Material and Digital Identity Negotiation of Francophone Music Artists: Decolonizing Diversity-Focused Festivals in Canada

Michelle Thompson

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ABSTRACT

Since the 1950s, a new wave of music festivals has emerged in North America in response to the systematic exclusion and cultural gatekeeping cultural organizations have historically conducted. This has created a more inclusive space for marginalized artists and communities in which political discourse and anti-discrimination movements have become the focus (Getz, 2010; Duffy & Mair, 2021; Quinn, 2005; Li, Moore & Smythe, 2018; Wilson, Arshed, Shaw & Pret, 2016; Bekenshtein, 2020; Fernandez, 2006). This study highlights some of Canada’s diversity-focused festivals, which are founded on the principles of multiculturalism and support the national narrative of a welcoming nation. However, these events sometimes reproduce existing societal conditions that position racially marginalized people as the “Other”. The study applies a digital ethnography (DE) methodology (Pink, 2012, 2013, Postill, 2008, 2010a, 2010b, 2011) to investigate the promotional activities festivals and marginalized music artists conduct as they negotiate existing power imbalances, cultural hegemony, and language hierarchies. Between July and November 2019, I carried out field visits to five Canadian festivals that focus on diversity and multiculturalism. I collected field notes, photos, videos, and audio recordings, and captured 1083 Facebook posts from the events and the artists who performed there. Through digital content analysis and ethnographic inquiry, the data revealed that racially marginalized francophone music artists express fluid and hybrid identities constructed by multilingualism, geographic mobility, and their musical influences. These identities are evident in the music styles artists express, the languages they use, and the symbolic meaning of their Facebook content. The findings show that festivals are largely apolitical and focused on the commodification of diversity and multiculturalism. This commodification can nationalize, fetishize, exotify, and culturally appropriate the identities of marginalized communities. As a result, festivals can reproduce difference rather than create the social cohesion they aspire to. Music artists use strategies like hashtag activism, code-switching, music remix, public speaking, and content curation to negotiate these social constraints. In doing so, they challenge the compartmentalization of the music industry and introduce positive representations of marginalized communities. The argument is made for recognizing a need for a participatory music culture that supports racially marginalized music artists and communities, and empowers them to use their creative, political, and rhetorical agency to challenge barriers to racial equity and economic participation.
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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

“Music has played a key role in social activism and various rights movements throughout history. Through political protest and social commentary, artists have used the power of music to share critical messages, inspire action, and achieve lasting change” (Tan, 2019, p. 1).

“Power and privilege are the greatest threats to resistance as those who benefit from the status quo may always want to punish those who push for change” (Sefa Dei, 2019).

In 2018, at the invitation of a friend who works in the music industry, I attended the World Music Expo (WOMEX) 1 conference in Las Palmas, Spain. The conference mobilized musicians, singers, festival organizers, and other music professionals from around the world under the umbrella of “world music”. The performances and networking events I attended focused on building connections between performers and event promoters/organizers and on giving under-represented music artists a platform. My friend introduced me to several musicians, singers, agents, and festival promoters, pointing me to the key players in Canada and explaining that “Canadians have big money” and there are many opportunities to conduct business there. From an outsider’s perspective, I could see how the strong relationships people had built over time and the music artists’ ability to self-promote were important to creating work opportunities. The conference felt more like a college reunion and a chance for attendees to renew old ties with professional allies around the world. Throughout the event, I witnessed a group of highly mobile people using the term “world music” to describe themselves and their peers. It was clear that the “world music” community was diverse, multicultural, and transnational, despite no one ever using these terms in our informal discussions.

During a series of live performances over five days, which were intended to showcase up-and-coming artists from around the world, I observed how music professionals make creative choices

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1 The World Music Expo (WOMEX) is an annual international networking event for “world music” professionals, where a jury of peers selects a diverse program for delegates and promotes it in a series of live performances. The organization also offers its members what it calls “cross-cultural networking” through workshops and exhibitions. WOMEX offers mentorship in all sectors of the music industry and prioritizes issues of equal accessibility (Piranha Arts, 2018, p. 39). WOMEX is an excellent starting point for having insight into the way the “world music” community categorizes itself globally. I attended the 2018 event in Las Palmas, Spain in preparation for my research design.
by blending traditional elements from their culture with contemporary music styles. They do so to create unique music products and audience experiences that sell. It was clear to me that multiculturalism, transnationalism, and diversity are not central to the discourses in which “world music” artists engage because each has their own identity, motivations, and experiences. When I returned to Canada, my cohort and I had several discussions about how neoliberal policies contribute to the oppression of marginalized people. I had heard nothing about this from the people I’d met in Spain, most of whom represented racially marginalized groups. I wondered if there was a disconnect between theory and praxis, or if music artists had a different understanding of these power dynamics and their own reasons for wanting to challenge them. A few months earlier, I had attended the Sunfest festival in London, Ontario. The event is known for bringing big international “world music” artists to Canada and introducing them to Canadian audiences. I visited the Sunfest website and found that it describes itself as an organization that celebrates the diversity of Canada and brings people from different cultures together. It was then that I asked myself what motivates festivals in Canada to produce programs that represent cultural and linguistic diversity. I could see how the default Western position compares other cultures to the “Canadian” identity, which amplifies differences and requires people such as immigrants and linguistic minorities to adapt rather than be celebrated or be themselves.

This dissertation is dedicated in part to showing how music festivals and artists’ promotional activities and performances influence the representation of marginalized people in Canada. Nick

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2 Before we go further, I want to define the term racially marginalized which I use several times in my thesis. I had originally undertaken to use the term “racialized” to describe people who experience racism. The term is often used in institutional policy-making and by many advocacy groups in Canada. For example, the federal government defines racialization as the “process through which groups come to be socially constructed as races, based on characteristics such as ethnicity, language, economics, religion, culture, politics.” (As quoted in Tewelde, 2020). The Ontario Human Rights Commission states that the term racialized is “widely preferred over descriptions such as racial minority, visible minority, and person of colour because it expresses race as a social construct rather than a description of people based on perceived characteristics.” (Ontario Human Rights Commission, 2022). However, after reading Yafet Tewelde’s (2020) article Canadians are using the term ‘racialized’ incorrectly, I have come to view this term as failing to name whiteness as integral to racism. Tewelde (2020) asserts that most Canadians default to the term “racialized” to refer to non-white people, which he points out contributes to a post-racial mythology when in reality Canada continues to have a problem with racism. He argues that using the term ignores the fact that whiteness and its privileges are also racialized (Tewelde, 2020). I concur with Tewelde’s assertions and instead of using “racialized”, I use the term “racially marginalized” when referring to non-white communities and people who experience racism. I do this to avoid creating separation between non-racialized as the norm and racialized as the “Other”, and to capture the impact of racism which marginalizes people of colour.
Couldry (2004) identifies some of the most common practices associated with digital technologies as “creative processes carried out by individuals or collectives with different goals and purposes” (p. 32). One of my objectives is to reveal these purposes through an examination of musicians and singers’ creative choices and their participation in political discourses. Ultimately, language, culture, identity, and even music styles can be used to promote cultural products. I explore the relationships between the symbols and practices music artists and festivals use to “sell” their events, and how they contribute to the representation of marginalized identities. I also want to understand how music artists negotiate these identities within a settler state where neoliberal interventionism pushes marginalized people to integrate. I conceptualize the way music artists promote themselves and present their work as a strategic resistance to hegemonic systems. This resistance can potentially counter the misrepresentation, under-representation, discrimination, and racism experienced by racially marginalized people.

As a francophone Canadian, I wanted to critically examine how francophones from racially marginalized communities, particularly people from the African diaspora, experience linguistic and marginalization, and whether this is observable in Canada’s festival industry. For many francophones in Canada, cultural interventions have been instrumental in strengthening linguistic identity in an Anglo-dominant nation. The original intention of Canadian cultural interventionism was to build social cohesion between French and English settlers, resist American media, and “sell” Canada to its citizens and to other nations (Charland, 1986; Filion, 1996; West, 2002; Dowler, 1996). Yet, these interventions also allowed Francophones to strengthen their identities through cultural production. For example, during the Quiet Revolution, Québécois were able to accelerate their production of cultural products such as music, literature, and film in the 1960s and 1970s. This acceleration strengthened the French language and culture in the province (BAnQ, 2010) and led to a re-definition of the French-Canadian identity. French-language cultural interventionism has produced literature, television and radio programs, films, music, and theatre.

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3 Canada has invested significant amounts of money into its cultural programs and its technological infrastructure through its funding of the National Film Board, Radio-Canada, and the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (Charland, 1986; Filion, 1996; West, 2002; Dowler, 1996). In the Canadian content, cultural production has been a useful tool for nation-building. For example, in the 1990s, the CBC produced the Heritage Minutes series (Historica Canada, n.d.; West, 2002), and more recently it produced the A people’s History series to maintain Canada’s national memory and identity (CBC, 2016).

In my study, I focus on musical production and explore whether cultural production can have the same impact on racially marginalized francophones. In a previous study on francophone linguistic minorities, the results showed that cultural events play an important role in constructing identity among francophone minority communities (Forgues, Thompson, Dallaire, and Doucet, 2018). I expand on this research and explore how racially marginalized francophones from the African diaspora use cultural production in the festival industry to unsettle Anglo-domination and settler colonialism in Canada. In my exploration of racially marginalized francophone music artists, I seek to understand how critical identity theories, Critical Race Theory (CRT), and post-colonial/decolonial discourses can deconstruct and name the inherent racism, exclusion, and lack of representation in Canada’s music industry.

In this introductory chapter, I situate my study primarily within sociological theoretical models on which I rely, and introduce the field of festival studies. In section one, I adopt a decolonial model for understanding the festival industry. I consider festivals that are mandated to support diversity and multiculturalism. I provide examples of how the festival industry has evolved from a mostly exclusive cultural space to a tool for resisting social exclusion. This is key to understanding racially marginalized musicians and singers’ professional experiences and creative choices, especially when it comes to performing, public speaking, and creating online content. I contextualize festivals as temporary communities that come together in the material space and in virtual settings to support local and transnational identities. I introduce the tension between the commodification of culture and diversity and the work festivals do to create inclusion in their communities. I explore the cultural hegemony embedded in cultural production processes. I also discuss how the problem of under-representation in the music industry has contributed to the exclusion of racially

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4 According to the federal government, an FMC refers to a federally recognized group of French-speaking Canadians living outside Québec (Immigration, Refugee, and Citizenship Canada, 2013). In 2016, there were 1,024,200 francophones living outside Québec, an increase of 16,615 people from 2011 (Statistics Canada, 2018). The federal government is mandated to promote the French language and support the development of FMCs as outlined in article 41 of the Official Languages Act of Canada (Justice Canada, 2016). The term FMC is used by some Québec Studies scholars who explore questions around the language and cultural rights of these communities (Cardinal, 2013; Chouinar, 2014). FMC members represent a diverse set of cultural identities, but hold a common linguistic identity based on the French language (Allaire, 2015).
marginalized francophone artists. In addition, I provide chapter summaries and briefly discuss the scope and limits of my dissertation.

Festival studies are a sub-set of event studies, which have traditionally focused their gaze on tourism and regional economic development. In the past few decades, the festival industry has grown exponentially. However, identifying existing knowledge and research gaps has been a challenge for researchers (Mair & Weber, 2019). Donald Getz’s (2010) review of existing literature on festivals identifies three existing discourses in the scholarship: 1) the classical, which concerns itself with the role, meaning and impact of festivals in society and culture; 2) the instrumental, which focuses on festivals as tools for economic development and place marketing; and 3) event management, which is more concerned with the production and marketing of festivals and the management of festival organizations. My study situates itself within all three of these discourses. I focus on the role and impact of diversity-focused festivals in Canadian society and culture (classical festival studies). I also touch on commercial activities for economic development and how they influence the role of these festivals (economic festival studies). Additionally, I explore how marketing, mandates, and decision-making by festival organizations influence the way racially marginalized music artists negotiate their identities, and how festivals construct safe spaces for community dialogue (festival management studies). That said, I am primarily concerned with how diversity-focused festivals support marginalized music artists and contribute to (or constrain) representations within the process of cultural production.

SeungHyun Park and KwangSoo Park’s (2017) review of 698 festival studies, showed that most festival researchers focus on marketing, and event and destination management. My study draws from critical identity and migration research and examines how the movement of performers, and their cultural/linguistic identities contribute to and negotiate the festival ecosystem. I also look at how these negotiations impact the representation of marginalized people in society. While most festival studies focus on the benefit of these events for local economies, I consider them as places that build social benefits such as community cohesion, a sense of place, belonging and identity, which Judith Mair and Karin Weber (2019) note as a position contrary to the economic focus of tourism. The unique cultural dimensions of music festivals focused on multiculturalism and inclusion are not only used to attract tourists, but are also examples of municipalities using culture
as a resource, which needs to be acknowledged (Mair & Weber, 2019). Therefore, I also consider the potential for harmful marketing and festival management practices in my analysis.

Mair and Weber (2019) state that very few festival studies have focused on social media as a marketing tool. Therefore, similar to the study by Fabrizio Montanari, Annachiara Scapolan, and Elena Codeluppi (2013) on the Italian photography festival Fotografia Europea, I consider the strategies that festivals use to promote their events. I argue that while host cities use festivals to attract tourists, they face challenges in meeting the expectations of the public as organizations focused on the inclusion of marginalized people. Festivals must consider the full impact of their social media and cultural production practices, and how their mandates fit into contemporary political and social movements and discourses.

While I do not investigate festival-goers’ engagement nor explore the consumer journey (Hudson & Hudson, 2013) to understand festival attendees, I do consider the methods organizers use to build brands and relationships with local communities, businesses, artists, and others. Likewise, my research into festival management strategies does not consider stakeholder management or policy-making, although my findings could potentially inform decisions related to these organizational activities. Communities are increasingly demanding socially responsible approaches to managing festival events, and the misrepresentation of marginalized communities can potentially hurt brands. In addition, their under-representation can have a negative impact on marginalized communities. Therefore, I focus on the role of diversity-focused festivals in bringing together people from different groups, and how the communal spaces they create can be used to create opportunities for meaningful exchanges, dialogue, and social change.

**Decolonizing the Festival**

Festivals focused on promoting multiculturalism can play an important role in Canadian society by addressing the issues marginalized communities face. However, this role requires that they participate in political activities and discourses (advocacy) to influence public policy and laws that have a positive impact on the people they work with. In 2016, the Superior Court of Ontario ruled that Canadian non-profit organizations have a right to engage in nonpartisan political activity, thus
challenging the federal government’s 10% limit on such work (Miller, 2018). I view this as an important step in encouraging festivals to become more engaged in work that addresses social injustice. While festivals have creative input into the kinds of musical performances they want to present, they also rely on different levels of government and private funding for their events. As a result, and because of the 10% limit rule, festivals have largely remained apolitical (Bekenshtein, 2020; Miller, 2018). In doing so, rather than leading conversations about inclusion and social equity, diversity-focused festivals are failing to meaningfully engage the public on important issues like racism and discrimination. As well, considering the role of media and cultural production in constructing the Canadian identity, I suggest that people who write about and disseminate the work of racially marginalized music artists can sometimes use harmful stereotypes and restrictive language. Alternatively, they can choose to play a role in the promotion of positive representations and lead important conversations that support equity and inclusion.

In settler colonial societies such as Canada, non-profit organizations must embrace a decolonial perspective in their activities and interventions if they wish to bring about real change. I recently attended a conference where sociologist Tshepo Madlingozi (2022) and political scientist Terry Givens (2022) discussed South African and American decolonization movements. Decolonization is a process of working to bring change by ridding society of subordination and acquiescence (Diop in Sefa Dei, 2019). I understand this as a process of unsettling the legacy of colonialism and define colonialism within the context of internal colonialism and transnational decolonization, which is the biopolitical and geopolitical management of people, land, flora and fauna within the borders of a given nation (Tuck & Yang, 2012, p.4). This inspired me to adopt a decolonial approach in conducting my research for this thesis and writing these results. Both scholars contend that when policy-makers fail to appreciate the historical legacy of racism and its influence on social and political structures, they uphold settler hegemony and white supremacy. Without understanding and taking into account the historical structures and events that underpin social injustice, liberal interventions cannot disentangle us from our past – instead, such interventions simply serve to perpetuate these mistakes. As academics, we must be mindful of the possibility that our research and writing can contribute to a long-standing project that has maintained white supremacy (Givens, 2022). In the 1990s, the model for managing diversity and multiculturalism was integrated into an

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5 Cultural hegemony is imposition of a value system on society by the ruling class, for the purpose of maintaining dominance and subordination of non-ruling social classes (Flint & Taylor, 2018).
existing settler-created society (Madlingozi, 2022). Madlingozi (2022) argues that this integration created a transition from settler domination to settler hegemony that maintained the invisibility of Black people. Givens (2022) asserts that we must recognize that laws can often legitimize discrimination and racial injustice; in order to make meaningful change, scholars need to be aware of such dynamics and actively work against them. Structural discrimination, which I understand as the baked-in governmental and organizational policies and practices that are rooted in racism and exclude non-white citizens, negatively impacts Black people by stopping them from accessing resources.

Issues surrounding festival management are not so far removed from conversations about decolonization. In their effort to support diversity, music festivals can re-produce cultural hegemony through their marketing and production practices. I argue that decolonizing work from movements like Black Lives Matter can facilitate the actions that festivals take to create change and social equity. I use the term "diversity-driven" throughout my thesis as a way to describe festivals whose mandates focus on creating inclusive multicultural spaces for music artists and local communities. The term diversity-driven also captures the intention of these organizations to support people who immigrate to Canada. While I could have used the term “multicultural” or "world music", these terms fail to appropriately describe the nuances in music genres, cultural and linguistic identities, and the presence of transnational and national musicians and singers.

Promotional practices are known to increase the visibility of professionals and festivals. Consequently, the representation of marginalized people in the media and in various cultural industries can be increased through these practices. However, marginalized people are under-represented and often misrepresented in the media. A 2020 study by the Geena Davis Institute found that only 0.8% of characters in ads are shown with a disability, and only 1.8% are 2LGBTQ2+ (Giaccardi, Cooper, Heldman, Cooper-Jones, McTaggart, Juliano, Phillips, Esparza, & Conroy, 2019). In addition, while racially marginalized people make up 43.1% of characters in ads, they are less likely than white people to be shown as having a job (Giaccardi et al., 2019). These examples illustrate the problem of under-representation and misrepresentation of marginalized people. In the music industry, the strategies producers of culture use to promote and represent artists are critically important to the participation of under-represented people such as women and racially marginalized people.
Many festival studies have found that these events play an important role in the construction of identity, belonging, and community (Duffy & Mair, 2021; Quinn, 2005; Li, Moore & Smythe, 2018; Wilson, Arshed, Shaw & Pret, 2016). Other studies on social media have investigated the use of digital media practices for developing cultural, linguistic, and technical competencies that support resistance movements (Jenkins, 2006; Van Dijck & Poell, 2013; Van Zoonen, Visa, & Mikelja, 2010; Suhr, 2012; Ratto & Boler, 2016; Ardévol, Roig, San Cornelio, Pages & Alsina, 2009). Yet, many theories on festivals, social media, and identity present a problem for the industry as it faces a rapidly changing landscape. Most festival studies fail to explore how social justice movements contribute to conversations about diversity, inclusion, and identity and to creating more inclusive spaces. New social media platforms and best practices emerge frequently. As a result, the festival environment sometimes finds itself ill-equipped to engage meaningfully with movements like Black Lives Matter and develop support strategies and approaches that decolonize and adequately represent without over-emphasizing the commodification of multicultural identities.

There is a lack of research about decolonization strategies in Canadian festivals that focus on diversity and multiculturalism. Therefore, this study aims to identify and evaluate the current state of five diversity-focused festivals: TD Sunfest (London), Canada Day Celebration (Ottawa), Nuits d’Afrique and Mundial Montréal (Montréal), and Mondo Karnaval (Québec City). To do this, I have set out several research objectives. First, I recontextualize the existing literature on francophones in Canada through the lenses of anti-discrimination, anti-racism, and anti-linguicism. My goal is two-fold. I want to critically investigate how francophone identities have evolved over time. I also want to show how the exclusion of Black francophone settlers must become central to conversations among scholars and policy-makers about language in Canada. Secondly, I identify and evaluate the common strategies and approaches used by festivals and music artists in the Canadian context to navigate language and cultural hierarchies, and classifications. Thirdly, I compare and contrast these strategies and approaches in terms of their strengths and weaknesses, and their ability to support the decolonization of Canada’s festival and

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6 The term francophone is generally used as a way of describing a person’s ability to speak French. In Canada, it defines a person with French as a first language learned and used at home” (Statistics Canada, 2015). The current definition of a francophone person can exclude people whose maternal language is not French, which is problematic because it precludes several groups from the conversation. For the purpose of this study, I apply the term francophone as an umbrella term that captures a collection of identities characterized by their common use of the French-language.
music industries. The primary focus of my study is on the racially marginalized francophone musicians and singers who perform at these five diversity-focused festivals. The festival industry categorizes these music artists into two groups: national and international. I limit my study to the 2019 festival season, which takes place between July and September. An exception is the Mundial Montréal festival-conference that took place in November of 2019.

My thesis seeks to answer several questions. I ask whether festivals and music artists represent, promote, or express hybrid linguistic and cultural identities in their live performances and on their Facebook pages. I inquire about how national and international francophone musicians and singers construct and navigate hybrid forms of Frenchness such as multilingualism by using strategies like code-switching and music style fusion. I also ask how francophone music artists use/navigate language, culture, and their transnational or complex identities as capital. In addition, I ask if festivals and their performers disrupt existing power dynamics by advocating for decolonial and other social movements during events, or through content curation and public speaking. I also survey the reasons festivals and music artists share content on Facebook to understand the various uses of social media platforms. As part of my study, I focus on francophones that represent racially marginalized groups, such as people of African ancestry, Caribbean and African nations, to make clear how their strategic practices impact representation and participation. I analyze the effectiveness of these practices, considering their strengths and weaknesses.

Building on Donald Getz (2009), Dianne Dredge, and Michelle Whitford’s (2010) call for a responsible approach to festival management and research, I use a critical lens that starts by acknowledging the influence of neoliberal interventionism and the role of governments in securing economic development in the tourism industry. I consider this set of pressures in tension with and in relation to contemporary decolonial movements that work to disrupt and deconstruct these neoliberal ideals.

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7 Berry (2021) states that neoliberal interventionism uses state projects and public policy to support accumulation, under the guise of working to collapse problematic national ideologies that support capitalism. I understand this accumulation to be related to power and wealth in a Canadian context of social-capitalism. I do not adopt a political economy perspective in my study, nor do I engage in a policy review of festival organizations, the neoliberal state, or the impact of capitalism. However, I do use these concepts to understand the way nation states, and to a lesser extent the cultural interventions they fund, can impact racialized (racially marginalized) artists in the music and festival industries.
Festivals have become enmeshed with grassroots movements such as anti-war, feminism, and LGTBQ rights (Quinn, 2005, p. 9). These events are socially meaningful devices for taking collective action against social injustices and finding a sense of belonging and meaning in society. The process of meaning-making is a social sciences approach to studying and interpreting signs and symbols (semiotics) (Lukianova, 2015). I use the term meaning-making to show how people are not only recipients, but also producers of cultural meanings. I argue that festival productions present performances and products that have cultural meaning for Canadians. Charles S. Peirce’s theory of signs (semiosis) highlights the active character of human agency and shows that interpretation is a condition of signification and involves an interpreting agent, a meaning-making human being (Pierce in Lukianova, 2015, p. 1). To be clear, I consider the festival-goer and Facebook follower as the interpreting agent and meaning-maker who navigates festival performances and activities. However, my study turns the lens towards the processes music artists and festivals use as producers of cultural meaning, rather than focusing on the consumer’s experience.

Following Michelle Duffy and Judith Mair’s (2021) definition of festivals as “sites where people can experience and explore multiple identities” (p. 13), my research project explores how musicians and singers, through their musical performances and speeches, create symbolic representations of Blackness. As Duffy and Mair write, festivals do more than contribute to local economies, they symbolically construct places, communities, identities, and belonging (Duffy and Mair, 2021). My study explores how music festivals give people a space to share and explore multiple cultural and linguistic identities. I also apply the mobilities paradigm as a way of understanding the social connections music artists make across multiple distances and places (Urry in Duffy and Mair, 2021). I believe this paradigm can help us understand how touring musicians and singers negotiate differences between regions and challenge problematic identities rooted in territory and race.

Canadian festivals are the ideal place to examine power dynamics between the state and the racially marginalized citizen because they involve symbolic representations of identities, cultures, and languages. Like Bernadette Quinn (2005), I am interested in how governments use festivals to create public images, attract tourists, build international profiles, and support the local economy (Quinn, 2005). Festival-goers have become consumers of culture in a globalized economy that
works to reproduce national identities through government interventions and investments. Sociologist Nathalie Heinich observes that “... the search for experiential holidays supports the widespread orientation towards a greater consumption of cultural goods and experiences, including festivals” (As quoted in Quinn, 2005). The results of my study show that Canadian festivals are actively facilitating the commodification of multiculturalism and diversity by selling cultural experiences, food, music, and artisanal products. Indeed, Duffy and Mair (2021) show that understanding the performative aspects of the festival can help capture people’s experience of it (p. 16). Building upon Judith Butler’s claim that performative utterances have “political promise” (Butler in Cull, 2013, p. 61), I explore the way francophone musicians and singers of colour use their speech and language to challenge conventional colonial power structures. The data indicates that they use creative, political, and rhetorical agency on the stage and in their social media content as tools for disrupting racial hierarchies and settler-colonial logics. A distinction between “us” and the “Other” is at the root of these logics (Ray, Wylie, and Corrado, 2021). Race and ethnicity are intertwined with colonialism and expressed through exclusion, marginalization, and dehumanization (McCallum and Perry in Ray, Wylie, and Corrado, 2021). Therefore, my use of CRT allows me to critically evaluate Canada’s cultural interventionism and identify the influence of historical events like slavery and white supremacy on societal structures and institutional practices.

I understand performances as a continuum of human actions (Schechner in Cull, 2013). In the context of the performing arts, Cull (2013) asks us to consider these actions as intentionally “framed, presented, highlighted, or displayed” to show, point to, underline, or display things (p. 59). I argue that if “language can act on and in the world, not just represent it.” (Austin in Cull, 2013, p. 61), then musicians and singers can act upon the world they live in through their speeches, their social media posts, and the languages they choose to use. I understand musical performances as actions that challenge dominant hierarchies and narratives about gender, race, and language. As Cull writes, “[...] performances can be seen not only to enact but also to refute and rewrite the dominant scripts concerning the production of gender, as well as race, class, and sexual identity.” (Cull, 2013, p. 61).

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8 The process of marginalization is at its core, social exclusion from a full and fulfilling life and a lack of access to resources rights, and opportunities, which leads to stigmatization and negative public attitudes (Kagan & Burton, 2005; Peace, 2001).
Building Festival Communities of Resistance

Ethnographers Jing Li, Danièle Moore, and Suzanne Smythe (2018) state that small groups of people can establish local cultures at festivals as a way of resisting stereotypes (p. 399). Festivals are spaces where people can interact together and construct communities and identities (Li, Moore & Smythe, 2018, p. 399). With this in mind, my exploration of festivals focuses on events branded as multicultural to better understand how these contradictions are negotiated within local micro-communities. Festivals can increase social cohesion while also supporting regional identities (Wilson, Arshed, Shaw & Pret, 2016). But what happens when transnational bodies enter these regional communities and challenge cultural, social, and linguistic boundaries? I propose that the festival stage can be a tool for community building among marginalized community groups. For example, at one of my field visits, Haitian festival-goers spontaneously formed a micro-community by gathering on the festival grounds during the group Tabou Combo’s performance. The audience spoke Creole, celebrated together, and sang the lyrics of several songs. The music and language symbolically represented the Haitian identity and the performance offered Haitian Montréalers a space for their community to gather and an opportunity to engage in their culture and speak Creole (Field notes, 2019, July 23). To explore questions related to collective identity I draw from literature on critical identity and migration studies. For example, I use several concepts to describe the music artists’ cultural, linguistic, and musical identities, such as hybridity and transnationalism.

The festival industry has significantly evolved since the late 19th century. In Europe, early festivals were primarily focused on classical works and catered to social elites, reinforcing social, cultural, and economic limits that excluded marginalized people (Quinn, 2005, p. 7). An example is the BBC Henry Wood Promenade Concerts in London. Now Britain’s largest music festival, it produces eight weeks of classical music performances (Waterman, 1998). Founded in 1895 by Sir Henry Wood, a conductor and son of a jeweller, the festival aimed to provide low ticket prices and attract people from all economic backgrounds (Waterman, 1998). Over time, its wealthy members invested in opulent building structures and affordable tickets became difficult to obtain. Another example is the Salzburg Festival in Austria. Founded in 1920 by novelist Hugo von Hofmannsthal, actor Max Reinhardt, and composer Richard Strauss, it promotes and produces opera, drama, and classical music concerts (Salzburger Festspiele, 2022). The festival describes its early mission as
celebrating “Europeanism that fulfilled an enlightened period from 1750 to 1850”, and its post-World War II role of rebuilding a sense of national pride after Nazism (Salzburger Festspiele, 2022). In explaining the purpose of the festival, von Hofmannsthal stated:

Organizing a musical and theatrical festival in Salzburg means reviving ancient living traditions in a new way; it means: doing things in a new way in ancient, meaningful and exquisite places, what was always done there […] (Hugo von Hofmannsthal in Salzburger Festspiele, 2022)

This quote from Hugo von Hofmannsthal shows how the festival strengthened Austria as a European nation state by using opera and classical music as its symbols. By 1982, tickets were difficult to find, 99.7% of the shows were sold out and performers and staff were highly paid in comparison to other European festivals (Waterman, 1998, p. 61). “Support for the arts is part of a process used by elites to establish social distance between themselves and others.” (Waterman, 1998, p. 54). This is a form of cultural gatekeeping ⁹ (Soroka, 2012). These examples show that early festivals contributed to the exclusion of marginalized groups and limited access to so-called high-brow culture. Lajos Brons (2015) defines “Othering” as the construction and identification of the self and the other in unequal opposition that attributes inferiority or alienness to the other. These European festivals are examples of how people in positions of privilege often engage in excluding the “Other” in favour of reproducing the dominant culture. Festival organizers, through their selection committees, conduct gatekeeping by curating which musical performances will be made available to the public. I define the festival organizers as the people who make decisions about the management and production of the event, and as the staff and volunteers who implement its plans ¹⁰.

The problem with cultural gatekeeping is that it can work to erase writers, musicians, and singers of colour. In response to this gatekeeping and social exclusion, a new kind of festival emerged in the mid-20th century. A first example is the Newport Jazz Festival, the first large Jazz festival in

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⁹ Stuart Soroka (2012) describes the function of gatekeeping as a process by which certain products reach the consumer, and others don’t. Building on Lewin’s concept of “communications channels” and “gates” (Lewin in Soroka, 2012), Soroka applies the metaphor to literature and mass media and states that media gatekeeping involves cataloguing and selecting stories for publication, similar to the role of an editor. I expand on his theory and transpose it to the process of creating festival programs, which I view as cultural products consumed by the public.

¹⁰ To be clear, I do not explore the governance models and leadership of the festivals in my study. However, further exploration of Board members’ and selection committees’ practices may reveal whether they use responsible management and apply anti-racist and anti-discrimination policies.
the United States. The Newport Jazz Festival was founded in 1954, eight years before Jim Crow laws were abolished. The organizers wanted to promote the idea of racial inclusion and equality and have a positive impact on the representation of Black music and marginalized people in Newport (Bekenshtein, 2020, p. 36). This gave a platform to African American musicians such as Miles Davis, Thelonious Monk, and Sara Vaughan (Bekenshtein, 2020, p. 31). Newport residents were mostly white upper-class and considered jazz “low-brow”. In fact, many expressed racial prejudices against the musicians and festival-goers who attended (p. 32). A second example of how festival shifted their purpose and created more inclusive spaces is Woodstock, which took place in 1969. Woodstock organizers took a political stance against the Vietnam War (Rolling Stone, 2019). One of the festival founders, Greil Marcus, explains what Woodstock meant to the people who attended:

It was a protest and it was an act of resistance. When the students gathered in Tiananmen Square in 1989, they said, ‘This is our Woodstock.’ They didn’t mean Santana, and The Who, and Hendrix; they meant coming together. (Marcus in Rolling Stone, 2019)

The music of Woodstock inspired a social movement for peace and anti-violence just as the Newport Jazz Festival had inspired a movement towards racial equality. These events were turning points in history (Rolling Stone, 2019). A third example is the Toronto-based arts festival Desh Pardesh which began in 1988 as Salaam Toronto. The festival’s purpose was to increase the inclusion of Canada’s South Asian diaspora in Canadian society and awareness of its LGBTQ2+ community (Fernandez, 2006). Creative policy consultant Sharon Fernandez (2006) observes that when South Asian people stepped outside hegemonic society norms they faced challenges from both cultures. She points out that Desh Pardesh participants negotiated these two cultures as they claimed their position as citizens. As one of the participants states:

It's hard to remember that being brown in the ‘70s and ‘80s sucked. It meant feeling like you were from another planet - one where your food stank, your parents were "weird" and you were trying to balance traditional culture with the realities of growing up second-generation. Things were even worse if you were a girl who wanted to avoid marriage, a boy who wanted other boys, a time-expired Indian from Trinidad, a desi bent on revolution. In the late ‘80s Toronto onward, Desh Pardesh was the answer to that suckiness. (Piepznsa-Smarasinha in Fernandez, 2006)
I note that festivals like Desh Pradesh, Nuits d’Afrique (1987), and Sunfest (1994) emerged at a time when academics were beginning to engage in critical theories such as feminism, critical race theory, and post-colonialism (Elam, 2019). In their early days, postcolonial theories engaged in discourse about Africa, Latin America, and South Asia, and focused on globalization (Elam, 2019). I suggest that these discourses became part of policy-makers’ focus, and this created funding opportunities for community organizers who wanted to create a space for marginalized communities. This was also 15 to 20 years after Canada’s immigration laws and policies had been introduced.

Building on festival researchers’ call for social responsibility in their curatorial approach in the last 20 years (Getz, 2009; Dredge & Whitford, 2010; Bekenshtein, 2020), I examine the management practices of festivals that address questions around inclusion, diversity, and multiculturalism. The previous examples show how festivals evolved, through historic shifts, from elite cultural spaces to more open spaces. These new festivals let people from many different backgrounds interact with and consume arts and culture. In spite of progress, many festivals continue to misrepresent or appropriate the culture of racially marginalized communities. Olga Bekenshtein (2020) gives the example of the Montréal Jazz Festival. In 2018, organizers produced a performance by the Canadian theatrical group SLAV. The cast, predominantly white, interpreted slave songs from the American South (Hamilton in Bekenshtein, 2020). Although this is clearly cultural appropriation, the festival’s response at the time was that their event knows “no race, no gender, no religion and all human beings are equal” (Hamilton in Bekenshtein, 2020). This example shows the importance of establishing festival management practices that conduct ethical evaluations and curation of culture and identity.

Arguing that there is no race and all people are equal fails to recognize the lived experience of racially marginalized people worldwide, which is often very different than that of white people. These communities continue to face racism, discrimination, and the repercussions of colonialism and white supremacy. The problem with white producers and performers interpreting Black music about the transatlantic slave trade in the United States is that “white voices become

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11 White supremacy is the belief that white people are superior to other races and should be allowed to have power over them (Newkirk, 2017). I view this belief as the root of white privilege. That is to say, it represents a privileged societal attitude grounded in the logic that white and non-white people experience the same social, political, and economic circumstances (Neville, Worthington & Spanierman, 2001). White supremacy is also rooted in settler colonialism and the transatlantic slave trade (Bischoff & Engel, 2013).
prioritized” (Sumney in Bekenshtein, 2020). Bekenshtein (2020) maintains that there should be more panel discussions at music festivals about social justice issues. Instead, most events are often apolitical and reduced to entertainment or economic activities (p. 4). As she points out, festival managers make decisions that affect public perception of music and play an important role in the framing of expectations, representations, images, stories, and approaches (Bekenshtein, 2020). As Bekenshtein states:

> Before an audience hears music or even gets a sense of the event, festival management makes decisions that affect the perception of that music, framing the expectations, changing the dynamics of representation and negotiating what values deserve to be saved or assessed. Through images, stories, and approaches to programming, festival personnel affect social development. (Bekenshtein, 2020, p. 38)

I view the production of Black culture and identity by white artists and producers as the commodification of difference and a process of cultural appropriation and exploitation. Some festivals construct programs that co-opt Black or Indigenous cultures and objectify them. In addition, they often support white artists who produce music from other cultures for the sake of diversity and economic or professional gain. Anamik Saha (2013) argues that scholars who study the concept of identity often overlook questions surrounding commodification and difference. He maintains that colonial legacies, cultural industries’ governance models, and social and racial hierarchies have shaped cultural production for racially marginalized people (Saha, 2013). Additionally, sociologist David Hesmondhalgh recognizes commodification as a process of enabling and constraining (Hesmondhalgh, 2007, pp. 56-8). It is in the spirit of Saha and Hesmondhalgh’s points of view that I examine Canada’s festival industry and consider how these spaces commodify difference, diversity, and multiculturalism.

Saha (2013) suggests that cultural production, and its shift towards marketization, impose standardized processes. He states that “culture is represented in a way to meet the perceived tastes of the audience” which requires sanitization of race (p. 12). This puts racially marginalized music artists in a challenging position because dominant discourses about culture can be imposed on them while symbolically devaluing under-represented cultures and identities. As Saha points out:

> Racialized minorities working in the arts are vulnerable to the materialities of cultural production, that through the varying degrees of a complex hegemony and
the durability and strength of imperial discourse (Said, 1991: 4), steers symbol creation down particular, dangerous routes. (Saha, 2013)

I consider this position of vulnerability in my analysis and build upon Saha’s theory on the materialities of cultural production and how they can reproduce hegemony and the marginalization of people. I investigate whether racially marginalized music artists are able to negotiate their cultures, languages, and identities without having to “sanitize” or change themselves.

**Performance and Identity: Tools for Navigating Power Imbalances and Under-Representation**

The main purpose of my study is to critically examine the issue of under-representation and mis-representation among racially marginalized francophones in Canadian society. I use the festival industry as a staging ground for my research, exploring how marginalized musicians and singers negotiate the existing cultural hegemony that exists in the music industry. My goal is to explore the symbolism of their performances, public speaking, and social media content, and identify what makes their work more (or less) visible. I want to know which tactics they use to unsettle social and cultural inequities and produce positive representations of their identities. One of the key things my study explores is the space of in-betweenness that migration and transnational mobility create. I utilize theoretical models from migration, identity, and performance studies to understand how music artists move from one location to another for their work. These movements contribute to the formation of complex attachments and fluid and layered identities. Another is the role performances play in constructing identities and creating dialogue about social injustice and marginalization. I use the field of performances studies to understand these processes.

Performance studies take performance as their object of inquiry and ask how social realities construct actions, behaviours, and events (Komitee, n.d.). Performance scholar Richard Schechner defines the seven functions of performance: to entertain, to make beautiful, to impact/change identity, to create communities, to heal, to teach/persuade/convince, and to deal with the sacred (Schechner in Komitee, n.d.). I focus on several of these functions in my study. For example, I look at how entertaining and teaching can require performers to sanitize or change their identities to meet the expectations of audience members and event organizers. I also investigate how racially marginalized music artists use their performances to persuade or teach their audience about the
need to address racial and gender inequality in society. I build upon Richard Schechner’s (2013) and Komitee’s (n.d.) assertion that text analysis can be applied to language, speech, movement, sound, voice, and performance activity. My research finds that racially marginalized music artists participate in performances and public speaking to share knowledge about their identities and cultures, promote their unique music styles, and express opinions about political issues. Information sharing is a form of political engagement and I view it as a way of resisting colonialism and white settler logic.

All of the musicians and singers I observed were engaged in some form of activism or advocacy as part of their work. This ranged from participating in discourse about decolonial movements and gender equality to highlighting the preservation of intangible heritage (see chapter five of the thesis). I introduce the concept of prise de parole as a meaningful way music artists speak to their audiences. This form of public speaking is structured, deliberately informs, influences, amuses the listener, and transmits meaningful messages (Laroche, 2017). Prise de parole can be done through language, voice, or body (Laroche, 2017). In the same way, that storytelling captures the attention of a group of people and communicates a story, prise de parole captures the audience’s attention and allows the performer to share meaningful messages about societal issues (Laroche, 2017; Lacassagne, 2017). I propose that prise de parole can take place through stage performances, literature writing, public speaking, and social media content creation. It merely requires a captive audience and a public platform. I argue that racially marginalized music artists use this strategy during their festival performances and on their Facebook pages.

My research also draws on critical identity studies. In its original form, this field focused on “sameness over time” and at the same time, “difference from others” (Erikson in Coté, 2006). I move away from the idea of difference and towards an understanding of identity as a space that supports in-betweenness, hybridity, and fluidity, and sustains processes of integration as part of the experience of transnational and marginalized people. Therefore, my research is about states of

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12 White logic is a perspective that gives “centrality to the knowledge, history, science, and culture of elite white men” (Zuberi & Bonilla-Silva in Buggs, Sims, & Kramer, 2020).

13 Jacques Derrida (in Coté, 2006) defines identity as the perception of “difference” between people, that is to say, people compare themselves against what they aren’t rather than what they are. To move away from this, I take the position that identity can be fluid, hybrid, and represent various states of in-betweenness.
in-betweenness and how organizations can either support or limit them. My study focuses on cultural, linguistic and musical identities and implies both a collective experience and a perception of oneself. My scholarship requires the ability to understand how people move from one position to another over time rather than adopting a static understanding of the self and of one’s community. I use the term “self” as a way of describing the personal experience of people rather than characterizing their personalities. I also take a symbolic approach to studying the identities of music artists (Weigert in Coté, 2006). This allows me to use an ethnographic approach that “captures the qualities of identities as they emerge through on-going interactional processes” and what they mean to marginalized communities (Coté, 2006). My goal is to develop a critical approach that contrasts historical narratives with contemporary issues and promotes the improvement of marginalized people’s lives. I intend to do this by showing how existing structures and practices create barriers to participation and equal social representation, and how social movements and best practices can inform new policies and decision-making around festival management.

Festival spaces, both virtual and physical, can construct the nation-state and commodify culture, language, and identity through their diverseness. These spaces, whether material or virtual, do so by introducing narratives, symbols, and imagery that describes the local community or the performers. They share these narratives and symbols on their websites and their social media channels. Michael Billig’s concept of banal nationalism is useful for showing how things that go unnoticed, such as flags on buildings or such language as “us” or “them” can be taken-for-granted as ordinary but are indeed symbolic representations of nationalism (Billing in Skey & Antonsich, 2017). He makes a distinction between the banal (subconscious) which often remains unquestioned, and the everyday (conscious). My research identifies several examples of the banal and everyday use of national symbols and of harmful language that perpetuates racism in the festival industry (see chapter four). I also assess the role they play in promoting diversity-driven festivals and racially marginalized francophone performers. One of the ways these symbols reproduce the nation and enable the mobilization of national attitudes is through digital media (Eleftheria J. Lekakis in Skey & Antonsich, 2017). Thus, I explore these symbols as they appear in the Facebook content of music artists and festivals. As an example, several festivals in my study use the word “exotic” to promote food and artisan markets.
Washington Post food writer G. Daniela Galarza (2021) says that the word “exotic” is harmful because it creates a symbolic distance between one group of people and another (Othering). Galarza states that this reinforces xenophobia and racism. She argues:

You know that exotic means ‘Other’ or ‘different’ from a dominant-White perspective because no one ever says, ‘I’m going to go on an exotic vacation, I’m going to Lowell, Mass.’ No one ever says, ‘Let’s go to that exotic new restaurant, let’s go to McDonald’s.’ I can’t imagine anyone calling a Big Mac an exotic sandwich, even if, when it was first introduced to countries outside North America, it may have been viewed with skepticism. (Waring in Galarza, 2021)

Like Galarza, I consider the effects of using words like “exotic” to caption images about African culture. The question of exoticism of food and music brings up how people who sell these products use a Western orientation in opposition to non-Western cultures, and this is rooted in colonialism and slavery (Rivera in Galarza, 2021). In chapter four, I explore this contradiction between the desire for economic participation as vendors and performers and the cultural exploitation of race and difference. Not only do we need to change our language around culture, but we must also develop robust anti-racist and anti-discrimination practices that challenge the tendency to use Western positioning as the default. My analysis gives significant consideration to social representation and to how festivals describe Black francophones’ identities and cultures in promotional material.

I also examine the problem of under-representation in the cultural industries. There are 158,100 artists \(^{14}\) in Canada, representing about 1% of the Canadian labour force (Statistics Canada, 2017). A joint report by the Canadian Council for the Arts, Ontario Arts Council, and Canadian Heritage showed that in 2016, racially marginalized Canadians were the most under-represented group among artists at 15% (CCA, 2019). Musicians and singers make up the largest group of artists (22%) (Statistics Canada, 2017). Racially marginalized musicians and singers make up 17% of the music industry’s workers, 2% higher than all cultural artists put together, but lower than all of Canada’s workforce (21%) (Statistics Canada, 2017). Only 15% of musicians and singers are francophones, compared to 18% of all artists in the cultural industries, and 21% of all workers in Canada (Statistics Canada, 2017). Immigrants make up 21% of musicians and singers in the music

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\(^{14}\) Canada codes nine occupations under the category of artists: 1) musicians and singers, 2) authors and writers, 3) producers, directors and choreographers, 4) visual artists, 5) artisans and craftspeople, 6) actors and comedians, 7) dancers, 8) other performers, and 9) conductors, composers, and arrangers (CCA, 2019).
industry, which is equal to the proportion of all artists, but lower than that of all Canadian workers (24%) (Statistics Canada, 2017).

In 2016, French-speakers made up 22.8% of all Canadians (OCOL, 2020a). This data reveals francophone and racially marginalized people working in the music industry are under-represented. Racially marginalized workers make up 27.11% (3,896,330) of Canada’s population compared to 14,371,790 white Canadians (Hill Strategies Research, 2019, p. 42). This is significant because the number of racially marginalized francophone cultural workers is small, despite these musicians and singers representing two significant groups of Canadians. In addition, many racially marginalized music professionals report experiencing discrimination (The Deetken Group, 2018, p. 19). There are no statistics to measure how many Black francophones work in the cultural or the music industries. Besides that, there are no statistics on racially marginalized linguistic minorities in the festival industry. Figure 1 shows the distribution of francophone and racially marginalized workers compared to non-marginalized cultural workers in Canada. I note that the census uses the terms “racialized” and “non-racialized”.

*Figure 1: Race and Language in Canada’s Music Industry*

![Race and Language in Canada's Music Industry](image)


Canadian radio stations have contributed to the exclusion of Black artists from the music they play. In the 1990s, the Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission (CRTC)
repeatedly denied license applications for a Black/Dance radio station in Toronto, despite its popularity on the radio (Tator, Henry, & Mattis, 1998, pp. 118-121). These examples show that Canada’s music industry needs to better represent and support Black musicians and singers. Many of Canada’s cultural institutions fail to meet the needs of racially marginalized Canadians (Young, 2006). This is in part because industry leaders like the Canadian Academy of Recording Arts and Science conduct gatekeeping and are selective about who they promote and support (Young, 2006). Later on, I discuss how musicians and singers have resisted these industry barriers by using several strategies for increasing their visibility and reach. In chapters four and five I explore the usefulness of Facebooking and online promotional activities, as well as the practice of Code-Switching.

The under-representation of linguistic minorities in music has also been identified in the music industry (CCA, 2019; Creative BC, 2020). This is in part because the industry promotes artists primarily in English. I apply Phillipson’s concept of linguicism to define linguistic domination and discrimination and to discuss the language hierarchy that exists in Canada. Linguicism, or linguistic discrimination, is the unfair treatment of people based on their use of language or the characteristics of their speech, including accent, first language, vocabulary, modality, or syntax (Phillipson, 1992; Skutnabb-Kangas & Phillipson, 1995; Shealy, 2010). French-speaking people, particularly those who live in predominantly English-speaking provinces, are under-represented in the music industry. Joëlle Bissonette and Anne Robineau’s (2017) study on Canada’s music industry found that there is a lack of access to the job market for French-speaking artists who live in FMCs. Participation in the music industry by Black francophone artists, especially those who live outside Québec, creates a double marginalization. I discuss these issues in my dissertation, and consider the role online visibility plays in countering this issue. Visibility depends on the ability to self-represent and create opportunities for economic participation, which explains why performance venues, music artists, and other industry actors are all networking on platforms like Facebook. Facebooking can be a tool for introducing new styles of music and connecting with diverse audiences. When artists understand their position within the virtual networks they inhabit, it allows them to increase both their presence online and their audience.

Mizoko Ito (2010), Alice Marwick, and Danah Boyd’s (2014; 2010) networked public theories lay the groundwork for the analysis of my data. A public is a group of people who share a common
understanding of the world, an identity, a consensus about interests, and a claim to inclusiveness (Livingstone in Boyd, 2010). Ito states that publics can be “reactors, (re)makers and (re)distributors” when they engage in shared culture, discourse, social exchange, and media reception (as quoted in Boyd, 2010). I understand this to mean that the public can react to, make, redistribute, and discuss cultures and social issues by engaging in media spaces. A networked public has all the characteristics of a public. However, it is set against the backdrop of digital technology and a set of social, cultural, and technological developments that drive engagement from people who use digital media (Ito in Boyd, 2010). Boyd explains how networked media shapes publics:

Ito emphasizes the networked media, but I believe we must also focus on the ways in which this shapes publics – both in terms of space and collectives. In short, I contend that networked publics are publics that are restructured by networked technologies; they are simultaneously a space and a collection of people. (Boyd, 2010)

I conceptualize the festival industry, and more broadly the nation of Canada, as sets of digital media data within virtual networks. The networked festival public, which includes artists, audience members, venues, and other social actors, can use these data sets to build relationships and interact with others, consume culture/music, produce digital cultural products, and develop and put in place policies about these processes. They can also use the festival network to connect with places and organizations from a distance. Like Marwick and Boyd (2014), I understand networked publics as digital spaces constructed through digital technologies that enable virtual communities with shared interests, values, and best practices. I further contextualize festivals’ Facebook pages as extensions of their physical manifestations. I argue that the networked festival public can accommodate the building of a “relationship web” between marginalized musicians and singers and festival producers (Bourdieu in Lazaridis Ferguson, 2013). However, these relationships can be supportive or oppressive.

I suggest that the performative and social media practices of racially marginalized francophone musicians and singers contribute to the decolonization of language and culture in Canada. These music artists unsettle old narratives about francophones in Canada and the myth of a homogenized society. I view these processes as taking place within a networked festival industry. I also position Black francophone musicians and singers as mobile communities who create temporary
attachments to the local communities in which they perform. Through their social media practices, they also share and curate content on their Facebook pages to maintain ties to these communities and to participate in political conversations. I challenge the idea that all francophones in Canada identify with specific territories and that these places are entrenched in their identities. Instead, I argue that they are often expected to fit into these territory-based identities. I propose people can be tied to multiple places and nations. I explore these diverse identities in detail in chapters four and six. My study contributes to the scholarship on the mobility paradigm (Cresswell, 2015; Sheller & Urry, 2006; Larsen & Urry, 2008; Sheller, 2004) and on identity studies. I consider the mobility paradigm a useful model for understanding the movement of people across international and national boundaries.

The movement of people and language in Canada can be used to re-contextualize how francophones maintain a sense of community as they move from one city to another for work. Touring musicians and singers from the international francophonie and from Canada engage in transnational mobility and maintain ties with multiple communities through their digital media practices and movement across borders. Indeed, I re-contextualize the “minority francophone” experience and engage Critical Race Theory (CRT) and anti-racist language that reinterpret mainstream identity definitions, political positions and social structures in Canada. This brings to light how official linguistic identities in Canada erase mobility, multilingualism, hybrid identities, and marginalization. I also use the mobility paradigm to re-imagine hybrid and transnational identities and introduce the idea of a moving identity, which accommodates the diverse set of experiences, attachments, and movements of music artists.

My work is also anchored upon Henry Jenkin’s participatory culture theory. Participatory culture is a discourse that advocates social progress through technological development (Jenkins, 2006; Schafer, 2011). It implies that the use of technology gives marginalized people the opportunity to take part in producing culture rather than simply consuming it. Becoming active participants rather than passive observers empowers those who would otherwise feel powerless or be invisible in society. I examine the way musicians and singers who represent linguistic minorities and racially marginalized communities can contribute new narratives about identity, music, and nationhood. I

15 A territory-based identity is a national or collective identity based on its members’ ties to a specific geographic territory and implying legitimacy and recognition as rights holders (Knight, 1982).
argue that they can do this in part through the curation of their social media channels and the use of various strategies that resist social sorting. These strategies can become promising tools for the decolonization of the music industry and for addressing anti-Blackness, discrimination, and racism.

I explore educational philosophers Michelle Knobel and Colin Lankshear’s (2008) concept of remix culture as a way of understanding how artists sometimes change their music and re-image traditional genres. They define remix as the practice of taking apart, combining and manipulating cultural artifacts to create new ones (Knobel & Lankshear, 2008, p. 22). One example is the Canadian group The Halluci Nation (previously called A Tribe Called Red). They combine moombahton, hip hop, and reggae with traditional Indigenous drumming and vocal chanting, creating a genre of music called Pow Wow Step (Kinos-Goodin, 2011). The group uses trap beats and drops, pioneered by Jamaican musicians, to produce electronic dance music (Levine, 2016). Their 2021 song *Land Back* supported the Wt'suwet'en First Nations and Indigenous land sovereignty and protested the Canadian pipeline project (Canadian Press, 2020). The example illustrates how Indigenous artists use remix music to engage in political activism about issues related to Canada. Another example of remix as a tool for political discourse is the song *Santé* by Belgian singer Stromae. In it, he mixes electronic music with cumbia and other traditional beats, rushing and delaying the beat patterns (Neely, 2021). The song is a commentary on the way privileged people treat the working class (Stromae in The Tonight Show, 2021). His performance on The Tonight Show in 2021 featured a group of dancers dressed in waiter uniforms, and at one point, Stromae sang “Arlette, you’ll be spending the party in the bathrooms (translation)”, implying Arlette was working as a cleaner and could not participate in the party (Stromae in The Tonight Show, 2021). Stromae uses remix as an aesthetic, and the lyrics and performances as ways of confronting classism, sexism, and racism.

Third-century poet Hosidius Geta first used remix in his centos when he borrowed passages written by other authors (Rostama, 2015; Tertullian in Refoulé, 1957). Later, during the Renaissance, 15th-century European architects and artists used ancient Roman and Greek elements in their building designs (Rostama, 2015). Another example is the Iranian traditional radif music which uses a series of pre-composed melodies as a backdrop to improvisation (UNESCO, n.d.). More recently, in the
1960s, digital technology replaced analogue recordings, making it easy to change, edit, reproduce and distribute remixed music and other cultural products (Rostama, 2015; Jenkins, 2006). These examples show that remix re-contextualizes and modernizes the old. Some academics have criticized remix culture for romanticizing free culture, encouraging plagiarism, and contributing to existing power imbalances through copyright infringement (Joo in Hart, 2012; Keen, 2007). However, I understand remix as a tool for social and political commentary and economic mobility.

My study advances research on remix by contextualizing this practice as a way marginalized artists navigate and challenge colonial societies. One of the ways they do this is by merging traditional music with Western styles of production as a way of engaging Western audiences and unsettling existing hierarchies within the industry. In chapters four and five, I discuss how several musicians and singers in the study use remix. One example is singer and musician Maya Kamaty’s use of traditional Mallorca music from Reunion Island and remixing it with contemporary Electronica. I interpret this creative practice as both positive and negative. It can be both evidence of creative choices (agency) and a process of transculturalization or assimilation. Even so, like social anthropologists Elisenda Ardévol and Antoni Roig, I view remix as transformative, empowering, and as a tool for decolonization because it shifts power dynamics in favour of marginalized artists.

In addition to exploring how remix and participatory culture support the creative and political agency of music artists, I use Pierre Bourdieu’s (1986) theories on cultural and linguistic capital, which are often used by scholars in film and music festival studies. I look at how cultural and political fields operate within the commercial economy, which consumers and producers can leverage for economic mobility. Marijke De Valck’s (2014) study on Canadian film festivals uses Bourdieu’s work to distinguish between two economic logics: the anti-economy of pure art and the commercial economy. De Valck (2014) argues that similar to social and political fields, the cultural sector operates with rules, discourses, and institutional policies that influence and generate a set of values (p. 76). The tension between the two types of economy (pure art and commerce) is negotiated by the social agents within the field of production. Bourdieu (1986) sees people as social agents who consume/produce culture and are capable of leveraging cultural resources like literature, art, music, and theatre to accumulate cultural and social capital and increase their social standing and status in society (cultural and social capital). In parallel, when people speak, read, or
write in a certain language, they can produce linguistic capital\textsuperscript{16} and gain social standing and status (Bourdieu, 1986). De Valck (2014) suggests that these social agents express their positions about the rules and discourses within the festival industry. They also experience power struggles due to the bifurcation of the cultural field between art and commerce (De Valck, 2014, p. 77). The assumption is that political activism and discourse are part of the “pure art” economy rather than motivated by a desire for commercial success. I extend De Valck’s findings on film festivals to the music festival circuit. De Valck (2014) observes that the bifurcation of the festival industry between pure art and commercial gain leads to two types of organizations: cultural gatekeepers, and commercial entities beholden to their financial stakeholders (p. 78). This allows me to consider the limits of festival management and the constraints organizations face when trying to create spaces that support multiculturalism and diversity.

Alex Lazaridis Ferguson’s (2013) study on the international performing arts festival circuit explores the way they use symbolic capital\textsuperscript{17}. Like De Valck, he suggests that the relationship between producers and consumers (procurers) of culture is status-driven and leads people to compete with one another for symbolic capital (p. 100). Lazaridis Ferguson argues that Bourdieu overlooks the motivations people have for participating in this capital exchange. Despite their position-taking and participation in political activity, music festivals tend towards cooperation and mutual benefit. I agree with this view and add that this is the reason most festival organizations are largely apolitical, despite their position as producers of culture and their central role in distributing music to the public. As De Valck puts it, “festivals are the brokers of symbolic capital.” (p. 78). The relationships people build within the system are key to accessing this capital. Curators of culture and music are beholden to various relationships, budget constraints, organizational limits, and personal visions. As Lazaridis Ferguson states:

\begin{quote}
A curator’s selection of a show is a complex process that depends on subjective response, cultivation of interpersonal relationships among curators and artists, budget limitations, and other practical and inspirational concerns. (Lazaridis Ferguson, 2013, p. 105)
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{16} Linguistic capital is a form of cultural capital accumulated by a person’s linguistic skills (Bourdieu, 1991).

\textsuperscript{17} Lazaridis Ferguson (2013) defines symbolic capital as “a metaphorical currency that confers prestige on an individual and is exchanged between agents vying for status and power in the field…”.  

These factors can sometimes limit the way festival programs are designed and music artists are selected. I argue that the process of bringing together people is central to festivals’ decision-making. I point to scholars who claim that music festivals increase social cohesion and bridge boundaries between groups of people (Wilks, 2011; Wilson et al., 2016; Getz, 2010). Wilks demonstrates that folk, pop, and opera festivals tend not to be productive sites for developing social and cultural policies that combat social exclusion because attendees are often similar in their demographics (white). I compare her findings to our earlier discussion on European classical music festivals. Wilks observes that the flow of capital controls group membership, which can facilitate access or restrict it (Bourdieu in Wilks, 2011). For example, in March 2022, the Festival de la chanson de Granby withdrew its invitation to Indigenous rapper Samian after learning he would perform his songs in Anishnabemowin rather than in French (Montréal Gazette, 2022). The music artist posted the following on his social media:

In 2022 should Indigenous languages still be considered foreign languages? I’m absolutely fed up with this colonial mentality. It’s time to change that in Quebec!

(Samian in Montréal Gazette, 2022)

The example shows the power that social media platforms can wield. Less than five hours after Samian posted his story, the Assembly of First Nations Québec-Labrador made a public statement on the issue. The festival has since reinstated the invitation to Samian (Montréal Gazette, 2022).

Festivals can also hold capital. For example, staff and volunteers can enhance the reputation of organizations (Schneider, 2009), and cultural authenticity can legitimize the work that they do. The music festivals see themselves as facilitating marginalized musicians and singers’ participation in the Canadian economy by providing work opportunities. Festivals offer musicians and singers a place to perform and gain a reputation in the industry. As well, some festivals provide a platform for music artists to expand their visibility and gain recognition at the national level. Nevertheless, festivals and the communities in which they exist are entrenched in a hegemonic system that perpetuates the exclusion and under-representation of Canada’s linguistic minorities and racially marginalized people. Bourdieu states that cultural capital exists “in an embodied state, i.e. as a long-lasting disposition of the individual’s mind and body; in an objectified state, when cultural capital is turned into cultural goods…” (Bourdieu, 1986, p. 243). This statement shows how racially marginalized artists must negotiate opportunity and commodification of self while
also selling their music. When they engage in political discourse, they risk losing the capital they’ve accumulated. Still, many music artists participate in social activism anyway. I propose that symbolic, linguistic, and cultural capital contributes to the economic mobility of French-speaking Black people when they effectively negotiate the boundaries, rules, and discourses of Québécois and Ontarian festivals. Yet, racially marginalized francophone musicians and singers must navigate language and culture in a way that allows them to compete with other artists. They must also take great care in the way they engage in political discourse for fear of reprisal. In 1989, poet M. NourbeSe Philip participated in a protest against PEN Canada’s lack of writers of colour (Parris, 2020). In her response, journalist and then chair of PEN Canada June Callwood publicly told Philip to “f* *** off”. Philip was later subjected to verbal attacks, racial slurs, and her eventual erasure from Canada’s literary community (Parris, 2020).

I argue that in some cases, music artists’ cultural background can provide limited cultural capital that helps them develop their professional profiles as Canadian artists. For example, using pre-established categories like “world music” opens the door to some awards and performance opportunities, as we will see in chapter three. However, I acknowledge that media publishers, music content producers, and festivals often use monolithic categories that erase the artists’ identities and musical roots.

**Chapter Summaries**

In acknowledging the legacy of slavery, I explore the construction of francophone identities in Canada after Confederation. I outline the way political and historical events constructed narratives that excluded racially marginalized settlers and erased Canada’s participation in the transatlantic slave trade. I discuss how the resistance of francophone communities against British assimilation policies created effective social movements that counter linguistic marginalization. However, these movements have not addressed anti-Blackness and the exclusion of racially marginalized francophones. I use a post-colonial/CRT perspective to understand the experience of racially marginalized francophones in contemporary Canada from the context of historical racism. I discuss

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18 PEN Canada’s website says that they celebrate literature, defend freedom of expression and help writers in peril (PEN Canada, 2022).
the impact of language hierarchies on marginalized francophones and explore the role of language in constructing representations in society. I outline how historical legacies, like the transatlantic slave trade and Canada’s white supremacy movements, have contributed to systemic racism in legal, cultural, and economic systems. I provide an overview of the development of multiculturalism policy in Canada and discuss how in the 1970s and 1980s, white supremacy and anti-immigration challenged this new Canadian identity. I show how these historical legacies have contributed to exclusion of Black francophones and the continued existence of racism, discrimination, prejudice, xenophobia and intolerance in Canada. I discuss how this process of “Othering” racially marginalized people has led to their under-representation in the media and various industries, and to the isolation and alienation of Black people from the dominant culture. I explore how resistance movements like Black Lives Matter can create a more inclusive and equitable society.

Chapter three outlines my methodology, and defines digital ethnography. I conceptualize the festival ecosystem as a networked public where organizers, performers, and visitors can build and maintain relationships. I describe my ethnographic community and the object of my research, five diversity-focused festivals and a series of francophone music artists who performed at these events in 2019. I discuss the way each festival’s mandate contributes to an organizational identity that focuses on its role of building social cohesion within communities and promoting diversity. I give examples of digital ethnographies that have been useful for studying social media platforms and expanding researchers’ understanding of what goes on in the material world. Interactions between people continue online after the festival events end. They allow music artists to express their unique identities and music styles, share knowledge about their cultures and music, and participate in cultural dialogue with their audience. I discuss several ethical questions and describe some of the challenges I faced during the design and implementation of the study. I also discuss the considerations I made concerning my position as a white francophone settler. I describe how music artists negotiate their identities, which are often fluid, hybrid, and transnational. I explore the impact of categorizing music under catch-all labels like “world music” and analyze how each of the artists’ biographical descriptions symbolize their musical influence, national/transnational identity, and at the same time, challenge existing labels and categories in the industry. I give examples of how music artists’ lyrics and music styles represent various resistance movements and create counter-narratives that create a place for marginalized people.
In chapter four, I discuss the concept of cultural interventionism and how Canada has used it to promote cross-cultural dialogue and social cohesion in a multicultural nation. I explore how the development of a digitized society and the increased migration of people have shifted Canadian identities. I apply Homi Bhabha’s post-colonial theories on interculturalism to delve into processes of hybridization and the subversion of the dominant culture. I also discuss how music artists who represent marginalized communities express hybrid and fluid identities. These identities are characterized by frequent movements between places, and by a state of in-betweenness negotiated by various tactics. I map out existing scholarship on hybridity and transculturation yet discuss how these theoretical frameworks support and hinder our understanding of racially marginalized people. I explain the consequences of the power struggle between commercial and cultural motivations and the impact of a commodified festival field. I give examples of how some festivals exoticize African culture through their marketing practices, thus contributing to racism in Canada. I discuss how music artists use umbrella terms like “world music” and at times, challenge them. I also explore the symbolic meaning of artisan markets and restaurants and the way festivals’ promotional practices can impact how people interpret them. In chapter four, I discuss how commodifying culture and identity can also lead to cultural appropriation. I explore how linguistic discrimination and domination have impacted racially marginalized francophones in Canada. I argue that Bourdieu’s capital theories explain how the strategies used by music artists produce economic mobility. I explore the code-switching practices of multilingual francophone music artists and consider their purpose. I argue that code-switching in public speaking, festival performances, and online content creation allows multilingual people to negotiate context and social norms so they can access cultural and linguistic capital. For example, I use the social media captions of several music artists to identify code-switching between Creole, French, English, and other languages. I also discuss how racially marginalized musicians and singers have long used their public platform to raise awareness about social issues and cultural rights (Tan, 2019). I want to show how performers at diversity-driven festivals engage in this process.

In chapter five, I explore the way festivals that “sell” diversity and multiculturalism commodify culture and identity. I look at how their dual role as economic tools and promoters of diversity creates a contradiction that can be harmful to marginalized groups. I provide several examples of how festivals’ marketing practices can contribute to the “Othering” and exotification of Black music artists. I also explore the promotional strategies racially marginalized francophone
musicians and singers use to engage in political discourses about colonialism and gender inequality. I argue that tactics like hashtag activism 19 and prise de parole allow artists to participate in the decolonization of festivals and the music industry of settler-colonial states. I further explore how music artists use the networked qualities of the festival by leveraging online spaces to speak to different audiences. I argue that marginalized musicians and singers can amplify their voices through Facebooking as an extension of the work they do during their performances. I introduce the concept of participatory festival culture as a theoretical model for understanding how technology sustains these strategic Facebooking and on-stage activities and supports participation in political dialogue and activism. I discuss how they use both the stage and their social media to amplify their voices and their messages. I argue that this disrupts existing hierarchies and constraints within the music and festival industries. I provide a model for positive festival management that supports anti-racism and decolonial movements. I briefly discuss the multiple uses of Facebook and how the desire to build brand authority can conflict with the need for festivals to support political discourse and activism.

In chapter six, I discuss the importance of recognizing multilingual code-switchers, and the transnational and moving identities held by racially marginalized music artists. I view these fluid identities as part of Canada’s francophonie and argue that acknowledging their presence is crucial to creating a more inclusive and supporting society. I turn my attention towards the opportunity diversity-focused festivals have to create productive and supportive decolonized spaces for marginalized communities. I argue that rather than remaining apolitical, festivals should engage with their music artists’ decolonial work and acknowledge the existence of racism, discrimination, and anti-Blackness in Canada. I suggest that music artists mobilize strategic tactics and creative choices that counter the music industry’s compartmentalization of marginalized groups. I discuss how the commodification of diversity can further harm racially marginalized artists by reproducing difference. I propose that the management and marketing practices of diversity-focused festivals must consider the work that politically and socially engaged music artists do and move towards a more critical approach to musical production. I discuss the theoretical implications of my results, and make recommendations for future festival studies. I propose that future research on allyship

19 Hashtag Activism is made possible when “large numbers of postings appear on social media under a common hashtagged word, phrase or sentence with a social or political claim.” (Yang, 2016, p. 13). For example, #BlackLivesMatter became hashtag activism when civil rights activist Alicia Garza posted the statement “Black Lives Matter” on Facebook after the acquittal of Trayvon Martin’s killer George Zimmerman.” (p. 15).
and the usefulness of other digital media platforms can increase festival researchers’ understanding of the experience of marginalized communities and artists, and support existing social justice movements in Canada.

**Scope and Limits of the Study**

While many festival scholars have focused on the motivations for festival attendance and the experience of festival-goers, I turn my attention towards the performers and organizers, as cultural producers. For example, rather than exploring the decision-making and engagement processes of festival guests, I look at how the decisions of music artists and festival organizations can potentially impact racially marginalized community members, and how these processes contribute to the representation of marginalized communities. I view this as important because under-representation contributes to racism in society. I do not look at whether engagement on social media leads to higher attendance at the festival, nor do I investigate the effectiveness or benefit of these marketing practices for festivals and funders. Instead, I engage in a semiotic analysis of the symbolic use of music, culture, language, food, artisanal products, and identity, and I consider the potential for positive vs negative representations of marginalized Canadians. While I recognize the role of reception theory in understanding the way the public interprets information, I don’t use it because my study is focused on the processes that produce cultural messages rather than how these messages are received. Therefore, the expectations and reactions of audiences, both online and in person, are less important to me than the way artists and festivals construct their identities, brands, and images, and how they engage in discourse about political issues that affect the community. I am interested in understanding how music artists negotiate their fluid identities. That said, I occasionally comment on music artists and festivals’ motivations for adopting certain marketing practices.

My digital ethnography was limited to Facebook to ensure the data volume and study timelines remained manageable. I gathered screen captures representing three months of Facebook posts by each music festival and artist, before the main events. I chose not to explore the way platforms and content creators use algorithms to increase their online visibility. I also did not quantify audience engagement for individual posts, such as the number of likes and shares. This would have required
a quantitative approach to my research, which is uncommon in ethnographic studies. In addition, the About sections I used to build my ethnographic community profile in chapter three illustrate the ephemeral nature of social media content. That is to say, some data captured in 2019 had since been removed or changed. As well, a few artists had little to no presence on Facebook, such as MOOV and Lakou Veranda. This made the exploration of their pages impossible. However, I attended their live performances and conducted additional online research to understand these music artists better.

I do not explore the governance models and leadership of music festivals. I acknowledge, however, that further exploration of board members’ and selection committees’ backgrounds and practices might reveal more about their management practices and policies related to marginalized people. Although professional associations and funding agencies are part of the festival ecosystem, I exclude them from the study. They are not actively involved with the internal promotional practices and creative and curatorial decisions of music festivals and artists. While I also acknowledge that some funding organizations have communication guidelines, my study does not analyze these institutional policies. I also don’t compare Black and white representations of musicians and singers, which could reveal why under-representation and misrepresentation among Black francophone musicians and singers contribute to discrimination and racism in Canada. As well, my study does not explore the representation of Indigenous musicians and singers at diversity-focused festivals, since only one Indigenous francophone music artist performed at the festivals I attended.

As a methodological approach, Digital Ethnography (DE) presents a few limitations. For example, online information is often conceptualized as a continual accumulation of past posts by online community members. Yet, social media content is ephemeral because it can be modified, edited, or deleted by the author. Because of this, the screen captures I collected represent only a point-in-time snapshot and are not a permanent record of the festivals, musicians and singers. An example is that music artists can adjust their privacy settings, making some content visible or invisible to the public. I excluded data previously made public but later removed. Another issue is that DE sometimes reveals identifiable and sensitive information shared by other parties and interactions, and is not relevant to the study (Lane 2016). I therefore chose to select only excerpts that focused
on answering my research questions. I deleted any that didn’t. For example, I excluded birthday wishes and personal messages from family.

Due to economic and time constraints, I limited my field visits to the provinces of Ontario and Québec. At times, accommodations were cost prohibitive and I needed to choose which days to attend. Additionally, some performances overlapped due to scheduling and location, and I was unable to see all of the festival performances. I had to be selective and reflexive about how each performance would support my research objectives and which artists would provide the richest data. I chose to observe performers representing different national identities to showcase the diversity of francophones in Canada. This included Canadian artists from diverse locations and backgrounds. When international performers represented the same groups or nations, I chose instead to attend performances from cultural backgrounds I had not yet seen. For example, two Colombian groups were performing at Mondo Karnaval. I chose to see only one of those performances.

Because I used a case study approach, the results of the research may not be generalized to other industries or groups of people. Additionally, as a white settler, I may have a biased view of Canada’s power dynamics and colonialism because I’m not a racially marginalized person and can’t fully understand the lived experience of my participants. To mitigate this, I used an ethnographic approach, which allowed me to conduct storytelling through the eyes of the musicians and singers. To achieve this, I used direct quotes from each performer’s public speaking and social media captions and discussed the differences between self-description and descriptions made by others, such as journalists and festival organizers.
CHAPTER TWO: ADDRESSING ANTI-BLACKNESS AND LANGUAGE HIERARCHIES IN CANADA

In this chapter, I explore how the historical narratives tied to French-Canadian settler identities and histories have for the most part excluded Black and other racially marginalized people. I propose that British assimilation policies led to the development of a mobilized francophone society that uses social movements and protest to confront and resist linguistic assimilation policies. At the same time, these movements have not confronted Canada’s legacy of anti-Blackness. Their mobilization has not focused on addressing anti-immigration or white supremacy, nor acknowledged Canada’s history of slavery. This has alienated racially marginalized francophones who continue to face racism, discrimination, and exclusion from Canada’s legal, cultural, and economic systems. I argue that the “Canadian” identity is fundamentally constructed by white settler narratives, which have given rise to exclusion and a lack of representation of marginalized francophones. I also argue that this must be named and questioned in order to address anti-Blackness and racism. I provide a brief historical survey of how multiculturalism policy emerged in Canada and contributed to the contemporary “Canadian” identity. I also provide an overview of Canada’s second wave of white supremacy in the 1970s and 1980s, which emerged during the same period multiculturalism was introduced. This, and a third anti-immigration wave after 9/11 contributed to the marginalization of African, Asian, and Muslim Canadians.

The chapter presents several examples of the marginalization of Black and Asian settlers, and Indigenous people as evidence of the presence of discrimination, racism, and exclusion in Canada during the late 19th and early 20th centuries. I engage with CRT to challenge the white settler logic that erases Black settlers from the discourse and historical narrative about French Canada and New France. I follow this with a discussion about the connection between slavery, white supremacy and the racism against Black Canadians today. To structure my chapter, I split my discussion into two historic periods. I start from the first documented presence of Black settlers in 1608 and survey anti-immigration and anti-francophone movements up to the last charter legally given to a Ku Klux Klan chapter in Alberta in 1925. I then move to the introduction of multiculturalism as a legal framework in 1971. I discuss how new forms of white supremacy and anti-immigration resurfaced and buttressed racism from the 1970s until 2001 when Muslim citizens and refugees faced racial intolerance after 9/11. To respect the chronological order of events, I discuss examples from
French-Canadian and racially marginalized Canadians together, although I note that comparing the two histories can be problematic. In the final section, I discuss issues around language hierarchies in Canada, and show how many racially marginalized Canadians face several layers of discrimination and experience gatekeeping, which adds to their exclusion from mainstream opportunities and resources.

Acknowledging the Legacy of Slavery and White Supremacy in Canada

Stories of early Black settlers and the presence of enslaved people in New France and pre-Confederation Canada rewrite popular narratives about the history of these nations. They make clear the presence of Black francophones as early as some of the first white settlers from France and other French-speaking European nations. I begin with the earliest documented French-speaking Black settler in New France, interpreter Mathieu Da Costa. Da Costa arrived in New France as a free man around 1608 and worked for French merchant Pierre Dugua de Mons (Johnston, A.J.B, n.d.). A multilingual settler, he spoke Portuguese, French, Dutch, Crioulo (a Portuguese base Creole), and a form of Basque pidgin, which he used to communicate with Mi’kmaq and Montagnais people (Johnston, A.J.B, n.d.). The story of Da Costa unsettles popular narratives about New France being a homogenized society.

Canada prides itself on being a welcoming nation and having historically been a safe haven for African slaves from the United States. However, there are a combined 4,185 documented mentions of enslaved people in the historic records of New France and the Lower and Upper Canadas between 1628 and 1831 (Edeh, 2016; Trudel and d’Allaire, 2013). Historian George Tombs argues that there were likely many thousands more than the 4,000 indexed by Marcel Trudel in his 1960 book *L’Esclavage au Canada Français*, since the systemic dehumanization of enslaved people meant that they were not always documented (Ostroff, 2019).

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20 Terms like “marginalized” and “francophone minorities” are frequently used in Québec Studies to discuss francophones and must be reflected upon by scholars. This language mirrors discourse about racial marginalization and this implies racism/racial marginalization and linguistic marginalization are equal. In my view, they are not.
That said, records are incomplete and sometimes difficult to confirm. In the 17th century, European colonial laws such as Le Code Noir ²¹, as well as the heavy involvement of French and British monarchs in the slave trade, contributed a legacy of racist laws and ideologies that considered Black people inhuman ²². I use four examples to challenge the myth that Canada has never involved itself in the slave trade. The Royal African Company, a company owned by King Charles II of England and his brother James, is thought to have transported 100,000 enslaved Africans to the Americas and the Caribbean between 1672 and 1731 (Carlos & Brown Kruse, 1996). The slave traders were granted a legal charter in 1663 by the British crown, and the monarchy went on to control all English business in the transatlantic slave trade (Carlos & Brown Kruse, 1996). A second example is the first documented Black person to have lived in New France, Malagasy enslaved man Olivier LeJeune (Edeh, 2016). LeJeune is believed to have been captured by David Kirke and gifted to Guillaume Couillard. He was jailed in 1638 for slandering interpreter and fur trader Nicolas Marsolet (Edeh, 2016). A third example of slavery in New France is Marie-Joseph Angélique, a French-speaking enslaved woman from Francheville (today’s county of Maskinongé). After attempting to escape in 1734 and allegedly setting fire to the house where she lived, she was imprisoned, sentenced to be hanged, and burned alive (Vachon, 2003). The brutal sentence was carried out, but only after she had been tortured and beaten by authorities (Vachon, 2003). A fourth example is the documented arrest on July 23rd, 1745, of three Guadeloupean people, in Québec City. A declaration states that three Black slaves, a woman and two men, “had escaped from the English island Antigua to the French island Guadeloupe, and there were seized and sold” (translation). The purpose of the declaration was to ensure that any enslaved people who escaped from an enemy colony would henceforth belong to the King of France (Riddell, 1925). These stories about Black settlers and enslaved people show that Black francophones were indeed present in New France. They also indicate that French and British settlers in Canada and the Caribbean actively participated in slavery. They did so by transporting, trading, selling, and purchasing people from Africa and the French and British colonies.

²¹ Le Code Noir is a decree passed by King Louis XIV in 1685 outlining regulations for slavery in the French colonial empire (Palmer, 1996).

²² At different times during the history of the slave trade, traders from Portugal, Sweden, Britain, and Holland kept enslaved people in Senegal, Ghana and other African countries (UNESCO, 2013). They did so in inhumane conditions and subjected them to physical abuse, torture and executions (UNESCO, 2013).
The objectives of colonization through slavery were the domination, submission, humiliation, and dehumanization of African people (Hassan, 2020). The Caribbean territories were deeply impacted by colonialism and by the trafficking and exploitation of African people. The forced population transfer from Africa to the Caribbean and the brutality of the plantation economy created inhumane conditions for enslaved people (Hassan, 2020). Nayera M. Hassan (2020) notes that the transatlantic slave trade negatively impacted the ability of African people in the Caribbean to self-define in the face of their loss of culture, language, and history. He argues that the production of resistance literature has helped re-create the cultural identity of slave descendants in the Caribbean. I build upon Hassan’s assertion that cultural production by people of African descent can be understood as an act of resistance. I propose that the production of music has also contributed to the resistance of Caribbean and African people. In chapters three and five, I show examples of how Caribbean music artists use their lyrics to participate in resistance movements and point to the negative impact of colonialism and neo-colonialism. Another consequence of the slave trade in the Caribbean was the creolization of African languages (Mufwene, 1996). Daniel Véronique states: “the development of a plantation economy provoked the massive arrival of new slaves […]. This led to dominant linguistic varieties and a distortion of the continuum of linguistic exchanges (translation)” (Véronique, 2000, p. 34). Linguist Salikoko Mufwene (1996) observes that people who speak Creole express linguistic variations according to the region they live in. My data indicates that many of the musicians and singers who perform at Canadian festivals frequently use creolized languages such as Guadeloupean Creole, Réunionnais Creole, and Haitian Creole, which are symbolic of their identities. Novelist and literary theorist Edouard Glissant theorized that creolization represents both cultural and linguistic phenomena. Glissant (in Céry, 2015) argued that in the context of Martinique relations between cultures result in creolization and different identities, which differentiates itself from hybridization because of the unpredictability. He introduced the concept of antillanité, which was aimed at reclaiming the West Indian identity and Black Caribbean heritage from the French colonial system (Glissant in Céry, 2015).

The transatlantic slave trade also contributed to the under-development of Africa and led to several negative consequences for the continent such as the fragmenting of families, a depletion

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23 The legacy of the transatlantic slave trade dates back many centuries. For example, in Ghana, there are more than 30 slave trade forts along the Cape Coast which were operational between the 16th century to the 19th century (BBC
of the workforce, and a diminished population size. Eloi Coly, Director of the House of Slaves museum in Gorée Island Senegal, states the following:

The consequence is the development of Africa because they chose the youngest and the strongest from Africa to [bring to] America. They destroyed the African family structure [...] the population in Africa, and the [workforce]. (Eloi Coly in UNESCO, 2013)

Expanding on the idea that slavery was a manifestation of white people’s belief that they were superior to Black people, I share a brief historical survey of white supremacy and anti-immigration movements in Canada. I propose that the legacy of slavery in Canada contributed to ideologies that fueled white supremacy movements. I agree with Amal Madibbo (2021) who argues that white supremacist movements rooted in classical racism are part of Canada’s history. There are other examples of early Black settlers in Canada such as Henry Cousby and Ned Patterson who were granted land in 1815 after the American Revolution (Harewood, 2022). They established the settlement of Priceville, Ontario (Harewood, 2022; Edugyan, 2022). However, as white settlers from the British Isles began to settle in the region, black residents were forced out of the community through intimidation and discrimination (Holness & Sutherland, 2000). White settlers dismantled the Black settler graveyard and built a baseball field over the land (Holness & Sutherland, 2000; Edugyan, 2022). I propose that this is evidence of how white Canadians erased the history of Black settlers. I argue that this is because Black people were seen as inferior, dehumanized, and subjected to racism. Several white supremacist organizations existed in Canada during this period and afterwards. For example, in Ontario, the Orange Order had established lodges as early as 1830, and by 1844, six of the city of Toronto’s municipal councillors were members of the order (Houston, 1980). More Orange Orders were later established in Newfoundland and Alberta (Baergen in Madibbo, 2021).

In Canada, white supremacy and anti-immigration movements espoused anti-Catholic, anti-Asian, anti-French, and anti-Black sentiments based on biological determinism, which categorized people into separate races and stressed the racial superiority of white people (Madibbo, 2021). In addition,

News Africa, 2020). In Gorée Island Senegal, the Maison des Esclaves trafficked thousands of Africans for the production of bananas, cotton, and other staples destined for the Americas and the Caribbean. Many enslaved Africans were also sold for sugar cane production in the Caribbean (UNESCO, 2013). African slaves were kept in dungeons in inhumane conditions, and experienced physical abuse, torture and executions by traders from nations such as Portugal, Sweden, Britain, and Holland at different times in history (UNESCO, 2013).
the federal and provincial laws and policies that governed Canada’s languages and education system were also rooted in Britain’s post-Confederation campaign of discrimination, assimilation\textsuperscript{24} and had aspirations for a homogeneous English nation-state. A wave of white supremacist movements and anti-immigration laws emerged in the late 19\textsuperscript{th} and early 20\textsuperscript{th} centuries after Confederation. I briefly outline a few examples here. In 1872, British Columbia’s provincial government introduced a literacy requirement for voting, which restricted Indigenous and Chinese residents from participating in provincial elections (Price, 2013, p. 629). By 1885, the federal government of Canada was imposing a head tax on Chinese migrants preventing women from immigrating (Price, 2013). In 1908, the federal government passed the Continuous Passage Act which prevented citizens of India from coming to Canada without direct passage which, at the time, was not possible (Khalsa Diwan Society, n.d.). The law also required any citizen of India who arrived to possess $200, an amount eight times higher than required of white immigrants (Khalsa Diwan Society, n.d.). In 1914, Gurdit Singh chartered a ship, the Komagata Maru, to take 376 Indian refugees, most of whom were Punjabi, to Canada (Khalsa Diwan Society, n.d.). They were refused entry by Canadian officials and sent back to India where British authorities shot many of the passengers, killed 20 people, and imprisoned many of the remaining survivors (Khalsa Diwan Society, n.d.).

In examining post-Confederation anti-Frenchness in Canada, we find that Confederation (1867) initially led to the dissolution of the Canadien identity and reconstructed Frenchness into one half of a bifurcated social and political system that separated settlers into French-Canadians\textsuperscript{25} and English-Canadians. Benedict Anderson’s (1983) concept of the imagined community explains how the construction of a new settler state rooted in Britishness worked to erase the presence of Frenchness across Canada and establish a “one-nation” narrative. At the same time, this “new” nation did not recognize Blackness, Asianness, Indigeneity, and so on. This created a Canadian identity that was ultimately tied to Britishness and whiteness as part of the new nation’s desire to be devoid of “Otherness”. The dissolution of the Canadien identity after the separation of Canada

\textsuperscript{24}Assimilation tactics lead to a loss of language and culture, and subsequently damage to a person’s sense of identity (Williams in Khawaja, 2021).

\textsuperscript{25}French-Canadian identity based its identity on religious conservatism, messianism, ultramontanism, and agriculturalism (Bélanger, 2000) and became characterized by traditionalism and the desire to survive as a nation and preserve the French language after Confederation.
into two parts: Lower and Upper Canada, worked to exclude francophone linguistic minorities living outside what is now Québec. Through this tactical bifurcation and the consolidation of Confederation in 1867, Canada birthed a bilingual and bicultural political system of governance (Justice Canada, 2016). One example of Britain’s attempts at assimilating French-Canadians is Règlement 17 (1912), a regulation that banned French instruction in Ontario schools (Charbonneau & Bock, 2015). Similar policies were imposed in other provinces such as Alberta’s Legislative Assembly and education laws (1892) and Manitoba’s Thornton Law (1916) on French schools, making English the only language of political participation and instruction (Government of Alberta, 2022; Radio-Canada, 2016).

In response to these regulations, in 1916, two educators from Ontario, Béatrice and Diane Desloges, led a protest in Ottawa that would establish the écoles de la résistance (schools of resistance). In what would later be called the Battle of the Hat Pins, police surrounded École Guigues while the Desloges sisters taught local children. Mothers and teachers used their hatpins, skillets, and rolling pins to push back local authorities and keep them out of the building (Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages, n.d.). Their actions inspired people across Ontario and other provinces to protest the regulation and fight for French-language education. These protests continued for weeks while teachers defiantly taught the children in French (Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages, n.d.). This event subsequently led to the reinstatement of French-language education rights in Ontario. I use this example to show how francophones in predominantly English provinces have historically used their political agency to mobilize and effectively re-instate, albeit gradually, their language rights. This resistance movement strengthened French-Canadians’ resolve to preserve their language and culture and strengthened regional francophone identities. Many francophone communities across Canada mobilized and developed associations to advocate for their language rights in the early 20th century. For example, in 1910, they established the Association canadienne-française d’éducation de l’Ontario (ACFEO) (Assemblée de la Francophonie de l’Ontario, 2022). These associative spaces have historically advocated for minority language rights and have strengthened French-language education and services 26.

26 At this point, it is important to note that conversations about racially marginalized people are nearly absent from existing primary sources and academic/government literature on francophones in Canada. As historian Jean-Phillipe
I note that while these events were taking place, Black, Asian, and Indigenous people continued to face racism and exclusion from Canadian society. For example, Orangists promoted anti-French, anti-immigrant, and anti-Catholic sentiment (Palmer in Madibbo) which played a part in the exclusion of racially, religiously, and linguistically marginalized Canadians from public sector jobs, especially in the police and fire section (Smyth in Jenkins, 2016). Another example is Canada’s government and church-sponsored residential school system which portrayed English and French as superior languages and discriminated against Indigenous people by imposing oppressive and destructive policies on their children and families (1876-1996) (Khawaja, 2021). By 1925, there were 1100 active Ku Klux Klan members in Ontario and many other chapters in provinces like Saskatchewan and Alberta (Madibbo, 2021, p. 89).

This legacy of racism 27, which is a doctrine of seeing one’s own “race” as superior to other races (Pettigrew, 2020), isn’t something most Canadians are willing to confront. Racism promotes discrimination, prejudice, xenophobia, bigotry, and intolerance (Pettigrew, 2020). In my view, racist ideologies are responsible for the marginalization of Black histories from white ones. As writer Esi Edugyan states: “there can be a kind of suppression of marginalized histories, especially ones that are so dark and contentious, that you don’t want to confront.” (Edugyan, 2022). The transatlantic slave trade and the white supremacy movements involving Canada gave rise to racist ideologies that continue to pervade society. These ideologies have impacted Canada’s legal, health, social, justice, and education systems and policies. For example, Black students in Toronto’s school system feel alienated from their schools and don’t see themselves reflected in what’s being taught (Johnson, 2013). In addition, Black Canadians don’t experience citizenship the same way white Canadians do because they are always under surveillance and being over-policing (Cooper in Brown, 2018). Many Canadian police services have come under fire in recent years for their

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27 Racism manifests through three paths: the unconscious and conscious attitudes and personal beliefs of people, the cultural schemas with which they make sense of the world and themselves, and the social relations to which they are oriented and are oriented towards them (structures) (Jiannbin & Woody, 2020). These three lenses conceptualize racism as an ideology, a cultural process of ideology, and a social system. Lamont et al. define cultural schemas as the frames, narratives, scripts, and boundaries social actors draw on in social situations (Lamont & Mizrachi, 2012).
carding practices. Moreover, a study found that the practice is harmful to Black communities who are three times more likely to be carded compared to white citizens (Perkel, 2017). Racial profiling reduces racially marginalized communities’ trust in the police (Perkel, 2017). These racist practices are rooted in the slave patrols of the 18th and 19th centuries (Brown, 2018). For example, in 1793, in Niagara-on-the-Lake, Chloe Cooler was forced at gun point to return to the United States where she had escaped slave owner Adam Vrooman (Hopper, 2021). The example of over-policing illustrates how the transatlantic slave trade, in which Canada participated, contributed to harmful practices in the justice system against Black communities. The experience of Black students in Canada’s education system shows how using dominant white settler narratives to teach history and erasing Blackness contribute to the alienation of Black students.

The Rise of a Multicultural Canada and a New Wave of Anti-Immigration

Multiculturalism is defined as a political policy that supports members of minority groups, and ideally, maintains their distinctive identities and practices while they integrate into society (Song, 2020). At its conception in 1971, multiculturalism was positioned as an important element of the Canadian identity (Trudeau, 1971; Government of Canada, 1978). In 1982, the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms reaffirmed multiculturalism as a Canadian value (Section 27), which was reiterated and broadened by the Canadian Multiculturalism Act of 1988 (Kenyeres, 2014). Around the same time that multiculturalism was introduced as a national policy, Canada experienced a second wave of white supremacy in the form of an anti-immigration movement. This movement associated Canadian identity with white Europeans and sought to preserve Anglo-Saxon traditions and ideals (Baergen in Madibbo, 2021, p. 91). Canadian society tacitly supported the identity of the Christian movement (the Movement) when it received its charter in 1972 (Madibbo, 2021). This group perpetuated stereotypes by using terms like “non-whites” “coloured immigration” and “third-world immigrants”, which projected racism onto people who immigrated to Canada and characterized them as aliens who had invaded “their” country. This created a backlash against racially marginalized people and multiculturalism policies in Canada (Madibbo, 2021, p. 93). Madibbo states:
Although The Movement was modern, it reproduced the classical racism that the previous white supremacists had embraced. It adapted biological determinism to its construction of Canadian identity, perceiving race and culture as genetic and static. (Madibbo, 2021, p. 91)

Similar to earlier white supremacy movements was the belief that racially marginalized Canadians were inferior, and that white people could and should dominate them and be favoured over them. Like Bonilla-Silva (2019), I argue that racial inequality is perpetuated through story lines (narratives), racist ideology, and justifications about racial status quo. I use the example of a third wave of anti-immigration which surfaced after the attack on the World Trade Center on September 11th, 2001. Amal Madibbo states that “the anti-terrorism measures Canada enacted in the aftermath of September 11 (…)” contributed to islamophobia in the West (p. 114). Muslim Canadians faced backlash after 9/11. In 2002, the Canadian Islamic Congress reported more than 170 anti-Muslim hate crimes (Perry, 2015). Muslim Canadian Osama AlTawil shares his personal experience: “September 11 happens, and on that day I had to leave my University because I was afraid that I would get attacked” (CBC Radio, 2021). Madibbo notes that Canada overlooked the hate crimes of white supremacists, but over policed racialized minorities after 9/11 (Madibbo, 2021). For example, a few weeks after 9/11, Ontario announced a special police unit designed to find and deport illegal immigrants (Bahdi, 2003).

Madibbo (2021) points out that contemporary racism is “disguised in discourses and policies that project Canada as one of the most tolerant societies in the world.” (p. 83). Many Canadian identity narratives normalize white supremacy and privilege and exclude Black francophones as a default position (Madibbo, 2021, p. 83). One example is how the survivance-tied French-Canadian identity was so defined by religiousness in the 19th century that non-Catholic people were dehumanized and considered a monstrosity (Frenette, 2012, p. 110). This example shows how settler identities based on religiousness contributed to xenophobia towards Asian, Middle Eastern, and African Canadians by supporting ideologies that saw racially marginalized people as undesirable (Guo & Guo, 2021). Sunera Thobani (2007) and Josée Bergeron (2007) argue that in Canada, multiculturalism is seen as weakening borders and national identities and a risk to the downgrading of established minority groups to “just another culture”. However, for many of the

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28 Racial dominance is achieved by coercion, violence, forced assimilation, enslavement, and discrimination (Jiannbin & Woody, 2020).
music artists in the study, French and English are second or even third languages, suggesting that Canada’s existing official languages are less representative of the realities of many racially marginalized francophones in Canada.

I build upon Appadurai’s (2006) argument that geography can be an instrument of aggression and oppression. I suggest that historically, French-Canadian people have feared losing their position as official linguistic minorities within Canada’s political system, in part because of historical assimilation policies like Regulation 17. In my view, this has contributed to some people’s resistance to multiculturalism and immigration, which they perceive as bolstering English Canada. I also suggest that the term French-Canadian itself has lost its meaning because it no longer accurately defines francophones, who have themselves become ethnically diverse. Appadurai (2006) maintains that the media, the Internet, and Canadian politics fuel what he calls the geography of anger. I understand this to mean that some Canadians’ emotional ties to places, along with the media narratives about racially marginalized people they consume, can become tools of aggression against the perceived “Other”. For example, in 2019, posters for ID Canada appeared in Saskatoon recruiting members to “join the fight and defend Canada” against Canadian diversity (Modjeski, 2019). The group denies Canada existed before European colonization and erases parts of its history (McLean in Modjeski, 2019). Appadurai’s theory highlights two things that contribute to the oppression of the “Other”; what we hear about those we perceive as different, and the attachments we hold about places that we view as symbolic of our identities. He observes that these factors have supported the negative narratives and images we tell ourselves about people and places across different cultures (Appadurai, 2016, p. 168).

Similar to Dei and Singh Johal (2005), I argue that anti-racism policies and social movements that challenge racist and discriminatory structures and behaviours are more important than supporting a sanitized discourse about Canada’s national identity. I suggest that decolonizing movements like Black Lives Matter are vital to disrupting settler logics and critically deconstructing Canada’s legacy of colonialism and racism. Similarly, using CRT can be useful for naming and challenging racial injustice, inequality, and established hierarchies by critically assessing prevailing ways of thinking and being. As an anonymous participant states in Madibbo’s book *Blackness and La Francophonie*: “Canadian identity means accepting differences, other cultures and ways of
being… It is multiculturalism.” (anonymous participant in Madibbo, 2021, p. 73). Nations around the world have associated Canadianness with diversity and cultural openness. Yet, Black Canadians still experience racism, including negative stereotyping, racial profiling by police, institutionalized discrimination, and harassment and intimidation in the workplace (pp. 74, 79). As she points out:

Diversity is not just a fact of society; it is negotiated in practice as participants incorporate it into the ties they form with people of different backgrounds in various social settings, including restaurants and at multicultural celebrations. (Madibbo, 2021, p. 83)

This points to the significance of cultural spaces like festivals, which are negotiated by people from different linguistic and cultural backgrounds. The intended purpose of multiculturalism was to compel and enable marginalized cultural groups to contribute to Canada as a nation, overcome cultural barriers to full participation, and embrace intercultural dialogue (Trudeau, 1971, 8546). Racially marginalized people have used multiculturalism policies to battle against racism (Mensah in Madibbo, 2021). However, Madibbo argues the tool is incomplete because Black people are under-represented in Canada’s institutional hierarchy (Madibbo, 2021, pp. 84-85). Racially marginalized people have continued to experience exclusion since its creation because multicultural policies haven’t adequately addressed the systemic discrimination and racism that exists in Canada’s institutions. In line with Madibbo, Givens, and Madlingozi, I use CRT and critical multiculturalism in my analysis of festival management and musical production in chapters four and five of my dissertation. As Madibbo (2021) states, Black people’s exclusion from the labour market reflects the contemporary racism within the dominant construction of Canadian identity. I explore more deeply how the under-representation of Black francophone music artists is experienced and negotiated in a space where Canada’s cultural dominance is reproduced.

**Leveraging Francophone Infrastructure and Political Movements: Addressing Under-Representation**

In this section, I discuss the factors that have contributed to contemporary racism and social exclusion in Canada. I point to the reasons for this exclusion. They include the under-representation of Black francophone people in the media and various cultural industries, the denial
of racism, the erasure of Black settler narratives in historical canon, and the role of white supremacy movements and the transatlantic slave trade. I argue that racially marginalized francophones hold multiple forms of identities that they must negotiate within the dominant Canadian identity. This national identity imposes its dominant culture on diverse citizens and people who immigrate to Canada. Music artists who perform in diversity-focused festivals negotiate these cultural boundaries, identities, and linguistic contexts in various ways that support economic mobility and social inclusion. I also look at how language hierarchies in Canada contribute to excluding multilingual and transnational francophones. I explore why discourses, laws, and political movements intended to protect Canadians from linguistic marginalization have been instrumental in supporting linguistic minorities but fail to capture the experience of racially marginalized francophones. The terms francophonie and francophone are not neutral in the context of Canada. They represent a history of linguistic “Othering” and a transformation of the French-Canadian identity from its characterization through ethnicity (French) to a nation-wide community connected by a common language and a collection of regional distinct cultural identities. This shift from ethnicity to language represents changes brought on by the adoption of the Official Languages Act (1969; 1982) at the federal level, the rise of the Québécois identity during the Quiet Revolution, as well as the increase of migration from other francophone nations. It also speaks to la francophonie’s ongoing attempts to recognize the cultural diversity of French-speaking Canadians.

Building on Madibbo’s (2021) argument that under-representation, silence about racism, and opposition to multiculturalism are forms of racism, I argue that historical narratives, the media, and political and economic spaces contribute greatly to the way la francophonie excludes and erases Black people. As Madibbo points out:

The dominant construction of Francophone identity is negotiated in three forms of racism […] 1) the underrepresentation of Black-Africans in the mainstream Francophonie, 2) the silence about racism, and 3) Francophones’ opposition to multiculturalism. (Madibbo, 2021, p. 121)

This racism is ingrained in Canadian society and alienates racially marginalized people from the mainstream. Many Canadians view diversity and multiculturalism as part of their “national” identity, but are too often not willing to confront Canada’s legacy of racism and its exclusion of Black people. This attitude has influenced the way Canada develops its policies and governance practices. I note that Black francophones have diverse experiences and identities, which often go
unrecognized. Joseph Mensah (2014) points out that white settlers often homogenize Black people and create monolithic categories to describe them. Labels like Black Canadian or African Canadian contribute to this because they are based on self-attributed and ascribed characteristics such as race, ethnicity, religion, and language (Mensah, 2014). Black identities in Canada are much more nuanced. For example, in addition to the identities of early African settlers and the descendants of enslaved Caribbean and African people that arrived during the slave trade, Black continental African people (African Americans) have deep multi-generational ties to Canada through their connection to some of its first settlements (Mensah, 2014). In my thesis, I attempt to avoid homogenizing labels and consider Blackness in Canada as represented by a diverse set of identities. In the same way, I consider the identities of the music artists who perform in the five festivals I studied as representing the diversity within the African diaspora and the international francophonie. Mensah (2014) adds that the racism Black people face in Canada can lead to isolation and alienation, hybridization, or assimilation into the dominant culture (p. 16). He notes that people should get to choose how they attribute identity to themselves. Some people identify as African (e.g., Nigerian), others prefer to use hyphenated identities such as Congolese-Canadian or Haitien-Québécois, while others primarily identify as Canadian. This leads to multiple identifications and fluid identities which can manifest as a state of “in-betweenness” (pp. 16-17). I understand this to mean that Black people have agency in the way they construct their own identities and present it to others.

I also consider these different expressions of Blackness as a choice people make based on their attachments to places and people (groups). Contextualizing this within Canadian society, I suggest that these states of in-betweenness are foundational to our understanding of culturally hybrid, transnational, and multilingual identities among francophones. Black settlers from the African diaspora often hold transnational identities and must negotiate them within the context of other Canadian identities (Madibbo, 2022). Transnational, hybrid, and multilingual identities allow us to explore questions around globalization, mobility, and diversity, and unsettle colonial ideas around language and culture. These transnational identities are characterized by the use of language, music, and cultural narratives. As sociolinguist Anna De Fina (2013) states, they

29 My study does not compare or measure the assimilation of racially marginalized people who immigrate to Canada into French or English society.
“combine elements usually associated with distinct groups, nations, spaces, and so forth, and therefore imply coming to terms with contradictions created by the need to navigate traditional boundaries” (p. 3).

Within these spaces of identity negotiation, I view resistance movements such as Black Lives Matter as offering Black francophones a decolonized space where they can find solidarity and correct the erasure of Blackness (Madibbo, 2022). I suggest that resistance to white settler narratives can and should take place within the music and festival industries. That is to say, the music industry and by extension the music festival industry are spaces where Black artists can participate in anti-racism discourse and social justice movements that compel Canadians to explore exclusion-inclusion dynamics and develop strategies for countering anti-Blackness in their communities. I propose that anti-racism and anti-discrimination movements can redefine La francophonie, both here in Canada and around the world, creating inclusive and equitable spaces for racially marginalized people. An example of one such movement is the Black North Initiative whose members are committed to removing systemic barriers by promoting a business-first mindset (Black North Initiative, 2022). This movement can address the under-representation of Black people in the Canadian business industry and support entrepreneurs of colour.

Many white francophones have not been willing to engage in discourse about racism and decolonization in a meaningful way. I believe doing so would give Black francophones a more prominent voice in their communities and support the development of a stronger sense of belonging among marginalized people. I suggest that movements like Black Lives Matter are key to bringing to light the legacy of slavery and white supremacy that has impacted the way Canada conducts policy-making. These movements can do this by facilitating dialogue and actions that challenge contemporary racism and discrimination. However, to make anti-racism movements successful, whiteness must first be made visible. White Canadians must be involved in conversations about racism and racial inequality because they can make whiteness visible and challenge white privilege (Madibbo, 2021, p. 109). I note that the attitudes, discourses and narratives of white Canadians contribute to keeping racism and Black settler histories invisible, and this invisibleness must be addressed through improved policies and governance models.
The performances, public speeches, and Facebook posts of Black francophone musicians and singers can be deconstructed as forms of cultural production that decolonize Canada’s cultural hegemony and linguistic hierarchies. Anti-Black racism is experienced as under-representation, discrimination, erasure, and exclusion from the music and festival industries. These issues must be addressed by leaders in the cultural industries. In 2021, the music industry signed a declaration to end anti-Black racism in the Canadian music industry after participating in the Breaking Down Racial Barriers (BDRB) initiative and partnering with the Canadian Independent Music Association and Canada’s Black Music Business Collective (Kennedy, 2021). This initiative is crucial to addressing racism in the music industry, and I argue that festivals must adopt a similar model.

Since Confederation, francophones have been effective in resisting linguistic assimilation policies and have established collective movements that quickly mobilize when language rights are at stake. I give two examples of francophone protests in the province of Ontario. The Battle of the Hatpins (1916) and the SOS Montfort protest 30 (1997) were effective political actions that re-claimed French language rights (Hôpital Montfort, 2022; OCOL, n.d.).

Another example is the 2018 Franco-Ontarian protests in response to the Ontario government’s French-language service cuts by the provincial government (Ramlakhan, 2018). The resignation of Conservative MP Amanda Simard and the public protests across the province led to a reversal of Premier Doug Ford’s decision to cut services, which many had perceived as an attack against the language rights of francophones (Benzie, 2018). I view these three events in Ontario’s history as symbols of Franco-Ontarian identity. They have dominated the discourse about francophone history in the province and have been examples of effective activism against language discrimination. However, I note that movements against racism and racial discrimination have largely been absent from this activism. Why do protesters not point to the racial inequities within the health care system? I argue that the next moment of political agency and resistance must be willing to engage in conversations about racial inequality and address barriers racially marginalized francophones face in Canadian society.

30 This resistance movement was in reaction to the provincial government’s threat of closing Montfort Hospital in Ottawa which provides services in French. The event re-affirmed Franco-Ontarian identity and connected it to its French-language institutions as it had in 1916.
Canada’s language laws don’t fully recognize multilingual people, and this contributes to their marginalization. The Official Languages Act (OLA) has been instrumental in the mobilization of francophones who have worked to reclaim education and language rights in Canada. However, the framework has reinforced a language hierarchy that erases francophones and anglophones whose first language is not French or English. English is seen as the *lingua franca*, while French has its official status and privileges. All other languages are positioned as unofficial and unprivileged, which implies their inferiority. The OLA also relies on metrics and policies that reinforce the idea that Canada is a bicultural nation, which is not the case. This erases Indigenous nations from the cultural narrative, as well as settlers who arrive from nations other than France and Britain.

Canadians’ use of a common language like English facilitates knowledge-sharing across nations/groups but also limits the nation’s collective knowledge by restricting professionals’ ability to publish, speak, and network to advance their careers (Salomone, 2021).

Discourse about language in Canada must consider how biculturalism, monolingualism and bilingualism can symbolically reproduce colonial structures. These dominant positions can erase the presence of other languages for fear of destabilizing the existing language hierarchy. For example, activism focused on the preservation of French outside Québec is important but does not consider how language is navigated by racially marginalized and transnational francophones, especially those who wish to access jobs in the cultural and service economies (Hall & Nilep, 2015, p. 616). Canada’s cultural industries are heavily slanted towards monolingual English speakers and its programs often favour people with English-language education without consideration for the value of other languages and knowledge systems. I build upon Salomone’s (2021) argument that many English speakers are mostly indifferent to learning and acknowledging other languages, perhaps because there is no need for them to do so. This attitude is fueled by the myth that “everyone speaks English” in Canada, which is far from the truth. As a result, non-English speakers risk being politically, economically, and culturally isolated unless they learn or give up their own language(s).
Sonia Das (2011) argues that a similar process of language domination takes place in the province of Québec. As she states:

“[…] the Board of the French Language of Québec (Office Québécois de la langue française) has endorsed purist conventions to differentiate between a standard, or “literary” style of Québécois French as the civic language of the province, and nonstandard, or “colloquial” styles of Québécois joual as the heritage languages […]”. (p. 777)

These purist conventions impose a dominant form of French and view all others as inferior. Das (2011) argues that “most residents of Québec, regardless of ethnic, linguistic, and national background, endorse the use of French as their common ‘civic’ language”, but that school boards identify other languages as belonging to urban centers with ‘multicultural character’ (p. 785). This distinction is problematic because it implies a separation between rural and urban spaces and positions cities and the immigrant people who live there as a threat to the status quo, setting up an “us” vs “them” mentality. Like Das, I view this as an ideological power struggle between multiculturalism and the preservation of Frenchness in Canada. Distinguishing between “civic” and “colloquial” language perpetuates a false narrative that racially marginalized and linguistically diverse francophones are a threat to the national identity of Québec and should assimilate. It also suggests that anyone who speaks a non-standard form of Canadian French does so from outside conventional society and from a position of inferiority. The dynamic sets up a hierarchy of language that fails to recognize the international francophonie and reproduces settler-colonial logic. It also supports the myth that Frenchness is absent outside Québec.

Canada has a diverse set of linguistic identities and scholars must question these language hierarchies when they study francophoneness. I argue that Canada should consider expanding its definition of literary French in Canada to make room for broader expressions of the language. This would help make French-language spaces such as schools, social services, and performance venues more inclusive. As well, the music industry must do more to acknowledge the existence of racially marginalized francophones and promote their work.

My third point of discussion is that the existing network of political and professional associations that currently support linguistically marginalized people in Canada could do more to make francophone spaces more inclusive. I acknowledge that cultural interventions by francophone
professionals have provided important representations of identity, culture, and language. For example, Franco-Ontarian literature (Hotte, 2000), francophone minority communities’ music (Robineau, 2017a, 2017b), and francophone theatre (Lacassagne, 2017) have provided symbolic contributions to Canada’s cultural production. These interventions have historically been supported by associations like the Association des professionels de la chanson et la musique (APCM) and the Association Canadienne-Française de l’Ontario (formerly ACFEO), which play an important role in advocating for “minority” artists. Nonetheless, in my view, the way these associations address the inequities racially marginalized artists face is inadequate. For example, the APCM policy on equity that states its Sub-Committee on Equity, Diversity and Inclusion is responsible for ensuring the equal participation of marginalized people (APCM, 2019). However, it makes no mention of including marginalized people in the decision-making itself, which is essential for representing these communities (APCM, 2019). People who participate in cultural production rely on cultural institutions such as festivals and professional associations for access to resources, professional development, and work opportunities. The responsibility therefore falls to the cultural apparatus and to community-based programs to ensure that their teams, policies, programs and practices support cultural and linguistic diversity and are representative of marginalized people.

In addition to reflecting on Canada’s language system, setting up anti-racist and anti-discriminatory approaches that explicitly acknowledge racism and discrimination and the imbalance of power in decision-making spaces is critical for making marginalized artists feel safe to express their diverse identities. Canada’s French-language services and programs can provide racially marginalized citizens, refugees, and people who immigrate access to industry knowledge, financial support, and professional work and training opportunities. Unfortunately, current institutional infrastructure sometimes lacks consideration for citizens, refugees, and immigrants from racially marginalized communities (Farmer, Chambon, & Labrie, 2002; Bergeron, 2007; Madibbo, 2012; Quell, 1998). I recognize that the OLA and French-language associations are important tools for economic and social mobility, but I propose that Canada should rethink its policies about equity and anti-discrimination to better meet the needs of Black francophone communities.
CHAPTER THREE: THE DIGITAL ETHNOGRAPHY METHOD: UNDERSTANDING THE FESTIVAL COMMUNITY

In this chapter, I outline my methodological approach and methods, and define the ethnographic community on whom I concentrated my exploration. In section one, I define the object of my study: the diversity-focused festivals I attended in 2019, and the francophone music artists who performed there. I structure my discussion around descriptions of the organizational mandates and About pages of each festival: Sunfest, Nuits d’Afrique, Mondo Karnaval, Mundial Montréal, and the Canada Day Celebration. I discuss how these mandates and descriptions are symbolic of the way each festival sees itself and presents its work to the public. I construct organizational identities for each festival. Then, using descriptions from music artists’ biographies and About pages, I identify and analyze the descriptive language they use to construct their music styles and identities. From the perspective of semiotic analysis, I use these phrases and words to construct artistic and cultural identities. I also explore how their musical influences establish the unique musical styles of each artist. In section two, I discuss the methodological approach I used to design my study, collect and analyze the data, and present my findings. I outline some of the Digital Ethnographies on which I modeled my research and elaborate my techniques. These techniques include ethnographic inquiry, content analysis, and data visualization. I discuss how my research approach allowed me to understand relationships, behaviours, practices, and cultural/linguistic identities within the ethnographic community. In section three, I discuss the ethical considerations and challenges I faced during the design and implementation of the study. I explore my positionality as a researcher and describe how I mitigated the concerns I identified.

Defining the Ethnographic Community: Organizational Identities and Roles

In this section, I discuss the way diversity-focused festivals see themselves and their artists, and I examine how music labels and categories can both limit and enable musicians and singers’ careers.
I then construct cultural/musical identities for each of the artists whose performances I witnessed at these five events. I apply Stuart Albert and David Whetten’s theory on organizational identity to explain the way festivals describe themselves to the public is evidence of how they see themselves and want to be seen by others (in Lin, 2004). I construct organizational identities for the festivals by analyzing their mandates and the words and phrases they use to self-describe on their websites and Facebook pages. The descriptions festivals use on their social media and websites are symbolic of their organizational identities and can be interpreted by others who see and read them (Peirce in Lukianova, 2015). For example, festival organizers use these descriptions in their Facebook About sections, web pages, and promotional materials. In response, festival-goers and Facebook page followers generate meaning from these texts. Both the material and the digital space that festivals inhabit can construct discourses and narratives about them, their music artists, and the communities and nations in which they exist. The data indicates that many of the words and phrases used by content creators support and encourage multiculturalism and diversity. This points to festivals holding a role as a rassembleur and service provider to their local communities. The term rassembleur describes a person or entity (organization) who unifies people for the purpose of bringing them together in one place for a communal experience. I suggest that the desire to unify and gather people is an element of diversity-focused festivals and can therefore be understood as a marker of organizational identity. In Figure 2, I outline the phrasing and wording used by each festival.

*Figure 2: Festivals’ Organizational Identities*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Festival</th>
<th>Mandate</th>
<th>Descriptors Used</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sunfest</td>
<td>Support artistic excellence in music, dance, and the visual arts, as well as represent all members of the London (Ontario) community.</td>
<td>non-profit; free access; cultural diversity; world music; cross-border; brought together thousands of people … from around the globe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nuits d’Afrique</td>
<td>Promote, disseminate, and develop African world music in Québec, Canada, and around the world.</td>
<td>30 nations; planétaire (global); multiple expressions of African cultures; concerts rassembleurs; exotic; African Canadian artists;</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Analyzing the symbolic meaning of these phrases and terms for each of the five festivals allowed me to consider their role within their local communities. Organizational identity is reflected in a set of statements the organization members perceive to be central, distinctive and enduring to their organization (Lin, 2004, p. 804). This has implications for program development and organizational change because leaders use the identity to guide decision-making activities (Albert and Whetten in Lin, 2004). These statements represent the decisions each organization makes regarding their programs and policies. For example, Sunfest’s use of the phrase “represent all members of the London community” implies they are working towards equal representation at the local level (TD Sunfest, n.d). However, the phrase falls short of claiming an anti-racism or anti-discrimination framework. Sunfest also uses terms such as “world music” and “cultural diversity” to qualify their work, which they note focuses on international music and cross-cultural exchanges as a path towards this diversity. They emphasize their relationships with food, craft and visual arts vendors while using words like “free access” and “non-profit”, which point to the dual commercial-service role of music festivals. Their contribution to the commercial economy is emphasized when they claim their events represent a form of “international tourism” (TD Sunfest, n.d). The festival leaders state that they conduct “cross-border and overseas promotion” (TD Sunfest, n.d.), which suggests a transnational organizational identity along with their local role. Sunfest also claims to have “brought together thousands of people of all ages and cultures for four days of music, dance, crafts, and cuisine from around the globe” (TD Sunfest, n.d) which confirms

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Festival</th>
<th>Mission</th>
<th>Values</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mondo Karnaval</td>
<td>Improve the quality of life, social progress, and personal development of immigrants through culture.</td>
<td>Québec’s diversity; bring people together; social equity; host community; economic prosperity (of immigrants); intercultural dialogue</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mundial Montréal</td>
<td>Provide national and global musicians and singers a platform to develop their careers.</td>
<td>world music; national and global musicians</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canada Day Celebration</td>
<td>no data</td>
<td>no data</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

diversity of Canada; inter-cultural dialogue
their self-perception as a *rassembleur* and points to the cultural products (dance, crafts, and food) as tools for achieving this.

The second festival I attended during my 2019 field visits was Nuits d’Afrique in Montréal. According to its Facebook About section, Nuits d’Afrique boasts of having hosted 700 artists from 30 nations in its 33rd edition (Nuits.dafrique, n.d.). The festival uses the word “planétaire” (planetary) to describe itself, which echoes terms like “world” and “global”. It also describes itself as a meeting place for cultures from Africa, Latin America and the West Indies, and states that it is a producer of “concerts rassembleurs” which translates to “concerts that bring people together” (Les Productions Nuits d’Afrique, n.d.). Nuits d’Afrique notes that its events promote the expression of multiple African cultures. The phrasing “multiple expressions of African culture” works to challenge the stereotype that Africans are a monolithic group of people. As well, there is less emphasis on the local community and more on the transnational identities of the musicians and singers. The website uses the term “exotic” to describe the food and drinks available for public consumption (Les Productions Nuits d’Afrique, n.d.). This choice of narrative works to construct difference between African and non-African, rather than create social cohesion. Expanding on sociologist Michel Nicolau Netto’s (2015) assertion that exoticism is founded on imperialism, progress, and nationalism, I view the categorization of performers as “world musicians” and the food as “exotic” as reinforcing the discourse of difference and the “Othering” of African people in Canada. Using words like “exotic” to describe African food also fragments intercultural relationships rather than bringing people together (Nicolau Netto, 2015). At its core, exoticism implies the need to civilize an uncivilized culture (Nicolau Netto, 2015). Therefore, this wording sustains rather than challenges unequal exchanges between cultures.

Nuits d’Afrique contributes to the development of African Canadian artists by helping them access the music market (Les Productions Nuits d’Afrique, n.d.). The festival produces an annual artist showcase called *Les Syli d’Or*, which they describe as an expression of the diversity of Canada (Les Productions Nuits d’Afrique, n.d.). Phrases like “diversity of Canada” substantiate my claim that diversity-focused festivals see themselves as contributors to Canadian multiculturalism. The festival website confirms this when it describes itself as a “successful model for multiculturalism,

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31 Ethnographer and archaeologist Victor Segalen (2002) describes exoticism as an aesthetic of diversity. Ralph Locke (2007) defines exoticism as a form of romanticism that places the observed away from the observer and borrows from the alien culture.
integration, and inclusion, as well as for cultural, economic, and tourism development” (Les Productions Nuits d’Afrique, n.d.). This phrasing shows that the festival is aware of its multi-layered role as a cultural producer, economic actor, and promoter of multiculturalism. The festival uses the term “intercultural dialogue” as a nod to interculturalism, which recognizes the French language and the Québécois nation as the dominant culture (Gagnon & Iacovino, 2005). Interculturalism is defined in part by the promotion of cross-cultural dialogue and interactions between cultures (Peñas & Saenz, 2006; Wood, Landry, & Bloom, 2006, p. 9). Allain Gagnon and Raffaele Iacovino (2005) go further and define it as a moral contract between the host society and the immigrant. For Québec, this means the recognition of French as the official language of the Québécois nation takes precedence over other languages (Gagnon & Iacovino, 2005).

The third festival, Mondo Karnaval, is located in Québec City. On its official web page, Mondo Karnaval states that it invests in the diversity of Québec (Mondo Karnaval, n.d.). Like Sunfest and Nuits d’Afrique, the word “diversity” shows a focus on multiculturalism and inclusion. On its Facebook About section, the festival describes its mission as bringing people together from immigrant communities, sharing their culture, art, and traditions, with the host Québécois community (Mondo Karnaval, n.d.). I view this as another acknowledgement of the dominant culture and of immigrant people’s perceived inferior position within society. Mondo Karnaval also describes itself as a tourist venue working to ensure social equity, quality of life, social progress, economic prosperity, and the personal development of immigrants (Mondo Karnaval, n.d.). Such phrasing shows the bifurcation of festivals’ roles between commerce and public service. The language makes evident the role of the festival in encouraging the social and economic participation of racially marginalized people. While the word anti-discrimination is not used, the term “social equity” acknowledges the social and economic inequality racially marginalized people face. This is the closest any of the festivals come to naming racism. Mondo Karnaval also aims to create linkages and cohesion, and to bring people closer together (MondoKarnavalQuébec, n.d.). This suggests they identify with the rassembleur role as Sunfest and Nuits d’Afrique do. The mission has a clear connection to Canada’s multiculturalism project, but it also represents the province of Québec’s approach to immigration: interculturalism. Evidence of this is found in the use of words like “host community” and “intercultural dialogue” (MondoKarnavalQuébec, n.d.). I note that all three festivals, Sunfest, Mondo Karnaval, and Nuits d’Afrique, have an artisan
market and food vendors, which they use to “sell” diversity to Canadians and support cross-cultural dialogue.

The fourth festival I attended, Mundial Montréal, is a hybrid showcase-festival and conference. Showcase festivals serve musicians rather than the public and are a gateway to the music industry for new artists (Innovation Network of European Showcases, 2018). Mundial Montréal’s mandate is to provide national and global musicians and singers a platform to develop their careers (Mundial Montréal, n.d.). Every year, the organization selects “world music” artists and showcases their work to other industry professionals and the public. The organization also coordinates networking events for professionals from around the world. The term “world music” is frequently used to categorize the type of music the festival promotes. For example, on Facebook, it describes itself as the “premier world music showcase event” in North America (Mundialmontreal, n.d.).

Unlike the other three festivals mentioned earlier, Mundial Montréal is not as focused on providing a service for the local community. Mundial Montréal relies on its local partners as venues for performances. Although the showcase concerts are open to the public, they are primarily tools for artists to promote themselves to other “world music” professionals and increase their visibility in the industry. There is no mention of multiculturalism, diversity, or bringing together regular citizens, nor is the event focused on tourism. This is because the event promotes itself to music industry professionals rather than to the public. However, it uses the event to showcase emerging music artists to the community and provide artists with opportunities for performing.

The last festival I attended was Ottawa’s Canada Day Celebration, which is described by organizers as the biggest in Canada (Ottawa Tourism, 2022). It is organized by the Ottawa Tourism and the Convention Authority and generously supported by the federal government. The event is not a festival proper nor is it a non-profit organization. Ottawa Tourism is a coalition of local businesses, regional tourism committees, and arts and culture organizations (Tourism Ottawa, 2022). The group’s close connections to the local/federal authorities allow it to benefit from exclusive locations such as Parliament Hill, Major’s Hill Park, and the Canadian Museum of History. Because of the simultaneous shows presented at these three separate locations, my field visit focused on one site, Major’s Hill Park. The festival celebration did not have a designated

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32 The national museum of Canada is a crown corporation governed by the Museum Act of Canada. The grounds of Major’s Hill and Parliament Hill are also managed by the federal government.
Facebook page and therefore was not included in the collection of digital data. However, it does show how music festivals can choose to focus more their attention on tourism rather than a service to marginalized communities. At the same time, while the goal of social cohesion is not explicitly made public, one can assume that Canada Day Celebration is a useful tool for strengthening the Canadian identity and cohesion between different cultural groups. Festival organizers describe the musical line-up as a set of “performances by a diverse selection of top and emerging Canadian musicians” (Field notes, July 1st, 2019). Therefore, we also see this festival invoke diversity as part of its guiding principles. I note that the 2019 event organizers did not include international musicians or singers, instead choosing to showcase Canadian artists.

Organizational identity influences the way stakeholders interpret actions and decisions by music festivals (Lin, 2004, p. 805). I use Dominique Hazel and Courtney Mason’s (2020) study on the potential role of music festival stakeholders as change agents for environmentalism (Wong, Wan, & Qi, 2015) and transpose it to the issue of social equity. Getz (as quoted in Hazel & Mason, 2020) suggests that festival organizers (managers) are not the only decision makers, and that festival-goers also wield power. I propose that festivals can engage in responsible management by including community businesses, local residents, and organizations in consultation processes. These consultations can inform operational improvements and policy/event design that consider the impacts and practices of promoting multicultural events. I propose a call to action for diversity-focused festivals in Canada to make this shift. Organizers make decisions based on their personal values and for business purposes. However, they can also become stewards of anti-discrimination and anti-racism movements in their communities.

**The Identities and Music Styles of Music Artists**

Having explored the way festivals see and describe themselves to others, I also consider how music artists do this, and how their musical influences contribute to their identities and performances. The music artists I discuss in this section each performed at one of the five festivals during my 2019 field visits. I consider the descriptions they use in their biographies as symbolic of their cultural and musical identities. When conducting my field visits, I selected performances based on two characteristics: first, the music artists had to be francophone, and second, they had to represent
a racially marginalized community. When performances overlapped, I chose to attend performances that gave me the broadest set of “national” identities. In using the term national, I recognize that many of the artists have dual or multiple identifications with nations, and that some simply see themselves as Canadians with unique cultural backgrounds. These dual/multiple identities exist in part because of artists’ migration histories and their desire to seek out work opportunities abroad. Nevertheless, I concur with Grace MyHyun Kim (2016) and Lee Komito (2011) that when people move from one place to another in order to work, they form attachments to each location which leads to hybrid identities. Therefore, while the terms “national” and “transnational” are occasionally used to discuss collective identities, I understand that this can describe more than the nations in which music artists are born or live in. It can also reflect the nations they work in, as they form attachments to these places over time.

The musicians and singers in my study use several terms to describe their music genres. Others such as festival organizers and journalists describe them in specific ways as well. These descriptions symbolically define how racially marginalized music artists see themselves and how others understand them. They contribute to the way people interpret and subsequently categorize the music and the artist. Applying Peirce’s theory of signs, I argue that people assign meaning to the symbolic use of words. One example is the use of the term “world music”, which constrains music artists from accessing other festivals. I believe this explains why most of the artists use several descriptors rather than just one when introducing their music and their body of work. I also propose that these descriptions are symbolic of the artists’ identities because they tend to represent their cultures. Therefore, using the term “world music” erases cultural and musical distinctions. In analyzing each of the artists’ Facebook and web page biographies, I build descriptions of their identities and how they categorize their music. I also include descriptive language used by others in my analysis. In addition to the words festivals use, I capture descriptive language used by journalists who interview and write about the festivals and the artists. In my analysis, I include only the third-party articles shared by the artists and festivals on their Facebook pages or their websites. As well, I explore how music prizes and awards mentioned in the artists’ biographies categorize the music. Considering that each artist’s musical influences may also contribute to their musical identities/genres, I discuss these later in this section.
On July 6th, 2019, I attended Sunfest in London, Ontario and saw two live performances. One was by Réunionnais artist Maya Kamaty and the other by French-Cameroonian singer Valerie Ekoumé. Both Cameroon and Reunion Island are former French colonies and recognize French as one of their official languages.

Maya Kamaty describes herself as a native resident of Reunion Island (Maya Kamaty, 2020). Her father, Gilbert Pounia, is the leader of the Maloya music group Ziskakan, and her mother, Annie Grondin, is a well-known storyteller (Kamaty, n.d.). Reunion Island is located east of Madagascar and South-West of Mauritius. Réunionnais Creole is widely used there, as is Maloya music, which was created by Malagasy and African enslaved people (UNESCO, n.d.). In her biography, Kamaty notes she is an advocate for her cultural roots and identity, which she preserves and promotes through her music (Kamaty, n.d.). She sings her songs in Creole and interprets traditional Maloya rhythms. On her Facebook page, she categorizes her music using three genres: Maloya, folk, and chanson (Kamaty, n.d.). I view her choice of language and music style, Creole and Maloya, as symbolic of her own identity.

Kamaty’s desire to preserve and promote her culture seems to drive her creative choices. She describes her album Pandiye as a “journey between tradition and modernity” (Kamaty, n.d.), which shows an example of how music remix works. Combining African and Indian cultural influences in Maloya music with contemporary music styles and instruments introduces a new audience to her heritage. Kamaty describes her musical influences and the instruments in this way:

_De puissantes basses (empruntant aussi bien à l’électro-folk de l’islandais Asgeir, au hip-hop de Kendrick Lamar, à la pop de Björk ou au dubstep), viennent soutenir les traditionnels kayamb et roulèr du maloya, en même temps qu’elles donnent à entendre d’autres instruments de la culture réunionnaise : la takamba (plus connu sous le nom de n’goni), mais également les tambours, d’habitude réservés aux cérémonies malbars (des descendants de tamouls, dont Maya incarne la 5ème génération)._ (Kamaty, n.d.)

This passage points out that Maya Kamaty’s music influences include electric folk musicians like Islandic Asgeir and American hip hop artist Kendrick Lamar, as well as pop music singer Bjork and dubstep artists (Kamaty, n.d.). Kamaty claims these modern sounds sustain the traditional kayamb and roulèr used in Maloya music. Traditional Réunionnais music uses these instruments as well as the takamba (n’goni) and the ceremonial Malbar drums, which were historically used
by Tamil people in Reunion Island. Kamaty notes her ancestors were indeed Tamil (Kamaty, n.d.). She and her band members credit themselves with re-inventing the Reunion Maloya and she notes that their intent is to reclaim the heritage of the people of Reunion Island (Kamaty, n.d.). Kamaty’s biography makes clear her efforts to decolonize Reunion Island by contributing to the resurgence of Indigenous language and culture through storytelling and the use of Creole lyrics. The Réunionnais people have been using storytelling in the Creole language since before the colonization of the island by France. French settlers who colonized the island suppressed Creole people’s language and cultural practices (M. Kamaty, personal communications, September 12th, 2019). Maya’s use of Creole and Maloya is a political act of defiance, a strategy for deliberate decolonization, and a reclaiming of her culture and language.

The second performance I observed was by singer Valerie Ekoumé who describes her music as Afropop on her Facebook page (Ekoumé, n.d.a). Ekoumé is Cameroonian and lives in France where she moved to study music and work as a singer (Ekoumé, n.d.a). She performed backup vocals for Cameroonian music artists Manu Dibango and the Soul Makossa Gang, and in 2011, she became a solo artist to “use her own voice” (translation) (Ekoumé, n.d.a). On her website, she describes her music as traditional with several contemporary influences:

> She [Valerie] grew up listening to various musical styles from Congolese rumba, pop music artists (such as Michael Jackson), to Cameroonian music. Singers like Miriam Makeba (Mama Africa) and Whitney Houston were, as she called them, her virtual vocal coaches, as she learned to sing with them. (Ekoumé, n.d.b)

This quote points to the influence of African song artist Miriam Makeba, a South African singer, actress, and civil rights activist who publicly opposed apartheid before its abolition (Ewens, 2008). Ekoumé’s description suggests that her influences are transnational (Congo, United States and South Africa) and span across two genres: pop and African song. The phrase “use her own voice” points to an intention to use her agency as a performer and to a willingness to discuss political and social issues. I view this as a form of narrative or rhetorical agency, which can be defined as “the capacity to act and have the competence to speak or write in a way that will be recognized or heeded by others in one’s community” (Campbell, 2005).

At Nuits d’Afrique, I attended performances by five francophone music artists: Alayé, Rommel Ribeiro, Aldo Guizmo, Marema, and Tabou Combo. There were more francophone artists at this
event mainly because of its location in a predominantly French-speaking province (Québec), its focus on African nations that often represent former French colonies, and its scale (13 days). The first group of musicians and singers I saw was the percussion ensemble Alayé. The name Alayé is taken from the Yoruba language and means explanation. This local group mainly consists of drumming students who perform Afro-Brazilian rhythms like maracatu, afoxé, candomblé, and coco (AlayéPercussions, n.d.). Alayé has been performing since 2011 and was founded by percussion student Simon Poitras who claims he “fell in love with maracatu during a musical study trip to Brazil” (AlayéPercussions, n.d.). The group’s Facebook page notes that Poitras and his partner Emilie Guérette who lived in Brazil wanted to share the traditional rhythms and dances with Québécois people (AlayéPercussions, n.d.).

The group leaders make clear they are Québécois, although there is no public information about the cultural background of performers. Most of the performers are not racially marginalized, which brings up questions about cultural appropriation (Field notes, 2019, July 23). Alayé has had some success in the professional music industry, despite branding itself as a group of students. In 2014, the group won 2nd place for the Syli d’Or prize for “world music” (Les Productions Nuits d’Afrique, n.d.). The ensemble has collaborated with global music artists from Recife, Rio de Janeiro, Salvador, Toronto, Québec, and New York City. The group points out that it is committed to social causes and social movements that contribute to a just world (AlayéPercussions, n.d.). There is no mention of specific causes, which raises the question: what movements are they committed to?

Building on Saha’s (2013) assertion that cultural appropriation happens when difference is commodified, I view this group’s use of Afro-Brazilian culture as cultural appropriation by the white directors, and a result of Canada’s colonial legacy, which continues to shape cultural production. Cultural appropriation is defined as “the act of taking or using things from a culture that is not your own, especially without showing that you understand or respect this culture” (Cambridge Dictionary, n.d.). Cultural appropriation is also harmful to the preservation of intellectual property rights and efforts to preserve culture (Fourmile, 1996). I also see this choice as a reflection of the festival’s curatorial choices that are part of the industry’s regular governance.

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33 Yoruba is a Niger-Congo language related to Igala, Edo, Ishan, and Igbo. It is one of the main languages of Nigeria and used by several other West African countries (Falola & Childs, 2005).
models. In my view, allowing white producers and performers to interpret Black culture contributes to the erasure of racially marginalized voices in the festival industry. Moreover, it creates symbolic meaning and interpretations that are then viewed from the perspective of whiteness, which can become misrepresentation.

Saying “I fell in love with” Afro-Brazilian music romanticizes African culture and shows a lack of awareness about the racism that racially marginalized people experience in Brazil. There is no attempt by the music artists or by the festival organizers to discuss these issues during the performance. On the other hand, there is a clear focus on teaching aspects of Afro-Brazilian culture to the public. For example, the website invites the public to participate in traditional Pernambuco rhythm workshops (AlayéPercussions, n.d.). It is questionable for white tourists to “bring another culture home” and sell it for profit. I note that several Board members and staff at Nuits d’Afrique are racially marginalized. However, I raise the question of how curatorial decisions are made and whether private discussions about the issue of cultural appropriation were considered.

Rommel Ribeiro is the second music artist I saw perform at Nuits d’Afrique. According to his Facebook page, composer, musician, singer, and musical producer Rommel Ribeiro is originally from Sao Luis Brazil and lives in Montréal (Ribeiro, n.d.). His About page on Facebook describes his work as a fusion of music genres and states: “mixing elements of popular Brazilian music with Afro-Reggae, funk and jazz, Rommel breathes and transpires authentic and upbeat music with compositions in Portuguese, French, Spanish and English.” (Ribeiro, n.d). The phrase “mixing elements of popular Brazilian music” is another example of musical hybridity. Ribeiro’s use of the term “authentic” is also interesting. The conventional definition of authenticity is that its provenance is traceable. However, another interpretation here could be that he considers it real and genuine, which is closer to the French meaning of the term “authentique”.

In 2011, Ribeiro won the Diversity Award from the Arts Council of Montréal and the Great Revelation Award from Festival Nuits d’Afrique. A year later, he won the Revelation of World Music Prize from CBC/Radio Canada (2012-2013) and the Coup de Coeur -MUZ Award from La Fabrique Culturelle de Télé-Québec (Ribeiro, n.d). Ribeiro has found success both nationally and regionally for his work. According to his website, he has also performed at Mondo Karnaval, Festival des traditions du monde and Mundial Montréal (Ribeiro Music, n.d.). His press kit is written in French, English, and Portuguese, and it lists his recent performances and contributions.
to the music industry (Ribeiro Music, n.d.). Ribeiro’s CBC award is an example of how many prizes define artists under the “world music” label. This categorization of his work has brought him success but also separates the music from other Canadian music genres, labelling him under a non-Western category.

Another music artist I observed at Nuits d’Afrique is Aldo Guizmo. The festival describes him as a “Guadeloupian artist who uses various musical styles” (Les Productions Nuits d’Afrique, n.d.). This is yet another example of how music artists blend several styles to create their own unique musical identities. Guizmo’s music is influenced by Caribbean musical culture including Jamaican reggae singers Queen Ifrica, Peter Tosh, and Capleton, and by his desire to share Creole culture 34. Guizmo uses the ka, a drum frequently used in Guadeloupe to play Gwoka rhythms (Tahon & Sitchet, 2017). Gwoka represents a cultural practice that is symbolic of the Guadeloupean identity (UNESCO, 2020). This identity is expressed through song, dance, and drumming marked by the formation of a public circle where people clap, and dancers enter to perform while facing a drummer (UNESCO, 2020). The Gwoka practice is a form of resistance to the dominant colonial culture in Guadeloupe. As a strategy for unsettling cultural hegemony, Gwoka engages people in social and political protest (UNESCO, 2020).

Guizmo’s song lyrics are written in Guadeloupean Creole, a French-based language combining words from English, Bantu, and Indigenous languages from Guadeloupe (Iskrova, 2009; Les Productions Nuits d’Afrique, n.d.). His musical artistic career began in 2001 and in 2010 he created the label Speak the Truth Production. His music, which is characterized as reggae, is inspired by current events in the news and his views about the world (Les Productions Nuits d’Afrique, n.d.). Jérémy Kroubo Dagnini (2010) argues that reggae music, which emerged in the late 1960s in Jamaica, has had a strong cultural influence in the Caribbean and around the world. Between 1953 and 1962, reggae music helped create a sense of belonging among young Jamaican immigrants in the United Kingdom who were increasingly alienated from British society in reaction to the rising

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34 The term Creole was first used between 1649 and 1699 to designate inhabitants of French colonial territories like St Christophe/St Kitts (1627), Guadeloupe et Martinique (1635), Louisiana (1672-1763), St Domingue/Haiti (1659-1804), Bourbon/Réunion Island (1665), Île de France/Maurice (1721-1814), and Seychelles (1770-1814) and describe the mix of French, Indigenous and African languages and cultures (Véronique, 2000, p. 33). After the 19th century, the term largely referred to creolized languages in the West and East Indies such as Réunionnais Creole and Guadeloupean Creole (p. 33). This historical shift shows that the Creole language has become a symbol of Creole culture.
The skinhead movement (Dagnini, 2010). Reggae also had a strong impact on African nations because of Bob Marley’s songs Zimbabwe (1979) and Africa Unite (1979), which made him a symbol of African identity and Rasta culture (Dagnini, 2010). For example, in Cote d’Ivoire, Reggae music artists such as Alpha Blondy and Tiken Jah Fakoly denounced colonialism, corruption, and neo-colonial policies. In his song *Françafrique*, Fakoly says:


These lyrics speak to colonial states that sell weapons to African countries, steal their resources, and complain that Africa is always at war. The phrase “ils ont brulé” translates to “they burned down”, pointing to the destructive effects of colonialism on the Congo, Angola, Gabon, and Rwanda. As well, in the 1970s, French Caribbean and African people living in France saw themselves in the messages conveyed by reggae music artists, which gave rise to a new music movement there (Dagnini, 2010). Dagnini (2010) argues French reggae music resonated with the old tradition of French rebellion and left-leaning intellectual movements. These examples show how reggae became a worldwide movement for resisting colonialism and white supremacy. Contemporary reggae artists have modeled their music on these movements.

The subversive nature of reggae is evident in its Rastafari-inspired 35 lyrics. Many Caribbean people were taught to be ashamed of their African ancestry, and Rastas were persecuted and seen as social outcasts (Akala, 2016). Akala (2016) argues that reggae artists used their music for political purposes. Bob Marley himself was shot for having written music about political parties in Jamaica (Akala, 2016). Music artists in nations like Barbados, Jamaica, and Canada have embraced it as a counter-hegemonic social movement that challenges authoritarianism, capitalism, neoliberalism, classicism, corruption, racism and neo-colonialism (Mulder, 2015). As Horace Campbell (in Mulder) states:

The Rastafari movement, in all its contemporary manifestations, challenges not only the Caribbean but the entire Western world to come to terms with the history of slavery, the reality of white racism and the permanent thrust for dignity and self-respect by Black people. (Campbell in Mulder, 2015)

35 “The Rastafari movement was a force of resistance, arguing for independence, reparations for slavery and native genocide, and the right to repatriate to Africa at the cost of the colonizer” (Mulder, 2015).
Another music artist I witnessed at Nuits d’Afrique is Senegalese singer Marema. The singer’s Facebook page classifies her genre as “world music”. Her father is Mauritanian and her mother Senegalese, a “métissage” which she claims is part of her identity (MaremaOfficiel, n.d.). The word *métissage* is commonly used in Québec to describe the process of two cultures coming together and forming a new one. This is similar to Fernando Ortiz’ concept of transculturation. Ortiz (1965) writes that transculturalism involves the “de-culturalization of the past and a métissage of the present” (p. 8). These processes imply both a loss and a coming together of two cultures. I note that Ortiz’s definition focuses mainly on interactions between groups, while Marema’s example describes a coming together of two people from different cultures to create a family.

Marema states that her music finds influence in popular American folk music artist Tracy Chapman (MaremaOfficiel, n.d.). She has performed backing vocals for Senegalese music artists Awadi, Yoro Ndiaye, Edu Bocande, Metzo Djatah, and Idrissa Diop (MaremaOfficiel, n.d.). She uses lyrical and acoustic styles in her work, which she says contribute to the universal musical heritage of the world. The use of the term universal suggests she sees music in a broad sense rather than belonging to specific nations. The Nuits d’Afrique website describes Marema’s music this way:

> Marema’s music blends traditional influences and contemporary beats. Her borderless melodies touch upon African sounds as well as blues, pop, and rock. Her repertory reflects her mixed identity. (Les Productions Nuits d’Afrique, n.d.)

The use of the word “borderless” supports the idea that Marema sidesteps a categorization of “national” music and that in terms of her musical identity she exists within a space of in-betweenness. The excerpt also provides an example of a musical fusion of several genres, rock, pop, blues, and African, which I view as remix practice and as a form of hybridity. Even so, her use of the traditional African instrument, the xalam, is representative of her Senegalese culture (Martin & Mikalha, 2020).

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36 Musical identities are developed when music plays a role in the formation of individual identities as a way of presenting themselves to others (Hargreaves, Miell, & MacDonald, 2002).

37 The xalam is a plucked lute with four or five strings used in Senegal, Gambia, and Mali (Martin & Mihalka, 2020). It is primarily used by professional musicians, oral historians and storytellers (p. 941).
Another group whose performance I attended is Tabou Combo. The ensemble is an internationally recognized group of musicians and singers who perform the “infectious rhythm of Haiti’s national dance music, Kompa” (Tabou Combo, n.d.). The 12-member group, originally from Haiti, relocated to New York City in 1971 (Tabou Combo, n.d.). Nuits d’Afrique describes Tabou Combo as the “Rolling Stones of Haiti”, referencing American culture (Les Productions Nuits d’Afrique, n.d.). The group points out that some of its musical influences are from the Dominican Republic’s national dance (meringue) and Haiti’s carnavalesque music, which the group describes as rara, hypnotic drums from Haitian voodoo rituals (Tabou Combo, n.d.). The group also finds influence in the quadrilles and contra-dances from Haiti’s French colonial times, and in the American soul era (Tabou Combo, n.d.). This multi-layered description shows a multinational influence on the group’s music style (American, Dominican, French, and Haitian). The musicians also use baselines, piano riffs, horns, conga drums, and electric guitars reminiscent of West African soukous, pointing to the influence of African culture (Tabou Combo, n.d.).

Like many of the music artists in this study, Tabou Combo actively promotes awareness about social issues. The group says it uses “lyrics that focus on social issues of the day”. Similar to Alayé, it does not name these issues. However, some of the group’s songs provide examples. In 1991, Tabou Combo released Zap Zap to improve the image of Haitian people in the wake of the AIDS epidemic (Tabou Combo, n.d.). Sydney Bryn Austin (1989/1990) argues that in the 1980s, mainstream media in the West used racist notions to report on the AIDS epidemic, which perpetuated negative stereotypes about African people. For example, popular media narratives pointed to the under-development of African nations and the sexual excess and immorality of African men as the reason for the epidemic (Austin, 1989). Another example of political engagement is Tabou Combo’s song, Independence Chacha, which commemorates the 50th anniversary of the independence of African francophone nations (Tabou Combo, n.d.). The song was originally written by Congolese singer Joseph Kabasele from the group L’African Jazz in 1959 as a commentary on the growing independence movement in Belgian Congo (Powell, 2014). These examples show a desire by the group to engage in political discourse about the decolonization of French-speaking African and Caribbean nations. They also show how the group has challenged negative representations of African people through its work. Haitian people who have immigrated to the United States and Canada hold identities distinct from other Black American and Caribbean people, which, along with Haiti’s history of colonization and slavery, has
led to tension, mistrust, and discrimination (John, 2015, p.4). Literary scholar Ronaldo John (2015) argues that the notion of identity is fluid when represented in Haitian literature. Writer Marie Vieux-Chauvet’s 1957 *La danse sur le Volcan* shows how the colour of skin created a social hierarchy in Haiti in her story of Minette, a Black theatre actress who is excluded from elite social spaces despite having been recognized for her acting abilities (Vieux-Chauvet in John, 2015, p. 7). John (2015) argues migration to Canada and the United States shifted these differentiations between social classes and led to an increase in storytelling about the experience of discrimination. Lyonel Icart (2006) notes that some of the first waves of immigration to the province of Québec came from Haiti between 1957 and 1972. He argues that the discourse about Haitian people in Québec largely revolves around integration and reveals an “us” vs “them” ideology. This is evidenced in one Radio-Canada interview moderated by journalist Joane Prince who asks the question “How would you define yourself?” to her guest (Icart, 2006). The exchange implies a cultural deficit by the individual who doesn’t integrate ‘well’ and imposes the responsibility of having to work towards filling this gap, while also denying the existence of racism within the structures of the state and the social hierarchization this has created.

At Mondo Karnaval, I attended three live performances by francophone music artists: Ramon Chicharron, Lakou Veranda, and MOOV 38. At the time of the study, Lakou Veranda and Moov did not have official websites, and Moov had no social media presence. For this reason, there are no auto-biographical descriptions available for Lakou Veranda and Moov, and they were not included in the digital content analysis portion of the study. I turn my attention to Ramon Chicharron, a Colombian-born music artist living in Montréal. Chicharron describes his style of music as Cumbia Chicharonica, a re-imaged version of traditional Colombian music (Ramonchicharron, n.d.). His music is inspired by a simple way of life and a “world without borders” (translated) (Ramonchicharron, n.d.). This is another example of the in-betweenness of transnational identities that Mensah discusses. Chicharron’s imagined borderless world promotes a narrative where nation-states no longer restrict the movement of displaced people such as refugees, and where the confines of nationalism no longer exist. The statement suggests a political commentary on the way nations in the West have politicized and controlled the movement of

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38 I was unable to attend performances by Carine au Micro, Kiri, and Noubi Trio’s performances due to a conflict with my transportation schedule and an overlap in performances by francophone music artists.
marginalized people through the policing of their borders. Yet, he never explicitly names the social injustice these people face or the global problem of neo-nationalism which has driven these policies.

Chicharron states that the purpose of his music is to take his audience on a voyage. This description suggests a desire to engage in cross-cultural dialogue. The transnational character of the discourse which promotes, albeit figuratively, the experiencing of other localities is also evident. He also describes himself as a “nomadic soul … influenced from cumbia and other Latin and Caribbean rhythms, and a touch of electronic sounds”, and as having a “blend between identities” (Ramon Chicharron, n.d.). These phrases show how Chicharron’s identity and music have elements of mobility (nomadism) and hybridity (blended identities). In addition, the blending of Latin, Caribbean, and electronic music styles also represents an example of musical remix. Although he rarely uses words related to ethnicity and cultural identity, his attachment to places (Colombia/the Caribbean) and the symbolic meaning of his blended musical style and experiences are all part of this identity (Ramon Chicharron, n.d.). He gives several examples of in-betweenness in his description: urban vs nature, tradition vs modernism, and dream vs reality without ever mentioning his “national” identity (Ramon Chicharron, n.d.).

At Mundial Montréal, I saw three performances by music artists Blick Bassy, Mamselle Ruiz, and Nazih Borish. Mamselle Ruiz’s Facebook About page describes her music as folk and fusion Latin jazz (MamselleRuizPage, n.d.). Her musical influences include Mexican folk singer Amparo Ochoa, Costa Rican singer Chabela Vargas who interpreted Mexican rancheras, Argentinian folk singer Mercedes Sosa, Cuban musician and folk singer Silvio Rodriguez, and American folk and jazz artist Bobby McFerrin (MamselleRuizPage, n.d.). These influences show that artists like Ruiz, who are categorized under the term “world music”, are not restricted to national expressions of music, but can find inspiration in several locations (Cuba, Mexico, Argentina, United States). On

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39 Maureen Eger and Sarah Valdez (2014) define neo-nationalism as the contemporary anti-immigrant parties constituting a new and distinct party family. Examples include Trumpism in the United States, the Freedom Party of Austria, and the Danish People’s Party in Denmark. The neo-nationalist global order is rooted in traditional (white) nationalist ideologies, the rise of populist politics and the spread of conspiracy theories and misinformation in the media (Bergmann, 2020). I argue that the increased displacement of people due to climate change, political unrest, and armed conflicts has heightened neo-nationalism around the world, positioning migrant people as a threat to national identities and nation-states and leading to more stringent border controls. These policies, as well as Covid-19 restrictions since 2020, have negatively affected touring musicians who rely on transnational movement for their work.
her website, Ruiz is described as a singer-songwriter, dancer, and performing artist who combines multiple art forms and cultural influences from Latin rhythms, Latin-American traditions, and Mexican legends with those from her “terre d’accueil” Québec (Mamselle Ruiz, n.d.). This description suggests a hybrid music style that is symbolic of her dual identity (Mexican and Québécois) and of her transnational musical influences. It also provides an example of interculturalism. The phrase “terre d’accueil” means “land of welcome”, which positions Québec as the default/dominant culture and all others as guests. I suggest that Ruiz is merely reproducing existing narratives about immigration in Québec society, but that this perspective highlights the difference between the dominant position and the “Other”. I suggest that it also positions Québécois people as “white saviours” who rescue and uplift racially marginalized immigrants and refugees. Felix Willuweit (2020) notes that the white saviour syndrome is a manifestation of neo-imperialism. He defines the concept as “the phenomenon in which a white person guides people of colour from the margins to the mainstream with his or her own initiative and benevolence”. This can be harmful because it assumes racially marginalized people are incapable of agency (Cammarota in Willuweit, 2020). The problem with this approach is that it places the so-called “Other” in a perceived position of inferiority and the white saviour as the hero, which reinforces the expectation that marginalized people should submit to the established order (Willuweit, 2020).

Ruiz’s first visits to Québec and Ontario were in 2007 after meeting her Québécois partner during a circus tour in Mexico (Mamselle Ruiz, n.d.). Mamselle also performed in Cirque du Soleil in 2009, according to her Facebook biography. A resident of Québec since 2010, she has won the Artist Residency Program at Place des Arts (MUZ – Vision Diversité), the Révélation Radio Canada en Musique du Monde (2013-2014) and has performed in Mexico during the “semaine de la francophonie” (Mamselle Ruiz, n.d.). These professional opportunities and awards show that Ruiz’s cultural and linguistic identities have been beneficial to her music career to some degree. They are also evidence of how award categories often use labels like “diversity” and “world music” to pigeonhole non-Western music, as we saw earlier with Rommel Ribeiro.

Another performance I witnessed at Mundial Montréal was by Syrian-born musician Nazih Borish. At the time of the study, he had no official web page and no biography on his Facebook page. However, the Centre des Musiciens du Monde describes him as having learned to play the oud at the age of five. The oud is a pear-shaped instrument commonly played in Syria and other Middle-
Eastern nations (Mottola, 2018). Borish’s music incorporates several styles: flamenco, jazz, blues, and Indian (Centre des Musiciens du Monde, 2020). Borish is an example of someone who neither speaks French nor English, yet lives and works in Canada. Gail Prasad (2012) argues that Canadians like Borish are culturally and linguistically diverse, but have historically had their identities constructed through official language and multiculturalism policies. That is, they are defined by their inability to speak French or English. This political framing has limited their access to French language schools and services, which has shaped their integration into Canada (Prasad, 2012). Building on Prasad’s argument, I propose that musicians who do not speak English or French are often excluded from Canadian society by policy-makers. This exclusion is a barrier to economic, social, and cultural participation. Indeed, during his Mundial Montréal performance, Borish uses one of his musicians to speak to his audience (Field notes, 2019, November 22\textsuperscript{nd}). Applying Jennifer Miller’s (2004) theory on the negotiation of identities, I reframe the concept of language as a form of socially constructed discourse. Miller states that “using language involves contextually situated discursive practices” (p. 291). She notes that the language we use also shapes our identities (Miller, 2004). Borrowing from her work, I use the metaphoric term “voice” to show how Borish negotiates language in the context of the music industry and festival. His rhetorical agency is co-opted by the fact that his primary language is not French (or English) and therefore he is seen as unable to use his own voice to communicate, which marginalizes him from the dominant culture (Miller, 2004). However, Borish works around this by asking one of his musicians to speak to the audience during his performance.

I also attended music artist Blick Bassy’s performance at Mundial Montréal. Bassy’s Facebook About section mentions very little about him and mainly promotes his album Ako (Bassy, n.d.). As a Cameroonian musician and singer who lives in Paris, France, he has developed a transnational identity. I understand touring international music artists as migrant cultural workers who form attachments to different nations, either as their country of birth/residence, or as nations where they frequently travel to perform. In doing so, they develop transnational identities. Using Steven Vertovec’s (2007), Sunyoung Park’s and Lasse Gerrits’ (2021) definition of the term transnational, I define this identity as representing migrant people’s unique sense of belonging, which can be individually contextualized and diversified beyond nation-state borders. Social contexts play an important role in understanding transnational music artists’ identities. Each person must always be aware of who they are, how they present themselves, and how others perceive and accept them.
within the host society (Park & Gerrits, 2021). I view this social acceptance as a driver towards integration. This also requires migrant cultural workers to navigate negative stereotypes, prejudice, and even exclusion, and at times, pressure to assimilate into the dominant culture. These negative experiences drive some of the decisions people make about how they express their identities in order to maintain a sense of belonging. However, I argue that transnationality does not require citizenship, but rather the prolonged experience of having lived in two or more nations, which leads to a double attachment and hybrid feelings of belonging. Like Cristina Bradatan, Adrian Popan, and Rachel Melton (2010), I view the identities of touring music artists as fluid and not limited to transnationalism, nationality or ethnicity, but rather as happening in the moment-to-moment interactions that unfold in their life (p. 176).

For Bassy, it’s unclear if he intentionally stays away from identity politics and labels in his description, but there are very few mentions of this in his biographical information. At the same time, symbolic elements such as his music style and use of the Basaa language[^40] are indicators of his transnational identity and his creative agency. Bassy previously toured Cameroon as a member of the group Macase (Eastaugh, 2015). The group claims to have developed a new style of music which they named Bantu Groove.[^41] The style has since influenced other West African music artists such as Bantunani (Clerfeuille, 2012/2020). Bassy seems to embrace in-betweenness and use his creative agency to support hybrid forms of music. He describes his latest project as experimental and featuring the guitar, banjo, cello, and trombone (Eastaugh, 2015). Bassy’s music incorporates jazz fusion with West African and Central African rhythms influenced by his travels to Brazil (France Rocks, 2019).

Bassy also uses his music to bring attention to political issues in Cameroon. His signature falsetto voice and unconventional style of music are his tribute to those who fought and died for the independence of Cameroon (France Rocks, 2019). His album *1958* is dedicated to Ruben Um Nyobè, an anti-colonialist leader who represented the Popular Union Party of Cameroon and was killed by French soldiers two years before the country’s independence. As one journalist describes Bassy’s music:

[^40]: Basaa is one of Cameroon’s 260 languages (Eastaugh, 2015).
[^41]: Bantu groove is a contemporary music style that fuses various Cameroonian styles with jazz and soul (Clerfeuille, 2012/2020).
Its focus is specific, but its themes – the bondage of neo-colonialism, the need for heroes, the relevance of history and the search for true identity – are universal. (France Rocks, 2019)

Bassy’s symbolic use of narratives about Cameroon’s independence movement shows that he uses his music as a tool for decolonization. His dedication to Nyobè 42 shows how political activism and the revolution against French imperialism in Africa are important issues in Cameroonian society.

During my visit to Ottawa’s Canada Day Celebration, I witnessed the performances of two Canadian music artists: Elagé Diouf and Mehdi Cayenne. Both are francophones and are often categorized as “world music” singers/musicians by the music industry. Both are members of FMCs. Yet, Senegalese-born Diouf’s website and Facebook pages describe his music under several labels, including “world”, folk, blues, pop, and aşıkò, a genre similar to Nigerian/West African sákárà but considered the Christian version (Waterman, 1988; Diouf, n.d.). I view music artists’ use of several genres as a strategy for disrupting existing hierarchies within the music industry. Music artists can expand their visibility and access multiple audiences by using several genre labels. Diouf, who is Franco-Albertan, mostly sings in Wolof, his maternal language, but speaks to his audience in French (and occasionally in English). His website notes his diverse influences such as English musician and singer Peter Gabriel, Colombian pop singer Andrés Capeda, and Brazilian singer and percussionist Carlinhos Brown (Diouf, n.d.). These influences have contributed to the development of his multi-faceted and hybridized musical identity.

Diouf has received SOCAN’s Echo Prize and collaborated with Canadian country music artist Johnny Reid and with Cirque du Soleil. In 2016, he won the Solo Artist of the Year for World Music at the Canadian Folk Music Awards, as well as several other “world music” prizes from ADISQ and the JUNO Awards (Diouf, n.d.). In 2011, he won the Galaxie Rising Star Award at Mondial Montréal, and in 2015, the Best Artist from the African Diaspora Prize (Calebasse d’Or) in Senegal (Diouf, n.d.). Diouf’s various awards and collaborations show a recognition of his music under several genres. Yet, some of these prizes categorize his music as “world music” or African, which doesn’t necessarily capture the complexity of his creative choices and range. This

42 Umism (derived from Ruben Um Nyobè’s anti-imperialism movement), a nationalist and pan-Africanist ideology based on the idea that the oppression of Cameroonians can be overcome when a leader becomes the people’s voice and prosecutor of the oppressor (Joseph, 1974).
is symbolic of how the music industry and the media tend to define music artists through broad catch-all categories that work to separate non-Western musicians and singers from Western ones.

The second music artist at the Canada Day Celebration whose performance I observed was Mehdi Cayenne. Cayenne is a Franco-Ontarian singer with roots in Algeria and other parts of Canada. He is also a poet, comedian, and radio personality based in Ottawa, Ontario. His music mixes funk, post-punk, folk, and elements of hip-hop and “world music”, which shows the artist’s musical fluidity and hybridity. Cayenne has lived in Montréal, Moncton, New Brunswick, and Ottawa (Poitras, 2015). This shows how some francophone Canadians are not tied to one territory because they move from one place to another for various reasons such as work or studies. Yet, as a French-speaking Canadian, Cayenne has the support of francophone associations and institutions, which he has used to strengthen his career. For example, he has won several prizes from organizations that support francophone artists, including the Trille d’Or, Contact Ontarois and Prix Rideau (Bergeras, 2017). He also has a public presence at Radio-Canada as a francophone radio host and has created a French-Canadian documentary and poetry-style programs across Canada (Bergeras, 2017). Additionally, he has facilitated workshops in several francophone schools (Bergeras, 2017). These activities show that Cayenne has built his career in part from his ability to speak French. He is also an active producer of culture in Canada’s French-speaking communities.

The previously mentioned music artist profiles show how artists and others’ descriptions of music genres can be both symbolic and a manifestation of their cultural identities and musical influences. They can also constrain them from accessing certain spaces. Figure 3 shows how musical influences, awards, and descriptions by journalists and festivals help construct symbolic boundaries. The way music artists describe their work also contributes to these boundaries and labels.
The figure shows that music artists in the study sometimes use folk and “world music” to self-describe. Some musicians/singers assign Africanness to their music, such as Afro-Reggae, Afro-Brazilian, and Afropop which shows that for some racially marginalized music artists, African identity is a part of their musical identities. The artists also use 19 different terms specific to their work, such as blues, pop, Asiko, West African, kompa (compa), funk and so on. Jazz is also popular. However, artists use variations of the term, including fusion Latin jazz, and Latin jazz. These variations show the fluidity of some genres and the role of Latinx and African identities in constructing distinct music styles. The prizes/awards music artists receive mostly use broad labels like “world music” and “musique du monde” to classify the artists. This is an important observation because artists need these kinds of accolades to build their professional careers and

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43 The data may not be generalized to music festivals outside Ontario and Québec (Canada) or to all media publication sources.
44 Only 9 out of the 12 music artists who have biographies on their Facebook pages and websites mention prizes/awards.
brand authority in Canada. One prize uses the word “diversity”, which symbolically defines the artists who win the award as part of Canada’s multicultural community. In a way, this works to create difference because it separates the winner from the rest of Canada’s musicians and singers, and labels them as the “Other”. While the prize intends to support underrepresented musicians and singers, assigning the label of “world music” or “diversity” can also re-produce power dynamics that marginalize artists who identify as African, Latinx, Asian, or Indigenous.

The festival programs and the third-party articles from journalists who wrote about or interviewed the music artists during the study used the terms “world music” most often, and more frequently than the music artists. I note that people who work in media industries can play a positive role in describing artists by not assigning these kinds of labels, which separate non-Western artists. I use the example of the Grammy Awards changing the Best Contemporary World Music Album category to Global Music Album in 2020. Haitian DJ Michael Brun argues that “Global Music” is more representative of a music culture without borders and the innovative fusion of sounds many global music artists are producing (Aswad, 2020). However, I argue that the “Global Music” label is not that different from its predecessor because it still implies a separation between Western and non-Western artists. The music industry could do more to make its award shows and radio play more diverse, and to provide more performance opportunities for marginalized artists from non-Western nations. The Canadian Live Music Association (2022) recently released a report which outlines the systemic barriers its racially marginalized workers face. These barriers include a lack of representation, the gatekeeping of producer, festival programmer, and music promoter positions, and the lack of supportive leadership (Live Music Association, 2022). The report also points to genre categorization as a “double-edged issue”, noting that “Indigenous music” and “world music” can both create a sense of belonging and, at the same time, tokenize and marginalize music artists (The Canadian Press, 2022).

When looking at the musical influences of musicians and singers, the terms most frequently observed in the music artists’ biographies were jazz, folk, and pop. However, here too a variety of specific terms is used, such as electro-folk, Congolese rumba, African song, rara, voodoo, and soul. The narrowness of the terms people use to describe themselves or their music suggests that they see their music as specific rather than broad or generic. Umbrella terms like folk and pop are therefore less useful in describing these music artists’ music styles. By the same token, the use of
multiple terms by an individual artist suggests they see their music as more fluid than others do. The absence of the term “world music” in the self-descriptions of most artists and in their musical influence suggests that the category has little meaning for them. Instead, it seems they prefer to use more substantial music categories that reflect what they do and how they construct their music styles/identities. The term “world music” makes clear the perceived inferiority of genres like Afrobeat, Caribbean, and Middle Eastern sounds to that of Western music. In the early 1980s, the record industry created the term as a way to market non-Western genres (Sweeney, 1991). After the commercial success of reggae and Paul Simon’s *Graceland* album (1986), which featured South African group Ladysmith Black Mambazo (Sweeney, 1991), *Billboard Magazine* went on to create the World Music Chart (Billboard Magazine, 1990). The category has created the impression that any non-Western music is part of a cultural monolith which erases global national identities.

A trend reveals itself in the terms music artists and others use to describe genres. The majority of the artists surveyed in this study are not defined by a single music style. This trend mirrors consumer habits. We don’t just listen to one type of music. Instead, we often consume several genres. Music artists might use these terms strategically, either to access work in a specific market or gain recognition in the music industry such as when they receive prizes. However, differences do exist in the music styles that reflect each artist’s identity and creative agency. Many artists see themselves as having hybrid identities and music styles. As an example, Valerie Ekoumé points to Congolese rumba and Michael Jackson as musical influences. In chapters four and five, I explore several examples of how the artists’ material and digital worlds express these hybrid musical identities.

**Research Approach, Methods and Techniques**

Contemporary ethnography focuses on researching groups of people and observing them as they participate in their world (Pink, Horst, Postill, Hjorth, Lewis, & Tacchi, 2015; Murthy, 2008; Atkinson, Coffee, Delamont, Lofland, & Lofland, 2002; O’Reilley, 2005). Digital ethnographers are storytellers who delve beneath the surface and unearth the things that interviews and surveys do not reveal. For example, researching how people experience self-driving cars requires sitting next to drivers and observing what they do (Raats, Fors, & Pink, 2020). Pink points out that we
live in a context where the digital and the material are both part of our environment and bringing them together in research makes sense (Pink, 2018).

Sarah Pink (2018) wrote the book on DE and identifies two approaches digital ethnographers can take when applying the method: looking from above at the space or moving through it. She shares an example from the field of human geography. Maps are often criticized for their flatness and view from above as opposed to representations of places that emphasize the movement of people, information, and things (Pink, 2018). I apply Pink’s “moving through” analogy to map out how music artists move through life and work, how they experience these domains and how they use digital technologies in them. I also use this to imagine how festival-goers walk through the festival grounds as they take in the event. When artists share pictures of their live music performances on Instagram to promote themselves, for example, they participate in the sharing of information.

Using this approach, and focusing on the community I defined in the previous section, I investigate the material and digital spaces music artists inhabit. I also discuss how racially marginalized francophone musicians and singers negotiate organizational identities and the curatorial/promotional practices of festivals. I detail how assigning labels to music genres can work to restrict or facilitate artists’ participation in the labour market. An illustration of this is the use of terms like “world music” and “exotic”, which can both promote and erase differences. On the other hand, describing one’s music as “borderless” allows the reader to imagine a world where moving between borders is seamless for everyone.

DE is often used by sociologists, information scientists who explore human-computer interactions, designers, social psychologists, anthropologists, human geographers, and media studies scholars (Pink et al., 2015). Pink (2018) notes that location and embodiment are important to DE. While we live and work in material places, we also use technology on a daily basis, which can give us a digital presence in multiple locations (Pink, 2018). We can therefore feel, know, connect with and sense when we engage with the digital world. For example, we use our smartphones to communicate with friends who live at a distance, our social media to share news, and digital photography when we travel. Pink (2018) points out that technology has the power to change social relationships between people by making new forms of relationships possible and enabling the structures people are already in. One example is a study by digital ethnographers on how inter-generational families used mobile phones to coordinate travel, care for people, and even keep track
of what family members do (Sinanan, Hjorth, & Fumitoshi Kato, 2018). The results showed that the smartphone enabled people to carry out modes of living together and generated or amplified feelings and relationships between them (Sinanan, Hjorth, & Fumitoshi Kato, 2018).

DE (also called virtual ethnography or cyber-ethnography) allows ethnographers to expand their purview into the cybersphere by using online observations that identify people’s behaviours and interactions. I rely on this approach because other scholars have used it to study workplaces and social movements on social media platforms. For example, Bazilah Talip, Bhuva Narayan, Sylvia Edwards, and Jason Watson’s (2017) Twitter study contextualized social media platforms as online information grounds (fields). Using online observation and interviews, they built an understanding of the norms, behaviours, and culture of Twitter users (Talip et al., 2017). In doing so, they were able to understand how and why professionals use social media for their work (Talip et al., 2017). Postill’s (2014) research on the Spanish indignados campaign 45 explored protesters’ use of Twitter. He positioned the platform as central to propagating information about protests and used DE to understand how protesters set the tone and agenda for their movement (Postill, 2014). Postill (2014) analyzed tweets, mentions, and hashtags related to the indignados protests. The accounts he collected provided alternative narratives (nanostories) to professional news media and highlighted the influence of amateur journalists (Postill, 2014). Dalsgaard (2016) supplemented his long-term ethnographic study of a community in Papua New Guinea by exploring how Facebook activities can inform offline phenomena. He developed an understanding of how sharing and tagging photos helped document social events and utterances (Dalsgaard, 2016). These examples show that DE is useful in helping ethnographers understand offline worlds by observing people online.

For my research, I wanted to study the way music artists and festivals use Facebook to promote performances. I also wanted to see whether these performances and the online content artists create contain symbolic representations. I identified two groups of music artists: those who identified as national and lived in Canada, and those who lived in other nations (international artists). I limited my study to Ontario and Québec festivals for logistical and financial reasons. Doing this allowed

45 Also called 15-M, the indignados movement that led to protest and inspired similar action across southern Europe. It represents an expression of civic discontent by Spanish citizens about the way the European financial crisis was handled (Kyriakidou & Olivas-Osuna, 2017).
me to explore how each province navigates multiculturalism. I selected festivals that brand themselves as multicultural, diverse, or focused on “world music”. In all, I selected five events; in Ontario, I attended London’s TD Sunfest and Ottawa’s Canada Day Celebration. In Québec, I attended Nuits d’Afrique and Mundial Montréal in Montréal and Mondo Karnaval in Québec City. Nuits d’Afrique, Mondo Karnaval, and TD Sunfest are traditional festivals focused mainly on an annual event and engaging in smaller activities throughout the year. I included the Canada Day Celebration because of its location in Ontario, but also because the local community is representative of Canada’s linguistic dualism. I wanted to explore how the Canadian government constructs its national identity through this celebration. Mundial Montréal is a hybrid festival with a professional networking component. I included it in the study so I could explore how musicians and singers navigate the festival ecosystem and use it to access training and performance opportunities and network. London, Ottawa, Québec City, and Montréal are ideal locations for hosting festivals due to their size and prominence. The four cities are easily accessible by train or bus and are in two of Canada’s most populated provinces. As well, these five festivals actively promote diversity and multiculturalism, which allowed me to study the experience of racially marginalized music artists. The five festivals provide a snapshot of the industry’s diversity-focused events in central Canada. In addition to my field visits, I collected digital data from each of the festivals’ Facebook pages. I also collected information from a sample of francophone music artists who performed at each of the five events.

To manage the large volume of digital information I collected, I narrowed my scope to the 2019 festival season that began on July 1st and ended on November 22nd. Choosing Facebook was a pragmatic decision. During my early discussions with industry leaders at the WOMEX conference, I found that the majority of professionals had an established virtual presence there due to the platform’s focus on promoting business products and activities. Most of the music professionals I had spoken to at the conference identified Facebook as being the most effective platform for networking and promoting their work (J. Mutis, personal communication, January 18th, 2019). In addition, Facebook had the broadest selection of technical features that allow users to increase reach, visibility, and engagement. I note that many music artists and festival organizers use several social media platforms such as Twitter and Instagram. However, this study focuses on the use of Facebook due to its explicit promotional nature and business focus. When deciding on which content to analyze, I focused on posts shared no more than three months before each live event to make sure to capture promotional activities related to the festivals. Guided by the works of Pink
(2012), Dhiraj Murthy (2008), Douglas Holmes and George Marcus (2008), John Postill (2014), Madeleine Pastinelli (2011, 2007), and Robert Kozinets (2015), I combined two fields of study: the stage/festival grounds (material) and the Facebook pages of music artists and festival organizations (digital). In doing so, I was able to capture data from each of the five festivals’ musical programs, grounds, and, in several cases artisan markets and food booths. The digital information I captured complemented and informed the in-person data. For example, at several festivals, I witnessed an artisan market which they also promote on Facebook.

DE facilitates the study of habits and movements (Postill & Pink, 2012; Beaulieu, 2004; Hine, 2000, 2008; Kozinets, 2010; Postill, 2008, 2010a, 2010b, 2011). My methodology allowed me to observe how touring musicians and singers move from one location to another as they perform in several venues. As an example, Nuits d’Afrique often shares social media posts and on-site signage acknowledging its sponsors, and many music artists take selfies when they arrive at airports or leave by train. Similar to Talip et al. (2017), I see significant value in studying how people experience festivals in the absence of the body.

I build upon Pink’s (2018) assertion that digital mediums like Facebook can manifest and maintain relationships while explaining how people create and maintain networks and communities (Pastinelli, 2011). For instance, when people immigrate to a new country, they can develop connections before even arriving by connecting with locals through social media. They can also stay in touch with their family and friends back home after they settle into their new country. Lee Komito and Jessica Bates’ (2009) study on Polish migrant workers living in Dublin shows that they frequently use the chat app Gadu-Gadu to network and stay in touch. The app allows them to connect with other Polish speakers across the country. In doing so, they develop resilient social groups with friends and family in Poland, Ireland, and in other parts of the world (Komito & Bates, 2009). This example is similar to mine in that it shows how mobile workers with diverse linguistic profiles can use social media to stay connected with their families and communities, and with others who speak their language. My study of Facebook pages shows how interactions between music artists, festival organizers, and other people can happen from different geographic locations. The artists stay connected to places and people by using two modes of communication: public speaking and social media content curation.
My methodology allowed me to find patterns and descriptions of the online communities I observed and of their members. One example of these patterns is that all of the music artists wrote their captions in multiple languages, which showed that they were multilingual. I was able to better understand how the festival community inhabits ‘networked’ places (Marwick & Boyd, 2014) by analyzing the hashtags 46 and hyperlinks 47 contained within their captions. For example, in a Facebook post, music artist Ramon Chicharron used the hashtag and caption “#Apretao is on its way” to launch his new album (Ramon Chicharron, 2019, Sept 6). I witnessed festival organizers, musicians and singers share and repurpose other people’s content through curation, which involved selecting the articles they wanted for their audience and captioning them with a personalized description, hashtags, and so on. One example was when Blick Bassy promoted an event for music professionals about copyright law at which he was speaking (Bassy, 2019, October 31, see Figure 28).

Similar to Edgar Gomez Cruz and Elisenda Ardévol (2014), my DE aimed to analyze the power relations, the cultural production processes, the circulation of information, the relationship between media practices and artists, and the representation of cultural identities. Their study on the creative practices of people who use digital media shows how DE can present new topics of research and investigate virtual worlds. To design my study and conduct my analysis, I positioned festival-goers as consumers and festival organizers, musicians, and singers as producers of cultural products. I further positioned the music, food, and artisan objects as expressions (symbols) of culture and identity. These expressions, in addition to the languages people used, constructed the symbolic ‘multicultural’ spaces I witnessed during my field visits. My DE also allowed me to identify processes for building professional relationships and connections between music festivals and artists. Inspired by Kozinets’ (2015) netnography method, I paid close attention to the symbolic use of language, instruments, and people as devices for “selling” culture and diversity.

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46 Hashtags are a technique used to aggregate or filter similar social media content together by using the # symbol before a word to create categories based on geography, identity, social movement, or event among others (Millette, 2015; Yang, 2016).

47 A hyperlink is a connection that allows you to jump from one web page to another by clicking or tapping on a highlighted word containing a link (Cambridge University, n.d.). “Each hyperlink organizes a range of interpretive activities accomplished for various purposes by the users of the web” (Beaulieu & Simakova, 2006, p. 7).
For example, I explore the languages music artists and festivals used to write their social media
captions and to speak to their audience while on stage.

Kozinets (2015) notes that DE can help construct the identities of individuals as a way to inform
business practices and decision making. I considered these processes in my analysis because
festivals use business models that position them as vital economic tools for cities and the music
industry. Therefore, decisions made by festival organizers and artists sometimes reflect a desire to
generate revenue. This is different from their motivation to serve or entertain the public and
produce “pure art”. As an example, the role of decision-making during the program selection
process and the need for responsible festival management cannot be separated from commercial
motives. I applied Kozinets’ view of DE as symbolic and identified cultural and national symbols
in the data I collected. I considered how they construct identity and nationhood for different people.
As an example, Lakou Veranda group members posted an image of themselves holding a
Guadeloupean flag, which I argue symbolized their national identity (Lakou Veranda, 2019b,
September 2). I view this as a potential act of resistance and a political statement against French
colonialism, since Guadeloupe remains a part of France as a département d’outre-mer.

As Pink (2012, 2013) and Ardévol (2012) point out, collecting online images and texts helps
produce a reflexive and multi-voice picture of the field. I understand this to mean that observing
posts by several people can provide a full picture of the community and the issues they engage
with. Therefore, in my analysis, I identified anti-racism discourse and positioned social media
content as capable of being either constructive or problematic. For example, I witnessed Ramon
Chicharron and Aldo Guizmo share knowledge about how the history of slavery in the Caribbean
contributed to the social exclusion of racially marginalized people (see chapter five). The absence
of voices was also revealing to me. None of the festivals in the study discussed issues of racism or
the history of racial marginalization and segregation. When one festival shared an article by a CRT
artist, they missed the opportunity to discuss its implications for the music industry or the
racism/discrimination Black musicians and singers experience in Canada.

I selected data that enhance our understanding of Canada’s festivals, and more broadly the way it
curates and manages language, culture, and identity. As a networked economic system with
multiple social actors, the diversity-focused festival is responsible for the selection and promotion
of its performers. The choices festivals make can have a negative or positive impact on racially
marginalized people. This contextualization allowed me to identify any problematic practices such as the cultural appropriation of African culture or the use of fetishizing terms or captions.

My techniques for collecting and analyzing data included passive observation, content analysis, and ethnographic inquiry. I used passive observation and screen captures for each of the artists and festivals’ Facebook pages without intervening in conversations or reacting to any of their content. My goal was to identify marketing strategies and symbolic use of identity by building an understanding of the festival industry’s culture (Tynan, McKechnie & Chhuon, 2010; Rosenthal & Brito, 2017). The Facebook pages also provided some insight into consumer engagement in the tourism industry via the festivals (Colliander & Hauge Wien, 2013; Hollebeek & Chen, 2014; Hsu, Dehuang & Woodside, 2009; Mkono, Markwell & Wilson, 2013; Rageh, Melewär & Woodside, 2013). Ethnographic inquiry involves capturing representations, understanding people from different cultures, and learning about their experiences through various techniques such as observation and descriptive note-taking (Nagy Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2010, p. 193; Fetterman, 2010). I did this by walking through the festival grounds, taking photographs, and jotting notes about my observations. My inquiry was descriptive and inferential because I used the evidence I collected to develop conclusions about the people and places I saw (Creswell, 2003, p. 113).

During the live performances, I recorded videos and audio, which I later used to conduct qualitative analysis and identify the cultural and linguistic elements music artists had incorporated. This allowed me to consider various symbols and their meanings as well as the motivations for using remix and collaborations.

In chapter one, I discussed the importance of meaning making and the way people interpret information and symbols at the festival. Donald Getz (2010) describes several categories of meaning we assign to festivals (pp. 6-7). The first meaning is the desire for social change driven by political, social, and cultural discourses. Festival organizers and artists express this when they discuss political topics online. Some festival-goers also assign this meaning to the festivals I observed. Though a good part of the discourse is about culture and music, some people also discuss political and social issues. The second meaning is the commodification and commercialization of identity and authenticity. The festival organizers create the conditions for festival-goers and vendors to commodify artisanal crafts, clothing, and food through the commercialization of the event. These commodities represent various cultural identities. Some festivals also use authenticity
to sell the festival experience. I discuss these examples in more detail in chapters four and five. The third meaning is attachment to place, cultural identity, and community. The festival visitors from the African diaspora and other racially marginalized communities do this when they identify with the cultural identities expressed in the performances, the food, and so on. A few of the music artists in the study do this when they interact with specific audience members who have similar identities.

The fourth meaning is the desire for social cohesion, sociability, and communitas 48. This is evidenced in the organization’s desire to build cohesive and diverse communities in their cities. They all assign importance to bringing people together and creating a space where cultural and social exchanges can take place. I argue that festivals need to do more work to ensure these exchanges are meaningful and safe for racially marginalized people. The fifth meaning assigned to festivals is festivity, liminality, and the carnivalesque. In my view, festival visitors often assign these meanings because the festival is primarily seen as a form of entertainment. In doing so, they sometimes risk misinterpreting some cultural symbols and assigning their misinformed notions to various cultural and linguistic groups. The sixth meaning is religion, rites, and rituals. There are few examples of this in the study, and instead, I focus mainly on the first five meanings proposed by Getz. The seventh theme associates festivals with pilgrimage. I did not observe this in the festivals in my study. However, I propose that in some cases, when people become attached to festivals and return year after year, they are engaging in a form of pilgrimage to find meaning and belonging. The eighth is the association of myths and symbols. Although initially I had not assigned these meanings to my data coding, I did observe one music group use mythology in their performance. Perhaps a closer study of lyrics, music videos, and stage performances might reveal that some musicians and singers use myths and symbols. Finally, Getz identifies spectacle as one of the meanings assigned to festivals. A spectacle is defined in two ways: first, as an unusual or unexpected event or situation that attracts unwanted attention, interest or disapproval, and second, as a public event or show that is exciting to watch (Cambridge, n.d.). I believe the festival organizers intend for their events, primarily produced as entertainment, to become spectacles.

48 Communitas is an anthropological term used to describe an unstructured state where all members are equal and able to share a common experience (Turner, 1974).
Nevertheless, there is also a risk that the performers themselves become spectacles through a process of fetishization.

Getz’s festival themes helped me frame my analysis and identify organizers and participants’ motivations for taking part in festivals. I note that while the intention of festival organizers may be to create spaces for positive expressions of self, they can unintentionally reproduce colonial structures and systems. These colonial logics can appropriate and sell people’s difference without considering the impact. Initially, I developed a preliminary code schema to support the content analysis. However, these codes evolved as I observed broad patterns and created new themes and categories (Creswell, 2003). They captured the context, processes, activities, strategies, relationships, social structures, types of material, type of creator, location, and language of the Facebook posts and in-person performances. I was able to generate descriptions and show how each topic and category represents a story or narrative (Creswell, 2003, p. 193). Ultimately, the codes expanded as I became familiar with the festivals, musicians, singers, and cities. For example, I had anticipated that “cultural heritage” would be an important category. However, I found that “promotion of heritage” was more accurate and I revised my coding approach. My ethnographic inquiry also involved describing the scene, the boundaries of the cultural identities I witnessed, and the characteristics and stories shared about music artists’ backgrounds. I was able to do this by analyzing public documents such as websites and interviews in combination with my photographs, videos, and field notes (Morse & Richards, 2002, pp. 149-150). One example is the way Sunfest organizes its multiple stages according to identity “themes”. This allowed me to determine how the festival understands and promotes cultural identity and language. My field descriptions and analysis informed my narrative and allowed me to document my experience of the festivals (Morse & Richard, 2002; Fetterman, 2010; Lofland, Snow, Anderson, & Lofland, 2006; O’Reilley, 2005).

With the video recordings, I was able to capture interactions between the musicians/singers and their audience, especially between songs when they engaged in public speaking. They asked

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49 This study is ethnographic used codes to guide the analysis and inspire representations that described participants, interactions, speeches, use of the space, instruments and objects, and cultural elements (Nagy Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2010, pp. 248-249).
questions, shared the meaning of their songs, expressed opinions about political topics, and encouraged people to dance. My photos allowed me to capture the instruments and clothing they used, which were symbolic of their identities. With my field notes, I was also able to describe interactions between people and reflect on how their presence might affect the setting and vice versa (Emerson, Fretz, & Shaw, 2011). I also conducted a document review of the festival programs to understand how they describe festivals, musicians, and singers, and to learn about the local communities. I collected other digital artifacts such as articles and blog posts to better understand music artists’ professional work and backgrounds. This allowed me to improve my understanding of the terminology commonly used in the music industry. As well, I reviewed the websites of musicians, singers and festivals to understand musical, cultural, and professional backgrounds. I consulted the World Music Professionals Directory to gain a more in-depth understanding of the key players in the “world music” industry (Piranha Arts, 2018). This included complementary data about participants that they have intentionally compiled and made available to the public. At times, I consulted televised interviews to get a better sense of the artist’s own perception of their work.

To capture much of my data, I followed Jörg Matthes and Matthias Kohring’s (2008) recommendation to use screenshots and video frames (p. 258). Denna Harmon and Scot Boeringer (1997) recommend a total 200 social media posts when conducting a study of a digital platform, which I implemented and surpassed (in Nagy Hesse-Biber, S. & Leavy, 2010). In total, my collection had an average of 70 Facebook posts per artist/festival for a total of 1083 posts covering periods of three months before and up to three days after each event. I used content analysis to review the generous sample of Facebook posts I had collected. Shanyang Zhao (2014) uses content analysis to study identity expressions on Facebook pages. His findings show that Facebook users tend to claim their identities implicitly by showing rather than telling, and prefer group identities over personal ones (Zhao, 2014). In my qualitative analysis of the digital data, I also explored the captions (texts) and emojis people shared with their images and videos (Mathes & Kohring, 2008). I was able to capture the dynamics of identity construction in a virtual setting as well as more subtle communication such as flirting or being excited. The text provided a way to establish the relational aspects of the communication I witnessed, and the presence of affiliations, partnerships, and relationships. I identified original vs re-shared content such as videos and photos. For example,
third-party articles about music artists’ interviews with journalists. I noted most third-party articles came from cultural institutions, online magazines, professional associations, or television media. Reviewing the original content helped me clarify the context and background of these third-party authors.

I also used data visualization as a method for examining the digital content I had gathered. This was useful for observing the locations and movements of people and the timing of their social media activities at a given time or place (Aparicio & Costa, 2014, pp. 7-9). My study considers musicians and singers as people who move from place to place. Therefore, I used concept mapping and mind mapping techniques to visualize this movement. Doing this also helped me identify relationships between various concepts and people (Lanzing, 2004; Wheeldon & Faubert, 2009, p. 69). In addition, it allowed me more creativity and flexibility in organizing and categorizing my data which improved my interpretation of emerging themes, stories, experiences, and meanings (Wheeldon, 2009, p. 71; Daley, 2004; Creswell & Plano Clark, 2010, p. 72). I applied Jacqueline Faubert’s approach to mind mapping as a way of framing and analyzing experiences (Wheeldon & Faubert, 2009). I used mind maps in this study to conceptualize the system in which the in-person and the virtual converge. I imagined each participant as having an experience within the festival and within the digital network of the industry. I viewed this as one segment of their professional life, but not a complete picture, since music artists also perform at non-festival venues. I considered the festival network/ecosystem as a place also inhabited by visitors and other entities such as journalists, researchers, and business owners.

I separated the data I had gathered into two categories: in-person and digital fields. I then arranged the data for analysis by organizing folders according to format: documents, images, screenshots, and recordings, and splitting each of those into two categories: festivals and artists. For the digital data, I created folders for the websites, programs, Facebook screen captures and other articles I used. For the field visits, I organized the information by photographs, audio and video recordings, programs, and field notes. I later created a folder I labeled “participant description” for each music festival and artist where I moved the website and Facebook About sections I had captured. I created

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50 A mind map is a data visualization technique using key concepts written on branches linked together rather than labeled. The most general concepts are at middle of the graphic which uses icons and visual metaphors extensively and strikes a balance between logic and creativity (Buzan in Wheeldon & Faubert, 2009).
a folder called “field descriptions” and added my field notes from each event, building research memos as I completed my fieldwork. From this layout, I was able to create a mind map illustrating the scope of the data I had collected (Figure 4).

Figure 4: Scope of Data Collected

Finally, I used convenience sampling as a sampling technique and selected francophone artists performing at the five diversity-focused festivals I had chosen for my field visits. Their geographic location and scheduled appearances made them suitable, but I also reviewed the programs in advance to make my preliminary selections. For each musician/singer I recorded four songs, as this usually represented the length of a standard set. I selected at least two artists from each festival line-up to observe. There were more francophone performers in Québec than in Ontario. Consequently, I had access to more music artists at Nuits d’Afrique, Mondo Karnaval, and Mundial Montréal.
Ethical Considerations and Challenges

When compared to traditional ethnography, DE presents new challenges surrounding informed consent and data safety. Authors who share information publicly can sometimes be anonymous which makes it difficult to verify authenticity (Wilson & Peterson, 2002). That said, people who post publicly on Facebook and set their privacy to public are giving implied consent to having others read their content. This is especially true of public figures like music artists and organizations that serve the public. To reduce the risk of intrusion, I chose not to collect comments posted by others and excluded content related to personal topics. I also flagged potentially sensitive or damaging content or images and did not use this information in my study. There was a mild risk of social or economic hardship if the musicians and singers made negative statements about the music industry. To mitigate this risk, I avoided using potentially harmful captions as examples in my dissertation. Maintaining the accuracy of the information I collected was paramount. My analysis of the data had the potential to contain unintentional bias. To avoid this, I identified areas where my cultural bias could influence the lens of my research and deeply reflected on my findings.

My whiteness comes with its set of cultural assumptions. I endeavoured to un-center whiteness in my research by challenging white logic and avoiding defaulting to white men’s reasoning when selecting my literature (Buggs, Sims, & Kramer, 2020). I selected literature from research conducted by scholars from the Black community, women and non-Western publications when available. To mitigate my white logic further, I avoided umbrella terms and language that implies inferiority, such as “minorities” and “lower class”. I capitalized the names of ethnic groups such as Black, Asian, and Indigenous and avoided the use of victimizing language such as “suffering”, “victim”, and “brave”. I avoided inaccurate generalized statements when specific terms were available, for example, using Congolese rather than African. I also used people-first language, such as “Black people” and “enslaved people”, avoiding terms like “Blacks” when several communities were being discussed. I avoided the term “racialized” and instead used “racially marginalized” (Tewelde, 2020). I also chose not to use BIPOC and People of Colour as much as possible because these terms erase differences in the experience of different groups (Lane, 2021). I also avoided comparing racism and racial discrimination to linguistic inequality when discussing issues around francophoneness. While I acknowledge Canada’s historical marginalization of the
French language through its regional assimilatory policies, my focus is on expanding current scholarship by exploring the racial marginalization of French-speaking Black Canadians. I actively challenged Canada’s colonial knowledge traditions by informing myself about the way these methodologies embed racism and colonialism and how anti-racist and decolonized approaches counter these issues.

During my field visits, musicians and singers faced a mild risk of interference with their performance if I became entangled with audience members or crew while collecting data. To avoid distracting them, I took a position at the back of the audience whenever possible. I avoided capturing the faces of audience members when possible and focused instead on the artists’ musical performances to mitigate privacy in a public setting. I faced a few challenges during the implementation of my research design. For example, being a complete observer while watching participants without interfering or reacting (Nagy Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2010, pp. 204-205) wasn’t always possible. While this gave me firsthand experience as a visitor and a chance to receive information in real-time, it posed a problem at Sunfest and Nuits d’Afrique when, on two occasions, a performer and an audience member asked me to dance. It was challenging to dance and observe at the same time. However, I found that my experience was enhanced by my understanding of how artists and audiences interact with each other. Musicians and singers get as much from their audience’s reactions as the audience gets from the performance. In addition, the act of listening to a musical performance can be a communal experience as the concert audience forms a community (Dearn & Price, 2016). I ran into another challenge at Nuits d’Afrique, other audience members blocked my visual field as the grounds became more crowded on more than one occasion. This made it difficult to record performances and I had to rely on my field notes, audio recordings and the large-screen televisions that broadcast the performances. In terms of logistics, the schedules of francophone musicians and singers sometimes overlapped, and I was unable to observe all French-speaking performers at every festival. To compensate, I selected artists who represent diverse cultural backgrounds.

Initially, I had intended to conduct semi-structured interviews with musicians and singers. However, after making several unsuccessful attempts to schedule them via email and telephone, I observed gatekeeping from agents and had difficulty reaching the music artists. Taking into consideration the logistics of interviewing while travelling and the hectic schedules of touring
performers, I decided to forgo the interviews. The other challenge I faced was that out of the 14 artists and five festivals, two did not have Facebook accounts: Canada Day Celebration and the group MOOV from Martinique. They were, therefore, excluded from the digital content analysis. Finally, the information on artists’ and festivals’ websites and their Facebook About sections allowed me to compensate when Facebook posts were scarce and build profiles through publicly available data.
CHAPTER FOUR: THE NEGOTIATION OF HYBRID IDENTITIES: CODE-SWITCHING AND REMIX

In this chapter, I explain how multiculturalism and interculturalism contribute to hybrid forms of identity. I discuss how the nation-state of Canada and the cultural industries in which it invests use cross-cultural dialogue to create social cohesion and manage a diverse society. This cultural interventionism has informed policies related to cultural production. I also discuss how multiculturalism, population mobility, and hybrid identities intersect in the festival industry and how this contributes to identity-making and belonging. As Stuart Hall (1993) states:

[…] the notions of belonging and homeland have been reconceptualized in contexts of migration, deterritorialization, diaspora, virtuality, digitalization, and other features of the globalized world, that make even more pertinent the principle that cultural identities are not fixed, but fluid; not given, but performed. (As quoted in Sarmento, 2015, p. 604)

Hall’s statement points to several factors influencing cultural identities, including population mobility such as migration as well as the rise of digital technology (digitalization and virtuality). These two relatively new societal changes have moved collective identities away from static states that focus on territories and nationhood and have become deterritorialized and more fluid. Building on Hall’s arguments, I explore how the current discourse about multiculturalism and diversity in Canada does not fully recognize or accommodate these fluid identities. Multiculturalism and interculturalism imply a process of integration, transculturation, and assimilation. People with hybrid or fluid identities must move through and across the symbolic boundaries of culture and language, negotiating them as they interact with others and blurring their borders in the process (Baker & Sangiamchit, 2019, p. 472).

Expanding on Bhabha’s (1994) argument that interculturalism functions as a “third space” for hybridity, subversion, and transgression, I use the concept of hybrid identity to imagine how cultural exchange and production give rise to traditional and subversive forms of creation and belonging. I explore how the movement of music artists from one place to another and the states of in-betweenness in which they exist help construct fluid and hybrid identities. I further consider how musicians and singers negotiate these fluid identities during their festival performances and when they create their music. I understand hybridity as a characteristic of people’s multiple
attachments to places, languages, and cultures, which represent their life (and work) experiences. For example, during her performance at Mundial Montréal, Mamselle Ruiz tells her audience about her experience as a Mexican person who immigrated to Québec, and how it has impacted her music (Field notes, November 22, 2019).

Additionally, I consider theories on remix and transculturality useful theoretical models for studying the music production, performances, and marketing practices of racially marginalized francophone artists. Transculturalism can be seen as a process that happens between people in power and marginalized citizens (Hall & Nilep 2015; Marotta, 2014; Ortiz, 1965; Bell, 2014). I identify two important practices, remix and code-switching, which music artists use to negotiate these contexts. I also explore how style fusions and artistic collaborations can become strategic ways of challenging cultural gatekeeping and social under-representation.

The Moving Identity and the Space of In-Betweenness

In this section, I discuss the tension between Canadians’ romanticized Utopian view of diversity and multiculturalism, and the lived experience of marginalized people. I discuss how cross-cultural exchanges and dialogue are conducted by music artists and festivals, despite taking place in a context of cultural dominance. I also discuss how music artists are required to cross borders in order to participate in Canada’s festival industry and how this and other boundaries can be experienced as barriers to economic participation. I explore the concept of transnational identity and discuss how some music artists develop dual (or multiple) attachments to places which required them to exist in states of in-betweenness. I propose that the term “transnational”, though useful in explaining how international music artists develop hybrid identities, fails to capture their full experience. I propose the term moving identity (Roche, 2011), which conceptualizes the movement of artists from city to city as a collection of attachments and unique experiences, which become part of how they see themselves. I argue a hybrid identity is not always a result of an attachment to one’s nation and to the new place a migrant person lives. This new concept also accommodates artists who live in Canada and over time, come to see themselves as Canadians, as well as those who move from one province to another.
Clara Sarmento (2015) argues that multiculturalism assumes a Utopian character without conflicts or dilemmas within its norms, values, and practices. This is a useful way to illustrate Canada’s romanticization of diversity. The Utopian view Canada projects to its citizens and the world has deeply influenced the way Canadians see themselves. However, as discussed in chapter two, it is far from the real experience many racially marginalized people face. I suggest that cross-cultural dialogue is important to developing mutual understanding, but less useful for investigating and naming power imbalances that exist in cultural production spaces. Multiculturalism and diversity policies often reproduce the same exclusionary structures of the colonial state it claims to oppose (Coulthard in Song, 2020). I note that diversity-focused festivals promote themselves as organizations that facilitate cultural exchanges between the dominant culture and the “Other”.

For example, Nuits d’Afrique describes itself as promoting “intercultural dialogue” while Mondo Karnaval and Sunfest say their role is to “bring people together” (see Figure 2). I consider cross-culturalism as an approach the Canadian state and many cultural organizations use to bring people together. However, I note the approach is insufficient for addressing racial disparity in Canadian society. Similar to McLaughlin (2012), Filion (1996), and Dowler (1996), I understand cultural interventionism both as a strategy, which ensures social cohesion and national security, and as a tactic for linguistic minority communities to strengthen their identities. I suggest that these interventions revolve around the idea that cross-cultural exchanges and dialogue can create social cohesion. In addition, I position festivals as part of Canada’s cultural apparatus and interventions which are supported by its financial contributions by event and organizational sponsors and funders such as the Canada Council for the Arts.

Even so, historically, cross-cultural studies have highlighted differences between nations and people in a way that perpetuates problematic stereotypes, nationalism, and racism. For example, social scientists Broesch et al. (2020) point out that cross-cultural studies often lack culturally sensitive protocols and flexible methodologies and use Western standards as the default benchmark (Broesch et al., 2020). They also fail to consider the lived experience of racially

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51 Lajos Brons (2015) defines Othering as the construction and identification of the self and the Other in unequal opposition that attributes inferiority or alienness to the “Other”.

52 The term cross-culturalism dates back to the 1930s when anthropologist George P. Murdock developed an approach to ethnological research that involved comparative studies across cultures (Lowes, 2021). Later, the meaning of cross-culturalism evolved from measuring differences between nations to describing cultural exchanges between groups (Lowes, 2021). I do not use this approach as I consider it problematic and outdated.
marginalized people. Canada’s cultural interventions impose a dominant culture on people who are categorized as “minorities”\(^\text{53}\). I use the concepts of cultural exchanges and dialogue to explore how perceived positions of cultural inferiority/superiority impact the way music artists and festivals conduct their work.

Paula Schriefer (2016) argues that we can recognize differences between cultures through cross-cultural communication. I apply the concept of interculturalism (Peñas & Saenz, 2006; Wood, Landry, & Bloom, 2006; Gagnon & Iacovino, 2005) to contextualize cross-cultural exchanges and dialogue in the festival industry. I propose that festivals promote these exchanges and dialogues through artistic performances, public speaking, and activities such as discussion panels and workshops. Intercultural philosophy and communication between two or more cultures focus on the mutual exchange of ideas, but position existing cultural norms as the default. Therefore, we need to ask ourselves whether these exchanges are balanced and equal. I challenge Schriefer’s (2016) assertion that cultural exchanges lead to understanding and respect, although I acknowledge that they do result in change. Interculturalism assumes that people who have an affinity for and appreciation of cultural differences can transcend the concerns of one group in favour of unity and diversity (Roy & Strarosta in Marotta, 2014). However, as theologian Seevaratham Ariarajah (2005) notes, this requires a balancing act between recognizing similarities and maintaining differences and boundaries (Marotta 2014, p. 8). In the context of musical production, this means music artists must balance their own identities and music styles while avoiding the alienation of their audience and ensuring their own economic success. One example of this is when a Jamaican restaurant owner at the Sunfest festival assures his customer that the food is “not too spicy” (Field notes, July 6\(^\text{th}\), 2019). This raises the question of whether preparing food differently is a conscious choice to “sanitize” Jamaican cuisine (Saha, 2013) in favour of selling more food.

Applying Mensah’s theory of in-betweenness, I suggest that policies based on interculturalism, multiculturalism, and cultural interventionism intentionally aim to create a double-belonging that leads to integration. This places the burden of changing and taking on the norms and ideals of the dominant culture on people who immigrate to, visit, or even live in Canada as “minorities”. I propose that music artists who perform in festivals focused on diversity and multiculturalism are

\(^{53}\) Millette (2015) states that groups become minorities through power dynamics and a criterion of differentiation that perceives difference as inferior (p. 20).
positioned as representatives of diverse cultural programs aimed at supporting integration. These artists are expected to produce performances that are suitable for public consumption by the dominant citizen and reinforce Canada’s discourses and narratives about its diversity without revealing its inequities. This requires people to become “well integrated” through a process of concealing, rejecting or losing part of one’s identity. As Sarmento states:

[…] a “well integrated” person is one who has become “like us” and thus, implicitly, will never become us (Dervin et al. 2011: 7–8). Ultimately, a “well integrated” person has rejected or concealed those features that might be identified as foreign, thus rejecting or concealing a significant part (if not all) of her/his own identity, the stable core to one’s individuality and sense of personal location. (Sarmento, 2015, p. 608)

Sarmento (2015) notes that the political ontology of multiculturalism is a subcategory of interculturalism and that the two have strong similarities. I argue that there are few differences between Canada and Québec’s approaches to managing cultural differences. Both approaches require people who immigrate to shed a part of themselves in favour of sustaining the dominant national identity. Additionally, both perspectives share the common characteristic of focusing on dialogue and reciprocity. However, as Schriefer (2016) points out, one culture will often have a dominant position over the “Other”, compare itself to it, and place it outside itself because it does not fit what it considers as established cultural norms (Schriefer, 2016). While Canada’s multiculturalism policies were intended to reduce the racism immigrants face, they have in many ways deepened the “Othering” of racially marginalized people by keeping them at the periphery of our nation (Haque, 2012, p. 22).

The data shows that festival organizers from both Ontario and Québec are focused on creating cross-cultural exchanges and dialogue. These exchanges take place between members of the public, music artists, restaurant owners, and other businesses. Presumably, people are brought together to create more tolerance and understanding and to celebrate identities that are normally excluded from mainstream society. However, some festivals, through their Facebooking practices, make clear these exchanges are taking place within the dominant cultural context. For example, Mondo Karnaval shares a Facebook post with the caption “MondoKarnaval c’est le vivre ensemble à Québec! C’est rencontres du monde, c’est musiques du monde! #mondokarnaval” (Mondo Karnaval, 2019, August 27). The phrases “it’s experiencing it together in Québec [City]
and “meetings of/from the world” show how the organization sees its role as bringing together nations from around the world as part of a transnational experience. It points to the experience taking place within the local space, which is part of the Québec nation and separate from other nations. In other words, it strengthens the local and national identity.

The study reveals several examples of music artists who participate in cross-cultural exchanges. On April 22\textsuperscript{nd}, 2019, Valerie Ekoumé shares a post of herself and another music artist holding a n’goni, a traditional African string instrument (Ekoumé, 2019, April 22). The post introduces an element of traditional Cameroonian culture to Ekoumé’s Western audience. In another post, Ekoumé shares her concert performance in Angola, using the hashtag #sharingculture (Ekoumé, 2019a, June 5). This choice of hashtag shows she is actively pursuing cultural exchanges between herself and the Angolan people in her audience. I interpret these posts as reflecting the artists’ perceived benefit of trans-cultural exchanges about music and culture.

I apply geographers Mimi Sheller, John Urry, and John Cresswell’s mobility paradigm and position these cultural exchanges as happening to groups of people in movement. For example, the touring music artists who perform in several nations lead these exchanges with their audience. Ekoumé’s performances in Canada and Angola both intend to provoke cross-cultural dialogue. I note that any nation’s multiculturalism policies must consider the increased movement of people, images, and information across national borders. I view the mobility paradigm as a way of understanding cultural exchange processes between people from different nations. The model acknowledges several scenarios where these exchanges could take place, including travelling for business or work, migrating to escape war, climate change or political unrest, and participating in tourism. This mobility plays a role in constructing hybrid, transnational and moving identities. I define transnationalism as the “occupations and activities that require regular and sustained social contacts over time across borders” (Portes et al. 2010, p. 219). Additionally, for international music artists who perform in cities around the world, geographic mobility makes Facebook pages a useful tool for documenting and sharing movements and transnational activities. For example, after her performance at Sunfest, Ekoumé poses at the London (Ontario) train station as she prepares to board (Ekoumé, 2019, July 6). This post shows that touring artists frequently move, and their location is somewhat impermanent. The post also shows how mobility contributes to a moving identity (Roche, 2011) as musicians and singers develop a collection of experiences and
attachments to multiple places. For Ekoumé, these movements are part of her professional experiences. Figure 5 shows another example of mobility.

*Figure 5: Marema Posts About Mobility*

In this Facebook image, music artist Marema documents her mobility as a touring music artist. She uses the caption “on my way to #fortboyard (translation)”, indicating movement from one place to another. The caption mentions other artists, fans, “festivallers” (festival-goers), and organizers, acknowledging various social actors within the industry. This shows Marema is aware of her position within the festival industry and of the presence of others. This example illustrates how music artists can build/maintain relationships through social media. In the image to the right, she is holding her mobile phone, showing how digital technology remains close to her (and presumably is used during her travels). This is an example of the way the material converges with the digital.
Cresswell (2015) observes that when people adopt allegiances to more than one place and develop hybrid identities, they challenge territorial nationalism (Cresswell, 2015; Sheller & Urry, 2006). Roche’s (2011) description of performers’ moving identities recognizes this hybridity and the artist’s de-territorialized state, which is constructed through unique experiences and attachments. Music artists, through their work, which requires them to tour, collect these experiences and attachments to localities and local cultures over time. They also become more detached from their national identities over time. Their experiences and interactions with festival-goers and others who participate in the festivals or music venues contribute to these moving identities and the process of attachment to multiple places and people. I build on Lee Komito’s assertion that temporary workers can develop hybrid identities through their dual attachment to their country of residence and the new country where they reside. I note that touring musicians are active participants in Canada’s labour market. Information and Communication Technology (ICTs) can anchor them to the places they perform so that they can maintain relationships with others while they continue to travel. In this way, they grow their virtual communities, such as their Facebook pages to stay connected with the cities and festivals that provide opportunities for future work. Touring music artists can stay in touch in real-time with their fans while travelling to new festivals and venues, as Marema and Valerie Ekoumé did through their Facebook pages.

While population mobility and digital technologies have accelerated cross-cultural contact and created world markets for material and cultural goods, some view this as diminishing the power of borders and national identification (Garcia Canclini, 1995; Sirois, 2007; Tremblay, 2005). For example, the popularity of K-Pop around the world shows how “new” cultures and languages can become lucrative commodities in other nations. The group BTS recently performed their song Butter at the 2022 Grammy Awards and was nominated for Best Pop Duo/Group Performance (Recording Academy, 2022). K-Pop, short for Korean pop music, has been one of South Korea’s most important cultural exports since 1997 (Green, 2018). As it gains popularity in the United States and Canada, Korean culture is contributing to North American popular culture.

While cross-cultural music exchanges have increased in the last decades I point out that for some musicians and singers, the process of obtaining visas and crossing borders can create a barrier to accessing work opportunities. Such barriers can sometimes be a result of racial profiling and
racism. For instance, the Department of Homeland Security in the United States was recently accused of racially profiling and harassing Black travellers at the Blue Water Bridge between Port Huron and Sarnia (Baldas, 2021). Records show that 95% of people arrested at the Michigan border are racially marginalized (Baldas, 2021). As well, a 2021 report exploring workplace racism at Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada revealed several instances of racist language such as referring to African nations as “the dirty 30” (Boudjikanian, 2021). These examples illustrate how racially marginalized music artists face additional barriers to participating in the festival circuit, since it requires them to cross borders and obtain work visas regularly.

I build on the concepts of transnational and moving identities and suggest that people who have them hold collective self-conceptions that appropriate and use (either consciously or unconsciously) cultural resources that belong to different communities and places (De Fina, 2013). These resources can include music, language, knowledge (concepts), or narratives (De Fina, 2013). I argue that transnational and moving bodies face contradictions when they navigate boundaries between heritage and the desire to integrate or belong. Transnational identities are a consequence of migration and the crossing of national borders over time, and my data suggests that some racially marginalized francophone music artists have transnational identities. On July 16th, 2019, at Nuits d’Afrique, musician-singer Marema shares a post on her Facebook page promoting her tour in Canada. She uses French and adds a few lines in English and Wolof (Figure 6).

Figure 6: Marema Posts in French, English, and Wolof

The caption reads in part “Be ready! Be there! Doumalene may dara!”’. I argue that her multilingualism is a marker of her transnationalism (Canada – Senegal) and that her presence on the Canadian music scene provides Wolof-speaking Canadians linguistic representation. The post suggests that she is speaking to audience members from three different language groups (Wolof, English, and French). As a transnational citizen, Marema can use both her Senegalese identity and
her francophoneness to access work in Montréal. She also uses her English and French as linguistic capital, negotiating different social contexts to leverage her exchanges with the audience/readers.

An example of an identity that is difficult to categorize is Mehdi Cayenne’s. Cayenne expresses multiple fluid/hybrid identities through live performance and in his Facebook content. For example, he expresses a Canadian identity when he describes himself as a “Canadian musician (translation)” in one post (Cayenne, 2019, April 4). In another, he talks about how his travels to the US and his exposure to popular British and American music helped him learn English (Cayenne, 2019, April 23) (moving/transnational identity). The image features a cassette by British Rock band Dire Straights, which Mehdi says he would listen to when travelling to Florida as a child. Later, Cayenne promotes an appearance at the Festival Franco-Ontarien\(^\text{54}\) in Toronto, which suggests a Franco-Ontarian identity. The Festival Franco-Ontarien promotes linguistically marginalized music artists and provides a space for Franco-Ontarians to come together and experience/use their culture and language (Cayenne, 2019, May 21). In a post, Mehdi describes how he views his identity (Figure 7).

\(^{54}\) The Festival Franco-Ontarien celebrates the Franco-Ontarian culture.
The post reads:

His father is Algerian, his mother is French. He was born in Alger and has lived in Moncton, Montréal, Gatineau, and Ottawa. “My identities are numerous, but I don’t have the impression that this is useful or hinders me. In the same way, we don’t ask ourselves why we have two legs when we get up in the morning: this is how I am. But it took me time to learn this, because when we are from here and other places, we are neither one nor the other. But in fact, we are one AND the other, rather than one OR the other, and this notion is the reality of my existence. And that of many others as well (translation)." (Cayenne, 2019, April 18)

In this post, he describes himself as being from here and other places. This indicates a hybrid identity as a result of migrating from Algeria to Canada (transnational identity). Additionally, he indicates his parents have different nationalities, again suggesting hybridity of culture. He explains he has lived in Moncton, Montréal, Gatineau and Ottawa, confirming that as a francophone Canadian, he has lived in several cities, all of them known for having significant francophone populations (linguistic identity). These examples show how Cayenne’s identities are diverse, fluid, and numerous. Another post describes Cayenne as “unclassifiable” while at the same time
belonging to the international *francophonie* (Cayenne, 2019, June 8). This is an example of a moving identity that developed over time as Cayenne experienced different attachments to places, languages, and cultures.

In Canada, political discourse around multiculturalism and diversity often describe it as a normative ideal in the context of a Western liberal democratic state (Song, 2020). However, racially marginalized people continue to face discrimination, racism, and exclusion from economic, social, and cultural spaces. I apply Glen Coulthard’s (2007) argument that this discourse and the policies of multiculturalism and language in Canada can reinforce rather than transform or confront colonial structures. Coulthard uses Frantz Fanon’s (1952/1986) reasoning that self-determination requires self-affirmation rather than dependence on oppressors for freedom (Coulthard, 2007, p. 454). I use a quote from Cayenne’s Facebook page, “my identities are multiple, and I don’t feel they hurt me or help me. It’s just who I am” (translation). This statement shows how the labels people use to define themselves involve self-determination and self-affirmation. Similarly, feminist theorist Anne Phillips (2007) suggests self-determination is necessary to move away from reductive views of minority cultures as incapable of any meaningful agency. In considering Phillips and Coulthard’s positions, I view Cayenne as actively challenging existing labels that socially sort and marginalize music artists. Reflecting on Phillips and Coulthard’s arguments, I frequently engage with the concept of agency and position music artists as using theirs. I argue that they do this for creative and political purposes, as part of their strategic arsenal for negotiating societal boundaries and categories.

**Transculturation or Agency? Hybrid Identities in Multicultural Festivals**

In this section, I discuss the usefulness of transculturality/transculturalism for understanding the process of transnational and transcultural exchanges. I discuss how this contributes to cultural hybridity and how it can be understood as a result of contact between the colonized and the colonizer. I propose that expressing hybrid or fluid identities and engaging in cross-cultural dialogue are also expressions of agency. I recognize that racially marginalized music artists experience discrimination, racism, and exclusion from mainstream music spaces as they cross borders and navigate national and local policies and practices. I also acknowledge that Western
listeners expect a certain level of sanitization of culture that can require marginalized music artists to engage in unequal exchanges with the dominant culture. However, I build upon existing theories about hybridization and transculturalism by outlining several practices that suggest creative and political agency on the part of the music artist. My study does not reveal a process of deculturalization (Ortiz, 1965), but rather a collection of fluid music styles and remix practices that reflect the hybridized identities of the artists who convey and use them. For example, I re-define code-switching as a strategy many racially marginalized francophone music artists use to navigate linguistic and social contexts.

Similar to Zentella’s (in Hall & Nilep, 2015) study on Puerto Rican students from New York City, I understand code-switching as a strategy racially marginalized people use to negotiate different social contexts and rules. I also see code-switching as a way of securing symbolic power and accessing local labour markets (Bourdieu, 1991). Code-switching is a strategy for negotiating different linguistic and cultural groups represented within one’s audience. I propose that in the festival industry, hybridity can be a result of cross-cultural contact and integration into a colonial society as well as choices that represent the music artists’ creative agency and their aspirations for career success.

Early theories about transculturalism affirmed three things: transculturalism both enables and destroys culture (Malinowski in Marotta, 2014), cultural exchanges create hybrid cultures and new forms of music (Ortiz, 1965), and understanding diversity is beneficial to service industries and their clients (Leininger, 1960). For example, in his study of Indigenous and African musicians in Cuba, Ortiz (1965) showed that Spanish colonialism produced different sets of transculturation among different groups and gave rise to new hybridized forms of music. As well, a study on Brazilian samba performances in Australia showed that these dances are often performed by people who have never been to Brazil and interpret the style through their own cultural lens (Kath, 2016). In my own study, the percussion group Alayé used Afro-Brazilian music, mythology and dance while performing at Nuits d’Afrique. The music was produced and primarily performed by white Québécois artists.

Elizabeth Kath (2016) conceptualizes hybrid identities as elements layered on top of one another through sounds and other cultural forms (Kath, 2016). She points out that Brazilian or Cuban
dancers who migrate still see themselves as connected to their country of origin through relationships with family and their identification with the nation. I give the example of Mamselle Ruiz who combines elements of Québécois and Mexican cultures in her performance at Mundial Montréal. In one song, she performs the traditional French-Canadian song *C'était un petit bonheur*, originally recorded by Félix Leclerc (Mamselle Ruiz, 2019b, November 22). The audience members show engagement/appreciation by clapping and singing along, suggesting they recognize the song and know the lyrics. Ruiz then introduces Mexican-style musicality, such as the Spanish guitar and clarinet (Field notes, 2019, November 22). She sings several songs in Spanish, plays the maracas, and uses traditional Cumbia rhythms (Mamselle Ruiz, 2019c, November 22) to which audience members also clap. In Figure 8, we see Ruiz dancing the Cumbia, a Colombian style of music which has become popular in Mexico and other Latin American countries.

*Figure 8: Mamselle Ruiz’s Dances Cumbia on Stage*

I view the audience’s reactions as a sign that both Spanish and French speaking members are in the room. Similar to Kath, I propose that transculturation can be a process of layering existing cultural elements, rather than removing parts of an artist’s cultural identity. In Ruiz’ case, she expresses both of her cultural influences from one song to another by alternating music styles and languages. Even so, I do not assume cross-cultural contact between people is always cooperative.
and equal. As Marotta (2014) points out, Ortiz’s transculturation theory overlooks the imbalances of power within these processes, which often require assimilation into the dominant culture. However, racially marginalized people can and do appropriate elements of the dominant culture for their own purposes. One could argue that Ruiz’s creative choices are strategic in that they speak to different groups. I conceptualize the decision to perform one song in Spanish and the other in French as a form of musical code-switching. This creative choice allows the artist to negotiate the various linguistic and cultural contexts of the performance.

I suggest that musical code-switching is just one of several forms of “cultural” code-switching. For example, digital cultural production often produces hybrid forms of culture. An example is Canadian politician Jagmeet Singh’s tweet about his recipe for Punjabi poutine one week before the Canadian election (Hanson, 2019; Singh, 2019). Singh creates a fusion dish inspired by Québécois street food, which he says is meant to celebrate Canada’s Thanksgiving holiday (Figure 9).

The recipe combines traditional elements of Poutine, namely St Albert’s cheese curds and gravy, but substitutes the traditional French fries with sweet potatoes and add ingredients commonly used

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55 Colonialism is a transcultural moment of contact between two cultures leading to the disappearance of the colonized culture through forced displacement, dehumanization, and violent uprooting (Marotta, 2014, pp. 11-12). Marotta (2014) says that colonialism is in fact transculturalism.
in Punjabi cooking such as ginger, tomatoes, and spices (Legett, 2020; Hanson, 2019). Examples like the Punjabi poutine show that culturally hybrid things can simultaneously symbolize national identity and work to appropriate it to participate in mainstream society. In this case, there are cultural elements from two nations mixed into the same dish. Both Punjabi and Canadian cultures influence Singh’s cooking, therefore the dish is symbolic of a hybrid identity. He chooses to share this recipe on social media to engage the public through symbolic representations of Canadian identity. I argue that he does this in part to engage Canadians during his political campaign, but also to participate in the mainstream discourse. Stacy Williams (2016) coined the term subversive cooking to describe how between 1963 and 1985, women published community cookbooks through liberal feminist organizations. Their purpose was to promote labour-saving cooking methods, teach women how to make money from cooking, and encourage men to cook. I propose that Singh subverts the dominant cultural narratives about food and to some degree makes Punjabi culture visible by modifying the recipe. At the same time, I suggest he is catering to Québécois and Canadian audiences by choosing a food that has symbolic meaning. I note that poutine represents francophone culture that has been appropriated by the rest of Canada (Fabien-Ouellet in Lau, 2017). Singh also takes creative agency by including healthy alternatives to French fries, making the dish his own. Similar to the way many music artists mix elements of two or more cultures, I view Singh’s recipe as a remix practice. In addition, the use of Twitter to share this recipe shows how social media actively contribute to these processes of transculturation, appropriation, and hybridization in contemporary Canadian society. The tweet is a strategic way to be seen by the public.

Expanding on Williams’ (2016) subversive cooking theory, I propose that racially marginalized music artists sometimes use their performances to subvert gender norms or cultural stereotypes. For example, during her performance at Nuits d’Afrique, Marema performs a drum solo (Marema, 2019b, July 21). In Wolof culture, dancing and drumming were historically forbidden for women and seen as acts of defiance by Islamic authorities (Heath, 1994). Like Heath (1994), I view Marema’s festival performance as a form of resistance to dominant gender norms and power relations in her culture. I see this action as evidence of her agency, both political and creative. Another example of Marema’s subversive performance is her dance with one of her percussionists (see Figure 10).
The dancing and drumming are symbols of Marema’s and her drummer’s Senegalese identity. By dancing together, they symbolically show that women and men are equal.

I use the term hybridization ⁵⁶ to show how people can identify with cultural elements from more than one culture, in the case of festivals, language, music, dance, and food. This hybridization happens from within a power structure and dynamic. Marginalized music artists negotiate this dynamic through deliberate creative choices and strategies that allow them to claim space. In keeping with Mensah’s theories on hybrid identities, I consider ideas like fluidity, double and multiple belonging, and states of in-betweenness as existing within an imbalance of power. This imbalance occurs between Canada and its transnational and racially marginalized cultural workers. It is with careful consideration that I include the concept of hybridity as a process of change, a negotiation of power, and a characteristic of the active production of a music style.

⁵⁶ Mikhail Bakhtin (1981) uses the term hybridization to describe the coexistence of elite and popular languages in literature. I expand on this proposition to include other forms of cultural production.
As Bhabha (1994) states, the power dynamics racially marginalized people navigate can lead to forms of hybridity that emerge from colonialism. Building on Bhabha’s viewpoint, I agree that hybridity, like transculturalism, can be linked to a process of assimilation (Bell, 2014, p. 59). To be clear, I understand transculturalism to be a form of hybridity, although I do not consider all processes of cultural production that bring together elements of two cultures as outright assimilation processes. I do consider post-colonial theorists Kwame Appiah and Homi Bhabha’s positions in my discussion. They contextualize hybridity within settler colonialism and multiculturalism frameworks, which I view as essential to my critical examination of cultural interventionism in Canada. For instance, Bhabha (1994) views the colonizer and colonized as becoming interdependent through transcultural exchanges (p. 37). I find this relevant to the interdependence of various social actors within the festival industry. Organizers rely on the performances of music artists while musicians and singers rely on their agents to secure work. Festival organizers also wield power when they select artists for their programs. Appiah (2005) also connects transculturality to multiculturalism and defines the latter as a gathering of multiple distinct contributions to one main culture (p. 217). I transpose this idea and propose that the diversity-focused festival expresses a culture of diversity, in which every musician and artist contributes their individual/collective identities. I argue that there is a tension between the desire to create a space for under-represented racially marginalized people and the need to sell this diversity to white Canadians. My analysis focuses on the diverse identities music artists hold, which is often expressed through processes of hybridity, remix, and mobility. Marema uses the word “métissage” to describe her family’s cultural background and Ramon Chicharron defines himself as having “a blend between identities”. These examples show that some music artists recognize the cultural hybridity within themselves. I note that recognizing and accommodating these self-descriptions is important because identity is not about who others think we are, but about how we see ourselves. Another example is evident in one of Ekoumé’s Facebook posts when she describes herself as “Franco-Camaronesa”. This shows she identifies as both francophone and Cameroonian, a dual identity focused on nationality and language (Ekoumé, 2019, May 21).
Multilingual Francophones: Negotiating Context with Code-Switching

In this section, I define the concepts of linguistic hybridity and identity and show how racially marginalized francophone music artists express them in multiple forms. This challenges existing scholarship about francophones in Canada, which are understood as binary concepts that involve dual attachments (French and English). I also define the practice of code-switching and discuss how music artists use it to negotiate language hierarchies in the festival industry. Linguistically marginalized artists negotiate different social contexts and audience groups by switching between multiple languages. They do this both verbally during their festival performances and in writing when they create and caption Facebook content. I consider the code-switching practices of racially marginalized francophone music artists as subtle acts of resistance against Canada’s linguistic hegemony, whether conscious or unconscious.

Using Allaire’s (2015) assertion that francophones in Canada represent a diverse set of cultural identities but hold a common linguistic identity based on the French language, I re-define francophone linguistic identity as expressed through multilingualism, cultural diversity, and a shared attachment to French. I view this as a more appropriate definition because it moves away from the linguistic hegemony and dominance Canada’s designation of official languages creates. I view multilingual identities as hybrid rather than dual, which unsettles linguistic dualism. I note that linguistic duality in Canada has been important for re-constructing Québécois and other francophone identities in the 20th century, but also creates barriers to participation for marginalized people who do not speak French or English. Similar to Frenette’s (2012) theory on the hybrid identities of linguistic minorities, I argue that hybridity is in part a result of the cultural exchanges that happen between French, English, and non-dominant language speakers (Frenette, 2012). However, I also point to the motivations and locations of multilingual people as influencing which official language they choose to learn/use.

Linguistic capital (Bourdieu, 1991, 1993) holds value and symbolic power in Canadian diversity-driven festivals because Canada’s cultural diversity centers in part around linguistic duality. Holding such capital can influence people’s position within the festival industry, but only when the value of Canada’s official bilingualism is recognized, or the language used reflects the local community’s dominant culture. For example, Mundial Montréal operates in French and English,
reflecting the 2016 census, which reveals that 45% of people in Québec speak both official languages (Krishnan, 2017). I see this symbolic value as helping francophone musicians and singers gain economic mobility, particularly in Québec. They do this by accessing new resources as a result of using their linguistic skills in different contexts. However, like educational linguist Tobias Schroedler (2018), I acknowledge that the economic value of language skills in workplaces mainly benefits English speakers. Schroedler (2018) suggests that monolingual workplaces often exclude migrant languages and value dominant ones like English and French, reinforcing linguistic hegemony (Schroedler, 2018). Even so, I suggest that in diversity-focused festivals that promote multiculturalism, languages other than English and French hold symbolic value because they contribute to an organizational culture of diversity.

I use Kira Hall and Chad Nilep’s (2015) study on the habits of Puerto Rican students in New York City to define code-switching. Code-switching is a characteristic of speech community identities and involves various language alternations such as style-shifting, hybridity, diglossia and code-mixing (Hall & Nilep, 2015). In my study, I observed most music artists code-switch. I interpret this as an expression of their hybrid and complex linguistic identities. Building on this definition, I view code-switching as a symbolic representation of dual or multiple identifications with and ability to use two or more languages. Code-switchers can shift between each language as a way to negotiate different social, cultural, and economic contexts. The practice of code-switching creates meaning in social situations and allows people to negotiate social rules and obligations this obtaining symbolic power through cultural reproduction (Gal, 1988; Bourdieu, 1993, 1991). I witnessed code-switching by musicians and singers multiple times during this study. I believe it is an example of the way bilingual and multilingual people use language when they come in contact with monolingual francophones and anglophones in a given community. This community can have several linguistic groups, which requires different approaches to communication.

Ramon Chicharron is an example of a Canadian music artist who doesn’t fit the “standard” linguistic profile of French-speaking Canadians as unilingual (French) or bilingual (English and French). He is not alone. In 2011, Statistics Canada found that 20.6% of Canadians speak a maternal language other than French or English (Statistics Canada, 2018). Building on Hall and Nilep’s (2015) assertion that racially marginalized people use code-switching to negotiate different contexts and groups, I use examples from Chicharron’s and others’ Facebook pages. On September
6th, 2019, Chicharron code-switches between English, French, and Spanish (Ramon Chicharron, 2019, September 6). The caption reads in part “#Apretao is on its way…On a eu tellement de plaisir hier…Mil gracias…” This shows his ability to speak to people belonging to different linguistic groups. On the other hand, at times Chicharron chooses to only use one language. On July 9th, Ramon captions a post in English, promoting his performance at Kultrun World Music Festival in Kitchener (Ontario) (Ramon Chicharron, 2019, July 9). In this case, he appears to address a local English-speaking audience. Similarly, at his London TD Sunfest performance (Ramon Chicharron, 2019, July 8) and again at Viva Fest in Ottawa on May 24th, 2019, he uses only English. On August 27th, 2019, he uses only French in his caption for a video shared of his performance at Festival International de la chanson de Granby, Québec (Ramon Chicharron, 2019, August 27). In another post, he captions several images of himself with a friend visiting from Miami using only Spanish (Ramon Chicharron, 2019, August 6). On July 30th, 2019, Ramon writes only in French while promoting an upcoming performance in Gatineau, Québec (Ramon Chicharron, 2019, July 30). In addition, Chicharron addresses his audience in French during his Mondo Karnaval performance, but switches to singing in Spanish (Ramon Chicharron, 2019b, August 31). I view these examples as Chicharron’s negotiation of different spaces that primarily use French or English. Other examples of code-switching are observed at Mondo Karnaval.

MOOV, the dance and drumming ensemble from Martinique, speak Creole in between songs and address the audience in French at different points of the performance (MOOV, 2019c, August 31). On the day of their performance, Lakou Veranda shares an image on their Facebook page (Lakou Veranda, 2019b, September 2). They caption their post in Creole and French “Prestation D’aujourd’hui: Timoun a Lakou Veranda adan Festival Mondokarnaval o Kébec (Canada).” Before their first song, one singer addresses the audience in French, explaining the tradition of “Bonjour”. He instructs the audience members to respond “Bonjour” after each line of the song, suggesting he is aware that the French speaking audience is not familiar with this tradition. The group then perform a song in Creole (Field notes, 2019, August 31). The presence of both French and Creole in the lyrics, performance, and Facebook content indicates a dual linguistic identity, and an ability to code-switch.

57 A performer sings “Bonjour Monsieur, Bonjour Madame, Bonjour Mademoiselle”, with the audience repeating the word “Bonjour.” (Lakou Veranda, 2019d, September 2). This arrangement is similar to the French-Canadian “chanson à répondre”. 
I propose that the use of code-switching depends on the presence of audience members who either speak the dominant language or the non-dominant one. For example, Ruiz addresses her audience in French in between songs, but when her guest Quique Escamilla joins her on stage to perform, they speak Spanish together (Field notes, 2019, November 22; Mamselle Ruiz, 2019a, November 22). Escamilla also code-switches between English and Spanish as the two engage in public speaking. This is a good example of how the lingua franca of a province can influence which official language people who immigrate choose to learn. Ruiz who lives in Montréal is fluent in French, while Escamilla who lives in Toronto is fluent in English. Yet, both hold a conversation in Spanish during their performance, unsettling the language hierarchy of Canada and providing a social representation of Spanish-speaking Canadians.

Code-switching can also happen on social media. For example, I witnessed code-switching in Valerie Ekoumé’s post about her upcoming performance in Angola, which she writes in English and Portuguese  

Figure 11: Valerie Ekoumé Posts in Portuguese

The post shows how Ekoumé easily switches from performing in French in Canada to writing content in English and Portuguese on Facebook. As shown in Figure 12, she posts song lyrics in what appears to be Duala, a Cameroonian language, with a short excerpt written in French, illustrating her ability to switch between several languages.

58 Angola is a former Portuguese colony (Birmingham, 1988).
I observed several other instances of code-switching, for example, Elagé Diouf who uses French captions on his Facebook posts, speaks to his audience in French, and performs his songs in Wolof (Field notes, 2019, July 1). On May 21st, 2019, he posts about the launch of his Canadian Tour, captioning the text in both of Canada’s official languages, French and English, which reads in part “Canada Tour 2019/Tournée Canadienne 2019” (Diouf, 2019, May 21). Another example of code-switching on social media is seen on singer Aldo Guizmo’s Facebook page. He writes several captions in French and Guadeloupean Creole (Guizmo, 2019a, July 23). Maya Kamaty also code-switches from French to Réunionnais Creole on her Facebook page (Kamaty, 2019, June 21). On July 6th, 2019, she shares a third-party article about an upcoming performance at Sunfest (Kamaty, 2019a, July 6). She uses English, suggesting she is speaking to an anglophone audience. I understand these examples of code-switching as characteristic of racially marginalized francophone music artists’ linguistic hybridity and multilingualism.

Code-switching is a useful tool in diversity-focused festivals. To explore this, I use Bourdieu’s theories on cultural and linguistic capital. I position multilingualism as a desirable language competency that music artists use to access work opportunities and connect with others, both in
their material and virtual worlds. For example, music artists can speak to different audience members depending on the languages they speak. Furthermore, by using dominant languages, they can speak to other music professionals, festival organizers, and industry leaders. Language is a symbolic representation of identity, and choosing which one to use can shift established boundaries and give room to under-represented people (Lacassagne, 2017). I use Aurélie Lacassagne’s (2017) study of collaborative inter-cultural artistic productions in Sudbury (Ontario) to illustrate my point. Sudbury is a bilingual and multicultural community where francophone, anglophone, and Indigenous people are relatively equal in numbers. The recent play Manman la Me, tells the story of a Haitian woman who reaches out to her grand-mother, a mystic healer and midwife, after suffering a mystery illness (Théâtre du Nouvel-Ontario, 2022). The play uses oral traditions from Haiti to teach the community about Haitian spirituality and mother-daughter relationships (Théâtre du Nouvel-Ontario, 2022). Lacassagne suggests that theatre art can create change at the local level because artists’ narratives and language choices challenge existing institutional structures and limits tied to official bilingualism and multiculturalism (Lacassagne, 2017). By using Creole, the actors re-define what it means to be francophone in Sudbury. I argue that music artists in multicultural and bilingual spaces can achieve similar change. When they code-switch and perform using under-represented languages, music artists create their own social norms, which provide representation to marginalized people in the local community.

Code-switching supports the crossing of symbolic boundaries between languages and cultures, allowing marginalized music artists to fully claim their performative and discursive spaces. The artists can then negotiate their local material workspaces and interact with their audience members in person and online in a way that allows them to be themselves and create belonging for others. In doing this, they blur the lines of power structures and create a space of in-betweenness.

**Music Production and Remix Culture: Musical Code-Switching?**

In this section, I provide several examples of music remix and discuss how artists use this creative practice strategically in their negotiation of culture and language. I describe how collaborations with other artists and the blending of Western and non-Western genres can be useful for resisting
the compartmentalization of music that takes place in the industry. I also discuss how multilingualism, the mixing of multiple cultural elements, musical remix, and hybrid styles allow music artists to create their unique music, rather than be limited to reductive and “ill-adaptable” categories. I give examples of how these artists are able to use remix and their creative agency to step out of their traditional categories, while also participating in political discourses about the world.

Several music artists in this study engage in some form of remix or fusion of traditional genres of music. The first example is Réunionnais music artist Maya Kamaty. Kamaty lives in France and expresses a Reunion Island identity through her music, her language choices, and the discourse she engages in during her performance at Sunfest, and in her Facebook content. She performs Maloya music and uses Réunionnais Creole in her lyrics, which are symbolic of Réunionnais culture. However, she also speaks and writes in French, suggesting a hybrid linguistic identity. I propose that this linguistic hybridity is both a product of French colonialism in Reunion Island and of her migration to France for work. As well, in a Facebook post seen in Figure 13, Kamaty’s caption uses the tag “Pan African Music”, which suggests that she considers herself a part of the African diaspora.
Kamaty’s music style incorporates African, Tamil, and Western influences. In her song *Pandiyé*, she makes references to the ceremonial kora \(^{59}\) and the Hindu goddess Kali (Tigay, 2018). The song also features the Indian sitar (Kamaty, 2018). These elements are symbolic of Indo-Réunionnais culture and religion. They reflect the island’s history of bringing enslaved people from Africa between 1715 and 1848, and later indentured labourers from India and China between 1848 and 1860 (Council of World Affairs, 2001, p. 66). After 1920, France granted Indo-Réunionnais people citizenship and permission to vote, own businesses, and participate in politics (Indian Council of World Affairs, 2001).

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\(^{59}\) The kora is a long-necked harp lute which originated during the 18\(^{th}\) century in southern Senegal and Gambia (Calderwood, 2009).
In the music video for *Pandiyé*, the imagery makes reference to Malabar ceremonies and dances originating in India (Kamaty, 2018). I argue that mixing Maloya and electronic music is a form of remix similar to music artist Stromae’s *Santé*. That is to say, Kamaty mixes traditional cultural elements in her performances and music production with contemporary sounds, calling this “New Maloya”. However, the use of Creole lyrics make it somewhat less accessible to a Western audience. Even so, in other songs such as *Dark River* (Kamaty, 2019) and *Écris-Moi* (Kamaty, 2015), she sings in English and French. I propose that this is a form of musical code-switching.

In Figure 1, a third-party article about Kamaty’s work is shared. The article is titled “suspended between two worlds (translated)”. This phrasing suggests that the writer recognizes her state of “in-betweenness”. I associate this description with Mensah’s characterization of the fluid identities of transnational people in Canada who represent the African diaspora. Indeed, in her Facebook biography, she writes that she considers herself as having a “hybrid culture” (Kamaty, n.d.). In the article published by Pan African Music Magazine, the writer also characterizes Maya’s album as representing the African diaspora. This is more evidence of how people can have more than one identification with a group. It also shows how media assigns symbolic identities by the narratives and words they choose to use. I suggest that Kamaty’s hybrid identity influences the musical remix in which she engages.

Another example of remix is Ramon Chicharron’s reimagined cumbia, which he called “Cumbia Chicharonica”. His use of the phrase “blend between identities (translation)” in his biographical description supports my assertion that he too sees himself as having a hybrid/fluid identity and that this influences his creative choices (Ramon Chicharron, n.d.). Chicharron also engages in a different kind of fusion, by collaborating with other artists. In his Spanish song *Soy de aqui*, he collaborates with the Canadian group Vox Sambou and Colombian musicians/singers Zalam Crew (Chicharron, 2021). This fusion of Haitian and Colombian cultures and the use of both Creole and Spanish lyrics show another way remix is practiced. Andrea Ordanini, Joseph Nunes, and Anastasia Nanni (2018) call this type of collaboration the featuring phenomenon. They define this as the process of combining artists of different genres to increase a song’s popularity and disrupt the compartmentalization of music (Ordanini, Nunes, & Nanni, 2018). I expand on this idea and

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60 Ordanini et al. (2018) note that institutions engage in the compartmentalization of music by dividing artists into categories. “Recognizing cross-genre collaborations in this way shines a light on what appears to be an inevitable progression in creative collaboration that incorporates genre blending.” (sec. 7.1).
propose that collaborations among artists defined by the “world music” label can disrupt the constraints placed on non-Western music artists and increase their visibility\(^{61}\) and public reach. This strategy can work to unsettle the inherent cultural hegemony within the music industry.

I view music artists who modify or change elements of traditional genres as using a strategy that makes them more accessible and visible to global markets. A possible reason for this choice is that it allows the musicians and singers to gain better positioning among Western audiences. At the same time, it facilitates the development of professional relationships with other artists and connection building with the artist’s fan base. Musicians and singers are acutely aware of how their choices speak to the public and their peers. At the same time, choosing to keep certain cultural elements in, such as traditional instruments and national languages, allows them to promote or preserve cultural practices. For example, Kamaty does this with the roulèr, the takamba, and the kayamb (Kamaty, n.d.). Similar to how performances facilitate political agency (Cull, 2013), collaborations and remixes allow a great level of creative agency and can incorporate political and cultural discourses. Another example of remix is the collaboration between Ruiz and Escamilla who perform together in Mundial Montréal. In this case, rather than disrupting existing boundaries, the collaboration amplifies the Spanish voice in a predominantly francophone community.

I consider remix practices as more than creative choices. They are also strategies for negotiating identities and claiming space within the festival and music industries that constrain racially marginalized artists. I witnessed many music artists express hybrid forms of music by introducing elements from the dominant Western culture to their own traditional styles. I use the term traditional here to describe musical genres that represent Indigenous and African diasporic styles of performance, though in Kamaty’s case, this includes Malagasy culture, which represents Reunion Island’s distinct musical traditions.

Remix allows musicians to negotiate boundaries within the music industry and counter existing categories and labels. I consider this practice as deliberate and strategic, rather than as harmful and

\(^{61}\) Heinich (2012) theorizes that there are four criteria for visibility. The first is that people must have the capacity for the technical reproduction of an image. The second is that there must exist a dissymmetry of knowledge between the visible and the invisible. The third is that the invisible must be in a socially distinct category. Finally, this must take place in the context of a new modern elite working to establish itself. In Canada, social media facilitates these four dimensions. I define the dissymmetry not just as an imbalance of knowledge, but an imbalance in access to resources and opportunities. I further note that racially marginalized groups are often invisible due to their under-representation in the media and in cultural narratives.
assimilatory. Remix can be a tactic for correcting imbalances in the music industry (Knobel & Lankshear, 2008). Yet, as Marotta (2014) points out, cultural exchanges and fusions do not necessarily happen on an equal playing field. Nevertheless, in my view, many scholars who discuss hybridity and transculturalism fail to acknowledge that racially marginalized people have agency. Many of the musicians and singers I observed have intentionally re-imagined traditional sounds or combined two or more genres or styles together. In other words, they use their agency to produce the products they want. Some go further and create experimental sounds using traditional samplings. For example, AfrotroniX, whose performance I was not able to see due to a scheduling conflict, uses remix in a similar way to The Halluci Nation. The Chadian DJ and Montréal resident uses remix for strategic reasons. By combining African music with blues touareg 62, electronica, and African rhythms he creates an afro-futurist interpretation of Africa that deconstructs mainstream representations of it (Valois-Nadeau, 2018). AfrotroniX made a shift from the “world music” label in 2014 after viewing the category as increasingly restrictive and what he calls “in-adaptable (translated)” (Valois-Nadeau, 2018). I note that the term in-adaptable implies an inability to grow and adapt to change. This suggests that artists like AfrotroniX see “world music” as outdated and limiting. AfrotroniX has since performed in New York, Chicago, Ottawa, Sao Paulo, Dodoma, Rabat and several other cities, as well as collected prizes such as the Gala Dynastie du meilleur artiste (2019), and the Best African DJ (2018) at the All-Africa Music Awards in Ghana (Afrotronix, 2022). Some of his songs, such as Solal touch on themes around political mobilization in Africa (Afrotronix, n.d.).

The goal of remix is often to increase consumption of the original product, making it a lucrative practice for music artists who want to bring new attention to “old” sounds (Ardévol et al., 2009). Building on this, I argue that the remix artist engages in a bargain by embracing transculturality and giving up parts of the traditional culture. In doing so, the artist participates more fully in the music economy, in part by blurring the borders of existing music categories. Another example of remix is shared on Ramon Chicharron’s Facebook page. On August 27th, he posts about a collaboration with DJ Rhythm & Hues, giving evidence of the fusion of two music styles: traditional Colombian cumbia and dance music. On August 31st, 2019, I watched Ramon Chicharron’s live performance at Mondo Karnaval. For his first song, he played Latin-style conga

62 Touareg blues, or desert blues, is a style of music from North and West Africa’s Sahara region. The style is a fusion between rock, blues, Tuareg, Malian and North African genres (J.D., 2019).
drums and combined them with western style drums and electric guitar (Ramon Chicharron, 2019a, August 31). These creative choices show how music artists can switch from traditional to remixed depending on the context and their professional objectives. I consider this another instance of musical code-switching. I witnessed more musical code-switching during some of my field visits.

At Nuits d’Afrique, the master of ceremony introduced Senegalese music artist Marema as a pop-rock artist “à l’Africaine”, indicating a mixing of the Pop label with African cultural elements. Marema played an electric guitar, while her musicians played conga drums and other African instruments. She sang in Wolof and spoke in French to her audience (Marema, 2019a, July 21). Her performance combined North American and African cultural elements such as music rhythms, costumes, languages, instruments and dance sequences (Field notes, 2019, July 21). This example shows that remix can involve linguistic and musical code-switching, while at the same time expressing elements of a transnational identity that borrows from multiple music categories.

I include a final example from the Canada Day Celebration when Elagé Diouf used a jazz vocal technique called scat singing in one of his songs as he played his African drum. Scatting is a form of vocal improvisation using wordless syllables, patterns, and riffs that mimic swing-era big bands from early 20th century United States to create melodies and rhythms with the voice as an instrument (Edwards, 2002, p. 622; Diouf, 2019b, July 1). During another song, he demonstrated several Wolof words to his audience, which they then repeated a response to his call (Diouf, 2019b, July 1). Diouf’s use of elements from Africa and the United States is evidence of a hybrid music style. When combined with Western instruments, like the electric guitar and blues rhythms, the music creates a fusion style that shows the influence of both African and American cultures on Diouf’s musical identity. His multilingual identity is also reflected in his use of Wolof, French, and to a lesser degree, English. All of these elements: language, music style and culture, are symbolic of Diouf’s hybrid identity, which expresses itself through his performance and his creative choices. In another song, a fusion of African and Latin musical styles can be heard (Field notes, 2019, July 1). He uses cha-cha beats and sings in Wolof, accompanied by his band and his African drum (Diouf, 2019c, July 1). In another song, he uses a style reminiscent of West African soukous, a rhythmic pattern derived from Congolese rumba and popularized in France in the 1980s (Diouf, 2019d, July 1; Peek & Yankah, 2004). The song also features improvisation on the electric guitar. Fusing different music genres is a way for Diouf to express multiple musical and cultural influences and create his unique style and artistic identity. All of these examples show a fluidity
in music making that transcends the compartmentalization of the music industry.

CHAPTER FIVE: FESTIVAL PERFORMERS AS SOCIAL JUSTICE AGENTS: CHALLENGING COMMODIFIED APOLITICAL SPACES

In this chapter, I discuss the commodification of culture that takes place in Canada’s diversity-focused festivals. I show how, despite organizational mandates that centre on multiculturalism, the festivals tend to be apolitical. I explore how their commercial role in local economies and their marketing practices can sometimes work against their intent to promote cultural diversity. I also discuss how music artists use the two fields of my study, the material and the virtual, together to construct representations that give a voice to marginalized people. I give examples of how cultural production can disrupt cultural hegemony and I discuss how Facebook can amplify marginalized music artists’ message. I explore why the apoliticalness and “commercialness” of festivals constrains political discourses and actions by music artists. I give an example of a music festival that succeeds in supporting racially marginalized artists and creating a safe space for conversations about racism, discrimination, and white supremacy. I also explore whether this model can be transposed to other diversity-focused festivals in Canada in order to appropriately address the under-representation and misrepresentation of marginalized communities. I introduce the concept of participatory music culture as a theoretical model for understanding the political dialogue and activism in which music artists participate, both on stage and on social media.

The Commodification of Diversity and Multiculturalism

In this section, I survey some of the marketing practices festivals use to sell food products, artisanal objects, and musical performances as “exotic” and “authentic” experiences. I consider whether this contributes to the “Othering” and objectification of marginalized people rather than promoting their inclusion. I discuss why the exotification \(^\text{63}\) of cultural products is harmful to racially

\(^{63}\) Exoticism is the fascination with and use of aesthetics and cultural elements from other cultures in artistic production, making products appear more fantastical, glamorous, and different (Sund, 2019). This involves a process of romanticizing other cultures foreign to oneself. Exotification on the other hand involves a process of applying this
marginalized communities and expand on my earlier discussion about the limiting qualities of the “world music” genre. I also discuss how some music artists challenge the genre’s symbolic boundaries, while others use the term to promote their work and gain visibility in the industry.

The marketing practices of festivals, especially as they relate to social media platforms, can enhance online visibility. However, they can also contribute to existing social and linguistic hierarchies within the dominant culture. For example, the words and phrases festival organizers use to promote food products, artisanal objects, and musical performances can create symbolic messages and interpretations that impact the way festival-goers see marginalized communities. At Nuits d’Afrique, organizers use the word “exotic” a few times to describe the food they are selling. In Figure 14, as they promote their activities they write: “Et n’oublie pas d’aller te régaler auprès des délicieux restaurants exotiques présents…” [“And don’t forget to enjoy the delicious exotic restaurants …”].

I view this as a harmful marketing practice because it contributes to the exotification of African culture. While my findings primarily focus on the agency of racially marginalized and gendered music artists, I apply Fanon’s argument that the Black subject is often positioned as an object and becomes fixed by the external (white) gaze of the non-Black observer (Fanon in Frosh, 2013). This positioning contributed to the commodification of African people during the transatlantic slave trade. It also takes place within contemporary festival spaces that historically have subjected Black practice to people, which can paternalize or exploit them. Exotification of racially marginalized people stems from colonialism and the Western world’s attribution, assignment and description of groups as different (Näthatshjälpen, 2022).
people to exploitation for entertainment purposes. Umberto Eco (1984) and Melissa Valle (2019) argue that celebrations like Carnivals are examples of “ethno-enterprises”, which use identity and social difference to produce economic value in local communities and nations (Valle, 2019). On the Colombian Caribbean Coast, Black characters like Las Palenqueras and El Son de Negro are prominently featured in Carnival celebrations. Performers typically present themselves with exaggerated physical features such as bright red lips, faces painted in Black, and contorted bodies and facial expressions, which render Black citizens into caricatures. As Melissa Valle (2019) states:

Blackness is subservient, hypersexual, and licentious, jocund, uninhibited, and libertine, primitive, and violent. Colombian nationhood is able to assert its whiteness by juxtaposing the contemporary quotidian white exemplars of progress with staged, carnivalesque forms of antiquated Blackness. (Valle, 2019)

While these representations reproduce negative stereotypes, carnivalesque expressions of Blackness are often meant to transgress social norms and resist authority (Valle, 2019). Fanon contends that identity, when defined in negative terms by those in power, can dehumanize and objectify, subjecting a racially marginalized person to others’ definitions and representations (Fanon, 1952/1986). Dilara Yarbrough (2020) introduces the concept of extractive exotification, which she claims is the process of exploiting a marginalized person to gain benefit such as insider knowledge. I suggest that practices that exotify the “Other” can become forms of romantic racism. Romantic racism is the process by which a dominant group projects their fantasies onto members of an oppressed group (Hoberek, 2005). Cultural producers who depict racially marginalized artists often use stereotypes like hypersexuality or hypermasculinity to construct these characterizations of marginality. I view this as potentially becoming a form of objectification and romanticization of marginalized people, which can contribute to their dehumanization. Dehumanization and the exotification of the “Other” can increase the risk of conflict, violence, war, and genocide (Schultz & Shuman, 2011; Rai, Valdesolo, & Graham, 2022). I am not suggesting the festivals lead to genocide, but I believe that organizers and policy-makers must inform themselves about the meaning and effect of the words they use. In my view, exotification, fetishization, objectification, and cultural appropriation create a denial of autonomy by the dominant culture that treats marginalized persons as though they lack self-determination and agency. As a researcher of marginality, I reflected on the need for me to challenge dominant notions and the white gaze, and avoid objectifying the music artists who performed at the five festivals I attended. I paid careful
attention to the role Canada’s systems and institutions play in reproducing marginality and considered the importance of recognizing the work activists do for/in marginalized communities. I view their voice as key to the dialogues festival organizers and cultural policy-makers must participate in.

Building on Galarza’s argument that the word “exotic” creates symbolic distance between Western and non-Western nations, I argue that using the above caption to describe the food creates a symbolic separation between African and non-African festival-goers, vendors, and music artists. This reinforces existing problems like racism and xenophobia rather than creating meaningful exchanges between people. There is a similar example of this in another Facebook post (see Figure 15).

*Figure 15: Nuits d’Afrique Posts About Exotic Meals and Drinks*

The captioned image of the Timboctou Market reads:
The Nuits d’Afrique Village opens tomorrow 😊. During your visit, you must go to the Timboctou Market which welcomes local artisans from around the world every year. This year, 16 nationalities will be represented at the market to sell you wonderful accessories, sculptures…from Africa and Latin America! You will also be able to taste exotic meals and drinks 😋 (translation).

The writer uses the word “village” and mentions 16 nations are represented in the market, and show the diversity and togetherness of the festival. They again point to “exotic meals and drinks”. The use of the word “exotic” is another example of exoticism and of the fetishization of African food and cultural objects. I note that the smiling face with heart-eyes emoji “enthusiastically conveys love and infatuation” (Kelly, 2018). The smiling face with a wink, which signals flirtation supports my assertion (Foley, Khaura Saad, & Gagliano, 2021). These emojis contribute to the sense of infatuation and re-enforce the fetishization of African culture.

Expanding on Quinn’s assertion that grassroots movements and festivals are enmeshed, I note that Nuits d’Afrique’s mission is to “represent a diverse set of African cultures”. However, as Li et al. (2018) suggest, festivals provide interactional areas for people to engage together and construct identity and community, but they also reproduce national narratives within the same space. Indeed, I saw several examples of this in my study. At Canada Day Celebration in Ottawa, which was promoted as a diverse music program, Canadian nationalism was on full display. A woman wearing an Oh Canada t-shirt and holding a small Canadian flag stood at the front part of the stage

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64 Fetishizing race is a process of objectification whereby a white person fixates on race, novelizes it and ignores other parts of a person’s identity (McWilliams, 2019). Homi Bhabha (1993) defines racial fetishization as “fetishizing a person of culture belonging to a race or ethnic group.”
and took pictures as Diouf performed his music (Canada Day Celebration. (2019b, June 30; Figure 16).

_Figure 16: Woman Wearing Oh Canada Shirt Holds Canadian Flag_

Canada Day Celebration 2019 took place at Ottawa’s Major Hill Park. At the entrance way, two large billboards (one in English, the other in French) invite visitors to write why they feel Canada is awesome. The boards read: “This is the reason why Canada is awesome...”. The purpose of the board appeared to be to celebrate the nation of Canada (Field notes, 2019, July 1). The festival also overlooked the parliament buildings, a reminder of the city’s colonial history and symbolic representation of Canada’s national and dominant identity (Figure 17).
This juxtaposition of a bilingual and multicultural festival with Canada’s national identity was meant to reinforce the idea that Canada is a diverse welcoming nation. At Sunfest, I saw similar nods to Canadian nationalism. For example, in a post shared on July 4th, the festival Director Alfredo Caxaj appeared with Prime Minister Justin Trudeau during the opening ceremonies. The caption read in part: “The Sunfest team works tirelessly to create an inclusive event that breaks down stereotypes…” (see Figure 18). They used the opportunity to ask for donations.
The post shows how festivals rely on the support of federal and other governments for their funding. I propose that the Prime Minister used the opportunity to promote Canada as a diverse nation. Therefore, both parties were interdependent on each other and relied on this opportunity to both justify and promote multiculturalism. However, I argue that this was a missed opportunity to discuss the inequities of racially marginalized people who were presumably the beneficiaries of this cultural intervention. The high profile of this guest also allowed the festival to fundraise. In a similar post, the festival shared an article published by CBC News titled “Trudeau to Make Appearance at London Sunfest on Thursday” (Sunfest LND, 2019). The article stated that the Prime Minister “embraces diversity” and that the appearance was not political, although he
planned to attend a fundraising event for the Liberal Party later that evening (Global News, 2019). I argue that Trudeau also used this public appearance as a way of raising funds and increasing his visibility in the community. The post also promoted local tourism by tagging “Downtown London”, which shows that as festivals participate in diversity making, they also engage in economic activities.

The Sunfest festival grounds symbolically reproduce national settler narratives and the nation-state. The festival took place in the downtown part of London at Victoria Park. The landscape featured several prominent monuments on the property including one donated by the Imperial Order Daughters of the Empire (Figure 19).

Figure 19: Daughters of the Empire Monument in London, Ontario

The inscription read “in honour of the men from the London district who fought for the empire in South Africa”. This monument was centrally located on the festival grounds and its size was
noticeable to visitors walking by. Another war memorial on the grounds honoured Canadians who died in the Afghanistan and Korean wars (Field notes, 2019, July 6). The monument commemorated the colonial presence of British settlers in the city and their participation in two wars overseas.

War commemoration re-produces feelings of belonging in settler society and contributes to the development and maintenance of Canadian nationalism. For example, cenotaphs use symbols of patriotism and heroism to construct national narratives about Canada’s colonial history (Vance, 1997). I saw several festival-goers stop to take a picture in front of these monuments during my visit to London. The choice of Victoria Park also projects a settler identity to tourists and visiting performers from across Canada and the world. Another example of how festivals reproduce nationalism and settler colonialism is Mondo Karnaival’s Facebook post on July 1st. The writer shared a captioned Canadian flag to acknowledge Canada Day (Figure 20).

Figure 20: Mondo Karnaival Celebrates Canada Day

![Image of a Facebook post by Mondo Karnaival celebrating Canada Day with a captioned Canadian flag and information about the festival.](image-url)
These examples show how music festivals that claim to focus on diversity reproduce national settler narratives and the nation-state through their choice of location and their celebration of Canada Day. I propose that the festival grounds and the Facebook content are symbolic representations of Canada and that they are meant to create a sense of belonging to the event. However, I argue that this co-opt the primary mission of the festivals, which is to create a supportive and safe space for marginalized Canadians to express their diverse identities. At the same time, diversity-focused festivals sell white visitors a cultural “experience”, which they can memorialize by purchasing cultural goods, t-shirts, and other products (Heinich in Quinn, 2005). The restaurant and marketplace become part of a local tourist event by participating in a festival where racially marginalized people can interact with other cultures while producing their own (Cho, 2010). Festivals provide a place for racially marginalized business owners to sell their cultural products such as handmade jewellery, drums and African clothing. This raises questions about cultural appropriation. For example, at Mondo Karnaval, an organizer invites the public to purchase bags from Guadeloupe and promotes travel to the Caribbean nation (Field notes, 2019, August 31). I understand this as a desire to encourage festival-goers to participate in tourism (both local and international). During a performance, an audience member showed me her African-style shirt (see Figure 21).
She pointed out that the purchase had been made at Mondo Karnaval and that she owned thirty others. When I asked her why she had made these purchases she stated it was in support of local businesses. Anishinaabeg creator, Rebekah Elk explains the difference between cultural appropriation and supporting creators (Elk in Sandler, 2021). She recommends Canadians educate themselves before supporting artisans. Elk says that “appropriation happens when non-Indigenous folks take up Indigenous practices lightly, without education about the roots of what they’re participating in.” (Sandler, 2021). Building upon Elk’s statement, I propose that the same process occurs when African and Latinx cultures are consumed. Elk (in Sandler, 2021) notes that people should support fashion by purchasing and wearing designs, but they should make sure to buy directly from the source. For example, in 2020, Tory Burch was criticized for designing traditional embroidered clothes without acknowledging their Morocco origin, calling them “folk-inspired” (Allouche, 2020). The dresses sold for $813 each. In a post titled “White people at it again to steal culture”, Twitter user @jehhtochhhh wrote that “if you take cultural clothing without any reference to the culture and sell them at that price, that’s considered stealing” (@jehhtochhhh in Allouche, 2020). The e-commerce company selling the dress, Harvey Nichols, describes itself as an advocate.
for sustainable clothing and ethical fashion (Allouche, 2020; Harvey Nichols, 2022). It is easy to see how mainstream companies can take marginalized culture and profit from it without generating any benefit for marginalized designers and creators.

The way music festivals describe their events, products, and music artists plays a role in how they are symbolically represented (or misrepresented). The words they choose can construct social and cultural categories that re-produce hegemonic power imbalances. Sunfest posts several exposés of local restaurants as a way to promote them. While the word “exotic” is not used, the content creator uses the term “authenticity” to describe Rose’s Tree of Life Caribbean Delight’s Jamaican cuisine (see Figure 22).

*Figure 22: TD Sunfest Promotes Jamaican Restaurant as Authentic*

![](image)

The post provides local representations of Jamaican food but also shows how festivals focus on cultural authenticity as a way of selling their products. I propose that using words like “authentic” assures festival-goers that their experience of Canadian diversity will be real and therefore worthwhile. Restaurants like the ones at TD Sunfest and Nuits d’Afrique operate as a juncture of interaction and relation between Westernness and “Otherness” (Cho, 2010). “Across spaces of cultural contact, the West has often had the orientalizing power of translating the East” (Cho, 2010,
I view the promotion of food as symbolic of the interactions of (white) festival-goers and marginalized restaurant owners. I note that these transactions are cross-cultural exchanges and are conducted in the context of unequal power relations of African, Latin, and Caribbean cultural production and consumption within a dominant culture. I argue that used strategically, festivals’ marketing activities can work to disrupt old ideas and structures rather than contribute to the marginalization of people.

However, the data reveals that many festivals use limiting phrases or words when they promote their artists. For example, Mundial Montréal uses the term “world music” to promote Mamselle Ruiz and Blick Bassy (Mundial Montréal, 2019, November 22). These categories matter because they can either open up professional opportunities for music artists or restrict them. Labels (genres) socially sort and categorize musicians and singers into manageable boxes while excluding them from others. I point out that Bassy himself does not use this category on his Facebook page or website. Instead, he uses the French term “masculin” under the genre category (in French, the word “genre” is used to indicate the gender of a person) (Blick Bassy, n.d.). I suggest that Bassy does this to disrupt existing categorizations of non-Western music. Nazih Borish does something similar. In his biography he uses the term “music” to describe his genre (Borish, n.d.). This suggests that some artists want to avoid the limits “world music” boxes them into.

In 1999, musician and author David Byrne of the Talking Heads wrote in a New York Times op-ed that listening to music from other cultures can change our worldview. He admonished the term “world music”, stating it creates an imagined distance between “us” and “them” and reproduces the hegemony of western culture (Byrne, 1999; Kalia, 2019). Many racially marginalized artists criticize the way the music industry characterizes global genres as “world music”, which they say racializes and harms non-Western musicians and singers. As Buckenham notes:

At its best, it’s bad culture, dialed down and made safe for a generic, mostly western consumer as imagined by a marketing department. At worst, the term is out-and-out racist. (Buckenham in Kalia, 2019)

They argue the term ghettoizes international artists and reduces their opportunities to perform in other festivals. Senegalese music artist Youssou N’Dour says that “world music” should only apply to international collaborations and interpretations of the world through a mix of cultural traditions (Kalia, 2019). Congolese funk band Bantou Mentale states that categorization equals discrimination. “It is a question of ethnicity as much as one of perceived authenticity and
category.” (Bantou Mentale in Kalia, 2019). As WOMAD festival organizer Paula Henderson states:

The sad fact is that musicians from African countries are still refused visas and have much less access to the music industry. So, the white ‘saviour’ tries to bring the black or brown musicians from a village to a studio or festival stage and profits from them. (Henderson in Kalia, 2019)

Henderson’s statement reiterates my previous discussion about the barriers international music artists face when they cross borders, and the tendency of white Canadians to take on the role of the white saviour. These practices contribute to society’s perception of racially marginalized people as incapable of agency and culturally inferior.

The categorization of music artists under the umbrella term of “world” isolates them from the world around them (McKay, 1994, p. 11). They become the exotic “Other” and experience labelling which limits them from accessing other industry categories. There is a hegemonic process through which one group of people articulates the interests of other groups to their own. Dominant groups exercise moral and intellectual leadership and create a national conscience as a fundamental aspect of their ability to dominate those who fall outside the parameters they set (McKay, 1994, p. 17). As I discussed in chapter two, many journalists, festivals, and prize organizers use the term “world music” more frequently than music artists. As a result, festival performers and restaurants and businesses experience separation from the dominant “Canadian” culture through their categorization and labelling as “different”. For example, when Mondo Karnaval shares a video of the drumming ensemble MOOV’s live performance (Mondo Karnaval, 2019b, September 1), they use the caption: “Venez-vous imprégner des cultures du monde” [“come soak-in the cultures of the world”]. The use of the word “imprégner” (permeate) suggests these cultures are viewed as separate and alien from the festival-goer’s and when experienced, can be metaphorically absorbed. Another example is Mondo Karnaval’s 2019 tagline “let’s celebrate the cultures of the world together (translation)” and its theme “Femmes du monde” [“Women of the World”]. Both of these descriptions reinforce the industry’s “world music” categorization. Another example is Mondo Karnaval’s description of their marketplace as “Marché du Monde” [“World Market”] (Mondo Karnaval, 2019a, September 1). The caption reads in part: “pour y découvrir les cuisines des quatre coins du monde” [“to discover cuisine from all four corners of the world”]. These phrases emphasize the narrative of a global village and the category of “world”, rather than
specifying which nations are represented. Therefore, while togetherness is a central theme, there are few nuances that inform the public about how Africa is not a monolithic culture. These categorizations also work to construct differences between so-called “world” cultures and the Western world. I suggest that these examples show how words can both emphasize and erase differences.

Similar to Mensah (2014), I propose that white settlers often understand African people as a homogenized group which can perpetuate stereotypes and misinformation. Black and other racially marginalized identities in Canada are quite diverse and represent a multitude of religions, languages, and cultures. I argue that festivals that “sell” diversity can do more to educate white Canadians on these differences.

**Contesting Social Injustice, Misrepresentation, and Invisibility Through Cultural Production**

In this section, I briefly define social representation and contextualize it within the music industry. I show how misrepresentation and under-representation can be harmful to racially marginalized people. I discuss how the festival stage and the Facebook pages of music festivals and artists can contribute positively or negatively to this representation. I also discuss the role of cultural production in creating positive representations and contesting social injustice. For example, the digital content music festivals and artists create and curate can reveal practices that enhance cross-cultural exchanges, build cultural awareness, or facilitate political discussions. Many music artists are using their rhetorical and political agency and their public platform to participate in political discourse about gender and racial inequality. However, this takes place in a context where festivals are focused on promoting businesses, event partners such as sponsors, and themselves as part of their commercial interests.

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65 To be clear, I view digital media content creation and musical performances as examples of cultural production. Sociologists Eric Klinenberg and Claudi Benzecry (2005) agree. They point to news media, advertising, digital arts, and emerging political cultures on social media as examples of digital cultural production (Kinenberg & Benzecry, 2005).
As we saw earlier, by promoting their unique musical styles and multilingual identities, music artists provide symbolic representations of their cultures and their experiences as touring artists. I argue that the way artists are represented through language, discourse, and images produces meaning for the people who consume festival performances and music (Hall, 1997). Music production also creates social representations through the symbolic use of musical styles, practices, instruments, rhythms, and lyrics. For example, Aldo Guizmo’s reggae style and discussions around Gwoka culture are both expressions of his Guadeloupean identity and symbols of political resistance. The spaces where musical production happens (festivals) and where the public discusses it (on social media) can either create positive social representations of racially marginalized people or perpetuate negative ones. They can also facilitate the contestation of societal injustices. However, my data indicates that most diversity-focused festivals tend to share sanitized versions of social injustice discourses in favour of remaining apolitical or neutral. They share very few posts about political issues on their Facebook pages, and when they do, they often avoid fully engaging with the issues. For example, on May 30th, 2019, TD Sunfest shares a politically focused post about the province of Ontario’s cuts to Indigenous arts programming (TD Sunfest Canada, 2019, May 30). The caption reads: “provincial elimination of Ontario’s Indigenous Culture Fund” and includes a direct quotation from NDP party leader Andrea Horwath:

> What artists do, whether it’s in music, whether it’s in the visual arts, whether it’s in the performing arts, they create an Ontario that is livable and an Ontario that is inspirational for the rest of us. (Horwath in TD Sunfest Canada, 2019)

I argue that while the festival’s sharing of the article is positive, it fails to fully bring attention to the political and cultural implications of cutting Indigenous arts programs. I see a potential for deeper ally-ship between Sunfest and racially marginalized groups through public education. Posts like these are scarce in the data and in the case of the Sunfest article, no follow-up activities or political actions were planned in response to the government’s decision. I build upon Bekenshtein’s (2020) argument that many festivals choose apolitical positions that do not adequately address the racism, discrimination, and colonialism that racially marginalized people face in Canada. I propose that festivals can play an important role in the framing of discussions around these issues.

Festivals management and curatorial decisions affect the way images, stories, and programs are developed. In my view, diversity-focused festivals are ideally positioned within the music industry
to do this work. I use the example of Mundial Montréal’s apolitical tone in a November 19th post about anti-racism author and podcaster Rokhaya Diallo (Figure 23).

Figure 23: Mundial Montréal Promotes Anti-Racism Podcast

The event is a good opportunity to discuss the racial marginalization of “world music” artists and the problem of racism. The guest’s podcast Kiffe ta race is posted on Binge Audio and discusses racial and gender discrimination in France (Diallo & Ly, 2020). I argue that the caption does not go far enough in its description and the festival should position itself within the broader conversation about how these issues can be contextualized within Canada’s music industry. In addition, these kinds of posts are largely absent from many of the other festivals I explore in the study. This shows that most diversity-focused festivals tend to avoid political discussions and content rather than embrace their position as organizations that promote diversity. This is problematic because, while music artists engage with these issues and often discuss them during their performances, there are no safe spaces for festival-goers to learn about or discuss them.

I give the example of Mutek, an electronic music festival in Montréal, as a positive model for the approach diversity-focused festivals could take. In 2020, Mutek participated in Black Out Tuesday to reflect on anti-Blackness and real-world events around the world and in Canada (MUTEK, 2020). The organizers later made a decision to include greater representation by artists and speakers of colour and by other marginalized communities. The website names the Black Lives Matter movement as a model for its proposed political actions and states it aims to push “for dialogue and greater awareness of our collective and individual responsibilities within white supremacist structures” (MUTEK, 2020). This statement clearly and explicitly names anti-
Blackness, white supremacy and marginalization as societal issues in Canada (MUTEK, 2020). In addition, the organization holds an annual forum where it discusses these and other issues with the public. I did find one example similar to the Mutek model during my field visit. Mundial Montréal states that it wants to bring to light the work of music artists from diverse and under-represented areas (Field notes, 2019, November 18). In two Facebook posts, they note that the representation of Indigenous artists in the music industry is important: “highlighting the work of under-represented artists with a focus on artists from Indigenous communities” (translation) (Mundial Montréal, 2019, October 8; Mundial Montréal, 2019, September 16). The event also features a workshop called *Accents Autochtones*, where local music professionals discuss the inclusion of Indigenous artists in the “world music” stage (Field notes, 2019, November 18). While this shows an acknowledgment of Indigenous people as members of sovereign nations, it is unclear if the organization’s policies and decision-making include things like land acknowledgement and recommendations made by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) for the cultural industries. The TRC demands that public educators increase their “capacity for intercultural understanding, empathy, and mutual respect” (TRC, 2012). Building on Karina Czyzewski’s (2020) argument that music educators have a responsibility to reflect on the impact of Indigenous pedagogy, I propose that festival organizers who promote Indigenous-focused workshops and performances must do the same. Similarly, when promoting programs that focus on the impact of racial marginalization, they should recognize other knowledge systems and perspectives. I argue that having an informed approach to cultural interventions, which considers other modes of being and knowing, is an important step to creating a diversity-friendly space where festival-goers and presenters can discuss issues that affect their communities.

I point to cultural production as an important source of social representation and a contributing factor in the construction of identities. I use Birgitta Hoijer’s (2011) theory on social representation to show how digital cultural products can either anchor or objectify the people they represent. These representations are symbolic of values, metaphors, images, ideas, beliefs, practices, and classification, all of which enable people to position themselves within society (Moscovici in Hoijer, 2011). When racially marginalized francophones see positive representations and recognize themselves in narratives, stories, practices, and political and economic positions, it contributes to the way they see themselves. I also understand representations as counter-narratives that challenge the dominant discourse about racially marginalized people in Canada. For instance,
Haitian film makers in Québec have created films that rupture negative images and their invisibility in the media (Boukala & Pastinelli, 2016). The Montréal International Black Film Festival (Montréal International Black Film Festival, 2022) promotes the independent film industry and showcases films about the realities of Black people (Montréal International Black Film Festival, 2022). One example is the 2008 French/Creole film Minuit about Haitian vodou culture which Fabienne Colas produced (Montréal Gazette, 2009). Another example is Yasmine Mathurin’s award-winning documentary, One of Ours (2021). The film tells the story of Haitian Canadian Josiah Wilson who was adopted by a Heiltsuk family and banned from participating in the All-Native Basketball Tournament (Simonpillai, 2021). Mathurin states that growing up, she questioned her Haitian and Canadian identities. The film allowed her to work through her own feelings (Mathurin in Simonpillai, 2021). These film productions have expanded Black francophone representations in Canadian culture and have contributed to discussions about identity and language. Black Canadian film makers can challenge negative representations and invisibility within the industry by producing these films. As Mathurin states:

I think Josiah's story is quite unique as someone who is both Black, adopted legally and in the traditional Heiltsuk and also as an adoptee to non-Black parents," she said. "I feel like there are a lot of other folks who are Afro-Indigenous whose stories might connect with what Josiah has gone through. (Mathurin in CBC News, 2021)

The example illustrates the state of in-betweenness that many Black Canadians experience. It also shows how marginalized people hold unique experiences and how cultural production can rupture negative images and their invisibility. This strategic production counters cultural hegemony and racism, which are perpetuated by under-representation and the denial of discrimination and exclusion. Expanding on my examples of Black films, I propose that Black music can also rupture negative images and the invisibility of marginalized artists.

According to Bronwyn T. Williams (2011), popular culture texts such as books, songs, and films can “provide representations of identity that individuals use both to reinforce and resist their identification with dominant cultural models in a dynamic process of continually becoming, rather than a matter of simply being” (p. 205). This assumes a transformation takes place when cultural production resists the dominant culture. For example, negative stereotypes about Black men in the music industry as promiscuous have a negative impact on boys’ self-esteem and well-being (Goodwill, J., Anyiwo, N., Williams, E.D., Johnson, N., Mattis, J., & Watkins, D., 2019). These
negative social representations are often based on the belief that Black people are racially inferior which perpetuates racist ideas about marginalized people (Liao, Wei, & Yin, 2020). Stories about Black people humanize them and challenge societal stereotypes and misconceptions. Black artists who share positive narratives can counter negative stereotypes by using lyrics about violence prevention, political and social consciousness, and positive Black identities (Goodwill et al., 2019). This has a positive impact on young Black people (Goodwill et al., 2019). I suggest that positive representations of racially marginalized music artists support positive identity construction and self-esteem in the Black community. In addition, people who attend festivals and witness positive expressions of Blackness in artists’ music can resist the negative impact of the dominant culture and rupture invisibility and negative representations. I propose that in the festival industry, resistance to dominant models and negative stereotypes can be achieved through the performances music artists produce, the stories they tell, and the social media texts they share. Resistance to, or reinforcement of negative representations also happens as a result of curatorial decisions made by festival organizers, which can either contribute to or counter the invisibility and misrepresentation of marginalized groups.

The lack of visibility that marginalized music artists face re-enforces culturally dominant models and Canadians’ perceptions about culture as a largely white settler construct. I argue that in Canada’s music and festival industries, positive representations through artistic performances are key to reducing the under-representation, discrimination, and under-participation of racially marginalized music artists. For example, on May 4th, 2019, Marema posts an image of herself sitting on a bench, using the caption “Je me sens une déesse Noire” [I feel like a Black goddess] (Figure 24).
Marema uses terms like “womanpower” and “blackgirl” in her caption. The phrase “I feel like a goddess” promotes the positive body image and healthy self-esteem of women and girls. I view this as an example of hashtag activism and rhetorical agency, which is to say that Marema uses her platform to send meaningful and purposeful messages to her audience (Yang, 2016). The term “womanpower” represents the collective strength or potential for work, activism, and suffrage of women (Merriam-Webster, 2022). The use of this term confirms my assumption that Marema’s hashtags indicate discourse about activism against gender-based discrimination.
Positive representations of Black music artists are important for festival-goers from marginalized communities. They help construct a public space where racially marginalized people can celebrate their culture together. For example, at the Canada Day Celebration, a group of young Black audience members dance the soukous during Diouf’s performance. They do so while waving Canadian flags, pointing to their desire for a sense of belonging. After his performance, Diouf asks the audience if anyone is from Africa (Diouf 2019f, July 1). The group of dancers say they are from Congo and Guinea (Field visit, 2019, July 1). During another song about Nelson Mandela, the group from Guinea sing along to some of the lyrics. It is clear that the performance creates a space for representation and participation from African audience members. This example shows how diversity-focused festivals, through their musical performances, can support marginalized communities that are often erased from the dominant culture.

**Participatory Music Culture: Artists as Cultural Activists**

In this section, I introduce the concept of participatory culture to music festivals in Canada. I position this culture as an important part of music artists’ online and on-stage activities and decisions. I give three examples of music artists’ who use social media and the festival stage as discursive weapons and tools for political participation. These tactics include hashtag activism, content curation, and *prise de parole*. I discuss the activist role many marginalized music artists assume as they engage their audiences in discussions about social injustice in the world. In addition, some artists use their social media platforms to promote the intangible heritage of their nations, which represents the African diaspora. Given my focus on social media, I build on Jenkins’ participatory culture theory. I propose a theory of participatory music culture. I define this as: 1) the collaborative and remix qualities of music-making, which combines traditional and contemporary styles for the purpose of engaging several audience groups, and 2) the sharing of these new genres with online audiences for the purpose of drawing them into discourse about the music and what it represents. I view music styles like New Maloya, Bantou Groove, and Cumbia Chicharonica as examples of this participatory music culture. The artists who produce these styles of music are participating in cultural production by strategically modifying, collaborating, and remixing original sounds, and by having conversations with the public about why they do this.
I introduce hashtag activism as a strategy marginalized music artists use to increase their visibility and participate in online conversations about social justice issues. These artists also engage in a form of rhetorical or narrative agency by bringing attention to gender and racial inequality through their captions, content sharing, and hashtags. These digital media practices construct positive representations of marginalized people and challenge dominant structures.

I propose that many music artists assume a dual role: the performer who focuses on creative agency and musical production (pure art), and the activist who is focused on serving society through cross-cultural exchanges and political activism. These artists conduct a form of citizen democracy by increasing the visibility and recognition of under-represented communities and raising awareness about the issues they face. For example, in 1939, Billie Holiday’s song *Strange Fruit* (1939) protested racism and lynching in the United States years before the Civil Rights movement began (Tan, 2019). In 1971, Marvin Gay’s *What’s Going On* raised social awareness about the Vietnam War and police brutality against anti-war protesters (Gaye, 1972). His lyrics expressed the importance of being an informed citizen and engaging in social activism (Gaye, 1972). In 2018, Childish Gambino made references to Jim Crow laws in *This is America*, commenting on Black oppression and racial discrimination in the United States (Tan, 2019).

In Canada, there are other examples of music activism. In 1975, French-Canadian singer Jacqueline Lemay wrote the song *La moitié du monde est une femme*, addressing gender inequality in Canada (Peristerakis, n.d.). In 1995, Innu singer Susan Aglukark released *O Siem* to address racism against Indigenous peoples and bring attention to social and economic inequalities in the country (Peristerakis, n.d.). In 2019, Knaan wrote *Wavin’ Flag* to bring awareness to migrants’ who experienced displacement due to war (Peristerakis, n.d.). These examples show that marginalized music artists participate in discourse about migration, social and economic inequity, and gender inequality through their creative work.

Other examples of political participation through cultural production are Franco-Ontarian music, literature and theatre movements, which have created opportunities for francophone citizens to be themselves, speak their language without judgment, and participate in counter-dominant discourse that challenges Anglo-dominance in Canada and the myth that Canadians are linguistically homogeneous. More specifically, Toronto’s Franco-Fête festival features performances from global and regional francophone musicians and singers, and celebrates the world’s French-
speaking music artists in an Anglo-dominant province (Franco-Fête, 2021). Festivals like these critique existing institutional structures and conventional forms of cultural production that erase linguistically marginalized citizens (Dionne, 1998; Gilbert et al., 2017; Hotte, 2000; Hotte & Melançon, 2010).

Indeed, many music artists who perform in Canada’s diversity-driven festivals actively work to create awareness about issues of inequality, and their social media presence allows them to amplify these messages. I use Megan Boler and Jennie Phillips’ (2015) argument that activists who use mediated platforms like Facebook “enjoy a lateral mode of sharing, collaboration, and even coordinated action, given the connective nature of the communication technologies in use” (Boler & Phillips, 2015, p. 238). Music activists who perform in Canada’s diversity-focused festivals can curate and construct narratives as they choose, carefully selecting articles and songs that reflect their personal views and knowledge about the subject matter they want to address. This work is a form of connective labour that creates engagement between humans and technology (Boler & Phillips, 2015, p. 247; Boler, MacDonald, Nitsou, & Harris, 2014). I argue that the connective labour music artists contribute to Canada’s festivals is important, but the primary work of a musician and singer is to entertain and sell their products.

The diversity-focused festivals I attended had several examples of this connective labour and social activism. At Nuits d’Afrique, Marema elicits political discourse about gender equality. During her performance, she introduces her song “Femme d’affaires”, which is a play on words with a double meaning: businesswoman and “woman concerned with important things”. I view this as a commentary on the agency of women, and a desire for them to take action and participate in conversations about issues that concern them. Marema’s claim that the song is a tribute to strong independent women supports my assertion (Field notes, 2019, July 21).

Other examples of music artists who participate in political discourse about colonialism and other issues on stage include Valerie Ekoumé, Ramon Chicharron and Lakou Veranda. Before her third song at Sunfest, Ekoumé states:

I was frustrated about the history of Black people in humanity. I think it’s not only about colonization and slavery, so I wrote this song which is called Queen, Not King. (Ekoumé, 2019b, July 5)
The title *Queen, Not King* suggests she advocates for gender equality within decolonizing movements she feels do not fully represent women. In her public speech, Ekoumé states that women face a lack of recognition in the decolonization movement and that her music offers a positive representation of Black women. Her performance often includes the use of empowering gestures such as the clenched fist, which is symbolic of solidarity around revolutionary social causes such as worker’s rights, feminism, and Black resistance (Kornbluh 1917/1998). Another example is Ramon Chicharron’s performance at Mondo Karnaval, on August 31st, 2019. Chicharron points out that one of his songs is about animals and how deforestation affects them (Field notes, 2019, August 31). This discourse draws from environmentalism movements. In his final song, Ramon mentions he is using a Champeta rhythm, a music style popularized in the coastal region of Colombia. This music style was created by African people from Palenque as a form of political resistance and response to being excluded from white spaces in Cartagena and Barranquilla (Luis & Martinez, 2011, p. 1). Similarly, during his live performance at Nuits d’Afrique, Aldo Guizmo sings about Shakazulu, a 19th-century king of the Zulu nation, as well as former South African President and civil rights activist Nelson Mandela (Field notes, 2019, July 23). I argue that the lyrics in his songs contain narratives about Africa’s history and that these stories are symbolic of resistance movements for many Black people around the world.

In another example, the singers and musicians of Lakou Veranda collectively raise their fists and speak about the presence of Black people in Guadeloupe (in Creole). They briefly discuss the history of slavery and colonialism in the country before beginning their performance (Lakou Veranda, 2019f, September 2; Figure 25).

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66 In the early 1980s, “Creole therapy” emerged as a Colombian music genre inspired by African music in Cartagena and Palenque de San Basilio. People of African descent used African rhythms like soukous and fused them with sounds from the East Indies such as compas and reggae as well as music of Indigenous and African origins like bullerengue and chalupa. Also called “Colombian therapy”, this style of music is now called champeta culture (Escallon in Piko, 2007).
This example of public speech shows how music artists can use festivals to assert their presence in a settler society, make slavery and colonialism visible, express their political opinions about these issues, and share their nation’s history. Such narratives contribute to global decolonization movements. This part of the performance shows that the stage provides a space for storytelling and socio-political activism, which is a form of *prise de parole* (Laroche, 2017). *Prise de parole* is a type of public speaking that involves structured and deliberate messages. Lakou Veranda is purposefully using its time on stage to convey a message to a captive audience about decolonization, anti-racism, and social recognition. The goal is to influence the audience while transmitting information that tells the story of Guadeloupe. The phrase “prise de parole” translates to “taking back my voice”, which is another example of music artists’ rhetorical/narrative agency. I propose that through this rhetorical agency, music artists participate in social and political activism.

Beyond activism music artists display in public speaking, they share Facebook content as commentary about the marginalization of women and Black people. For example, Guizmo often posts about the economic participation of Black people in Guadeloupe and the history of slavery in the Caribbean. On July 23rd, he shares a post calling for a general strike by the working class
(Guizmo, 2019b, July 23). In another post, he shares an article about the legacy of slavery in modern society (Figure 26).

*Figure 26: Aldo Guizmo Engages in Political Discourse*

The caption reads in part “if we are the descendants of our enslaved ancestors, then our goal is not to remain this way ourselves. Isn’t our goal to continue the battle so that ‘Tout’ Moun se Moun (translation)”? The Creole phrase, “Tout Moun se Moun”, means “everyone is human”. I note that these posts point to the continued dehumanization of Black people in Guadeloupe, and to the legacy of the transatlantic slave trade. They show that music artists are fully aware of their position as activists and use their public platform to mobilize and inform their readers about the issues Black people continue to experience. Guizmo’s curation of content accurately represents the social injustices Guadeloupean people face. In 2021, violent protests took place on the island due to the impact of Covid-19 restrictions (Al Jazeera, 2021). These protests reflect a long-standing mistrust
of the colonial health system and French government, which used pesticides on banana plantations in the Caribbean from 1979 to the early 1990s after it had been banned by the World Health Organization (1979) (Whewell, 2020). As a result, the island has the highest rate of prostate cancer in the world. In addition, a third of the population of Guadeloupe lives under the poverty line, and the Covid-19 pandemic only intensified the unemployment and rising food cost on the island (Whewell, 2020).

Another of Guizmo’s posts about slavery on July 23rd, 2019 reads: “cette même population se doit de se mobiliser afin de faire entendre son désaccord face à ce système” [“This same population must mobilize to voice their disagreement about the system”]. The French word “mobiliser” means mobilizing, which I understand as a process of collectively organizing and taking political action to bring about social change. This example shows that music artists are not just passively sharing information, but also encouraging their readers to participate in political movements. While Guizmo never uses hashtags like BlackLivesMatter, the intention to advocate for Black people’s rights to clean water, equal access to economic prosperity, and safe health care is clear. On another occasion, he posts several articles about access to clean water and the environment (Guizmo, 2019a, July 18; Guizmo, 2019, July 12). In two other examples, Guizmo shares an article about police officers forcefully arresting a Black man (Guizmo, 2019, July 9), and an article commemorating the Amistad of 1839 where 53 African slaves revolted. The story of the Amistad revolt had significant implications for the slavery abolition movement in the United States. A group of African men challenged the law of salvage, which claimed that enslaved people were goods and therefore should become the property of the United States government if a ship transporting them were to sink (Adjaye, 1999). The Supreme Court ruled that the enslaved African men were never Spanish citizens and had been taken illegally from Africa where they were considered free men under the law (Adjaye, 1999). All of these examples show that music artists can intentionally create awareness and dialogue about the legacy of slavery and about the contemporary violence and racism Black people face. The juxtaposition of these issues (contemporary vs historical) is proof of the legacy of the transatlantic slave trade and the ideologies that contribute to the over-policing of Black citizens, as well as white supremacy and racism in society. Guizmo’s Facebook content challenges the denial of these issues and gives visibility to

67 The Amistad was a Spanish slave ship whose enslaved Africans revolted and escaped in 1839, 35 of whom returned to Sierra Leone three years after they had been captured into slavery (Cornish, 1988).
the experience of racially marginalized people and to stories about the history of slavery in the Americas.

Ramon Chicharron also posts about the transatlantic slave trade on his Facebook page. He shares a video about the history of Palenque de San Basilio, a Colombian community historically settled by former slaves. In Figure 27, we see a video captioned in Spanish discussing the former slave colony of Palenque on the Caribbean coast of Colombia.

Chicharron’s post shows how music artists contribute to conversations about slavery and colonialism. These conversations happen both on social media and on the stage. For example, we also see Chicharron discuss the social meaning of Champeta music for Black Colombians.

On November 12th, 2019, Blick Bassy shares an article calling for Cameroonian unity and advocating for the defiance of Western culture in an article published in Songlines Magazine (Blick
Bassy, 2019, November 12). The article titled “Blick Bassy: This generation must defy imported culture and design their own role models and paths”, quotes the music artist’s own words. Bassy frequently shares third-party interviews in which he participates and expresses anti-colonial ideas to raise awareness about the political issues Cameroonians face. He captions this article with the phrase “breaking the silence on France’s colonialist treatment towards Cameroonians”. In another post, on November 2nd, Bassy shares an article related to the decolonization of Africa (Blick Bassy, 2019, November 2). This article, originally published by the Cameroon Tribute, describes Germany’s colonial history in Cameroon. The caption reads “…questioner l’impact de la colonisation allemande dans les 6 espaces qui l’ont subi” [“…to question the impact German colonialism has had on the six spaces that experienced it”]. These examples illustrate that the curation of articles contributes to discourse about the impact of colonialism in Africa and can be intentional. The captions people use can further contextualize the issues.

Bassy also Facebooks his participation in a meeting about copyrights for professional musicians, where he is described as an “intervenant” (the word translates to social practitioner) (see Figure 28).

*Figure 28: Blick Bassy Participates in Advocacy Work*
These examples are evidence of how the artists curate articles and other content as a form of resistance work in which music artists participate. Joelle Tremblay (2013) notes that the purpose of advocacy work is to improve social conditions, transform people’s lives, and create opportunities for reflection about injustices (p. 30). I understand musicians and singers who engage in advocacy work as artists who create change and introduce new points of view about the social positioning of minoritized people. I also view their content sharing and curation within social media communities as a form of activism/advocacy. Indeed, most of the musicians and singers I observed in this study conducted some form of activism, whether this was during performances, through their curation of Facebook content, or through other activities such as facilitating workshops and participating in community forums. For example, Ekoumé poses with a group of young students during a community workshop she leads to promote music (Ekoumé, n.d.).

In my view, the curation of Facebook, as well as the use of politically leaning hashtags, are forms of political discourse. These discursive tools support music artists who use their political and narrative (rhetorical) agency. I apply Guobin Yang’s (2016) definition of hashtag activism to explain how music artists deploy hashtags for political purposes. As Yang (2016) argues, hashtag activism happens when people use words or phrases related to social and political issues and claims. The hashtag acts as an aggregator of information by allowing people to search for any content related to the specific topic it represents. As an example, #BlackOutTuesday and #theshowmustbepaused have increasingly been used since the killing of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, and Ahmaud Arbery (Togoh, 2020). In 2020, several major labels in the United States pledged to support Black Out Tuesday and not release new music for a week, while Spotify replaced playlist artwork with a black tile (Togoh, 2020). The same year, these hashtags became a top trending topic on Twitter (pausetheshow, 2020). Similar to the way journalist Alicia Garza used #blacklivesmatter after the trial of Trayvon Martin’s killer, these hashtags raised awareness about the issue of police violence against Black people and invited readers to reflect on ways to show solidarity with the Black community.

My data shows that music artists use hashtag activism on Facebook to bring attention to gender and racial inequality in society. Marema uses #Africanwoman #Naturalwoman, #Savewoman, and #Womanpower to engage in discourse about gender equality and body positivity. Hashtag activism is a form of narrative or rhetorical agency in which the hashtags are used to create stories on social
media in a way that is “collective and recognized by the public” (Campbell, 2005). Marema’s post also reflects her own identity as a Black woman and provides a positive social representation to others. While the media does not always provide adequate space for the representation of the self, music artists can use their Facebook platform and other social media to create it. Another example of hashtag activism and the countering of negative representations is observed in one of Maya Kamaty’s Facebook posts on May 2nd, 2019 (see Figure 29).
Figure 291: Maya Kamaty Engages in Hashtag Activism
In the image above, Kamaty is seen wearing a t-shirt with the words: “Why be racist, sexist or homophobic?”. She uses hashtag activism here, captioning the image with the phrases #noracism, #nosexism, #nohomophobia, #lgbtq and #allthesame. I view this as a social commentary on racial and gender inequality and the discrimination of people from the 2SLGBTQ+ community and racially marginalized people. On April 2nd, 2019, Kamaty shares an article about the Les Nuits Couleurs Festival in France (Kamaty, 2019, April 2). She uses the hashtags #lutteculturelle and #culturepourtous, which translate to #culturalstruggle and #cultureforall, to point out the importance of supporting cultural organizations. This post also suggests festivals can make culture accessible to everyone. In a third example, while promoting her album on July 8th, 2019, Kamaty uses identity-based tags like #ReunionaisduMonde, #delareunion, and #ReunionnaisduQuébecNoulela (Kamaty, 2019, July 8). These examples of hashtag activism show how social media can amplify racially marginalized voices and change the power dynamics among institutions, businesses, and individuals. Hashtags also facilitate resistance movements, raise public awareness about social injustice, and increase positive representations of marginalized people. Musicians and singers participate in hashtag activism by adding hashtags that bring attention to social causes or issues. By doing so, they expand their readership and signal their willingness (agency) to call out social injustice and participate in political and social discourse about it.

In their study of Twitter activity during the Occupy Wall Street movement, Floriana Garguilo, Jacopo Bindi, and Andrea Appoloni (2015) found that the hashtags protesters used helped identify the roles of different actors within the debate, including amateur and professional journalists. The hashtags also provided different levels of connectivity depending on their prominence (Garguilo, Bindi, & Appoloni, 2015). I consider the social media practices of activists as tools for bypassing structural, professional, cultural, and linguistic hierarchies and boundaries, and for supporting broader group communication and information sharing. The Occupy movement was a social commentary on unequal wealth distribution after the economic crisis of 2008 (Anthony, 2021). More than 750 Occupy events were promoted worldwide on social media at the height of the movement (Anthony, 2021). Despite many organizers’ intent to create a more egalitarian society, the movement failed to share a clear message or demand. However, it did create a model which was later used by other social justice activists. Today, activists use social media platforms for
image and video sharing, status updates, recruitment of people to movements, securing resources, sharing information, storytelling, and group exchanges (Boler & Phillips, 2015).

Participatory music culture provides several avenues for engaging in connective labour and advocating for social justice. These opportunities work to correct the exclusion of marginalized people and shift dominant power structures, creating spaces for people’s voices to be heard (Byrd Clark, 2009, pp. 19-20). I argue that this culture reflects a new form of public engagement, which is characterized by music artists’ participation in networked festivals and music industries. These networks, which are buttressed by various public platforms such as Twitter, Facebook, and TikTok, can help shape society through music practices and dialogue. As Jacques Attali’s (1985/2009) theory on the political economy of music states, music is a reflection of socio-political and socio-economic relationships and changes in society. It represents knowledge, aesthetic, economic processes, differentiation, and the quest for un-differentiation (Attali, 1985/2009). These contradictions are reflected in the double responsibility music artists have: to sell music and to challenge social injustices.

**Disruption, Voice Amplification, and Promotion: Facebooking as Multi-dimensional Praxis**

In this section, I borrow from business theory and apply the concepts of disruptive technologies and brand authority to discuss the tensions between the disruptive qualities of social media and its usefulness in promoting music artists and festivals. Brand authority is the level to which a brand is seen as a leader or expert within an industry (Rahal, 2021). I expand on the idea that Facebook can amplify the voices of marginalized people by promoting their “disruptive” styles of music and content creation to mainstream audiences. To be clear, I don’t consider this disruption negative. I view it as unsettling dominant cultural structures and classifications, which is essential to increasing the participation of under-represented groups in society.

The concept of disruptive innovation was developed in 1995 by Joseph Bower and Clayton Christensen. Disruptive technologies are platforms and applications that introduce attributes
different than the ones mainstream consumers historically value (Bower and Christensen, 1995). They make possible the emergence of new markets and allow smaller organizations to introduce or change their products and marketing strategies and capture the attention of those consumers. As an example, in the fall of 2020, small investor groups used the WallStreetBets Reddit community to coordinate the purchase of Gamestop stock, overwhelming investment professionals (Petras, Loehrke, & Sergent, 2021). Another example is the power struggle between Indy labels and major labels in a capitalist society. Small labels are often marginalized for refusing to conform to industry standards (Suhr, 2012). On the other hand, digital spaces like YouTube allow consumers equal access to both labels’ products (Suhr, 2012, p. 17). Bigger labels have access to more financial and cultural capital, more resources, and theoretically, more capacity to increase visibility and reach. At the same time, the unique sounds small labels produce can serve as cultural capital because they are sought after by audience groups looking to distinguish themselves from the mainstream (Suhr, 2012). This shows that being original or different can work to the benefit of the music artist. I relocate this idea of “small vs big” and apply it to under-represented music artists. I argue that people with less representation have less visibility and power in the music industry. However, strategies like remix, hashtag activism, prise de parole, and the use of disruptive technologies allow these artists to bring value to consumers by offering something different. Using social media platforms like YouTube and TikTok, artists can change transform their music and reach new markets that represent unique fluid and hybrid styles of production. They can also use promotional strategies that increase their visibility online. I use the earlier example of Maya Kamaty’s promotion of the term New Maloya on Facebook, which is both a disruptor of traditional Réunionnais culture and a strategy for bringing it to mainstream consumers. Another example is Ramon Chicharron’s promotion of Cumbia Chicharonica, which introduces traditional Colombian music to North American audiences by changing it and making it into something unique. I acknowledge that Bower and Christensen’s theory mainly informs business decisions by organizations that wish to use disruption to enter new markets and create profit. However, I propose that the concept of technological disruption can be used to understand the way
marginalized cultural producers successfully enter new markets by digitally remixing or subverting old modes of production and marketing them to online audiences.\footnote{Bourdieu (1993) states that the various fields of cultural production (industries) involve workers, producers, and institutions who are organized into hierarchies.}

The promotion of cultural products and festival performances online is also a useful discursive weapon for negotiating the hierarchies and limits of institutional power structures (Nissenbaum & Shifman, 2017). For example, in a single day, music artists can caption their performances at Canadian festivals and comment on social inequalities in the Caribbean or in Africa (Guizmo, n.d.). Lawyer and political activist Lawrence Lessig suggests that products that use counter-narratives, modify old artifacts, and use remix practices are examples of how negotiations of power take place (Lessig, 2008). However, online platforms are also enmeshed with corporations and governments which can reproduce power imbalances (Boler & Phillips, 2015). The data shows that festivals’ Facebook pages remain mostly apolitical and neutral in their framing of stories. I argue that this is a reflection of their interdependence with government and business entities. However, this apoliticalness can negatively influence participation and equal access by ignoring societal barriers and real-world issues affecting racially marginalized people. Music artists’ online communities have much more agency and freedom to produce counter-narratives and challenge existing power structures.

I suggest that cultural remix and social media marketing can challenge spaces that either under-represent or misrepresent racially or linguistically marginalized people. For example, in 2019, Bombardier appeared on the show Tout le monde en parle and claimed that francophone communities outside Québec had “disappeared” (Pamou, 2019). The backlash from her comments led her to produce the documentary Denise au Pays des Francos, during which she toured Canada and interviewed francophones, often correcting and criticizing her guests’ French (Pamou, 2019). Denise Bombardier’s attitude reflects the linguistic hierarchy that exists in Canada and shows how Québec’s dominant position diminishes other speech patterns, accents, vocabulary, modalities, and syntax. I view this as an example of linguicism and linguistic discrimination (Phillipson, 1992). In response to Bombardier’s documentary, the Télévision Francophone de l’Ontario produced a parody, which lambasted her and challenged her position (Flip TFO, 2020). The parody titled
“Let’s Flip 2019: Denise in the country of francos (parody) (translation)” was shared on the TFO television channel, on YouTube and on other social media platforms. It provided a counter-narrative to the myth that francophones only exist in Québec and allowed francophones across Canada to challenge the dominant political discourse about them. This example shows how social media, especially when supported by media organizations that engage in cultural production, can disseminate counter-narratives that point to the experiences and stories of misrepresented or under-represented people. Another example of how social media can amplify the voice of cultural producers is We'koqma'q artist Whitney Gould’s painting, They Found Us (2021). The piece was a response to the graves of 215 children uncovered at the Kamloops Indian Residential School in May 2021 (Hassan, 2021). The image of Gould’s artwork went viral on Twitter after several people re-tweeted it (Hassan, 2021). The virality of the content amplified its message and increased the visibility of the artist.

While social media platforms can amplify the voices of marginalized people, many continue to be excluded from these so-called disruptive technological spaces, which often reproduce the same power dynamics that exist in the mainstream. For example, blockchain art, which is meant to disrupt classical art spaces, continues to marginalize women artists and promote white men whose work is largely considered apolitical (Kent, 2021). Since 2014, women have created art that critically engages blockchain technology and disrupts the male-dominated space. For instance, in 2017, Josie Bellini’s viral piece Genesis depicting a woman wearing a bull and bear mask sold for $400,000 (OpenSea, 2022). Itzel Yard’s Dreaming at Dusk sold for $2,000,000 in 2021 (Yard, 2021). Despite women’s success in the blockchain art world, many auctions have not included them in their exhibitions (Kent, 2021). Using Kentaro Toyama’s (2011) theory of amplification, I propose that technology amplifies existing human forces and social inequalities. I also argue that platforms like Facebook reflect society’s existing cultural hegemony, which can confuse, distort, and even sanitize the message. Applying these principles to the music industry, I consider music artists’ own virtual communities as crucial to challenging mainstream organizational information spaces. While the festivals’ Facebook pages I explored did promote marginalized artists and business owners, their tendency to remain apolitical constrained discourse about racism, sexism, 

69 The bull and bear mask symbolizes the cryptocurrency market’s rise (bull) and fall (bear). The bull market moves upward when investors have high confidence, while the bear market moves down because confidence is low (Walker, 2015).
and xenophobia. I argue that music artists’ social media channels are more effective spaces at challenging authoritative/hegemonic power structures because they are not so closely tied to corporate and government sponsorship and legal parameters.

Like Lance Bennett (2012) I note that authorities’ power exists in the same space where people actively subvert, distort, block, and avoid it through collective action (p. 412). While I acknowledge social media have their limitations, I apply Larsen and Urry’s (2008) networked capital theory to show how people can nevertheless successfully leverage these platforms for their benefit and shift power systems. Bourdieu’s theories on social, cultural, and linguistic capital state that participating in cultural spaces leads to the accumulation of knowledge and cultural literacy. This, in turn, leads to an increase in economic and non-economic resources that improve a person’s standing in society (Bourdieu, 1966). These resources enable social and economic mobility (Bourdieu, 1966). I build on capital theory and argue that Facebooking literacy (competency) is an indicator of cultural capital because it facilitates music artists’ access to career opportunities. In addition, networked capital is accumulated when people who are physically far away from each other can generate emotional, financial, and practical benefits through virtual connections. The network also facilitates the accumulation of knowledge, skills, and competencies when its users learn how to use digital media to their advantage (Larsen & Urry, 2008). I view networked capital as a person’s ability to gain symbolic capital such as visibility, reach, and recognition by learning how to leverage social media. I argue that this capital leads to financial gain and economic mobility by creating work opportunities and increasing product sales. This capital can also represent increased representation for marginalized communities, which over time, also leads to more economic and social participation. For example, knowing how to use hashtags and mentions in promotional content can amplify a music artist’s message and reach.

I use the concepts of ICT competency and ICT capital to show how social media users can gain symbolic capital. This capital depends on their ability to use platforms like Facebook in a way that increases their visibility and reach (Tondeur et al., 2010). I argue that they are also more capable of promoting themselves to new audiences. Similarly, members of the public who understand how to use ICTs are better equipped to access cultural products (Tondeur et al., 2010). I propose that racially marginalized francophone music artists can use this capital to increase their economic mobility in Canada’s music industry. For example, Ramon Chicharron is tagged in a post created
by Sunfest which includes his image, a hyperlink that sends readers to his Facebook page, and information about his upcoming performance (Ramon Chicharron, 2019, June 12). This illustrates the usefulness of tags and hyperlinks as promotional tools. Knowing how to combine these elements can improve the effectiveness of one’s marketing strategy. Another example is Blick Bassy who uses a link to a third-party article to promote an appearance on a BBC television program. The link has a dual purpose. It promotes Bassy’s music and shares his views about Cameroon’s political system (Blick Bassy, 2019, November 20) (see Figure 30).

Figure 30: Blick Bassy Uses ICT Competencies

In another example, on October 14th, 2019, Bassy posts an article originally published by À Nous Paris Magazine. It mentions him as a must-see performer at the MaMA Festival, strengthening his brand authority in the industry. Many of the festivals also use Facebook to promote musicians and singers in their line-up by sharing third-party content like YouTube videos. During a live event, Nuits d’Afrique posts several links from YouTube (Les Nuits d’Afrique, 2019, July 18). For example, one post includes a video of music artist Moumoki’s Banlieux’Art video. The music festival regularly posts these links to promote performers as they take the stage in real-time. This provides a promotional service to the artist by leveraging the festival’s own followers to increase the reach of the people they promote. These examples show that both festivals and music artists
use third-party content, tags, and hyperlinks to introduce their audience to the music and the festival event.

The festivals also promote sponsors and business partners. For example, on July 19th, 2019, Nuits d’Afrique shares a post acknowledging one of its main sponsors, TD Canada Bank (Les Nuits d’Afrique, 2019, July 19). The post has a call to action to visit the bank’s booth and participate in a contest. The image presents the TD booth, which is decorated with the company logo. The purpose of sponsoring an event is usually to increase brand visibility and the company’s reputation in the community which in turn improves sales. This suggests that festivals promote and acknowledge their financial sponsors in exchange for their financial contributions. In another example, a Nuits d’Afrique post acknowledges Tunisair with an image of a man wearing headphones and standing behind a live festival audience (Les Nuits d’Afrique, 2019, July 17). The post provides free advertising to the sponsor, which shows how festivals are entangled with corporate entities.

There are also examples of music artists who use their bodies and cultural identities as tools to promote their music. On June 7th, 2019, Maya Kamaty promotes her upcoming tour and posts her new album cover, which is an image of her (Kamaty, 2019, June 7). On July 11th, 2019, a post promotes her upcoming tour (Kamaty, 2019, July 11). The caption makes clear her Réunionnais identity by her choice of hashtags: #islandgirl #reunionnaise #isledelareunion #ontour. The music, the image of the artist, and the use of identity hashtags become part of the marketing strategy. In another example, Mamselle Ruiz puts forward images of herself and symbolically uses her Mexican identity to promote her album and her live performances (Mamselle Ruiz, 2019, November 18; Mamselle Ruiz, 2019, November 14; Mamselle Ruiz, 2019, November 13; Mamselle Ruiz, 2019, November 1). In Figure 31, Ruiz is seen wearing a Mexican-style costume and make-up to celebrate the Day of the Dead (El Día de la Muerte). She takes the opportunity to promote her upcoming November 22nd performance.
I understand these posts as primarily intending to increase ticket and album sales. The images artists like Ruiz and Kamaty use essentially become representations of their culture. I suggest that by focusing on their national identities, musicians and singers mean to bring attention to their uniqueness as artists. In doing so, they become willing participants in a commodification process similar to that of many festivals that sell food, artisan objects, and musical experiences. However, there is a distinction between strategically using one’s culture to sell, and simply sharing information about oneself. For example, posting about a performance vs posting about watching/attending a football game requires different intentions. In other words, not everything artists post is intended to sell their work or represent political activism. The use of Facebook is multi-purpose and diversified.
It is clear that digital technologies and the cultural industries have hierarchical and hegemonic systems embedded within them (Ems, 2014; Giraud, 2011). At the same time, the Internet creates technologically driven and disruptive opportunities for participation and production within the cultural economies. However, digital technologies are also institutionalized and corporatized, which invites regulation, control, and capitalism into the space (Peterson & Anand, 2004). For example, music artists are subject to transnational copyright laws (Lessig, 2008). These regulations can disempower marginalized cultural producers and make the cultural field increasingly focused on generating income for the dominant culture. This blurs political and social messages intended to shift power imbalances in society. While there are economic benefits to using social media platforms, people who use them engage in a sort of data bargain. While new technologies re-organize the boundaries established by old power structures, they also impose binary definitions of people’s gender, language, and race through their designs.

Festivals and music artists who use Facebook and other social media often do so to build their brand authority. For example, TD Sunfest has been using YouTube since 2013 to share performances with the public and collaborate with a local college (SunfestCanada, n.d.). Their YouTube account states: “as we acquire more technology at Fanshawe TV we’re able to expand our coverage of the festival, providing a greater learning experience and better videos” (SunfestCanada, n.d). In 2009, the festival began sharing highlight performances for each band on local television. By 2014, Sunfest was live streaming performances on its social media channels (SunfestCanada, n.d). This shows that social media platforms can increase viewership and lead to professional collaborations. Biographical information can also play an important role in building brand authority and selling music products. For example, music artists’ About sections on Facebook allow them to share their contributions to the music industry. Maya Kamaty, Valerie Ekoumé, and Blick Bassy use their Facebook About sections to promote their albums, share recently published songs, and provide their booking information (Kamaty, n.d.; Ekoumé, n.d.; Bassy, n.d.). Rommel Ribeiro uses hyperlinks on his Facebook page to redirect visitors to other platforms where they can engage with and buy his music (Ribeiro, n.d.).

Music festivals and artists use their digital media platforms primarily for marketing (promotion) and for discussing social justice issues, as they build their brand authority. I note that this reflects the multiple roles of artists and festivals: to provide a service to the community, to sell, and to
entertain. In using these marketing practices, festivals and music artists claim a space in the industry and make room for their stories to be told. The assumption is that by doing this, they increase their revenue and consumer/fan base. Authority is earned. It requires consistency and reliability. I point out that brand authority poses a unique challenge for festivals because they have both commercial and socio-political interests. However, as *Forbes Magazine* writer Amine Rahal states: “If your content isn’t serving your customers, you’re never going to earn recognition as an authority source.” (Rahal, 2021). I use this statement to challenge diversity-focused festivals to ensure they are putting the needs of marginalized communities ahead of their corporate and economic interests. Festivals can choose to produce content that is relevant to their audience and will generate meaningful conversations about it. One way of doing this is to ask music artists and festival-goers what they want to see and talk about. The data reveals that Facebook posts tend to focus on four areas: event promotion by festivals, promotion of individual performances by festivals and music artists, promotion of local partners such as restaurants, vendors, volunteers, and sponsors (by festivals), and the sharing of politically focused discourse. The first two are significantly more used than the others, although politically focused posts often receive higher engagement (likes, shares, and comments). The political content shared by festivals tends to be produced by third-party publishers and usually focuses on promoting the arts sector. On the other hand, musicians and singers tend to share more articles and create original posts about socio-political issues such as gender and racial inequality.

The multi-layered use of Facebook shows how festivals and artists are engaged not just in social justice work, but also in business activities. I propose that this is a reflection of their hybrid roles as entertainers, cultural producers, activists, and social agents working within the tourism industries. In the end, the festival space is commodified because music artists, restaurants, and artisans produce commodities that they wish to sell.
CHAPTER SIX: CONCLUSION

In this final chapter, I discuss the code-switching practices of multilingual francophone music artists. I explore how these practices facilitate the negotiation of different spaces and social contexts, and why artists choose to them. Artists use code-switching in various ways: public speaking, social media content creation, and musical performances. I propose that music artists also engage in a form of musical code-switching when they express fluid and hybrid linguistic identities and use tactics like remix. For example, they do this when they speak in one language to their audience and sing in another. I introduce the idea that two ideological shifts need to happen in the festival in music industries: first, organizations and policy-makers need to recognize the presence of multilingual francophones and the common practice of code-switching within la francophonie; second, academics and policy-makers must acknowledge the presence of the moving identity as a characteristic of music artists’ cultural identity. I discuss the various forms of agency music artists use in their work. I view these processes as tactical decisions that unsettle the status quo in the music industry. I also discuss how the commodification of music and culture, and the tendency of festival discourse to be apolitical can be counter-productive to the political discourses and actions in which artists participate. The commodification of diversity can potentially further harm marginalized artists. Therefore, the management practices of festival organizations and the decisions organizers/industry leaders make about their programs and promotional materials can either correct existing inequities and improve public perception of non-Western music, or reproduce difference and marginalization. Further in this chapter, I make several recommendations that would improve responsible event management in the festival industry.

Recognizing The Presence of Multilingual Code-switchers as Francophone

Language research in diasporic communities can reveal how multicultural and transnational contact produces identity. One of the practices I observed in Canada’s diversity-driven festivals involves the ability of francophone musicians and singers to switch from French to other languages seamlessly. Code-switching isn’t an “either-or” choice between two languages. It is a part of the
person’s bilingual or multilingual repertoire (Zentella in Hall & Nilep, 2015, p. 608). I use Zentella’s (in Hall & Nilep, 2015) study of Puerto Rican bilingual children in New York City as an example. The research revealed that multilingual people use their familiarity with multiple languages to navigate their social worlds and negotiate multiracial neighbourhoods (Zentella in Hall & Nilep, 2015). Outside of their community, children use Spanish with other Latinx people, and English with non-Latinos and in school (Hall & Nilep, 2015, p. 608). These choices are motivated by the children’s localized understandings and functions, each language used to repeat similar information depending on the listener. Young Puerto Ricans living in New York City view identity as negotiated rather than fixed (p. 610). In a similar way, the francophone music artists from my study negotiate their use of different languages depending on their listener. This code-switching practice represents the artists’ hybrid and fluid identities. In Zentella’s study, the choice to use both languages shows that the children’s identity is two-fold, Puerto Rican and New Yorker, a dual identity (Hall & Nilep, 2015, p. 609). In mine, music artists use multiple languages which represent their multi-faceted identities. These identities vary depending on the artists’ “national” residence or background. For example, Elagé Diouf switches from French to Wolof, which represents his dual identities, Senegalese, and (French) Canadian. Mamselle Ruiz switches from Spanish to French, representing her dual identities, Québécois and Mexican. Ramon Chicharron switches from English, to French, to Spanish, which represents his multiple identities, Colombian, and bilingual Canadian. Aldo Guizmo switches from Creole to French, representing his dual identities, Guadeloupean and Québécois. These examples show that within a community, multiple members can have different identities, but still fit within that group of people. For these music artists, their professional role as artists and their ability to speak French, along with their shared experience as racially marginalized people bring them together.

French-speaking musicians and singers choose languages deliberately. They use language to negotiate multiracial spaces and navigate different linguistic profiles of localities across Ontario and Québec. For instance, the data shows some Creole musicians and singers sing their songs in Creole but address their live audiences in French or English. These choices are likely motivated by the artists’ desire to communicate with different groups of people. The choice to use two or even three languages shows that they hold hybrid linguistic identities. Wesli expresses his dual identity through his song *J’ai grandi dans un guetto* in which he uses both Québécois French and Haitian Creole (Wesliband, 2016). Parts of the song also include traditional French-Canadian
fiddling, while other parts use Afrobeat, reggae, and Haitian rara (Wesliband, 2016). Not only is this a form of linguistic code-switching, but I also understand it as musical code-switching. In addition, the song utilizes the featuring phenomenon which resists the music industry’s compartmentalization of music styles and expands the artist’s audience (Ordanini, Nunes, & Nanni, 2018). I argue that these are techniques that music artists can utilize to increase their economic mobility and visibility within the music industry.

Because festivals can be understood as communities, I view these negotiations as taking place within the spaces where musicians and singers build relationships with audience members and other music professionals. In negotiating multilingual and multiracial spaces, these music artists use their language skills and the collaborative process to navigate social interactions with different people. A similar process of this dual/multiple linguistic identity formation and the use of code-switching exists in Dakar Senegal (Swigart, 1992). In Dakar, Wolof is the preferred language in urban spaces, but people frequently switch between it and French depending on the context. From personal experience, I know that when faced with making a choice between one’s primary language and the dominant lingua franca, francophone people often hide/erase their Frenchness in order to fit into and avoid negative responses from the dominant culture. In the same way, I suggest that multilingual people often choose to use one of Canada’s dominant languages to avoid isolation or exclusion.

Bilingual and trilingual francophone musicians and singers also code-switch on their Facebook pages. This suggests that code-switching can also take place through written communication, not just when music artists engage in public speaking or musical performances. Ramon Chicharron, Aldo Guizmo, and Maya Kamaty post content in different languages depending on the context of the topic and the audience to whom they are speaking. The choice of language may also depend on the purpose of the post and the geographic source of the content, such as the location of an event they are promoting. In one post, Aldo Guizmo writes in Creole, French, and English (Guizmo, n.d.). Negotiating social context is an important reason for code-switching, both online and in person. I suggest that when artists discuss the social injustices their own communities face, they tend to use the language that represents them. Additionally, many music artists use hashtags in their posts to show their identification with a particular national group. For example, Maya Kamaty uses #reunionisland when expressing her Réunionnais identity or speaking to Réunionnais
members of her public. The choice of language in songs is also important. I propose that music artists can more readily use their creative agency and elements of their identity when they write/produce songs. For example, Maya Kamaty and Aldo Guizmo use Creole frequently in their song lyrics, which is symbolic of their cultural identities.

In some cases, the festivals highlight the value of artists’ multilingualism. For example, in one post, Mondo Karnaval writes about Haitian Québécois artist Wesli and brings attention to the performer’s ability to speak three languages: Creole, English, and French. Another example of the perceived value of multilingualism is noted on Tabou Combo’s website. The group highlights their ability to sing in several languages:

Tabou Combo’s relentless and high-energy style of Kompas dance beat knows no language barrier. Singing in English, Spanish, French or their native Creole, Tabou serves a hot mix of grooves and textures with roots from around the world. (Tabou Combo, n.d.)

The choice to include these details shows a conscious decision to use the artists’ language skills as a way of promoting them (and the events). The post shows a recognition of the value of multilingualism, which can potentially create linguistic capital for the musicians and singers. This suggests there is value in the music artist’s multilingualism. We see this again when Ramon Chicharron, alternates between English, French, and Spanish in several of his Facebook posts. In doing this, he expresses his hybrid and complex linguistic identity. This type of code-switching happens again when Senegalese music artist Elagé Diouf posts captions in both English and French about his Canadian tour and performs his songs in Wolof. This is another example of a multilingual identity. Building upon Linda Fisher, Michael Evans, Karen Forbes, Angela Gayton, and Yongcan Liu’s (2020) definition of the term “multilingual identity”, I apply the term to touring music artists. Fisher et al. (2020) apply the term to language classrooms. They define the concept in terms of learners’ involvement in the language learning process. However, I view multilingualism not as a process of adding/learning new languages but as primarily using them as a repertoire of knowledge to access economic opportunities. That is not to say that some international musicians and singers do not need to learn new languages when they come to Canada to work.

Language identities are multiple and can shift depending on who a person interacts with and the context in which the interaction takes place (Joseph in Fisher et al., 2020). I argue that multilingual identities are constructed when people are required to learn or use other languages, usually to
engage with people from the dominant culture and gain access to economic resources. Canada’s linguistic and cultural boundaries around Frenchness have mostly supported the idea that French speakers are either unilingual or bilingual (French and English). These myths must be challenged if we are to recognize and accommodate the presence of people from nations like Guadeloupe, Reunion Island, Senegal, and Martinique. Many people from the African diaspora may not use French or English as a first language. In addition, code-switchers like Kamaty, Diouf, Marema, and Guizmo make their dual and multiple identities known by the way they negotiate language. The presence of these identities in diversity-driven festivals contributes to the representation of Francophoneness in Canada. At Nuits d’Afrique, Rommel Ribeiro speaks in Portuguese and Canadian French to address audience members between songs. He actively translates his statements into both languages, using his bilingualism and dual identity as tools for ensuring the full participation of the audience. Ribeiro also uses his language skills to capitalize on building affinity with the audience. The more people he interacts with, the more engaged they become with his music. Another example is when Mamselle Ruiz performs her repertoire of songs in Spanish and French during her performance in Montréal. In doing so, she expresses a dual linguistic identity. Additionally, her use of a Mexican-style guitar and clarinet in the song *C'était un petit bonheur* is evidence of a fusion of French-Canadian/Mexican cultures. Ruiz even discusses her Mexican identity with her audience, speaking about her experience of migrating to Québec. On Facebook, she posts about this several times. When she performs a duet with Escamilla, a Mexican-born musician and singer, they speak in Spanish together. This choice may speak to their recognition of Spanish-speaking audience members and their desire to include them.

Ruiz and Escamilla’s linguistic profiles are different. He speaks English and she speaks French. The language people use in Canada often depends on their geographic location. In this case, Escamilla lives in Toronto (Ontario) and Ruiz lives in Montréal (Québec). This observation speaks to the hierarchization of language in Canada and the way language continues to be defined by territory despite the frequent movement of people between borders. I follow Salomone’s discussion on the hierarchization of language and pay close attention to how each music artist navigates language and place. Here, Spanish is positioned as the common language between the two artists. Nevertheless, they both use one of Canada’s official languages to speak to others. This shows how multilingual Canadians must code-switch to navigate performative spaces within one performative event. One way they do this is by performing songs in different languages.
Lacassagne’s discussion of the Sudbury, Ontario francophone theatre scene provides an example of how cultural performances provide representation to several groups of people through code-switching. The play *Le Happening* she studied used French, English, and Ojibwe as symbolic representations of the local residents. This cultural production model challenges popular ideas about nationalism and liberalism by incorporating French, English, and Indigenous languages, stories, and cultural references which are a reflection of the local (multi)culture rather than static ideas about francophones and Canada. People who produce these multicultural and multilingual plays are also resisting mainstream pressure to homogenize and assimilate by writing about immigrant experiences (counter-narratives).

I argue that festivals can be more intentional in their promotional practices and in the choices they make when selecting performers for their programs and telling stories about them online. For example, in London Ontario, Sunfest can ensure a representative line-up of francophone musicians and singers, rather than bunching them together into one monolithic category of Québécois. In 2019, they named one of their stages the Québécois Pavilion and assigned international music artists to perform there. International francophones are not Québécois. Yet, francophone artists from other parts of Canada were not included. Organizers used the Québécois identity to construct a mainstream view of French-Canadianness, which perpetuated the myth that francophones outside Québec do not exist. That said, the festival did include several French-speaking music artists in its program, such as Les Poules à Colin, Maya Kamaty, AfrotroniX, and Valerie Ekoumé. The program was, therefore, mostly reflective of the diversity of la francophonie with the exception of francophone minority communities. These choices matter to audience members who look to musical performances for social representation and belonging. The term Québécois is inadequate for describing the diversity of francophone musicians and singers performing in Canada.

I note that there are differences in languages music artists use depending on the location of the festival events. International music artists tend not to consider the language hierarchies created by geography. In London Ontario, francophone musicians and singers Valerie Ekoumé and Maya Kamaty use French rather than English to address their audience. In Ottawa, Mehdi Cayenne comfortably moves between French and English, while Elagé Diouf speaks mostly in French. In Montréal, Creole francophone artist Aldo Guizmo moves between French and Creole. These examples mirror the linguistic practices of Puerto Rican New Yorkers who code-switch according
to the context in which they find themselves. I propose that this context negotiation is not just related to social situations but also to geographic location. In Québec City, there was little use of English by multilingual music artist Ramon Chicharron, however, he uses English in some of his social media posts about his performance at TD Sunfest in Ontario. And, in another post, he uses Spanish while discussing an event in Miami. I suggest that festivals can actively work to remove linguistic barriers and create a space where multilingual francophone artists can express their true identities.

**Acknowledging the Presence of a Moving Identity**

Building on my findings from chapter four and the concept of moving identities, I argue that mobility plays a significant role in influencing the way people see themselves. I use a Facebook quote from Cayenne: “Mes identités sont multiples, mais je n’ai pas l’impression que ça me sert ou ça me nuit…je suis comme ça.” Here he is saying that he holds multiple identities but doesn’t believe they serve him or hurt him. “I am just that way (translation)” (Cayenne, n.d.).

This music artist deliberately moves away from the idea of a static single national identity. His statement suggests an acknowledgement of hybridity and multilayered-ness, which the artist views as a part of who he is. Most racially marginalized francophone music artists express very complex and nuanced identities. For example, Cayenne describes himself as Franco-Ontarian, a member of *la francophonie internationale* (owing to his ties to Algeria), and Canadian with influences from Canadian cities like Moncton, Montréal, Gatineau, and Ottawa (Poitras, 2015). The concept of transnationalism isn’t sufficient in explaining this identity because the cross-border movement has taken place within Canada. However, the mobility paradigm is useful for explaining this complex identification because Cayenne’s mobility contributes to the way he sees himself. I use Sheller’s (2004) argument that de-territorialization comes with new attachments to place to explain why people who frequently move from city to city develop “de-territorialized” identities but continue to hold attachments to multiple places they have lived in. When the identity becomes linked to the world (i.e. I am part of *la francophonie internationale*) vs to Canada (i.e. I am Canadian) vs to specific Canadian provinces (i.e. I am Franco-Ontarian), the diversity of identification shows that Cayenne’s identities are so complex that it becomes non-sensical to attach places, languages, and
eticities to him. The question then becomes, what is the purpose of expressing these allegiances publicly on Facebook or in other venues? I speculate that the identities themselves becomes useful tools for moving in and out of markets to achieve economic mobility.

The multiple cultural and linguistic identities of many of the musicians and singers I observed show that as they move from one place to another, they begin to define themselves through several “allegiances”. While in some cases, such as the international music artists, this becomes a transnational identity, this is not always the case. Kamaty shows allegiance to Reunion Island, Ekoumé to Cameroon, and both have ties to France because they live there. However, they also cross the Canadian border and develop allegiances to the local communities in which they perform during their tours. This manifests in part as trans-provincial border crossing. Therefore, I propose that the moving identity concept is a more useful description of what music artists do and how they construct their fluid identities. At the same time, I acknowledge that these categorizations may be of no use to the artists themselves. I propose that because of the “in-between” spaces these hybrid forms of identity produce, the very act of categorizing people becomes a pointless endeavour.

However, I propose the term “moving identities”, which relies on movement and experience rather than linguistic or ethnic categorizations, can be a useful way of understanding the collective identities of music artists. Roche (2011) uses this term as a way of defining the contemporary dancer’s identity. She defines this identity as a “way of moving” acquired through the accumulation of training approaches, choreographic movement traces, and anatomical structures (p. 105). I adopt the concept as a way of understanding the movement of touring musicians and singers over time and across national and international borders. Roche (2011) suggests that the concept of the moving identity allows us to appreciate the unique signature style of artists as a collection of experiences (p. 105). Although Roche’s concept was meant to explain body movements in dance, I find it useful for understanding population movement within the festival industry. Roche (2011) describes the negotiation of a moving identity as the experience of having “many bodies in one” (p. 109). I build upon this and focus on the experience of people who migrate and tour as “moving” bodies. I anchor this new definition of the moving identity on Roche’s (2011) assertion that it incorporates gendered and socially and culturally located orientations (p. 110). People who move from one city to another experience multiple political and social approaches,
cultural and linguistic legal frameworks, and various institutional structures. They develop a moving identity which can be characterized as having complex combinations of language, culture, experiences, and attachments.

The moving identity of musicians and singers is also visible in the information they share as they leave one city and travel to another during their tour. As an example, Ekoumé and Marema post images of themselves standing on train platforms after their performances (MaremaOfficiel, 2019, June 21; Ekoumé, 2019, July 6). They temporarily form symbolic attachments to each community through their participation in the festivals and their interactions with residents and industry professionals. They then move to another location to do the same, detaching from the first and temporarily attaching to the next, and so on. As touring music artists accumulate these experiences, their own identity becomes more nuanced and complex, in part because of the act of movement itself and through their multiple identifications with places and people. The process can be compared to people who chose to live in a new city, after having lived in another for some time. Expanding on Kim (2016) and Komito’s (2011) theories which describes migrant people as capable of staying connected to physical locations and people as they move across borders, I see Facebook as supporting moving musicians and singers in maintaining these connections. Through their virtual communities, usually populated by the audiences who attend their live performances, and probably by friends and family, music artists can continue to interact with each locality after the festival is over.

Mensah's concept of in-betweenness is useful for examining the hybrid identities of racially marginalized music artists. I find that Ramon Chicharron's use of the phrase "world without borders" (translation) and "blend between identities", as well as Marema's use of the words "métissage" and "borderless" help re-define the boundaries of Canada. They also represent the presence of transculturality and mixed identities, which are characteristic of moving identities in the music industry. Borderless conceptions of nations fit with the idea of a moving or transnational identity. However, the concept of a moving identity is a better description than transnational because many music artists actively resist nationalism and the way it boxes in people. When describing themselves and their work, they engage in narratives that suggest a desire to counter neo-nationalism and embrace in-betweenness. Many artists describe their own experiences with mobility as having influenced the way they see themselves. The hybridity, in-betweenness, and
fluidity seen in moving identities encompass the broad experiences related to language, culture, migration, music styles, and experiences.

**Festival Activism and the Politically Engaged Music Artist**

Resistance work is a process of creating a place where racially marginalized people can be themselves and feel safe. Patrick J. Williams (2006) uses the word authenticity to explain how resistance work affects music scenes and resists the under-representation, misrepresentation, discrimination, exclusion, and racism music artists and racially marginalized Canadians experience. Williams states:

> Some resistance work within (music) scenes is collective, while others are individualized; some resistance is overt, while others are covert. Regardless of how resistance is articulated, however, it is a key aspect of subcultural authenticity. (Williams, 2006, p. 184)

Similar to Williams, I argue that resistance work in the context of the music industry is a collective movement in that many people engage in it, but the ways this is done aren’t always obvious. Music artists use covert and overt ways of resisting racism, discrimination and social exclusion. For example, using their creative agency by creating remixed traditional sounds can challenge existing structures and categories within the industry. Creative choices like using several genres to label one's music, and collaborating with other artists are other examples of the music artist’s creative agency and covert resistance. These choices often challenge existing compartmentalization, hierarchies, and labels within the music industry, and the dominant culture which imposes itself on the “Other” (see p. 36 & p. 75 in thesis for examples). More overt ways they resist are by engaging in political discourses through their lyrics, by actively discussing racial and gender inequality between songs and by sharing content about these issues. For example, Valerie Ekoumè’s statement that the decolonial movement in Africa needs to be more inclusive of women and Aldo Guizmo’s Facebook posts about the decolonial movement in Guadeloupe are more obvious ways artists contribute to change in society.
At Canada Day Celebration, Elagé Diouf sings his song *Dekoulo Fî* in Wolof. The lyrics underline the presence of refugees in Québec and the discrimination and exclusion they face. The choice of performing this song shows that musical performances can be used to share overt messages about social justice, racism, and racial inequality. However, the use of Wolof limits the message to people who understand the language. The official video for this song uses images of Black francophones wearing a traditional French-Canadian (Québécois) *ceinture flêchée* (sash) and hunting. These practices have previously been symbolically restricted to white Canadians with ancestral ties to New France. The video and lyrics act to unsettle cultural spaces that do not accommodate Blackness. This example shows how performances can be useful tools for bringing attention to the experience of racially marginalized Canadians and for unsettling the ethnic boundaries of identities in Canada. Diouf’s performance also reclaims the cultural domain by making Senegalese Canadians visible and providing representation to racially marginalized people. Whether consciously or not, he uses his creative, rhetorical, and political agency and his public platform as a successful musician to challenge the idea that Canada is a welcoming nation. Diouf is an example of how public figures can use their position to bring attention to issues of inequality and discrimination. His performances are useful tools for speaking out about various political and social issues (*prise de parole*) and communicating messages about anti-racism and anti-discrimination.

The data shows that nearly all musicians and singers participate in social justice discourse and/or work to disrupt unequal power dynamics in society. This usually focuses on gender and racial inequality issues. However, there are also examples of advocacy for heritage preservation, author copyrights, and 2SLGBTQ+ rights. One of Marema’s captions reads “the voices for the emancipation of women in West Africa (translation)”, which speaks to gender inequality in West Africa. Her use of the word “voice (translation)” has a double meaning; her voice as a singer and her desire to give a voice to women in Africa. As well, several (male) artists engage in anti-racism discourse. Ramon Chicharron, Lakou Veranda, and Aldo Guizmo all share content about the history of slavery in South America and the Caribbean, using third-party articles about the treatment of Black people. This shows how online activities contribute to the decolonization of the music industry by raising the profile of Black people around the world. In addition, several music artists use hashtag activism (Yang, 2016) as a strategy for unsettling sexism and racism. Marema uses #womanpower #savewoman and #africanwoman, signalling she believes in gender equality.
and female empowerment for Africa. Maya Kamaty uses hashtags like #noracism, #nosexism, #nohomophobia, #lgbtq and #allthesame to bring attention to homophobia and sexism and express her opposition to them. These examples show how hashtag activism helps music artists bring attention to social injustices.

The technical skills required to engage in this resistance contributes to the effectiveness of the covert/overt resistance work music artists do. By understanding which hashtags are useful and who’s listening, musicians and singers can increase the reach of their message. When hashtags are skillfully used, the message is amplified because it becomes visible to readers who seek to engage with these issues by searching for relevant hashtags. The effective use of hashtags depends on people’s digital media literacy, political/social consciousness, and technical knowledge. Most people know why they’re using hashtags. However, in some cases, people do not use them and miss an opportunity to increase the effectiveness of their messaging. For example, Aldo Guizmo shares several political posts that would fall under the purview of the Black Lives Matter movement, but he never uses the hashtag #blacklivesmatter. Nevertheless, he does share a post about Guadeloupe’s history of slavery, captioning it with two fist emojis which are symbolic of Black resistance. This suggests his support of anti-racism and anti-discrimination movements, and his desire to mobilize the Black community. Indeed, in one caption he says, “it’s time to mobilize the Black community (translation)” (Guizmo, 2019). I propose that workshops on hashtag activism and political engagement could be useful in supporting the resistance work music in which artists are already engaged.

A few musicians and singers also build cultural literacy among audience members. We see this when Diouf teaches his audience a few words in Wolof, and when Kamaty explains the significance of her traditional instruments. This process of prise de parole gives rise to the expansion of positive portrayals of other nations, languages, cultures, and genres of music that fall outside our usual understanding of Canadianness. I see this as a way francophone musicians and singers claim space in the industry through dialogue and the reproduction of various cultural products from the world. For example, Ekoumé and Kamaty use their speech between performances to share knowledge about Cameroon and Reunion Island.

Some artists engage in heritage preservation as well. For example, Kamaty remixes traditional and contemporary styles of music (see p. 56 of thesis) and uses Creole, French, and English in her song
lyrics as ways of reclaiming her Reunion Island heritage by alternating between marginalized and mainstream cultures. I argue that it is the remix itself that reclaims the history of Malagasy and African enslaved and indentured people through its re-imagining. The new music becomes a contemporary expression of what was once suppressed by colonial powers. The in-betweeness of her music style is not only reflective of her diverse cultural influences but it also shows how suppressed traditions have survived and found new meaning. Similar to the way Indigenous languages in Canada are experiencing a resurgence, I argue that Maloya and Reunion Creole are preserved through their use by Kamaty and can potentially expand as new speakers consume the music. Language revitalization is achieved through documentation (Flores & Ramallo, 2010), and Kamaty’s work is a public record of her culture and language.

Musical choices can also be a more overt form of resistance to colonialism. Guadeloupean artists Lakou Veranda and Aldo Guizmo both use and promote Gwoka, and Guizmo’s signature music style is reggae. These are both examples of how Caribbean artists use music to resist colonialism and unsettle cultural hegemony (see p. 68 of thesis). They do so from a Canadian stage, which suggests some music artists do decolonial work music not just within their own nations, but internationally. Racially marginalized francophone music artists need to balance competing identities and national allegiances, language hierarchies, the commodification of diversity and dominant narratives about Canadianness. They also must work harder to be heard and seen due to their exclusion from the media and the discrimination and racism they sometimes face in mainstream society (under-representation). As well, these music artists often experience misrepresentation or cultural appropriation due to irresponsible marketing practices and program curation decisions. To this end, many music artists engage in resistance work to create an authentic space for themselves and speak truth to power.

**Digital Cultural Production as Participatory Music Culture**

Participatory music culture is a commentary on the limitations of the music industry's structures and labels. It is also a tool for decolonizing hegemonic spaces and for engaging in political activism. These processes reflect the creative, political, and rhetorical agency of racially
marginalized music artists. Participatory music culture can be integrated by diversity-focused festivals as a philosophy that accommodates marginalized music artists, their fluid identities, and their political, creative, and rhetorical agency. This can take place on the stage, between performances, on social media, as well as through community-based activities that engage the public politically. For example, festivals could organize forums, workshops, and panel discussions that respond to the needs of their communities. However, this would require them to avoid sanitizing discourses about racism, discrimination, and white supremacy, to stop using marketing materials that exoticize or fetishize people, and avoid cultural appropriation in their programs.

Culture is ultimately an expression of the way collectives live, what they believe, how they see the world, what they think about norms and values, and how they interact with others. In the professional world, these expressions of self can take on numerous forms: musical, literary, culinary, or journalistic. Social media facilitates all of these things but also lets non-professionals people bypass the gatekeepers of cultural production when necessary. A non-professional can record a tutorial or share a performance by video using nothing but their iPhone. They can share it on several free platforms and make it viewable in an instant. Even so, the product must be consumable in some way, and users must have an audience and know how to make it visible. The Facebooking practices of music artists in this study provide examples of the potential for disruptiveness and visibility that Facebook and other social media offer.

While the marketing activities in which music artists engage are part of their arsenal for generating sales, the festivals' promotional practices extend to artists, restaurants, event sponsors and community partners. This suggests that the purpose of promoting on Facebook is different for music artists than it is for diversity-focused festivals. Artists practice self-promotion while festivals mostly promote others, unless they are promoting volunteers, the event itself, or recruiting donors (see page 153 of thesis). Mangold and Faulds (2009) suggest “a new [communications] paradigm that includes all forms of social media as potential tools in designing and implementing [marketing] strategies.” In terms of the music industry, this paradigm allows music artists to talk to their fans directly (Mangold & Faulds, 2009). Messages published on social media can be part of the artists’ promotional and branding strategies. However, it is possible that agents may also control the content creation process (Mangold & Faulds, 2009). Margiotta (2012) proposes that music artists and their managers could create Facebook groups that give fans a place to
communicate with one another. For example, some artist websites have a forum section that encourages people to post and respond to discussion topics. The Foo Fighters use this strategy, which allows fans to share their opinions on discussion topics related to the band with other fans (Margiotta, 2012). Building upon this idea, I propose that artists and festivals could create a public forum where community members can discuss topics related to social justice. In this way, social media communities would become political spaces that also provide visibility to under-represented voices.

Digital cultural production has the power to rupture exclusionary identities and re-construct positive ones that include racially marginalized people (Boukala & Pastinelli, 2016). Visibility is a key component in the full participation of people in society and a pre-condition to equal representation (Marwick & Boyd, 2014). However, social media is a double-edged sword. On the one hand, it has the potential to increase the visibility and reach of under-represented Canadians. On the other hand, it binds them to corporate structures that perpetuate the same power imbalances that exist offline, reproducing social categorization. I propose that for racially marginalized artists, access to economic opportunities is essential to overcoming under-representation and discrimination (Canada Council for the Arts, 2019). Ultimately, having visibility in the festival industry produces a form of symbolic capital which increases music artists’ economic mobility (Bourdieu, 1986; Millette, 2015, p. 79). I view the use of social media platforms as key to this visibility and to music artists’ economic success. Being seen and recognized means gaining access to work opportunities, new relationships, and for professional musicians and singers, gaining a reputation and an audience.

Digital media platforms can also provide a space for alternative political discourses. Sociologists Liesbet Van Zoonen, Farida Visa and Sabina Mikelja’s (2010) study on YouTube video production practices shows that remixing and vlogging allow global citizens to express their own identities and deconstruct colonial structures. Ratto and Boler’s (2014) theory on critical making activities supports the idea that digital media practices are a form of critical reflection. We begin to see how using Facebook, YouTube, and other platforms can empower under-represented people to claim space in Canada’s cultural industries. At Ratto and Boler argue:
Critical making...whether through video, web-based communications...are understood as politically transformative activities by individuals and groups, integrating processes and practices (making things) through critical reflection. (Ratto & Boler, 2014, pp. 1-2)

The products that emerge through these transformative practices are often developed in reaction to the regulation of citizen identity (p. 5). When nations exclude or misrepresent minority groups in favour of the one-nation narrative, they do so at the expense of people’s ways of being. The result of these subtle assimilation tactics, whether done under the pretense of national security or social cohesion, can lead to collective resistance by the ‘minority’ culture.

Strategies like hashtag activism and prise de parole are all ways music artists show agency and self-determination. When music artists do this, they also use their creative and political agency. Therefore narrative/rhetoric, creativity, and political positioning are all characteristic of the music artists who participate in Canada’s diversity-driven festivals. Recognizing different forms of agency among music artists is important to decolonizing festivals because it shows that they are actively challenging social inequalities related to language, gender, and race (see page 35 and 65 in thesis for examples). Artists make creative choices such as using remix or collaborating with other musicians (creative agency) or using hashtags and public speaking (rhetorical agency) in order to claim space on the stage and online. Ultimately participatory music culture offers a space for music artists to utilize these three forms of agency.

**Opportunities for Decolonization in the Festival and Music Industries**

In this section, I position the agency of artists as a tactical decision they use to unsettle the status quo and change the power imbalance in society and the music industry. I discuss how the commodification of music and culture, as well as the apoliticalness of festival discourses can be counter-productive to the pursuit of social cohesion and political activism and dialogue. The commodification of diversity and multiculturalism in festivals can potentially contribute to the subjugation of marginalized artists. Therefore, the management practices and decision-making processes of festivals are important because they can either reproduce power dynamics or work to correct them.
Throughout the dissertation, I have engaged in discussions around political, creative, and rhetorical/narrative agency. In my quest to unravel the complexities of cultural, linguistic, organization, and musical identities, I have explored the role of racially marginalized music artists in a variety of performative activities within the process of cultural production. I have used the category of music artist to work within their racialized categories and make connections between their lived experience, political and professional activities, and historical positioning. This helped me to understand how marginalized artists contribute to political movements in festival organizations that control and enable their participation. Similar to Shaminder Takhar’s (2013) study of South Asian women’s organizations in the United Kingdom, I understand political activism as capable of moving away from the more obvious and overt forms of politics. Since the 1950s, the political mobilization of music artists has been about responding to the racial segregation and oppression of people of colour as well as the gender discrimination of women and 2SLGBTQ2+ people. The creation of critical spaces in festivals and music production allows marginalized communities to become active agents that influence policies on diversity and multiculturalism in Canada.

My focus on agency connects with Bourdieu’s concept of the social agent, and the tactics music artists use to negotiate the structures of festivals that empower them to carry out political and creative activities and engage in storytelling. I view music artists, not just as social agents in the festival industry, but also as creative and political agents. I use Zeilinger’s (2021) theory on tactical agency in the digital arts to define these roles. Agency can be ascribed to the choices people make, turning them into decision-makers with the capacity to make strategic decisions that influence their lives and reflect their personal, professional, creative, and political objectives. Creative agency facilitates divergent forms of expression and can disturb the logic of mainstream models and systems that are designed to control and gatekeep privileged space in the creative industry (Zeilinger, 2021). Agency is the manifestation of a capacity to act in an autonomous way and with intention (Zeilinger, 2021). I expand this theoretical understanding of agency and propose that it is a process of self-determination which is expressed both through remix work and resistance activities. While Zeilinger’s (2021) work does not consider the political dimensions of agency, it does discuss the role digital technologies have in enabling artists to use non-human activities that move away from the human subject. These activities can produce fluid, narrative (authorial) and
representative information, which can decenter the dominant perspective as the observer becomes aware of it. I view this theoretical model as compatible with resistance work which is founded on the idea that decolonization and other social justice movements require embracing resistance to the status quo. It also recognizing that marginalized people are making things happen and actively changing societal power imbalances rather than simply being victims to them. Music artists’ capacity to use their agency is important to the resistance work with which they engage. As Sefa Dei (2019) states: “Decolonization is also about embracing and pursuing everyday resistance.” (Sefa Dei, 2019). Therefore, “doing” decolonization means taking action in search of a new future that recognizes the power of the past, present and future as linked together (Sefa Dei, 2019). To reclaim cultures, histories, memories and religions, Sefa Dei (2019) argues that societies need to question and challenge the current state of society and work towards change to arrive at a more equitable future. This means anti-colonial and anti-racism resistance workers must seek out new forms of civic engagement that call-to-action citizens’ participation in these movements. Settler colonialism involves the subjugation of people into commodities of labor (Tuck & Yang, 2012, p. 6).

Festivals do participate in social justice movements, but in a far more muted way than music artists. For instance, in one post, Mondial Montréal promoted an Indigenous initiative which included a workshop. However, the festival failed to discuss why the initiative was important and what specific concerns Indigenous communities and music artists wanted to address. The post also did not give specific examples of Indigenous nations and instead used generic wording. In another example, Sunfest shared a third-party article about the funding cuts to Indigenous programs in Ontario’s arts sector. However, in other content it could have promoted Indigenous music artists more to support their work. In addition, there were no Indigenous artists in the 2019 program, which shows the organization does not recognize Indigenous nations as capable of transnational relations or as holding sovereignty. Festivals sometimes share information about social justice issues with no clear message about why anti-racism, anti-colonialism, and anti-discrimination are relevant to the industry.

The festivals also participate in the commodification of cultural products without fully explaining the meaning behind these objects, foods, and performances. Both music festivals and artists use African and Canadian symbols such as flags, clothing, and languages to tell stories. This is a
strategy for engaging both African and non-African participants and for creating social cohesion and belonging (Getz, 2010; Wilson et al., 2016). I argue that festivals use hybridity and multilingualism to engage the public, but that they do not necessarily use the opportunity to create discussions around racism, discrimination, and anti-Blackness. As an example, Nuits d’Afrique describes its marketplace and food as “exotic”, while Sunfest describes its restaurant partners as “authentic”, which reproduces difference and turns cultural products into commodities that are perceived as “different” and separate from the rest of Canadian society. This creates tension between the intentional commodification of objects, food products, and musical performances for economic gains, and the appropriation of these cultural elements as representations of diversity and multiculturalism. The festivals succeed in creating a space for racially marginalized and non-racially marginalized people to come together. However, the need to generate revenue and “sell” diversity erodes the ultimate goal of serving racially marginalized communities.

Nonetheless, the events support business owners of colour by providing opportunities for economic gain, which aligns with the festivals’ desire to provide economic opportunities for marginalized Canadians. There is also an agency on the part of the vendors themselves because their purpose is to make money and they are willing participants in this venture. Even so, a by-product of the capitalism embedded in festival structures is the cultural appropriation of African aesthetics. For example, the objects and traditions of African people are promoted as exotic, desirable, and are detached from the nuanced cultural identities they represent. Festival-goers who appropriate the cultural markers of African culture reduce Black Canadians to alluring and curious resources. When white people acquire African culture for fashion, they miss the opportunity to learn about and confront issues of racism, islamophobia, and oppression lived by Black communities (Fahmy, n.d.). Whether intentional or not, an appropriation of culture takes place when white community members purchase and wear African culture without having a real understanding of what the pieces represent. At the same time, material culture provides social capital to the business owner, and facilitates economic mobility. I contextualize this transactional relationship between consumer and artisan as a form of cultural exchange between two groups that aren’t on an even playing field. Canadian Black business owners are more likely to have difficulty securing a loan for their business and 71% use bootstrapping to finance the start-up of their business (Canadian Black Chamber of Commerce, 2021, p. 22). In the United States, a study found
that institutional racism plays a significant role in creating barriers to financial, economic, and growth capital (Howard, 2019). Financial literacy is also lower among Black communities in Canada (Canadian Black Chamber of Commerce, 2021). As well, representation in the business sector plays an important role in a Black person’s decision to access financial support. As one business owner states, “A lot of my experience raising capital is not about the idea or projections, it’s about have I seen someone do it who looks like me?” (Canadian Black Chamber of Commerce, 2021, p. 23).

My dissertation reveals examples of fetichism, cultural appropriation, and exoticism that take place between white and non-white festival-goers. This shows how cultural exchanges can be unequal in the context of the festival event. I use Bhabha’s (1994) argument that transcultural exchanges as contradictory and ambivalent because they lead to “an international culture” based on hybridity (p. 37). The examples discussed in my study suggest that when people from two cultures meet, they transform each other in subtle ways. In studying this process, I understand the various elements of transculturality, including language, culture, identity, music, and food, as subjectively constructed by the other group. Like Marotta (2014), I view colonialism as a process of transculturalism. I note that cultural exchanges take place in the context of Western power and settler colonialism. Therefore, festival scholars need to take a more critical look at the power dynamics between the state and the multicultural artist. Racism, discrimination, and cultural appropriation are examples of how these exchanges can become unbalanced. If we use the example of Alayé which is primarily a group led by white Canadians, and we compare it to Guadeloupean performers Lakou Veranda, it is clear that they have two different purposes for sharing cultural representations of marginalized people. Lakou Veranda members have ties to Black communities and frequently talk about their concerns (colonialism, racism, discrimination, mobilization) as they share information about their own culture. In comparison, Alayé focus mostly on the musical performance as an artistic exercise. The possibility for misinterpretation or misappropriation is clear. While one group is bringing attention to social and political issues and connecting these to their cultural practices, collective identities, and traditions, the other is using the material in a more performative way to create a stage show. Both groups benefit from using the cultural identities and both are using them to advance their economic positioning, but one is doing it from a clear position of privilege and cultural dominance.
Most festivals in the study didn’t bring explicit attention to the existence of racism and discrimination in Canada. None discussed the implications of colonialism on the African diaspora. In order to avoid harmful practices such as cultural appropriation and fetishization of racially marginalized people, white Canadians must understand how people of colour experience these transactions. As Madibbo (2022) states, talking about the global experience of racism and exclusion by society can unsettle colonial ideas around language and culture. I believe that it is essential to recognize that racially marginalized people have different lived experiences and stories to tell. As white Canadians, we must be willing to learn about the oppression and bias they face, and the historical reasons societal and institutional structures and policies contribute to this. I suggest that these discussions should be part of the diversity-driven festival experience. Reflecting on the presence of transnational, moving, multilingual, and hybrid cultural identities, the power dynamics that exist within them, and the current role of festivals in promoting diversity, I argue that confronting racism and under-representation should be a primary concern of festival organizers and their funders.

The way music festivals construct messages around their artists also needs to be given full consideration. Captioning food as “exotic” contributes to creating an “us vs them” paradigm and works to reproduce difference rather than eliminate it. These practices have the effect of reinforcing the separation between the so-called host nation and anyone who was born outside of it. This “us vs them” dynamic perceives white Canadians as legitimate groups and others as alien bodies that enter cultural spaces as products rather than human beings. I propose that these practices have the potential to dehumanize music artists when the difference between groups is amplified and festivals promote their events as an authentic experience of travel at home. I use the examples of Nuits d’Afrique and Mondo Karnaval who repeatedly invited visitors to experience a “global immersive cultural experience” without having to ever travel outside of the country. Whether intentional or not, whiteness is shown as a privileged state of being whereby the person can enter a racially marginalized space, play in it, and then leave (Razack, 2002). White festival-goers get to experience Africanness without having to experience racism, anti-Blackness, or discrimination. We see this again with the promotion of Alayé’s Afro-Brazilian Maracatu workshops.
The festivals use perceived authenticity as a selling point for visitors who want to experience “real” African culture. In doing this, they promote a collective experience that redefines the city as diverse. In one post by Mondo Karnaval, the reader is reminded that these cultural exchanges take place on Québécois territory, “en terre Québécoise”. The emphasis on Québécois identity and its territorial claim illustrates how even in spaces where diversity of cultures is promoted, people are bound to the nation-state. Furthermore, some of the festival locations reinforce the municipalities’ ties to Canada’s colonial history. The field visit data shows that material symbols of colonialism and nationalism are prominent in both the Canada Day Celebration event and at Sunfest. In Ottawa, the choice of Major Hill Park as a location for the event ensures the city’s colonial history and built heritage are prominently displayed to visitors. The stage heavily features bright red lights and other national symbols such as the maple leaf. In London Ontario, there is no acknowledgment of local Indigenous nations. As well, the location at Victoria Park highlights the region’s colonial history and acknowledges settler and military presence. These are reminders of the cultural dominance of the nation-state, which reinforce white settler narratives.

The tacit and sometimes covert support of nation-state ideologies can be seen as opposing the acts of resistance the music artists take. The political advocacy work musicians and singers do is tolerated but not talked about online by festival organizers. The data also reveals that some festivals engage in re-producing the Canadian or Québécois state through symbolic images. For example, at Sunfest organizers post about Prime Minister Trudeau’s visit to the 2019 event. At Mondo Karnaval, the organizers share a post that highlight Québec’s national holiday, and a few days later, Canada Day. Many festivals promote the ideals of diversity and multiculturalism and view their roles as rassembleurs that bring together diverse community groups (Les Productions Nuits d’Afrique, n.d.). I understand this rassembleur identity as an ethos and praxis of bringing people together, establishing the festival organizer as a producer of Canadian and Québécois nationalism, which reproduces the utopian ideal of a welcoming nation. However, there is a clear contradiction between the festivals’ work to establish local cultures that support multiculturalism and resist ingrained stereotypes (Li et al., 2018, p. 399), and their role as tourist attractions and economic actors (Heinich in Quinn, 2005). As active contributors to local economies, the festivals encourage visitors to interact and engage together in the construction of community and identity while also commodifying culture, language, music, food, and identity. As an example, Mondo Karnaval says it relies on “the richness of our diversity in Québec (translation)” to ensure social and economic
equity (Mondo Karnaval, n.d.). Another example is the contradiction that arises when Sunfest posts content about its work towards inclusivity while also supporting Canadian nationalism. The festival says it works “tirelessly to create an inclusive event that breaks down barriers and stereotypes by celebrating community through music and culture” (SunfestLND, n.d.). Yet, it also posts content about Canada Day, captioning one image with “Happy Canada Day!!! #sunfestLDN celebrates our beautiful country’s diversity and acknowledges the land on which we celebrate.” These examples suggest a cognitive dissonance between the festival’s need to work towards social equity and the desire to celebrate a “beautiful” diverse nation. The content doesn’t adequately capture the realities of this nation or name the challenges marginalized communities must contend with in order to live in it.

**Theoretical Implications of Results**

Québec Studies scholarship sometimes fails to adequately capture the experience of racially marginalized francophones in its exploration of English and French political and cultural dynamics. For one thing, studies tend not to apply anti-colonial and anti-racism models that illuminate their understanding of racially marginalized people’s experiences. For example, while the OLA has been positive in defining the francophone collective and supporting the development of French-language education outside of Québec, it ignores the gatekeeping many schools have conducted in the past, which excluded multilingual francophones from the African diaspora and French-speaking Indigenous peoples. We also know from previous research by Madibbo (2012) and Quell (1998) that first-generation francophones from Africa have had difficulty finding meaning and belonging in French-language associations and community programs. Perhaps this is because these spaces continue to reproduce historical narratives about French-Canadians and Acadians as communities that define themselves by ethnicity, territory, and their ties to settler colonial histories. In addition, people who speak French differently than Québécois are labelled as inferior or even as anglophones. As well, people with nuanced identities such as transnational, hybrid, moving, and multilingual, are often excluded from discussions around francophone issues in Canada. For example, French/Réunionnais and French/Cameroonian singers in the study were miscategorized at Sunfest as “Québécois”.
At the same time, many musicians and singers use their agency and language skills to navigate professional spaces and language hierarchies as they accumulate linguistic and cultural capital. This strategy contributes to music artists’ economic mobility. However, the ghettoization of musicians and singers from non-Western genres is ensured by the industry’s use of labels like “world music” or “Afropop”, which socially sort, separate, and constrain the artists from the rest of Canadian and French-Canadian music. The data shows that music artists are aware of these constraints and often use strategies to disrupt these imbalances through their social media content and other means. At the same time, music artists’ will frequently use French or English depending on their geographic location and the local audience for whom they are performing. This shows musicians and singers are aware of their geographic locality as they tour and how this influences language use. The ability to switch from one language to another according to regional norms leads to the accumulation of more linguistic capital because it allows bilingual and multilingual music artists to connect with people from the dominant local culture and increase their engagement with festival-goers from linguistically marginalized communities. The more languages artist use and the more they apply their code-switching strategy, the more effectively they can negotiate linguistic differences between groups and gain symbolic power in the process.

Results from my analysis of the Facebook pages of festivals, musicians, and singers make clear that external publishers such as newspapers, radio, and television stations play a role in the dissemination of information and the construction of musical identities. Music artists and festivals actively conduct the curation of content produced by these parties in support of their promotional activities and goals. The publishers’ authority gives them more credibility. For example, Blick Bassy and Valerie Ekoumé choose to share interviews they’ve done with the CBC, TV5, and Le Journal de Québec. In another example, Bassy shares his interview with Songlines Magazine, captioning the article with his own statement which reads: “This generation must defy imported culture and design their own role models and paths”. The quote suggests he rejects the influence of dominant cultures and advocates for more contemporary versions of cultural models. Bassy exhibits agency in the way he constructs this message by using it to serve his anti-colonial resistance work. These examples of external interviews also give music artists more legitimacy as professionals. While this finding is not central to my research, further study is needed on the source
of curated content and the narratives used by other cultural producers to construct representations of identities in Canada.

My research also has implications for existing theories on francophones as an ethnoclass. Heller et al.’s (2016) theories on French-Canadians as an ethnoclass defines francophones in Canada by their ethnicity and mobility, and points to their desire to seek out work across provincial borders as a characteristic of their community. I step away from the term ethnoclass and instead propose that contemporary francophones in Canada are a linguoclass. The prefix "linguo" as an umbrella term for people who represent several cultural identities but speak a common language (French), is more fitting because of the cultural (and linguistic) diversity of French-speaking people across Canada. Historically, the identity of French-Canadians was internalized through religion, language, and ethnicity. Today, this 'ethnoclass' is created by the utilization of language and geographic mobility as tools for economic mobility (Heller et al., 2016). I argue that people migrate for economic, social, and political reasons and what they have in common are their experience as francophones and their language. The term must be renamed because “ethno” no longer works due to the group’s diversity. The linguoclass concept challenges existing notions about collective identity in Canada as a construct limited by regional territories and ancestral ties. It makes evident the false relationship to place by identifying the de-territorialized nature of transnational and moving identities, and of FMCs. In the context of Canada’s festivals, people who work as temporary performers can develop attachments to several localities including their countries of province of residence and/or birth.

I apply Komito’s argument that social media provide representation, visibility, and reach within a networked public which leads to a form of networked capital (Komito, 2011). Building upon this idea, I propose that networked musicians and singers can use social media to increase representation, thereby countering misrepresentation and under-presentation, but only when visibility and reach are achievable. I understand the networked festival public as consisting of the people who follow the Facebook pages and other platforms of music festivals and artists. Although digital media literacy is important to online participation, it is perhaps less so than the willingness of music artists to engage in cultural dialogue, knowledge transfer, and prise de parole with their audience members. An example of this is when Lakou Veranda explains the practice of Bonjour to their audience and makes a public statement about their experience of colonialism in
Guadeloupe (Field notes, 2019, September 1). In effect, musicians and singers use both the festival stage and their Facebook communities to engage in cross-cultural education about their cultures, music, identities, and the issues they care about.

Music artists of colour contribute to the cultural production of francophones in Canada while at the same time engaging in decolonization movements. Marema, Valerie Ekoumé, Aldo Guizmo, and Elagé Diouf do this by expressing their Senegalese and Guadeloupean identities and discussing issues important to Black francophone communities, making the diversity-driven festival a safer place to express in-betweenness of the self. Francophone musicians and singers from marginalized communities are challenging Canada’s binary definitions of culture and language (biculturalism and bilingualism) and the limits of its national identity by supporting multilingual and multicultural citizens. At the same time, Canada reclaims its nationhood and identity through its public support of live music performances at festivals, whose mandates reflect Canada’s (and Québec’s) multiculturalism/interculturalism policies and cultural interventionism practices. Expanding on Mirca Madianou and Daniel Miller’s (2011) assertion that social media communication is transnational and de-territorialized, I find that some Facebook pages allow people to publish content from several locations while speaking to groups from multiple national allegiances. Considering Kim’s (2016) assertion that governments and their institutions rely on categories of difference for understanding diversity, it is fair to say that when festivals use social and cultural categories to sort and organize their programs, they run the risk of reproducing these logics. Because the festivals claim to promote inclusiveness and multiculturalism, they must consider the meaning behind the words, narratives, and images they use in their promotional practices in order to avoid such problems.

I conceptualize musicians and singers as “networked performers” operating as social actors within a professional industry (network) where people create and consume culture. I note that the scope of this study did not include an exploration of the communal exchanges between Facebook members and in-person festival participants, and that future research is needed. I argue that Facebook allows people with diverse cultural and linguistic identities to form multicultural communities online. As a result, networked music artists eventually develop attachments to places and people through their long-term interaction with the localities and organizations where they perform. In addition, the growth of their virtual community is in part reliant on physical bodies
that become aware of their music during their live performances. However, this does not depend on their continued physical presence in one location.

My research demonstrates that our understanding of the francophone identities in Canada is being redefined by multilingual, hybrid, and moving identities. People actively construct these identities through their language practices, their multiple allegiances to places, and their contribution to the decolonization and cultural production of Canadian culture. By participating in diversity-driven festival spaces and adopting Facebooking practices that contribute to social justice and self-promotion, music artists are claiming cultural, linguistic, social, and networked capital. I call this performance capital, which is the accumulation of symbolic power through the use of language, culture, social dialogue, and networked spaces. However, I note that music artists who access performance capital in the context of racial and linguistic hegemony and settler logics are subject to cultural appropriation, exoticism, fetichism, and language discrimination. In addition, I build upon Franca Iacovetta’s (2006) assertion that government branches like Immigration, Refugees, and Citizenship Canada, the RCMP, and the Canada Border Services Agency are policing transnational people, excluding some, and allowing others to cross borders. I agree with her statement that the same hegemonic nation that persuades new immigrants into conformity also gives elites the power to exclude them (Iacovetta, 2006). Therefore, I propose that an anti-colonial lens to the management of festivals that promote “world music” and transnational artists could help unsettle these practices.

The commodification of marginalized cultures and identities offers an opportunity to give a voice to people of colour and forces music artists to engage in capital modes of production and consumption that sometimes reduce their cultural output to consumable reductive objects. However, artists make language and musical choices that reveal the nuances of their hybrid identities and empower them to participate in the economy and also change society. Therefore, scholars must consider how festivals that focus on diversity conduct marketing and business decisions, and how they impact not only the brand authority of the organizations, but also how their ability to negotiate the problem of marginalization influences their position within the industry. The festival is a non-threatening venue for presenting and promoting diversity to Canadians. It offers the public an image of diversity as good music, fun, food, and souvenirs. This celebratory culture is less controversial than political or religious organizations that do similar
advocacy work for racially marginalized communities. However, diversity-driven festivals have the potential to leverage their rassembleur role and literally bring together different groups in the community for meaningful dialogue, rather than remain metaphorical.

Lastly, my study contributes to feminist scholarship by introducing the role of music artists and festivals as spaces that confront gender inequality and amplify the voices of marginalized women. Some of the women who performed on stage advocated for gender equity through their public speeches and Faceooking activities. For example, Marema discussed and performed her song *Femme d’affaires*, asking her audience “Êtes-vous une femme d’affaires?” [“Are you a businesswoman?”]. This question encourages women to make their own choices. Her creative choices also disrupt traditional gender roles, for example her drumming solo and her dance with her musician. This challenged the idea that in Africa, men and women dance separately, and that the African drum is a man’s instrument (Louis Gates & Appiah, 1999). At Nuits d’Afrique and Mondo Karnaval, women artists were highlighted, suggesting the organizations were attempting to address gender inequality in the industry. Nuits d’Afrique’s “série voix du monde” [“voices from the world series”] and Mondo Karnaval’s “Femmes du monde” program themes show that festival organizations can use their decisional power to give more representation to women of colour. In addition, Marema’s hashtag activism which focused on body positivity, provided positive representations to Black audience members. Whether there is actual gender equality and equal representation of marginalized women is not known however, and warrants further study. That said, the study points to several potential avenues for exploring the resistance work music organizations and artists do.

**Recommendations for Future Studies and Closing Remarks**

My research argues for future festival studies that rely less on the Western perspective and consider the perspectives and experiences of marginalized communities. I propose an interdisciplinary approach that includes theoretical models from sociology, business, and human geography. This multi-dimensional approach would provide a more realistic interpretation of the discourses, transactions, and practices that take place within the festival industry. It would also recognize the
multi-layered role of organizations: commercial, artistic, and socio-cultural. I suggest that festival researchers must also consider the impact of social justice movements on event management and the need for responsible management that includes anti-racism and reconciliation in decision-making, policy development, and best practices of festival organizers. This shift in focus would have implications for the future of Canada’s creative industries, which are constantly scrutinized for the choices they make. My study provides an example of how social media can become a tool for creating socially responsible marketing practices and supportive festival communities that develop opportunities for dialogue about racism, exclusion/inclusion, and the barriers marginalized Canadians face.

My digital ethnography reveals new directions for future studies that could determine the link between digital media competencies, cultural awareness, and whether these skills truly increase cultural, linguistic, and social capital for minority groups. Additionally, future research on the use of creator-viewer platforms like YouTube, live streaming, and festival consumer engagement on social media platforms would provide a better understanding of how Canadians engage with political discourse and marginalized music artists online. For example, a quantitative study of online engagement with music festivals and artists’ content through the exploration of the number of likes, comments, and shares would allow for a new layer of understanding of consumer experiences. A broader study of the transformative practices of racially marginalized francophones who engage in remixing and modifying traditional music styles would provide a better understanding of how these practices resist constraints on transnational artists who seek access to mainstream music categories. Additionally, image-sharing platforms and ephemeral communication through Instagram, TikTok, and Snapchat would be of interest to festival organizers and performers. To date, there are few studies focusing on these platforms and their usefulness for marketing in the festival industry. For French-speaking minority groups in Canada, many cultural products are connected to spatial locations which re-enforce the fragmentation of francophone identities. A comparative study of the way French cultural products in Canada are linked to places and are disseminated online would reveal interesting trends in digital media practices and the role publishers can play in reproducing or challenging the isolation and under-representation of linguistically marginalized people. Additionally, a future comparative investigation of racialized and white representations of musicians and singers could reveal why under-representation and misrepresentation among marginalized musicians and singers continue
to be a problem in the music and festival industries and how these representations contribute to discrimination and racism.

I propose that future research on allyship between marginalized groups working in the cultural industries can contribute to existing social justice movements in Canada. As Ciann Wilson, Sarah Flicker and Jean-Paul Restoule state:

> African diasporic and North American Indigenous communities have felt the harmful impacts of colonization for generations. They have remained connected across time and space through their shared and distinct histories of resistance and oppression. (Wilson, Flicker & Restoule, 2015, p. 77)

Similarly, I argue that there is great potential for arts-based interventions and research that explore identity, resistance, and solidarity between marginalized groups (Wilson et al., 2015). Despite sharing experiences of racism, racially marginalized Canadians largely maintain a settler relationship with Indigenous peoples (Amadahy & Lawrence, 2009, p. 105). Future research on the dynamics of allyship within *la francophonie* is also warranted and would support the expansion of existing resistance movements into a more inclusive space. For example, a study of associations’ equity policies could reveal interesting trends and community needs. It would also be interesting to see how associations support racialized and transnational artists in comparison to white Canadian artists. As well, festivals have an important role to play in ensuring the equal and positive representation of under-represented racially and linguistically marginalized groups in Canada’s music industry. The policies and decision-making of funders and festival organizers can ensure this. Therefore, I propose a more thorough review of public policies and best practices to investigate whether existing promotional and curation strategies by festivals consider issues of racism, white supremacy, and inclusion fully, and whether they promote fair and equitable practices. A study of the policies funding agencies and festival organizations would reveal whether program guidelines utilize an anti-discrimination framework. Lastly, a study of stakeholder relationships/management could increase current understanding of the potential for consulting and/or including festival-goers and community partners in the process of developing policies and responsible practices that support decolonization movements.

My overall purpose was to point to potentially harmful festival practices and narratives that contribute to the dehumanization and social exclusion of racially marginalized music artists, including fetishizing, exotifying, and culturally appropriating and exploiting African culture. The
study made visible the everyday (banal) decisions, actions, and misrepresentations that symbolically reproduce power imbalances in the music and festival industries and contribute to the marginalization of people of colour. It also revealed how language hierarchies symbolically erase people who don’t speak French or English, and constrain multilingual francophones from full economic mobility. The cultural and linguistic identities of transnational and Canadian francophone musicians and singers help construct both the physical communities associated with the festivals and the virtual communities on Facebook. These identities are expressed in multiple ways: transnational, multilingual, hybrid, linguistic, moving, and regional. Most of the music artists in the study expressed more than one of these forms of identities, which is central to understanding why code-switching is essential for participating in Canada’s cultural economy. I found that transnationalism, multilingualism, hybridity, and population mobility work together to create fluid and “in-between” identities, which reflect how people who perform in and go to festivals see themselves and negotiate the norms and laws that govern language and culture in different geographic regions. Self-representation and the development of a music “image” is influenced by consumption processes, musical tastes and preferences, the personal creative choices of music artists, and the contexts in which they find themselves (Larsen, Lawson, & Todd, 2009). While music serves as a tool for communicating symbolic meaning, it also represents the self, which allows artists to develop relationships with consumers that utilize self-representation and the symbolic elements of their music (Larsen et al., 2009). In the end, the study shows that racially marginalized francophone music artists develop their own tactics for negotiating these structural limits to resist the compartmentalization and marginalization of their music and of themselves.

The multidimensional aspirations of festivals (commercial, artistic, and social) create tensions and contradictions that make responsible event management challenging. I build upon the findings of this study and propose the following calls to action for music and festival industry leaders who organize public events that feature marginalized artists. First, I propose that funding programs and national and provincial policies avoid lumping racially marginalized groups such as Latinx, Indigenous, and Black music artists into monolithic categories that erase their identities. Second, I recommend that festival organizers, music writers, and journalists avoid using catch-all terms like “world music” and harmful descriptions such as “exotic” to promote African, Indigenous, Middle Eastern, Latinx, Caribbean, and Asian artists, and instead, focus on the self-descriptions
music artists use in their promotional materials. Third, I propose that the music conferences and festival workshops use the stage to give space to marginalized artists who engage in anti-colonial and anti-racism resistance work. Fourth, I put forward that the festival industry must recognize the linguistic and cultural diversity of francophone music artists in Canada and ensure their representation during decision-making and curatorial processes.
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