in arms: in the conquest of Spain. But at the same time here (in Galicia) some people consumed their passwords/slogans as if they were cooked Galician style by a madrilean group]".⁵⁰

“Miña terra galega” follows the pattern of many successful Siniestro Total hits. It is a remake of the blues song "Sweet home Alabama" by Lynrd Skynrd into which they introduced a new lyric. The lyrics are in Castilian and the chorus in Galician. In the first part of the song most of the stereotypes of Galicians are present; homesickness (morriña), a waiter far from home, grey sky, an emigrant listening to the muiñeira (bagpipe music) and crying. At the same time there is an interplay with the Galician anthem, "morriña" is called "el dolor de Breogán" (in the Galician anthem Galicia is referred as Breogán's home and nation, Breogán being a mythical Celtic king who is supposed to have been in Galicia); "Donde se quejan los pinos" refers to the book written by Pondal⁵¹ in which appears the poem used in the Galician anthem .

One of the most striking features of this song is that it strikes almost every chord of Galicians while producing ambiguity and an unsettled feeling. In other words we know that the song talks about us and our home, but we do not know how to relate to it. We do not know if we are supposed to feel sentimental, patriotic or proud, or are we to just being humored while they mock us.

In the second part of the song there is a list of the things missed by the emigrant. The list is divided into two sets of opposite elements: "zanfonas de Ortigueira". The “zanfonas” or hurdy-gurdy is another instrument like the bagpipe widely used in traditional and Celtic music, and Ortigueira refers to the Festival Celta de Ortigueira that I mentioned before. In opposition to “zanfonas de Ortigueira” we find "Los kafkianos del Jaján" which it appears to be a reference to the Kafka followers that gathered at a mountain outside Vigo called Xaxan (and it doesn't seem to make too much sense), impossible to encapsulate within the constraints of Galician identity and therefore in opposition to the “zanfonas de Ortigueira”. The next pair of

opposites is La Liga Armada Galega and El pazo de Meirás. The former is a reference to an armed Galician nationalist organization in the seventies and the latter a symbol of francoism in Galicia, as the manor house that once belonged to Emilia Pardo Bazán was given to Franco for his summer holidays by the Governor of Coruña.

Bagpipes are not played in this song. The "gaita" is absent as a performer although it is present by references in the lyrics: the muiñeira (bagpipe music), and the bagpipes are also present by association with other traditional music and instruments such as "zanfona" and "alalás"⁵². In this song bagpipes and traditional music together with tradition, nature and nationalism are juxtaposed with the other Galicia, that of kafkianos del Jaján and francoism to show a contradictory home, a home divided between two separate set of identity marks.

“Galicia Sitio Distinto 2 parte”, by Os Resentidos is the second song I will look at. The image of Os Resentidos is closely linked to its lead singer Antón Reixa, the most versatile Galician artist of the last two decades; a writer, video-artist, singer and mass-media persona. The first period of Os Resentidos was a development of Reixa's poetry and his poetry group "Rompente". Soon their early performances solidified into the first records of Os Resentidos. In this first period Os Resentidos cannot be described as a rock-band and should be seen as closer to experimental and atvanguard groups such as The Residents and the Art of Noise. In the second period they developed new styles and influences such as southamerican rhythms, hip hop and rap and their repertoire became a cross mix of cultures, styles and instruments and rapidly became a successful band in popular entertainment.

Os Resentidos' work has all the features on any cliché definition of postmodernism: decentering of the subject, blurring of the borders between the high and the popular, pastiche, etc...⁵³ An analysis of his work transcends by far the remit of this paper and my only hope is to draw some clues and explain key concepts that run deep in Reixa's and Os Resentidos' work and that can help us to understand the role that bagpipes and digital music play in their work.

In their mixture of styles and instruments, bagpipes and digital music are always present. Digital music performed through software and machines are mixed with bagpipes as a traditional instrument associated to nature. While the "gaita" produces the idea of a link with the roots of the people, a gateway to the past and to old Galician culture, digital music is rootless, belonging to science and technology. It does not provide a sense of belonging, a link to the past, or an identity. Bagpipes and digital music and their associated terms shape two different spheres of meaning, that can be summarized by the terms "tradition" and "progress" respectively. They have always been perceived in the Galician context as opposites, exclusive to each other.

Digital music with its capability to manipulate and transform analogical sounds into binary bits, allows for the manipulation and "quotation of sounds". As Simon Frith points out digital music "has speeded up the process in which composition means quotation" thereby bringing the emphasis to the "performance of the quotation"⁵⁴ So Os Resentidos by their constant use of digital music, mixing and manipulating sounds and songs bring the process of making music to the fore and engages us in an activity of decoding their songs. Bagpipes are part of this process in which sounds became self-referential signs and themselves are part of this constant quotation.

Os Resentidos' discourse is a contradiscourse on identity. Reixa defines "un galego" as follows:

"Un galego é un refuxiado en terra de ninguén cunha estrela de David nos collóns e no centro da estrela as siglas da Organización para a Liberación de Palestina [A Galician is a refugee in noman's land with a Jewish star in the bollocks and in the centre of the star is written PLO]".⁵⁵

It will not be easy to find a quotation to better describe the sense of deterritorialisation. Galicians in Reixa's quotation do not only lack home but also got their symbols so mixed up that there is not even hope that they have or will find home through political mobilization.

It is difficult to establish limits for "Glacia: Sitio Distante 2 parte" as a piece. It was included in the record "Fracaso tropical" edited in 1988, but the song is also part of a group of songs which were performed in a TV program of thirteen episodes broadcasted in 1990 and were published, with the exception of "Galicia: sitio distinto 2 parte", in the record "Delikatessen" (Musical tradicional da República de sitio distinto) in 1991; Galicia: Sitio distinto 1 was published on its own as a promotional record and video clip.

Sitio distinto⁵⁶ is an imaginary nation: "Galicia é unha colonia e Sitio distinto é a súa colonia subconsciente [Galicia is an empire and Sitio Distinto is its subconscious colony]"⁵⁷. Sitio Distinto issued their own passports in the TV programme, had its own symbols, a cow patterned with camouflage, its own food "churrasco"(a typical

Argentina way of barbecuing meat brought to Galicia by emigrants and widely eaten in Galicia).

The chorus "tacón, tacón, tacón, punta tacón" refers to the steps learnt in order to dance the Muiñeira, and "eu quero bailar nos autos de choque" is developed in the introduction to the record: "O ruído dos coches de choque da verbena e da miña banda de ritmo maltreito bloqueáame o pensamento e xa non penso máis e fumo e bebo e bebo aínda máis..[The noise of the festival's dodgems and of my band in a poor state block me and stop thinking and smoke and drink and drink even more". The dancing of the muiñeira, (in the video clip there are some dancers with the traditional costumes) is performed against a background of the noise produced by the "autos de choque".

In the last part of the songs we find two series "A Coruña, Lugo, Ourense e Pontevedra" and "Namibia, Palestina, Nicaragua e Guatemala", and after that "Castelao, Nelson Mandela and Alvaro Pino que comprou unha vespino". It is very common in Reixa's songs to list together Galicia with countries with ethnic, territorial or social class conflicts such as Namibia, Palestine, Nicaragua.⁵⁸ Galicia is situated in this context of international conflicts breaking the perceptions of separations between the "third world" and Europe. Nelson Mandela being a world respected leader, and Castelao, a Galician political icon, are put together with a popular Galician cyclist.

In "Sitio Distinto" Reixa creates a place in which geographical borders are blurred and Galicia is situated in relation to societies in conflict in which pieces from different levels of discourse are put together; tradition, mass-media, politics, etc.

Different sounds and instruments are put together to create something new, but following on Simon Frith's writing about rap: "...is best understood not as producing new texts, but new ways of performing texts, new ways of performing the making of meaning". Reixa displays his quoting and mixing and therefore attracting the attention not only to the new Galicia, but to the process of constructing this new Galicia.

Galicia in Reixa's *Sitio Distinto* is not a place we can go in order to be reassured of our identity, it is a place in change and transformation. "Arde galicia con lume forestal/.../ arde galicia pero non queima" refers to the continuous burning of woodland in the summers which destroy "landscape and land". Precisely the landscape and land, identified with bagpipes and which serves in the nationalist discourse as the reserve for Galician identity. Reixa compares Galicia with a child, ill, possessed by the evil "galicia ten o demo e ten o tangaraño/.../ un neno sen roupa que vai de man en man/as vellas que o menean matarán o bicho tangaraño".⁵⁹ This image is quite close to the image used by one of the Galician most famous writers, Manuel Rivas, in his book *Galicia: el bonsai atlántico*, in which he compares Galicia with a bonsai.

To conclude we could say that bagpipes are a very powerful image and symbol in Galician culture. They have been used in a variety of ways, be that to reassert an idea of identity based on nature and traditional culture or to challenge this perception and create new ways of perceiving Galician identity. In the first part of this article I tried to show a tradition in the making. I tried to show how tradition is made by repeating and keeping some marks that could identify what are in fact very different practices.

In the second part of the article I have tried to show that the bagpipe as a symbol identified with Galicianess became a battlefield for cultural struggles.

The identification of the bagpipe with the soul of the nation and home as portrayed in the identity discourse, is challenged in the two songs I have looked at. In Siniestro Total's "Miña terra galega" the emigrant misses his home but he is facing a divided idea of home, a contradictory home, and the bagpipe works as a symbol of one of the possible homes: the home of the traditional culture, nature, nationalism. The image of a gaitero smashing his gaita challenges the boundaries of what Galician is; an ambiguous border on which Siniestro Total has always been situated; the place of being Galician but not being part of Galician culture. Their cover is a statement on Galician culture but their songs fail to pass the test used to define Galician music and literature, that is, the use of the Galician language.

The idea of home in "Galicia Sitio Distinto" is evolving and changing. In other words we are witnessing as well as being involved in the process of constructing home. "Gaitas" are part of this changing and evolving home and are widely used as an instrument, and therefore in this sense they are something more than a symbol by having a completely productive role. Bagpipes are mixed with digital music in a complex web, in which there is no opposition but a network of relations working together. In Galicia Sitio Distinto there is no a defined home, but a place in which home is constructed in which bagpipes and digital music combine against a background of the noise produced by the "autos de choque". Meaning, culture and identity are not fixed but changing and evolving. Tradition as represented by the bagpipe is not a safe and secure place because it is modified, photocopied (in the video there is very interesting image of some traditional figures being photocopied to

became something else), influenced, stretched, combined with other rhythms and where the limits between home and the outside are no longer clear. The image of the dodgems widely used in the video of Galicia Sitio Distinto is very illustrative of the attempts by Os Resentidos to make some sense of the identity.

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- ¹ Manuel María, Introduction to *Os segredos da gaita*, Xosé Lois Foxo, (Coruña: La Voz de Galicia, 1982), pag.6
- ² See Cores Trasmonte, Baldomero, *Los símbolos gallegos*, (Santiago: Velograf, 1986). The first steps towards the institutionalization of the symbols began in 1978 and a law was finally passed in 1984. It is important to notice that the conservative popular (Partido Popular) has been ruling the Xunta de Galicia throughout this process.
- ³ The XIX century saw the emergence of a variety of literature dealing with Galician history, language and literature. This period is known in literary studies as Rexurdimento literario and in politics as regionalism.
- ⁴ “The bagpipe is the harmonic expression of Galicia...it is its character, its symbol, its historical synthesis”, Vicetto, B. *Historia de Galicia*, vol I, (Ferrol:Taxonera, 1865), p.99, cited in Martí, J. “A tradición vista a través do folclorismo”, *Galicia fai dous mil anos*, vol.2, ed. Milladoiro, (Santiago: Museo do pobo galego, 1998), pag.339
- ⁵ The band Milladoiro is a key referent in the Galician folk. A collaboration between the musicians Anton Seoane and Rodrigo Romani with a traditional bagpipers formation (two bagpipes and two drummers) in the mid seventies will solidify the band Milladoiro, publishing their first record in 1979 (*A Galicia de Maeloc*). In this record they already include instruments from the regarded Celtic tradition (ocarina, violin, harp...). In a series of successful records they epitomised the new trend celtic-folk being signed by the CBS in 1982. In 1986 they obtained the Goya prize for the soundtrack for the film “*La mitad del cielo*”. In 1990 they initiated a series of institutional collaborations making the music for a Macro exhibition “*Galicia no tempo*” and for the exhibition Maruxa Mallo which inaugurated the Centro de Arte contemporáneo de Santiago. In 1994 they created Iacobus Magnus, their first orchestral collaboration, with the English Chamber Orchestra.
- ⁶ “El desenlace se desconoce porque esto es una guerra...la guerra de las gaitas, que enfrenta a dos bandos de músicos: los gaiteros gallegos tradicionales, ... y la facción orensano-escocesa, patrocinada por la Diputación de Ourense, con ramificaciones en la Televisión de Galicia, y en fase de expansión por toda Galicia”. Alfonso de la Torre Nuñez, J. R., “*La guerra de las gaitas*”, *La Voz de Galicia*, Cultura-31, sept, 1995, pag. 2-4.
- ⁷ The numbers of bagpipers participating in those gatherings vary depending of the newspapers, following *La Voz de Galicia*, in 1982, 2.000 bagpipers attended to the Obradoiro square, and in 1989, despite of announcing that 5.000 would attend, the day after the gathering the number was reduced to 2.000. *La Voz de Galicia*, 10-12-97
- ⁸ Hobsbawm, E. and Ranger, T., *The invention of tradition*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983)
- ⁹ Joan-Lluís Marfany, Joan-Lluís, *La culture del catalanisme*, (Barcelona: Empuries, 1996), pag.322-347
- ¹⁰ Hall, Stuart, ‘Notes on Deconstructing the popular’, *Cultural Theory and popular culture, a reader*, ed. John Storey, (Hertfordshire: Prentice Hall, 1998), pag. 450
- ¹¹ Williams, Raymond, *Culture*, (London: Fontana, 1981), pag.131
- ¹² The first records refer to a gaitero as witness in a legal document in 1374. Some documents in the XVI refer to a contract between a bagpiper and a gremial institution to play in the day of a festivity. Torres Regueiro, Xesús, “*O gaitero na sociedade galega tradicional*”, *No país das gaitas*, *Cadernos A Nosa Terra*, 20, (Vigo: A Nosa Terra, 1995), pag.4-6
- ¹³ What is known in Galician literature as Rexurdimento literario comprises the end of the XIX century with the publication of the three most celebrated books *Cantares gallegos* (1863) by Rosalía de Castro, *Rumores d’os pinos* (1879) by Eduardo Pondal and *Aires da miña terra* (1880) by Curros Enríquez.
- ¹⁴ This statement taken from Carballo Calero’s *Historia da literatura galega contemporánea*, which serves as the basis for modern histories of literature is contentious. Carballo Calero ignored literature published since the beginning of the century which he regarded as a politically orientated and not aesthetically based.
- ¹⁵ Rosalía de Castro is regarded as the foundational writer of Galician literature. She published *Cantares Gallegos* in 1863, (the date of the publication of this book, 17 of May, is used to celebrate the day of the Galician literature), in this book a poem titled *A gaita gallega* is included. The poem answers a previous poem by Ruiz de Aguilera in which he wonders if the Galician bagpipe sing or cry, Rosalía on her poem answers the question, the Galician bagpipe cries.
- ¹⁶ Lamas Carvajal, Valentín. He was the director of one of the first newspapers written in Galician language, some satiristic texts criticising bagpipers departing from tradition are thought to be written by him and certainly were published in his newspaper. He also wrote the poem *O anxiño* in *Saudades galegas*, in which a bagpiper plays in a child’s funeral.
- ¹⁷ He was awarded the prize “*Certame literario de Ourense*” in 1877 for his poems “*Unha boda en Einibó*” and “*O gaitero*”. Bagpipes feature in both poems and they would be published in his book *Aires da miña terra* in 1880.
- ¹⁸ ‘Carlos Nuñez, un gaitero en Manhattan’, Rivas, Manuel, *El país*, n 1076, 11-5-97, pag.58
- ¹⁹ Xesús Torres Regueiro points out that in the competitions of Ourense in 1887 and Betanzos in 1906 there are explicit guidelines for the competitors in order that traditional clothing and bagpipes designs are used. “*Rilo, o clasicismo na gaita*”, in *No país das gaitas*, *Cadernos a Nosa terra*, 20, (Vigo: A Nosa Terra, 1995), pag.12
- ²⁰ Torres Queiruga, Xesús mentions criticisms from Lamas Carvajal in 1888, the magazine *A Monteira* 1889 and Camilo de Cela in 1897, towards bagpipers that do not follow the tradition. “*Rilo, o clasicismo na gaita*”, *No país das gaitas*...pag.12
- ²¹ Luengo, Francisco, “*Os instrumentos tradicionais na música galega*”, *O feito diferencial na música*...pag.171-176
- ²² Juanjo Fernández defines the “*dixitación pechada*” as alternating the fingers which go up and down simultaneously and that allows for complementary notes to be heard. “*A dixitación pechada, patrimonio da humanidade*”, *No país das gaitas*, ...pag.23
- ²³ The bagpiper of Ventosela was criticised by Lamas Carvajal for substituting the traditional hat (monteira) by a new hat with golden adornments, using bagpipes with keys like the ones used saxofons and playing new rhythms such as vals and mazurcas.
- ²⁴ Risco, Vicente, “*O sentimento da terra na raza galega*”, *Ourense*, Nós, n1, 1920, pag.4

²⁵ Castelao was one of the most important politicians and artists of the period known as nationalist (1920-1936). He was MP for the Partido Galeguista and president of the Consello de Galicia in exile following the civil war. He was also a cartoonist publishing in newspapers like A Nosa Terra, El pueblo gallego and El sol. In 1920 he published an album of cartoons entitled “Nos” in which the cartoon about the bagpipe is included.

²⁶ Calle, José Luis, “A música tradicional nos nomes propios”, O feito diferencial na música..., pag.101-107

²⁷ Quintanilla, Jaime, ‘O nazionalismo musical galego’, Nos, 1920, n.2. pag.5-7

²⁸ Costa Vázquez-Mariño, Luis, “As bases do nacionalismo musical galego no entorno da música relixiosa”, O feito diferencial na música., pag.251-292. He traces the antecedents of the Galician musical nationalism to the religious music of the XIX, and links Quintanilla’s article and the nationalism thought on music to the spanish “regeneracionismo” of Santiago Tafall and Eladio Oviedo.

²⁹ ‘No país das gaitas’, Introduction, Cadernos A Nosa Terra, 1995

³⁰ The most important band of the time it was Rei de Viana, supported by the Diputación da Coruña.

³¹ Estevez, Xoán Manuel, marks the beginning in 1975 with the creation of the organization Movimento Popular da Canción Galega and with a festival in Santiago in February 1975. “Un novo estilo para a música galega. O nacemento da música para folk”, O feito diferencial..., pag. 202

³² ‘Nando Casal e Xosé Ferreirós’ interviewed by Carme Vidal, in No país das gaitas, pag-25-26

³³ Estévez, Xoán Manuel, points out the record “Fonte do Araño” by Emilio Cao, in which he introduces the harp as the turning point in which the Celtic fashion would start.

³⁴ In the Galician nationalist discourse of the 1920’s Celtic nations can be interchanged by Atlantic or sometimes Nordic nations; basically Atlantic cultures opposed to Mediterranean cultures. Ireland, French Brittany, Scotland Cornwall are part of this group of countries Irish folk music is the main influence in Galician folk.

³⁵ The Festival Celta de Ortigueira began in the mid seventies up until now. Together with the Lorient in Brittany, a place of reference for Celtic music. Important voices in the Celtic music featured in those festivals, Alan Stivell, the Chieftains, etc...

³⁶ Andrade, Lois R. and Sampedro, Pablo, ‘Panorama do folc en Galicia de Norte a Sur’, Tempos Novos, n 27, 8-99, pag. 19-23

³⁷ Madrid, Ariola, 1999

³⁸ Seoane, Anton, ‘A mitomanía da mestizaxe. A globalización da cultura’, O feito diferencial na música, ..., pag.235-251

³⁹ The practice of featuring together in the same stage folk and pop-rock band has been reduced dramatically as it is admitted they have different publics and musical venues feature one music or the other.

⁴⁰ First emerged at the beginning of nineties as a kind of coalition of bands that performed in the tv series Sitio distinto by Reixa, and had in common that sang in Galician, in a field which was by and large full of bands singing in castilian.

⁴¹ The term rock bravú refers to a broad group of bands of different bands who produce a variety of styles. They have in common that sing in Galician and the aim to create a autochthonous musical movement. The band Os Diplomáticos, and particularly their leader, became the main voice for this group. He recently published a couple of books that tried to gather momentum to a literary movement called “Literatura bravú”. Their defence of the language and their feeling of belonging has made bands of Bravú common performers in nationalist festivals.

⁴² En Galicia, en galego, No país das gaitas, A Nosa Terra, ..., pag.39

⁴³ Included in “Menos mal que nos queda Portugal”, (Madrid: Dro, 1984). A una isla del Caribe/he tenido que emigrar/y trabajar de camarero/lejos de mi hogar/Me invade la morriña/el dolor de Breogán;/cuando suena la muiñeira/el llanto empieza a brotar./Miña terra galega/donde el cielo es siempre gris/Miña terra galega/es duro estar lejos de ti/ Donde se quejan los pinos/y se escuchan alalás/donde la lluvia es arte/y Dios se echó a descansar./ Las zanfoñas de Ortigueira/los kálfianos del Jaján/LA LIGA ARMADA GALEGA/ y el pazo de Meirás/ Miña terra galega/donde el cielo es siempre gris/Miña terra galega/es duro estar lejos de ti.[To a Caribean inland I had to travel/and word as waiter far from home/I am invaded by homesickness/the Breogán’s pain/when the ‘muiñeira sounds/the crying starts to appear/ My Galician land/where the sky is always grey/My Galician land/it’s hard to be far from you/Where the pines complain/and the ‘alalás’ are heard/where the rain is art/and God took a rest/The Ortigueira’s ‘zanfonas’/the Jaján kálfians/LA LIGA ARMADA GALEGA/and the Pardo Bazán’s manor house...]

⁴⁴ Included in “Fracaso Tropical”, (Madrid: Gasa, 1988). Published in “Viva galicia beibe” which collects all the Reixa’s lyrics, (Santiago: Edicións Positivas, 1994), pag.87-88. Arde galicia con lume forestal/e con lume ou sen lume ti tamén podes arder/porque no inferno forestal non se está tan mal/(a)inda que a piromanía non che me dá nada igual/(e) con razón ou sen razón teño que insistir en que/arde galicia pero non queima/tacón tacón punta tacón/arde galicia con lume forestal/(e)tamén arden os teus ollos con pupila de metal/e cando os teus ollos queiman tanto che me ten/e tanto che me ten ven/e tanto che me ten vai/ vai e vén vai e vén e baila do dereito do revés/tacón tacón tacón punta tacón/eu quero bailar nos coches de choque/bailas do dereito bailas do revés/e bailas ponte quieto pero sen move-los pes/porque bailas cos pés quietos que parece-lo siroco/unha volta e outra volta/e despois reviravolta (e) dálle dálle/que eu tamén lle dou (e) dálle dálle/mira como vou/tacón tacón tacón punta tacón/eu quero bailar nos coches de choque/xa estou farto de millo que non quero patacas/que cultiven pellote dende ortegal ó miño/e galicia é un sitio distinto/e nos sitios distintos non se dá a banana/e por iso en galicia non é como en ghana/e a xente non canta galicia banana/galicia banana I like it/tacón tacón tacón punta tacón/eu quero bailar nos autos de choque/galicia ten o demo e ten o tangaraño/ten un bicho dentro que se chama tangaraño/e toma ti e toma o tangaraño e doucho enfermo e ti dásmo sano/unha rolda de vellas debaixo dun carballo/un día de vento matarán o tangaraño/un neno sen roupa que vai de man en ma/as vellas que o menean matarán o bicho tangaraño/eu quero bailar nos coches de choque/e unha vez un jicho en noia díxome con paranoia/que álvaro pino comprou unha vespina uju aja/quedeime sen falar e pra disimular

decidín/cantar unha canción italiana que se chama il mondo il mondo il mondo/mondoñedo noia paranoia il mondo mondoñedo/viño branco viño tinto galicia sitio distinto uju aja/así che nos vai a coruña, lugo, ourense e pontevedra/namibia palestina nicaragua e guatemala uju aja/isto é o que hai castelao nelson mandela e álvaro pino/que comprou unha vespina tacón tacón tacón punta tacón/eu quero bailar nos coches de choque.[Galicia burns with forest fire/and with fire or without fire you can also burn/because in the forest hell is not that bad/although the pyromania doesn't leave unaffected/and with or without reason I had to insist on that Galicia burns but it doesn't scalds/heel heel tip heel/Galicia burns with forest fire/your eyes also burn with metallic pupil/and when your eyes scald it doesn't bother me/it doesn't bother me come/it doesn't bother me go/go and come go and come and dance straight dance the other way round/heel heel tip heel/I want to dance in the fairground dodgems, you dance straight you dance the other way round/and you dances stay still but without moving your feet/because you dances with your feet still and you seem a sirocco/.....I am feed up with corn I don't want potatoes/I want them to cultivate peyote from the Ortegá to the Miño/and Galicia is a different place/and the different place the banana doesn't grow/that is why Galicia is not like Ghana/and the people doesn't sing Galicia banana/Galicia banana I like it/...Galicia has the evil inside and has the evil eye/it has a bug inside called 'tangaraño'/and take it take the tangaraño/a naked child goes from hand to hand/the elderly women who sake him will kill the tangaraño bug/I want to dance in the fairground dodgems/once a bloke in Noia told me somehow paranoic/that Alvaron Pino bought a vespino/I stayed silent and to not change the subject without being noticed/I decided to sing an Italian song called Il mondo il mondo il mondo il mondo Mondoñedo Noia paranoia il mondo Mondoñedo/ white wine red wine Galicia different place/that's what we got Coruña, Lugo, Ourense, Pontevedra/Namibia/Palestine, Nicaragua and Guatemala/That's what we got Castelao Nelson Mandela and Alvaro Pino who bought a vespino. ...

⁴⁵ "Cuando se come aquí", Dro, 1982.

⁴⁶ "Cuando se come aquí", Dro, 1982

⁴⁷ Siniestro Total II (el regreso), Dro, 1983

⁴⁸ "Bailaré sobre tu tumba", Dro, 1985

⁴⁹ It must be noticed that the cover of the Clash is itself a remake of the first record by Elvis Presley

⁵⁰ Casal, Alberto, Rock & grelos, (Santiago: Edicións Lea, 1995), pag.20

⁵¹ Pondal, Eduardo, Pondal, 1880

⁵² A Galician oral song played without instruments, characterised for the refrain "alalá".

⁵³ The fontana post-modern reader, ed. Truett Anderson, Walter, (Fontana Press, 1996), pag. 18-25

⁵⁴ Frith, Simon, Questions of Cultural Identity, ed. Hall, Stuart and du Gay, Paul, (London: Sage, 1996), pag.115

⁵⁵ Reixa, Viva Galicia beibe, (Santiago,:Edicións Positivas), pag.71

⁵⁶ It must be noted that Fraga, the Xunta de Galicia president since 1982, promoted Spain when "Ministro de Información y turismo" in the Franco regime as "España es diferente".

⁵⁷ Reixa, Viva Galicia beibe, Edicións Positivas, pag.119

⁵⁸ The song "Abdul" in the record "Vigo capital Lisboa"(Madrid: Gasa, 1985), lists Galician hamlets and African countries. The song "camarada Sitting bull", included in Fracaso tropical, (Madrid: Gasa, 1988), puts together the tribe of Galicians with american indian tribes.

⁵⁹ When a child a is malformed and weak it is said that he was given the evil eye that means he has the "tangaraño".