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Chapter 7

Conclusion

This study started *in medias res,* in the middle of the story of the unfolding copyright wars. As this project is approaching its conclusion, the struggles over intellectual property give no indication of nearing a conclusion. Although these ongoing debates formed the starting point for my dissertation, I turned away from them for the main part of this study, hoping that pursuing a different line of thinking, set out in a historical chapter and elaborated in three case studies, would enable me to elucidate the issues at stake. Now, it is time to find my way back from particular cases to a larger cultural and political perspective, and to take stock of what has been learned.

In this final chapter, I will first give a brief review of the conceptual apparatus I developed. Subsequently, I discuss four conclusions which emerge from the foregoing case studies taken together. I then make remarks about technology and about the concept of practices, before finally turning my attention towards certain other aspects of Romanticism which still inform pop music culture, if less visibly so than the cult of the artistic creator.

The credit question and two ways of solving it

At the center of this entire study has been what I have called "the credit question." Many people play different roles within the cultural practices of popular music. The credit question is the question of who gets what kind of credit for making what kind of contribution to a practice, where "credit" can be any kind of acknowledgement or reward, ranging from a simple "thank you" or proper attribution of reused musical materials all the way to fame and fortune.

I found that the different positions held within the copyright debates implied different answers to the credit question. The issue was therefore clearly relevant to the debates. However, it was not subject to explicit reflection within these debates. My first objective, therefore, was to bring the credit question to the center of attention. Three positions often taken in the copyright debates proved especially important throughout this study.

Implicit in the rhetoric of the phonographic industry was an answer to the credit question which I dubbed "the commercial theory of appropriate credit." In the view of the phonographic industry, pop music culture produces three types of actors, namely creative artists who create songs, a mediating industry which takes care of all the mundane technicalities, and passive consumers who enjoy the recorded music. The artist, in this view, deserves to be admired for her art and to be financially facilitated so that she can pursue it full-time. The industry deserves a financial reward for the service it provides. The consumers, finally, provide both the money and the admiration necessary for a fair reward for the other players and are in return enabled to enjoy their music of choice. The commercial theory of appropriate credit is closely tied to what I have called "the romantic metaphysics of musical communication", that is, the idea that the artist puts an immaterial good, such as soul, emotion, or inspiration, into a piece of music, and that the enjoyment of this music on the part of the audience consists of extracting this immaterial good.

Implicit in much of the rhetoric of the more recent critics of the music industry is an answer to the credit question which I called "the egalitarian theory of appropriate credit." The critics in question would like to see a pop music culture which is truly participatory; a culture where all music lovers are active partakers rather than passive consumers. They show

a tendency, also, to believe that the main, or indeed the only thing standing in the way of such a democratized music culture before was the unequal distribution of means and skills. Now that the digital age provides means for musical self-expression which are both affordable and easy to use, they expect the age of passive consumers to be over. In their view, all people want to express themselves creatively, and will activate themselves when given half a chance. I named this position "generalized artistry", and the theory of appropriate credit it implies is a very simple one: no credit-giving is necessary, because people's cultural activity and creativity stems from an internal drive or from an intrinsic motivation, a will to self-expression so to say.

Generalized artistry has an important element in common with certain schools of cultural studies, especially with the so-called Birmingham school. The critical theory coming from this institution is likewise informed by a great appreciation for cultural participation. And like the proponents of generalize artistry, these cultural scholars approach the activation of consumers as a matter of taking away obstacles to such activation. Their concept of choice is "agency", which denotes a type of freedom, namely the ability to act. Researchers of this persuasion investigate everyday practices and sub-cultures in order to prove that cultural subjects have agency and are therefore not passive dupes of the circumstances into which their capitalist environment places them. The answer to the credit question which theories of this type imply is similar to general artistry's egalitarian theory of appropriate credit: No reward or acknowledgement whatsoever is necessary to activate people. Rather, active ways of engaging with culture will spring up wherever they are not thwarted by, say, ideological constraints or the expropriation of means.

Finally, I identified another type of critics of the recording industry, whose views implied yet another answer to the credit question. These were the advocates of sharing economies. Unlike the proponents of generalized artistry, they realize that an aspect of give-and-take is involved in social practices, and they stress the importance of norms of interaction in sharing economies. What these norms of interaction are exactly, and how these sharing economies work in general has yet to be established. We might therefore jocularly call the answer to the credit-question implied by this view the 'to be announced' theory of appropriate credit. There must be such a theory, but it has yet to be developed.

My own position differs from each of the above, but I have listed them in order of decreasing divergence. My position is closest to sharing economy advocates such as Lawrence Lessig. My only substantial criticism on his position is that it assumes there must be a single answer to the credit-question which must hold for all of (pop music) culture, or in my terminology, that there must be a theory of appropriate credit. In my view, by contrast, there can be no such general theory. Taking a piecemeal approach to pop music culture and investigating it practice by practice, I argued, might produce more interesting results.

My position is similar to that of Lessig and other proponents of a sharing economy approach in that it wants to take the role of norms for social interaction in (pop music) culture seriously. In this respect, both our views differ from those of the proponents of generalized artistry and of certain cultural scholars, for whom the activation of music lovers is solely a matter of taking away the obstacles which impede self-expression or agency.

Arguably, my opinion is furthest removed from that of the recording industry. With its insistence on the tripartite division of pop music culture in artists, industry, and consumers, and its exaltation of the artist, it is the only position which claims there is really

only one practice in pop music culture that is ultimately worthwhile, namely the commercial production of pop music. There is a greater diversity of ways in which one might contribute to pop music culture than this model recognizes, and the emphasis it puts on the role of the creator detracts from the recognition of other important types of participation.

It is in contrast to these three positions in the ongoing copyright debates, then, that I have sketched out my line of thought. The approach I have chosen entails looking at specific cultural practices rather then pop music culture at large, and concentrating on the styles of credit-giving of these practices. In three case studies this position was put to the test, and I am now in a position to evaluate the results. This leads to three firmly supported conclusions and a tentative fourth.

The details of practices matter

Contrary to all approaches described above, my position predicts that no single answer to the credit-question can be given that will obtain for all of pop music culture. Instead, each successful cultural practice gives an answer to the credit-question according to its own particularities. This leads to the question, then, whether the three cultural practices I discussed in the foregoing case studies were indeed too different in their styles of credit-giving to make a single answer to the credit-question possible.

The case studies show, first and foremost, that each of the cultural practices investigated indeed has its own specific style of credit-giving. In the case of mix taping, the role of the mix taper was made up of three components, each of which entitled him or her to a different kind of credit. As a creator, the mix taper deserves admiration for his or her skill, and a serious contemplation of the resulting cassette as a work on the part of the recipient. Inasmuch as the mix taper is the giver of a gift, the tape should be accepted with gratitude and the mix taper's reward should appear organically within the relationship between mix taper and recipient, in the form of affection. As a reference person, the mix taper is entitled to acknowledgement and a certain amount of prestige for his or her musical knowledge and helpful intent. The task of deciding to what degree the mix taper is each of these things falls in part to the recipient and is not determined by the mix taper alone.

In the case of ccMixter, the peer-relation between remixers was simpler, but here too actors combined different roles. Active members are without exception remixers, reviewers, and genealogists at the same time. Unlike mix tapers, ccMixter members have a reciprocal credit-giving relationship, and it is the activities of remixing, reviewing, and attributing taken together that entitle members to have their own compositions reviewed and used with proper attribution by others. Meanwhile, ccMixter members also have a much vaguer non-reciprocal relationship with casual visitors of the site, to whom they are primarily creators and reference persons, who supply compositions for passive consumption and 'recommends' that allow visitors to find the best uploads.

In the case of deejaying, I concluded that all DJs I interviewed fitted the role of a very special kind of reference person; one who not only responds adequately to the queries people have, conscious or not, but who by doing this again and again leads the mood of a mass of people in a certain direction. This shared role was obscured, however, by other roles in which only some of the DJs engaged. A few DJs were what I called archaeologists. Certain

DJs were reference persons in a more straightforward and educational sense. And some were producers, and therefore *bona fide* creators. Credit-giving for all types of DJ tends to come in the form of a financial reward and positive reactions from the crowd. However, the role of creator, in the case of the DJ-producer, pulls the style of credit-giving towards that of the traditional artist in commercial pop music culture, and this usually means more money and more admiration.

From this comparison it is immediately clear that the commercial theory of appropriate credit falls short in accounting for all that happens within pop music culture, and consequently also in deciding who deserves credit for it. The categories of the artist and the consumer have no clear-cut delimitations, and there are many mediating roles between, or rather surrounding, these fuzzy categories which are not associated with the music industry. Most importantly, perhaps, the commercial theory of appropriate credit is underpinned by a metaphysics of musical communication according to which the artist is the one true creator of value in the process of pop music production; he or she puts an immaterial good such as emotion or inspiration into a song, and it is the extraction of this good which makes listening a joyful experience for music consumers. The importance of all other roles exists only in their supportive relation to this central aspect of communication. But this argument is fallacious. The value of a mix tape as a personal gift was not just the value of all preexisting songs added together, and the euphoria of a successful dance party cannot be explained with a mere reference to the quality of the music that is played.

The question that follows is whether another theory of appropriate credit might do better. I have discovered similarities between the actions of people who contributed to different practices; I have even given names to these patterns and foregrounded them as the role of the reference person, the genealogist, the archaeologist, et cetera. So could a more careful analysis of cultural practices not 'carve' pop music culture 'by the joints', and bring to light its true division of labor and the appropriate credit for each type of contributor? I believe not, for two main reasons.

First, the question whether an actor performs a certain role is not an all-or-nothing issue. In the mix tape case, I showed that the relative importance of the roles of creator, gift giver and reference person in relation to one particular mix taper may vary, and depends in part even upon the interpretation of the mix tape recipient. For instance, ccMixter members differ in their relative degrees of engagement as a remixer, reviewer, and genealogist, and DJs vary in the relative importance of reference giving, creation, and archeology to what it is they do. This issue, moreover, is connected to the credit-question. One may interpret a love tape as a gift and reward it with affection, or one may take it as an education and give credit in the form of gratitude and a degree of admiration. When a DJ becomes more prolific as a producer, this may pull his status further towards that of an artist or star.

Second, if actors fulfill similar or even analogous roles within different cultural practices, it does not follow that the same kind of credit is returned. The way credit is given depends upon the complete assemblage that is the cultural practice in question. For example, a reference librarian is always paid, occasionally thanked, and rarely admired for his or her efforts. A reference mix taper is never paid, virtually always thanked, and sometimes admired. Members of the ccMixter remix community perform the role of reference persons in relation to visitors of the site when they recommend certain uploads, but for this they get no credit whatsoever from the visitors in question. The remixers at ccMixter do not recommend tracks

for the sake of passersby, but because it is part of their culture of reciprocal praise. Even for similar activities, then, the type of credit-giving they elicit is determined in the context of that particular cultural practice. The details of specific practices matter.

Styles of credit-giving keep practices going

In the copyright debates, my criticism concerns two intellectual positions. The proponents of generalized artistry voice the ideal of a pop music culture where everyone is an active participant or even an artist, and they speak about this ideal as if its realization is solely a matter of removing the obstacles which impede individuals' creativity. Within academia, the influence of British Cultural Studies and the so-called Birmingham School is still felt, and one important aspect of this tradition is research which searches for, and exalts consumer agency in the practices it investigates.

The element shared by both positions is an implicit notion of intrinsic motivation. The proponents of generalized artistry assume that people are intrinsically driven to express themselves creatively, and that they will do so unless they are thwarted in the process. Cultural scholars who promote consumer agency assume that cultural subjects are intrinsically driven to contest elements of culture which displease or disempower them. In fact, their work is an understandable hypercorrection to a previous type of cultural research which saw subjects as a product of their cultural environment 'through and through', leaving no place for subjective agency whatsoever.

Yet the notion of intrinsic motivation is a problematic one. When engaging in a non-solitary practice, actors are dependent upon a style of credit-giving to keep their motivation going. This does not mean that everyone is a *homo economicus* who will only become active if a reward offsets his or her effort. It rather means that no matter how intrinsically pleasurable the activity, the motivation to make an effort in a social context will dwindle if others do not recognize the value of one's contribution, or if others benefit from these contributions without acknowledging a person's efforts. If this is indeed so, then there is no such thing as an intrinsic motivation to engage actively with culture in the sense of a motivation which is truly private and not affected by one's social circumstances.

The idea that styles of credit-giving keep practices going is supported by all three case studies, but most clearly so by the case of ccMixter. In a web community ostensibly devoted to remixing alone, all remixers in the core group of active members turned out also to be pleasant reviewers and meticulous genealogists. The concept of a style of credit-giving provides a simple and parsimonious explanation for this fact. Members who upload poor material or do not write any reviews are ignored and mostly become inactive. Members who do not attribute reused materials properly or who otherwise behave unpleasantly are presumably banned. What remains is a hard core of remixer-reviewer-genealogist members who keep each others enthusiasm alive.

In the mix tape case, there was no close-knit community like ccMixter, and therefore no such flywheel of reciprocal activation among core members. Rather, it seems that the practice of mix taping kept going because mix tapers detected ever new opportunities for rewarding action. As gift givers, they used mix tapes as a way of investing in relations of love or friendship. Returns came in the form of affection. As reference persons, mix tapers could

win or maintain the status of an especially knowledgeable music lover and a helpful friend. In this practice too, credit-giving played a role in activating people. When the mix taper is considered as a creator, the role of credit-giving is less clear, because many mix tapers polished their powers of mix tape creation in solitude, but in this case too it is at least highly plausible that the decision to share the product of one's effort with others tended to be informed by the prospect of being admired for one's skill.

Finally, DJs, amateurs and professionals alike, generally get paid to perform, even if their financial rewards differ considerably. This indicates that a reward is deemed appropriate, even if for some retro DJs it is hardly enough to offset the costs of record acquisition. The relation with the crowd, meanwhile, may be just as important, although credit-giving within this relation takes different forms, ranging from outright veneration for a star DJ to a simple smile directed at the person with the headphones by someone having a good time. The case studies support the idea, therefore, that styles of credit-giving keep practices going by ensuring the persistence of core participants' motivation.

A foregrounding of the creator obscures the importance of other kinds of contributors

In the first chapter I showed how the artist is at the center of contemporary copyright debates. The recording industry claims to care deeply about the rights of the artist, and to be the appropriate party to safeguard those rights. Proponents of the anti-commercial theory of appropriate credit professed to care no less about the rights of the artist, but argued that both the rights and the soul of the artist, if anything, needed protection from the music industry. Among the enthusiasts for the new possibilities afforded by digital technologies, most still place the artist at the center. Some argue that tools for music sharing help create a level playing field for artists, giving everyone a more or less equal chance to be heard. To proponents of generalized artistry, too, the interests of artists are central, but they argue that this role must be democratized.

In short, there is a wide consensus about the central importance of the role of the creator in pop music culture, whilst many other things are disputed. This makes a thorough investigation of our shared assumptions regarding the importance of the artist unlikely. Precisely for this reason, I undertook the task of denormalizing our presuppositions regarding the artist in the second chapter. I investigated the metaphysics of musical communication, according to which the value of any musical experience for the listener rests upon the extraction of an immaterial good which the creator encoded into the music in question, and I showed this idea to be the product of a precise set of historical circumstances, and therefore not a given or necessary aspect of music culture. Furthermore, I described how this ideology found its way into popular music culture and became associated with the commercial production of music.

The case studies of the foregoing chapters show what an undue emphasis on the role of the creator obscures from view. Story writers who argue that mix taping is an art tend to emphasize that there is a value to their compiled tapes which was not inherent in the preexisting individual songs. By choosing to describe their practice as an art, however, they obscure the value of mix tapes as gifts which may stand as milestones in the history of the

relationship between two people, and they render invisible the importance of mix tapes which introduced their recipients to new musical styles and communities.

The ccMixter community is ostensibly a place where one can display one's creativity by uploading remixes. In practice, however, it is a dynamic and warm social world, where music is not only made but also discussed, and where music creation is not just a creative, but also a social process, to the extent that even among the circle of active members one finds no 'pure remixers'. I found that active members were virtually all remixers (or singers), reviewers, and genealogists.

It is the case of deejaying, however, which showed most clearly the extensive blind spot to which the preoccupation with the role of the creator gives rise. I found that the status of a DJ depends first on foremost on their status as a producer, with DJ-producers being regarded as *bona fide* artists whilst 'mere' DJs are considered the providers of a service. Thus, the status of a DJ is mostly determined in relation to the notion of the creative artist rather than in relation to the notion of *DJ*. This is not the result of the absence of such a function. DJs guide the mood of a crowd in a particular direction, and thus make experiences possible which would be very difficult to obtain in any other way. These experiences are frequently euphoric, and are widely regarded as liberating and valuable.

I have given names to certain roles which existed within more than one cultural practice. My main objective in doing so was showing that there are important trans-practical roles besides that of the creator. Let me briefly revisit the three roles which have been most central to my argument.

In all three case studies, we encountered *reference persons*. The role of the reference person is evidently rather ubiquitous. The ccMixter members who recommend tracks are reference persons only in the most simple sense of the term, mediating between a corpus of compositions and an audience of mostly anonymous visitors navigating the ccMixter website. In this context, a 'recommend' amounts to a general statement that 'people should hear this'.

The role of the reference person becomes more interesting when the reference person interacts with a person or group and tries to determine their 'query', of which they may or may not be aware themselves. Thus, the reference mix taper can introduce the recipient of his or her mix tape to new musical territory, designing the tape specifically to pleasure or to challenge the specific person in question. The DJs implant this activity of 'query reading' into the context of a continuous relationship with the crowd, and this enables them to steer the mood on the dance floor gradually into a particular direction and generate joyous shared experiences.

In a popular music culture which for many people is too dense with possible musical experiences to find one's way, reference persons provide a vital moment of interpretation and selection. Whereas canon-like guides such as hit charts take a 'one size fits all' approach, a good reference person can take someone's personal preferences and needs into account. Thus, at best, reference persons help others to deepen their engagement with the culture around them.

In the case study on deejaying, I described the role of the *archeologist*. While this role is markedly less ubiquitous than that of the reference person, much can be said for its importance. On the one hand, the archeologists of pop music culture play a role in the preservation of historical treasures. On the other hand, certain archeologists, such as conservationist DJs, go on to disclose these remnants of the musical past to an audience.

In the case study on ccMixter, finally, I described the role of the *genealogist*, which in this case was not a specialist role in the sense of the reference person and the archeologist, but a role shared by all ccMixter members. In broad terms, the role of the genealogist is to give due credit to predecessors and to tradition. Making explicit the relation between remixers and the ones whose work they reuse is one of the most innovative aspects of ccMixter. In the rest of popular music culture, relations to predecessors are more often obscured. DJs, for instance, play preexisting music - an activity that raises copyright issues. However, venue holders take care of these copyright issues behind the scenes. The commercial theory of appropriate credit insists on reproducing the myth of original creation, and, by the same token, on obscuring relations of genealogy. A look at ccMixter shows us how a renewed awareness of genealogical issues can revitalize a community's sense that making music is, in the broadest sense of the term, a deeply social activity. The value of each of these trans-practical roles, however, and of many other types of cultural participation, is often obscured by the traditional emphasis on the role of the creator.

The commercial theory of appropriate credit may put pressure on styles of credit-giving

Finally, the case studies indicate that the persistent influence of the commercial theory of appropriate credit, at least in some cases, suppresses alternative the styles of credit-giving and makes it more difficult for some cultural practices to thrive. This idea follows more or less directly from my premises, because the styles of credit-giving of specific cultural practices necessarily involve the acknowledgement of types of actors which are not recognized by the commercial theory of appropriate credit. As I showed in the first two chapters, this is the dominant viewpoint; its apparent self-evidence is rooted in a long history. Conversely, in order to be adequate to their specific practices, styles of credit-giving often give little or no importance to a role which is emphatically recognized by the commercial theory of appropriate credit, namely that of the creator.

As the case study on deejaying shows, there is a marked difference in status between DJ-producers and 'pure' DJs. This difference is explicable from the influence of the commercial theory of appropriate credit, according to which the first kind of DJ belongs to the category of artist, whereas the second at most provides a service which is entirely dependent upon the work of artists. As a result, being a DJ-producer, generally speaking, is a more viable professional career option than just being a DJ.

The cultural practice of mix taping was an illegal one. The laws in question *de facto* reproduced the commercial theory of appropriate credit. Mix taping could flourish nonetheless because copyright law could not be reinforced in the home. Nonetheless, the practice of mix taping was slightly impeded in two ways. On the one hand, the prices of empty cassettes were raised as the result of a statutory fee, which aimed to offset any damages the music industry suffered as a result of home taping (Morton 2000: 164). On the other hand, the value and legitimacy of mix taping was continuously disputed, because media campaigns portrayed mix taping as a mere act of theft.

It is the same copyright legislation, with its insistence on the concept of an originating artist, which gave rise to ccMixter. Its strict adherence to creative commons

copyright makes ccMixter an enclave within which boundaries remixing and sampling is legal. In other words, the ccMixter remix community is a response to the problems musicians normally face if they want to remix or sample preexisting songs.

I have chosen three relatively successful cultural practices for my case studies. I did so for a reason. One of my main objectives was to show that successful cultural practices have styles of credit-giving that keep the enthusiasm of their contributors going. What my research, as a result of this choice, cannot show is whether there are cultural practices which disappeared soon after they emerged, because the pervasive influence of the commercial theory of appropriate credit prevented them from developing a stable style of credit-giving. This may be an open question, but also one that needs to be asked, and one into which future research would be welcome.

A remark about technology

The copyright debates tend to focus on legislative issues regarding the relative rights of artists, industry, consumers, and players who, empowered by new technologies, challenge these categories. Less conspicuously, however, these debates are also about technology. Critics of the recording industry may claim that new digital music technologies will help create a level playing field for artists, or argue that every music lover is an active cultural participant or even an artist - that is, unless conservative forces keep them in place. Conversely, the recording industry, especially in the earlier stages of the debate, perceived these new technologies as a threat to music itself.

There is an element of technological determinism in both positions. Each assumes that technologies, which are the products of scientific progress rather than of their cultural environment, will cause pop music culture to change in a certain direction. In the second chapter, I criticized technological determinism by showing how past music technologies such as the phonograph reached their stable form within the context of cultural practices in which many heterogeneous elements came together to form a robust assemblage.

In the third chapter, however, I also discussed a very different position. Both in Science and Technology Studies and in British Cultural Studies, scholars have put forward studies which emphasize the agency of end-users in shaping technologies or bending them to their needs. In the negative form in which they are usually phrased, their conclusions are indisputably true. End-users are not passive recipients of full-fledged technologies which use is already pre-determined. But we must be careful not to overstate the amount of agency for the end-user that the falsity of technological determinism implies.

I have conducted three case studies involving different music technologies. Considering these case studies from a technological perspective, two points deserve to be made. On the one hand, they clearly do not support a technologically determinist view. Neither remixing, nor mix taping, nor deejaying would have even existed without users who appropriated technologies for previously unimagined uses. Read superficially, my case studies may come across as a celebration of end-user agency.

On the other hand, however, my analysis of styles of credit-giving shows that such end-user agency should not be interpreted too radically. I argued, for instance, that individuals who want to pursue a certain activity within a social context can only maintain their

motivation to do so in a cultural practice with a stable style of credit-giving. This places an unexpected limitation upon individual agency.

A remark about cultural practices

Looking back at the foregoing investigation, I find that my usage of the concept of cultural practices comes quite close to the views of 'the final Foucault'. While Michel Foucault may be known primarily as the philosopher of discourse, his later work gave a central place to practices. Taking the self-care practices of antiquity and early Christianity as his subject, he gravitated towards an analysis of ancient Greek and to some extent ancient Roman self-care as consisting of, as he calls it, 'practices of freedom' (Foucault 1986, 1988, 2004). This concept is central in his last university lectures, which are on truth-telling (*parrhesia*). He there describes Socrates as a person who invites people to enter into practices which will enable them to be frank and honest, and to withstand the force of public opinion (Foucault 2001). The freedom to speak one's mind only becomes possible within the context of a practice.

There are several analogies to be drawn between Foucault's analysis and my own. In both, a kind of freedom is central. In the case of his final lectures it is the freedom to speak one's true opinion. In my case it is a form of creative agency. We both go on conclude that these freedoms are not free-floating, but that they are rather embedded within practices. Foucault insists, furthermore, that advancing freedom is not a simple matter of taking away constraints. He rejects any simple opposition between the individual and power, where the former is free to the extent that he or she is not impeded by the latter. The ability to give shape to one's own life, he argues, is best organized in practices of freedom (Foucault 2004: 183-184). Although I have analyzed creative practices which may seem trivial in comparison to the ability to speak truthfully, my point has been much the same. People's ability to engage actively with the music culture around them is not a mere matter of lifting the constraints which powerful institutions impose on them. To be perpetuated, people's creativity must be organized into cultural practices.

In this light, a conceptual distinction Foucault makes between "power" and "domination" is telling. What is undoubtedly surprising to some is that Foucault does not consider himself to be adverse to power. Society is pervaded by relationships of power and this is, in his opinion, not in itself a bad thing. It makes life interesting and challenges us to develop ourselves. What he does oppose, however, is a situation he calls "domination", where power relations become rigid and static rather than fluid and interesting, and where reversals of power stop happening (Foucault 2004: 185-186).

I find my position on this matter to be similar to Foucault's position. On the one hand, I have argued that people's motivation for prolonged engagement with culture is (at least within a social context) embedded in cultural practices. This puts a constraint on individual creative agency. Within cultural practices, all participants can be said to wield power over one another, or at least to influence each other. Such 'power' or reciprocal influence, however, is not something from which individuals need to be liberated. Rather, it is part of what makes cultural engagement within a social context interesting and meaningful.

And yet relations of power within popular music culture could become static and rigid. This a danger I have discussed above, in the section on the pressure which the

commercial theory of appropriate tribute puts on cultural practices. The music industry does not in fact dominate pop music culture in this sense. In the foregoing research, I have discussed three examples of cultural engagement which would not have been possible had the phonographic industry enjoyed such a degree of dominance. And yet, in the unlikely event that the music industry were to come out utterly victorious at the end of the copyright wars, cultural practices such as the ones I have investigated would become impossible, and the intricate relations of reciprocal influence among their actors would give way to the static and transparent relations indicated by the ticking of boxes marked "terms of use: I agree".

Persisting romanticisms

In May 2010, the Dutch news paper *NRC Next* carried an opinion piece about the demise of the super hit song (de Jong 2010). In this article, cultural scholar Thimon de Jong argues that the easy availability of music through downloading and P2P sharing has produced a pop music culture in which all listeners inhabit niches. As a result, he predicts, there will be no new 'evergreens', no new songs that are known by virtually everybody. This, he argues, is regrettable because it undermines the collective experience of culture for which the evergreen was uniquely suited. He hopes to remedy matters by criticizing remix culture and pleading for a return to originality.

De Jong's diagnosis of the current situation fits a well-known narrative of our culture, according to which uprooted individuals wander aimlessly and in isolation through a post-modern society. The experience of a collective in which the individual is at home either has gone or is disappearing. If we read de Jong's analysis carefully, we find that the demise of the super hit, in his opinion, impoverishes us in more than one way. It deprives us of an experience of being rooted in a collective culture, but it also deprives us of a certain way of experiencing the past. Only the super hit of the present can become an evergreen in the future, a universally recognized 'icon' of the specific time-frame when it topped the charts.

The foregoing research leads to a very different outlook on pop music culture. My investigations of particular cultural practices are full of examples of individuals who are far from culturally uprooted. Their activities are firmly embedded in a social context. The practices in question may not connect these individuals to a collective that encompasses 'virtually everyone', like evergreens do, but on the other hand they do connect them to a community with which they actively interact. The collective recognition of evergreens rather generates an 'imagined community' (Anderson 1991).

The cultural practices I have investigated do not leave their participants uprooted in terms of their relation to the past either. In this light it is worthwhile recalling that, in the second chapter, I analyzed the commercial theory of appropriate credit in terms of the persistent influence of a specific aspect of *Empfindsamkeit* and Romanticism. This aspect was the veneration of the artist as the person who can communicate emotional or transcendental contents by means of an artistic work. Looking back at the case studies of the previous chapters, we can now see that, outside of the dominant practice and discourse, many other aspects of Romanticism have also survived, and found refuge in particular practices. Most importantly, the cultural practices of the previous case studies give a remarkable degree of importance to relations with the past and the future.

The archeologist brings artifacts from the past into the present and thus plays a role in accentuating a cultural form's relation with the past. Also, there is an element of Romantic historicism in the activities of the archeologist. There is a sense of distance and strangeness about the artifacts he or she 'digs up' and discloses. The experience of these artifacts can help one escape the present, whether to open one's mind to thinking outside the confines of contemporary standards or to revel in the past as if it were an exotic destination to which access has not been made ubiquitous by cheap flights.

The genealogist gives credit from the present to the past. This role might therefore be said to be most clearly analogical to practices that far predate Romanticism, by which the ancestors are given their due. But in any case, the activities of the genealogist partake of certain aspects of the Romantic understanding of history as a progress narrative. Genealogy emphasizes the cumulative aspect of history; the fact that no creative feat is achieved in isolation and that one always builds upon the work of predecessors.

The reference person, finally, can be said to push the awareness of presently existing works into the future. This role, moreover, betrays the persistence of something like the Romantic ideal of *Bildung*. There is a notion that a greater knowledge and experience of certain cultural works can in some sense help one develop as a person, a notion that underlies the activities of many reference mix tapers and reference DJs. The idea that there is an intrinsic value to deepening one's engagement with existing culture has far from disappeared, but this may be hard to see because it has become embedded in specific cultural practices of a relatively modest scale and produces little or no discourse.

The temporal locatedness of these roles sharply contrasts the role of the creator, who, being original, seemingly stands outside of time. Presently the super hit producing music industry supports the atemporal ideology of the original creator, whereas each of the cultural practices I have investigated in some way invests in the maintenance of a relation with the past and the future. This at least indicates that, with regard to temporality as much as with regard to sociality, participation in cultural practices is likely better equipped to ward of cultural uprootedness than collective enjoyment of commercial evergreens is.

A final observation

The copyright debates with which I began this research are somewhat like a boxing match in which to parties struggle for supremacy. In one corner we find the conservative forces of the traditional music industry who would like to see the changes that come in the wake of new digital music technologies contained in several important ways. In the other corner there is a loose alliance of progressive forces who welcome this change enthusiastically. I have criticized both sides, although I have by no means criticized them in equal measure, and I have insisted upon a natural setting approach to pop music culture that pays attention to the particularities of specific practices.

I see two ways in which a reader might take this insistence on the particular to heart and put it to use. The first is fairly obvious: to take back into the copyright debates an understanding of the importance of credit-giving, an awareness of the value of the many ways of participating in popular music culture that exist aside from being a creator, and an insistence on the inadequacy of overarching theories concerning how pop music culture works or should

work. The second is less conspicuous and therefore deserves emphasis. It is to appreciate pop music culture's richness in the possibilities it offers for engaging, contributing, participating, or just enjoying. In the actual present, there is no need for us to all be consumers, as the traditional music industry would gladly see. Neither is it necessary for all of us to be artists or remixers, like the industry's opponents sometimes seem to be saying.

As I performed my case studies, I came across many live individuals and narrative accounts who provided an argument for the value and importance of their respective cultural practices. When a DJ seemingly starts to glow when explaining the intricacies of deejaying, it is tempting to conclude that this is because deejaying is wonderful, and more people should try their hand at it. It might be more accurate, however, to say that the accounts of these DJs provided an argument for the value and importance of a pop music culture which is rich and varied enough for different people to be able to find a place for themselves, where they can contribute in the way that fits them best, which they enjoy most, or which they find most meaningful.

The foregoing research shows that one can engage with pop music culture as a consumer, an artist, a mix taper, a remixer, a DJ, and probably in many other ways. One can contribute to a cultural practice as a creator, a reference person, a genealogist, an archaeologist, a reviewer, and presumably in many other roles. Maybe then, a 'glowing' DJ is not first and foremost an argument in favor of the cultural practice of deejaying, although it undoubtedly is that too. It might rather first and foremost be an argument in favor of taking heed of the countless possibilities that already exist within pop music culture, and concluding that among these there is likely something you can do which is as exciting to you as deejaying, remixing, or mix taping is to some of the people who featured in this study.