

MUSICAL TRANSFORMATIONS OF NON-PLACES LA TRANSFORMACIÓN MUSICAL DE LOS NO-LUGARES

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Abstract

The twentieth and twenty-first century have been a temporary canvas where two closely related concepts have broadened, both in terms of modernity and supermodernity: ambient music and the development of urban spaces. Both phenomena undergo a development, interaction and sustained change process, largely caused by technological changes. For the purpose of this study, first the concept of "non-places" and its change from physical spaces to virtual spaces will be presented. In second place, the development of ambient music is specifically considered; first regarding the close relationship that it establishes with non-places and then the generation of atmospheres through collective sound spheres. Subsequent technological transformations spread and fragment the associations between non-places and music, enabling personal atmospheres through individual spheres. At present, technological developments allow virtual non-places to take shape (Augé), which are environmentally filled thanks to playlists through streaming services. Subsystems of delocalised networked spheres and temporary spheres are established, yet they are emotionally contiguous. This article presents the humanising role that music has experienced within this urban growth process in western societies, which have developed over the last century.

Key words: non-places, ambient music, urban spaces, individual spheres, delocalised networked spheres, technological change

Resumen

Los siglos XX y XXI han sido el escenario temporal donde se ha producido la expansión de dos conceptos estrechamente vinculados tanto con la moderni-

dad como con la denominada sobremodernidad: la música ambiente y el desarrollo de espacios urbanos. Los dos fenómenos experimentan un proceso de desarrollo, interacción y cambio sostenido, causado en gran parte por el cambio tecnológico. A efectos expositivos, primero se presenta el concepto de “no-lugar” y su expansión desde los espacios físicos hacia los virtuales. En un segundo momento, se considera de forma específica el desarrollo de la música ambiental; primero en lo que se refiere a la relación íntima que establece con los “no-lugares” y la generación de atmosferas mediante esferas sonoras colectivas. Las transformaciones tecnológicas posteriores expanden y fragmentan las asociaciones entre los no-lugares y la música, permitiendo atmosferas personales mediante “esferas individuales”. En la actualidad nuevamente el desarrollo tecnológico permite la formación de no-lugares virtuales (Augé), que se amueblan ambientalmente gracias a las listas musicales en streaming. Se establecen con ello subsistemas de esferas en red, deslocalizadas espacial y temporalmente, pero contiguas emocionalmente. En este artículo se presenta el papel humanizador que la música ha ejercido dentro de ese proceso de crecimiento urbano experimentado por las sociedades occidentales desarrolladas en el último siglo.

Palabras clave: no-lugar, música ambiental, espacios urbanos, esferas individuales, esferas deslocalizadas en red, cambio tecnológico

1. INTRODUCTION

Music generates emotions. This statement is the cornerstone to understand that, as well as social and cultural meanings, music has a performative power to transform moods. Thanks to technological advances, distributing and auto-playing music has redefined the lives of current societies. Music allows people to live differently by creating atmospheres and emotions to redefine a space. Technological advances have improved this new way of cohabiting with music from telharmonium to streaming.

We say cohabiting with music, as it is perceived by areas of the brain that receive stimuli of an emotional nature, in other words, those associated to feelings (Juslin P.N. & Sloboda J. A., 2010; Menon, V. & D.J. Levitin, 2005; Martínez M. & Parsons, L.M., 2004), introducing a transformation factor of what we perceive as ordinary. The study on the relation of music, feelings and behaviours has interested different areas of knowledge that have confirmed its influence. In particular, the neurophysiological approach can be highlighted (Koernst and Siebel, 2005; Zatorre, Chen & Penhune, 2007), as well as cognitive and psychological processes (Konecni, 2010), anthropology (Hannon and Trainor, 2007), or sociology (Alaminos Fernández, A 2014; Santacreu, 2002).

The integration of music and urban spaces in the twentieth century is produced due to technological developments in communication, providing

broader ambient music, alongside the urban establishment of non-places. This relation between ambient music and non-places is developed following technological developments, which allow musical environments to be customised, generating individual musical spheres (for example, the Walkman) moving around with the individual. They are defined with individual spheres that are filled with the individual's emotional content. Individuals are empowered as emotional prosumers in occupying urban spaces. Through music, vital spaces are filled, travelling through them. An extreme case of this phenomenon were individuals who moved around cities with music devices without using headphones, filling urban spaces with music which was not always desired. All of the aforementioned processes again incorporate ambient music in virtual spaces as a consequence of technological developments. The networked spaces allow playlists to be shared in a new virtual, delocalised and timeless non-place. This article gathers the development and transformation of the relation between music and urban spaces, as well as the consequences of the potential that new communication technologies have provided.

2. MODERNITY AND NON-PLACES

The concepts of space and place have been debated, redefined and criticised in a number of fields such as architecture, anthropology, philosophy, art, etc. The intention is not to provide a definite definition of the terms, but to highlight that in such debates some features and considerations gave rise to a certain heuristic relevance in current research. We will simply differentiate them as "space" and "place". From an architectural point of view, "the concepts of space and place can be clearly distinguished. Space has a theoretical, generic and indefinite ideal condition and place has a specific, empirical, existential and articulated character, defined up to the last detail"¹. Based on this, Augé carried out a conceptual refinement from a social view of the concept, incorporating the notion of non-place. The ideas of non-place were present in considerations by a number of authors, such as Maurice Merleau-Ponty (1948), the architect Víctor Gruen (1978) or Michel de Certeau (1990). Nonetheless, it was Augé who offered a more successful definition of the concept. In particular, non-places would be one of the characteristic features of what he defines as *supermodernity*.

"Thus, by defining place as a space where identity, relation and history can be read, I proposed to name places where this was not possible as non-places. These increasing spaces are:

¹ A.A.V.V. Introducción a la arquitectura. Conceptos fundamentales. Ed. UPC, Barcelona, 2000, pp, 101.

-Spaces for circulation: motorways, service stations at petrol stations, airports, air space, etc.

-Consumption spaces: supermarkets, hypermarkets, hotel chains.

-Communication spaces: screens, cables, waves with immaterial appearance.

We can think, at least in a first analysis, that these new spaces are not places where long-lasting social relations are made (.../...). These non-places juxtapose, fit together and, therefore, tend to resemble: airports that are similar to supermarkets, we watch televisions on airplanes, we listen to the news while putting petrol in our cars at petrol stations which increasingly seem like supermarkets"².

Obviously, Augé's approach has also been criticised. There is a temporary effect that interferes with the cataloguing of non-places (non-places can have different uses and occupations throughout the day) or have a special meaning (associated to a particular use) for certain groups (such as young people binge drinking in a car park). He has accepted the majority of critical observations, including them as nuances to the idea of the increase in the number of non-places.

"It is necessary to clarify that the opposition between places and non-places is related. It varies according to moments, functions and uses. Regarding moments: a stadium, a historical monument, a park, certain neighbourhoods in Paris that do not have the same appearance or meaning during the day or at night, when open or when almost deserted (moment)"³.

Marc Augé calls non-places those spaces we could say are for waiting or passing by. Ultimately, Augé believes every space dedicated to a waiting or passing by function are non-places, even if they could have an occasional social meaning. Nonetheless, based on Marc Augé's idea of physical and virtual non-places, questions may be raised that, when a personal experience is incorporated, it acquires a specific meaning. Non-places become lived places to generate emotions. Thus, it could be interesting to differentiate, from an EMIC point of view, between lived non-places and occupied non-places. An occupied non-place corresponds to Augé's basic idea of waiting spaces. An analytical table is generated with four types: place, space, lived non-place and occupied non-place.

However, setting these conceptual refinements aside, the essential ideas that interest us on this occasion are the increase in waiting situations (in the use of time) and non-places (use of place) throughout the twentieth century

² Marc Augé. "Sobremodernidad. Del mundo de hoy al mundo de mañana". http://www.ddooss.org/articulos/textos/Marc_Auge.htm

³ Marc Augé. "Sobremodernidad. Del mundo de hoy al mundo de mañana". http://www.ddooss.org/articulos/textos/Marc_Auge.htm

Table 1

Space	Place	Lived non-place	Occupied non-place
Unknown place where there are no personal experiences or uses.	Known place where there are personal experiences or uses.	Usable space for waiting in which participant does not wait.	Usable space for waiting where participant does in fact wait.

Prepared by the authors based on information by Michel de Certeau and Marc Augé.

in developed western societies. The original research by Augé considers indicators from a specific historical era that he names supermodernity. In a certain sense, the non-places broadened and grew at the pace of social change at the end of the nineteenth, twentieth and the beginning of the twenty-first century, until they became a characteristic feature of an era.

Parallel to this process of non-placing, ambient music is developed, reinforced and transformed. It is part of the logic that tries to humanise (give meaning, whether emotional, commercial, etc.) an urban setting where life is in transit and waiting. With technological developments, autoplaying allows to create ambient music associated to non-places. Ambient music played for everyone to hear is what we will call here collective bubbles, where the music played is designed differently according to the objective (fast food restaurant, waiting room, shopping centre, etc.). Subsequently, on occasions where individuals listen to their own music through headphones, they would be using the occupation of virtual non-places to create individual bubbles. Ultimately, individuals reduce loneliness in transit and waiting situations by going to a virtual and personal non-place. This place fills a relational emptiness that collective non-places host. Musical microclimates are formed: personal non-places inside collective non-places.

It is important to highlight that non-places refer to both a physical and virtual reality. In fact, at the end of the twentieth century and beginning of the twenty-first century, the biggest development was in communication non-places. Augé proposes, in a fundamental sense regarding the dimensions of virtual spaces, virtual non-places as "communication spaces: screens, cables, waves with immaterial appearance". These non-places are disconnected from near physical surroundings and allow a delocalised and timeless space to be shared. In terms of furniture music, technology allows to form microclimate musical networks (such as playlists on Spotify) in a delocalised and timeless manner. This would be a virtual non-place for non-related individuals with a common ambient music.

3. MUSIC AND DAILY LIFE

Social functions of music have significantly varied with social changes. Historically, music was generally associated to a social activity. In a collective context, it was related to a certain duration and certain preestablished social and cultural meanings for a specific time (Alaminos-Fernández, A 2016). Music was above all part of a social or cultural event.

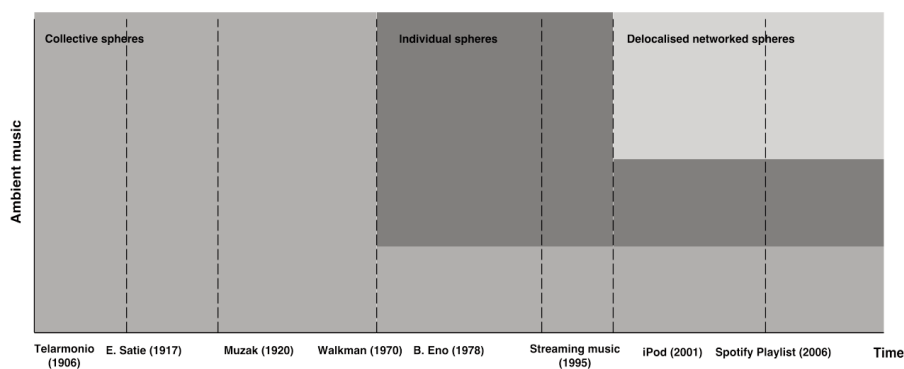
The industrial revolution and new technologies led to music being mechanically played and heard on a continuous basis. Piped music emerged, where music was played non-stop, generally with different themes and aimed at creating an atmosphere (directly or indirectly aimed at generating emotions). It was heard in different places and contexts, such as train stations, hotels, lifts, etc. An example of this symbiosis between urban and musical changes is in lifts. If lifts made skyscrapers possible, it is also true that music humanised these new non-places. They were made liveable to reduce fear of what a platform moving high up into emptiness could cause. The quotidian use allows risks to be forgotten which, at the time, contributed to reducing relaxing music. And not only mechanical noises. The reduced space of lifts forces personal spaces to be broken, leading strangers closed in a small space to share a non-desired intimacy. Historically, in the same sense as skyscrapers needed lifts, lifts also needed music to reduce technological impact. Lifts and music are part of technological developments that transformed everyday lives towards the end of the nineteenth century and beginning of the twentieth century. Ambient music belongs to the same history as technological developments at the beginning of the twentieth century, establishing an essential relation to other technologies, such as the lift. After the Second World War, "lift music" led the symbiosis of these two processes to its peak, converging from the very first phases till fully evolved. Ambient music in lifts satisfied needs by providing special attributes.

As we have seen in the cases of skyscrapers and lifts, urban concentration processes and progressive technologisation of social settings were creating new spaces for cohabitation and personal experience. Some of these spaces were new due to mass use and incorporated new meanings in relational narrative. This was the case of the multiplication of non-places, as well as ambient music as a feature of modernity. Music continued to have a parallel process, where technology allowed it to be present in spaces unthinkable until that moment. Without technological innovations in communication, Telharmonium (1906) and, finally, piped music would never have existed. Telharmonium was the first completely electronic and polyphonic instrument that, in addition, retransmitted its music to different establishments and homes in the city through

a telephone line. Automatic music is a music with special properties as it is not related to *in situ* human musical execution and allows it to be simultaneously heard in very different places. It contains potentiality, exploited decades later with electronic music, of a standardisation that allows the advantages of known music to be combined with its background use. With ambient music, mass music underwent a transformation to make it mass-produced music. A clear example of this is the adapted versions of songs on an electronic piano, ideal for piped music. Telharmonium was quickly substituted by radio broadcasting and piped music. Technological transformations, such as telharmonium enabled music to be played autonomously and independently. The possibility of mass broadcasting that the telephone and radio incorporated boosted the popularity of decontextualised music (Muzak) and helped to build atmospheres.

In order to understand how technological advances have strengthened the effects of music in daily life, it is important to take into account time and space. With regard to time, as we already know, nowadays music can be continuously heard at different times of the day. On the other hand, regarding space, and thanks to the aforementioned technological advances, music can be played in different spaces and in an unlimited manner.

In this sense, ambient music carries out a social work that allows meanings to be overturned, both in its use from a paradigmatic point of view (part of connotations and transfer of emotions) and a syntagmatic point of view (whether as an accelerator of the action or according to narrative parentheses or waiting areas). However, music also establishes an occasion for people to interact with each other according to musical tastes, styles and even singers. Music expresses what we are like and the way we relate with others (Brown Et al, 2001; Frith, 1978).



Source: Antonio Alaminos-Fernández

Currently, part of our daily lives is related to consuming cultural material, highlighting among such consumptions listening, buying, sharing or interacting with music. (Alaminos-Fernández, A. F, 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018; DeNora, 1986, 2000; Hargreaves and North, 1997, 1999; Cohen, 1993; Crozier, 1997; Koelsch, S. 2005, 2010; Konecni, J. 2010). According to these studies, being exposed to music causes emotions: happiness, sadness, euphoria, among others. Music also has the ability to generate memories based on these daily actions (Alaminos-Fernández, A. F, 2014). In this sense, ambiences and atmospheres are generated.

3.1. Furnishing non-places with music: from satie to brian eno

A concept which is closely related to the term place is atmosphere (also known as ambience). This concept, originating from social psychology, currently has a relatively weak scientific status⁴, as appreciated in the limited debate on its empirical measurement (Navalles, 2006 and 2008; Jiménez et al.2004; Irtega, García and Trujillo, 2013). The Spanish Royal Academy of Language provides the following meanings for atmosphere (as well as the physical meaning): "Space where influences of someone or something are spread, or a surrounding environment", as well as "prevention or tendency of moods, favourable or against, towards someone or something". "Space", "mood", "influence", "environment" are key elements in the definition of atmosphere. The scientific definition is not far away from that provided by the Spanish Royal Academy of Language, as it emphasises the definition of atmosphere from a social point of view: "It is the willingness of mood, tone or sentiment that is spread in a group at a specific time and space"⁵. Despite it being a highly used concept (it is possible to talk about atmosphere in art, music, architecture, social psychology, anthropology, sociology, politics, etc.), its degree of formalisation (what it means in operational terms, to which psychological mechanisms it responds,

⁴ NAVALLES, Jahir. "Prolegómenos a la Psicología Social: La Idea de Atmósfera en la Psicología de la Colectividad". *Cinta Moebio* (2006). 27, pp, 284-302.

NAVALLES, Jahir. "Idea de atmósfera. Psicología social y otros prolegómenos". *Athenea Digital: revista de pensamiento e investigación social*. (2008). 13, pp, 307-316.

ARISTIZABAL, Amaia Jiménez, CONEJERO LÓPEZ, Susana, RIVERA, Joseph de, PÁEZ ROVIRA, Darío. "Alteración afectiva personal, atmósfera emocional y clima emocional tras los atentados del 11 de marzo". *Ansiedad y estrés*, (2004). 10, n. 2-3, , pp, 299-312.

VILLODRES, Carmen Ortega, GARCÍA HÍPOLA, Giselle, TRUJILLO CERREZO, José Manuel. The influence of the local political atmosphere on electoral behaviour. A study on socialist voting in local Andalusian elections of 2011. *Revista internacional de sociología*, (2013). 71, n. 3, pp, 617-641.

⁵ CHURBA, Carlos Alberto, *La Creatividad*. Ediciones Dunken. Buenos Aires. 1995.

how it influences or generates conditions to establish atmospheres, etc.) is highly limited. In spite of this lack of formalisation, the concept is frequently used and even as part of the description or explanation of a phenomenon (for example, electoral atmosphere).

In general, the concepts *ambience* and *atmosphere* reciprocally refer to each other or support each other when using enthymemes, establishing a tacit agreement between the reader and the definition. It is understood that the reader knows and understands what *atmosphere* and *ambience* mean based on their personal experiences. Common sense fills in the operational gaps of the concept, given that it is implied that everyone understands what it means and what the idea of *atmosphere* and *ambience* refers to when indicating a meeting or a place. An example of the aforementioned is the definition by Eno (1978) "an *ambience* is defined as an *atmosphere*, or a surrounding influence: a tint"⁶. In the case of music and its social effects, both terms are essential to understand the function and use from an analytical point of view. It is obvious that both *atmosphere* and *ambience* are part of the research that studies music regarding every dimension.

In this task, it is interesting to take other advances in artistic works as a reference, such as cinematographic art. The main idea of the notions of *atmosphere* and *ambience* is that moods and feelings of a group vary depending on the physical conditions surrounding them, as well as interactions and relations established between people, arising as the result of several factors. Thus, the complexity of the concept (as a consequence of the need to create audiovisual atmospheres) should be recognised regarding the notion of *atmosphere* in the cinematographic sense: "Atmosphere. Atmosphere is referred to as an influence space of a film, a favourable or unfavourable *ambience* that intends to create certain scenes. In cinema, *atmosphere* is carefully planned to achieve an interactive communication between what is shown on screen and the audience. In this sense, the whole backstage revolves around operations, decoration, music, camera movements, rhythm, staging, ambient sounds..."⁷. Clearly, creating atmospheres in film making implies musical effects to be involved. Music highly contributes and defines the creation of an *atmosphere* (*ambience*), within the film, but also outside, in the seats. It is in an involvement phenomenon that includes the product (film) and the audience in a common *atmosphere*.

⁶ ENO, Brian. *Ambient 1: Music for Airports*. (Composition), 1978.

⁷ Cinema glossary. Universidad de Huelva. http://www.uhu.es/cine.educacion/ciney_educacion/glosariocine.htm

Exactly the same happens with music in daily life, as it tries to appeal to all our senses, both in an auditive sense and its symbiosis with listening contexts: concerts, parties, romantic situations, etc. Atmospheres are generated in a social space and with specific conditions. Practically all music tries to transform the listener. Whether that may be tribal rituals, a hymn or Rock and Roll. Nonetheless, there is a type of music and use of it that is especially thought and oriented towards non-places: it is what Eno calls "ambient music". This is a music designed to create an ambience in non-places. They are new artistic creations that are shaped in parallel to other social creations: urban transit and waiting spaces. The non-places. These places do not generate an identity in individuals.

Filling non-places with music is the result of joining technological innovations and musical creations. Ambient music is initially the result of interacting between the genius that is Satie and his pieces for furniture music (music to listen to without it being public) and the technological possibilities that represented the invention of telharmonium and later Muzak. From a musical creation point of view, the possibility of a "supermodern" concept of music originated with Satie, and his proposal revolutionised all ways of living and experiencing music. In 1917 Satie coined the term "furniture music" (*musique d'ameublement*) in a composition with a very special intention. In this sense, he was also the first composer to try and explain the spheres without using this adjective. According to Espinosa (2011) "he wrote the glorious *musique d'ameublement* (furniture music) with a serious desire: for music to be played without the listener adopting any of the conventional physical or symbolic stances, in other words, walking around a room without sitting in a seat in front of musicians. Music would be part of a place, like the furniture or decoration"⁸. In this manner, Satie composed and established a perfect musical proposal for ambient music. Music as a furniture element for non-places. Music would stop being the centre of attention, leave the stage and would no longer be a show. The musical proposal responded to other ways of living and experiencing music. Ultimately, this led to the possibility of creating collective sound spheres where individuals share a same ambience and experiment with similar sound stimuli.

In this sense, Satie provided a new interpretation of music and its social functions before its peak in mass media. Nowadays, society is using music on a daily basis, in cars, public places, shopping centres, at home. Thanks to tech-

⁸ ESPINOSA, Pablo. "Erik Satie, la música que siempre sonr e". Revista de la Universidad de M xico. 2011. 87. pp, 105.

nology, music is everywhere. It surrounds us and is part of us. This new musical reality was anticipated by Satie, with compositions aimed at this purpose. In this sense, ambient music is heterogeneous in its sounds (it can be intentionally unnoticed or very loud, depending on the ambience to furnish) and its different sources: pre-existing or composed with an intention. Although any type of music can be used to create an ambience (in general, it is the use that enables it to be characterised as ambient music, for example, *The Girl from Ipanema*), Satie intentionally composed pieces for an ambience. In this creative sense, Silvestre Revueltas (briefly) composed music to furnish a space in Mexico with "music to talk"⁹ in 1939. Espinosa (2011) believes that composing ambient music has specific musical properties, at least when considering the two great references, Satie and Eno. Thus, Satie "liked to repeat and repeat and repeat the same bar, extend the melody with fewer, and less, notes, representing minimalism that would lead to a dense, complex harmonic sense, yet also brutally simple"¹⁰.

Music progressively occupied non-places and places in the twentieth century. A music which explores its potential, linked to technologies and urban development. In this sense, for example, it was used in lifts in large skyscrapers and planes to calm people, or advertisements to encourage shopping, or cinemas to hide the sound of machines, etc. Ambient music acquired its own meaning by simply existing. A non-place (hotel hall, for example) in the fifties was more modern due to the fact it had ambient music. Music being present in this non-place meant innovation and music everywhere was new in itself. The transmission means and use in non-places simultaneously expressed the idea of modern, as stated by McLuhan¹¹, where the means is also the message. This social value of ambient music allowed for this expression of modernity to be found among its properties. This would be emphasised by using new musical procedures, such as electronic music and, in moments of high intensity, ambient music and technology merged with electronic instruments. The equation that was established was ambient music = new technologies = modernity. An essential feature of ambient music was the production of modernity as an additional feature in the level of connotation. According to Lanza (1994), it was in the fifties when different types of ambient music appeared related to modernity, thanks to technological advances such as Muzak and styles like

⁹ ESPINOSA, Pablo. "Erik Satie, la música que siempre sonr e". *Revista de la Universidad de M xico*. 2011. 87. pp, 105.

¹⁰ Pablo Espinosa "Erik Satie, la m sica que siempre sonr e". *Revista de la Universidad de M xico*. 2011. N  87. Pag.106

¹¹ McLuhan M. and Fiore Q. (1967) *The Medium is the Massage*. Random House.

Easylistening. Precisely at its peak moment, the creative proposal by Satie reappeared and another great composer, Brian Eno, composed ambient music for non-places in the same creative logic as "furniture music" or "music to talk". Eno wrote on the back cover of his album *Music for Airports* the differences that ambient music represented regarding piped music.

"The concept of music designed specifically as a background feature in the environment was pioneered by Muzak Inc. in the fifties and has since come to be known generically by the term Muzak. The connotations that this term carries are those particularly associated with the kind of material that Muzak Inc. produces—familiar tunes (.../...). To create a distinction between my own experiments in this area and the products of the various purveyors of canned music, I have begun using the term Ambient Music". In this sense, even when producing ambient music, Eno aspired to use much more ambitious musical registers than Muzak music. "Whereas the extant canned music companies proceed from the basis of regularising environments by blanketing their acoustic and atmospheric idiosyncrasies, ambient music is intended to enhance these. Whereas conventional background music is produced by stripping away all sense of doubt and uncertainty (and thus all genuine interest) from the music, ambient music retains these qualities. And whereas their intention is to 'brighten' the environment by adding stimulus to it (thus supposedly alleviating the tedium of routine tasks and levelling out the natural ups and downs of the body rhythms), ambient music is intended to induce calm and a space to think. Ambient music must be able to accommodate many levels of listening attention without enforcing one in particular, it must be as ignorable as it is interesting"¹². From a certain perspective and taking into account the aforementioned, Eno carried out a creative sophistication exercise that really expressed the level of maturity of a music with clear functions, what he called "to brighten surroundings" (furnishing the non-places). His creative refinement is essentially a diversification of the functions of ambient music, to which an alternative interpretation can be granted providing higher artistic dignity. With this, the concept ambient music became popular, leading to a number of pre-existing music collections to be released, aimed at creating an ambience.

Eno composed four main pieces for different spaces: *Music for Airports* (1978), *The Plateaux of Mirror* (1980), *Day of Radiance* (1980), *On Land* (1982). He began his compositions by furnishing airports thanks to technological developments and modernity. Ambient music is a consequence of technolo-

¹² ENO, Brian. *Ambient 1: Music for Airports*. (Composition), 1978.

gical developments and its expansion to non-places by trying to humanise or create value for the use of such contexts. At its peak in the seventies, it was suggested to be a music genre with a topological specialisation, dependant on the use of non-places: airports, shopping centres, waiting rooms, etc. It is the peak of piped music. At this peak of creating ambient music and, unfortunately for composers of other pieces, technological evolution reduced the importance of ambient music.

While technology enabled collective ambient bubbles to be created, it also enabled tools to eliminate the first and then internalise the furnishing of non-places. And this happened almost simultaneously with Eno's creations, with the Walkman and portability of music. The arrival of the Walkman to daily life allowed each individual to choose their ambient music. The sixties are the golden years for ambient music used as a collective bubble. Nonetheless, ambient music for non-places is product of an era and it is subject to life cycles. As with any other product, its use had reached its peak and began to decline. It was slowly replaced by another modernity: individual music. The cycle of ambient music in collective spheres followed the standard process of any other social product.

Ambient music includes collective and social aspects, although this does not exclude the fact that it can cause individual emotions in some circumstances when played in collective spheres, due to previous individual experiences. It is the initial phase of a process which, thanks to the latest technology, shared ambient music for non-places is created, changing again decades later thanks to technological innovations and allowing the sounds of our environment to be personalised.

In this sense and taking into account the notion of atmosphere as a unit to measure pressure, I use them as synonyms to indicate that here we are focused on creating emotional atmospheres in spaces of zero social atmosphere¹³ in terms of social pressure. As Augé stated "When possible, individuals move around without relating or negotiating with others, but they obey a certain number of guidelines and codes that guide them, each one in their own way". Without interpersonal relationships, social pressure is reduced and weakened. It is for this reason that, when referring to the notion of atmosphere, I propose a double meaning. The first referring to creating an ambience and the second as an expression of social pressure, of the density of interpersonal relationships. The non-places are zero atmosphere spaces in terms of social

¹³ Atmosphere. Physics. A unit of pressure equal to mean atmospheric pressure at sea level, 101,325 pascals. Oxford Dictionary

pressure where ambient music aspires to introduce a social atmosphere¹⁴ that makes it more inhabitable. In this sense, DeNora defends that music builds a relationship between “the polis, the citizen and the configuration of consciousness. Music is much more than a decorative art... It is a powerful medium of social order” (2000:163). In order to show its power, ambient music can be used to create or control an “environment and the behaviour that takes place within it”. DeNora believed that music had the ability to be a tool to control and oppress (let's remember that music has been used as a psychological torture weapon to force people to eat faster or promote compulsive shopping), but it can also act to build identities and emotions that empower people. Emotions are a substantial part of the significant areas of music (Alaminos Fernández, A, 2014), in particular, in non-places where new lifestyles and developments have spread alongside technological and economic evolution. Ambient music in non-places is music for moments where time is not spent carrying out an activity, but the activity itself is spending time waiting for something.

4. FROM "INDIVIDUAL SOUND SPHERES" TO "NETWORKED SOUND SPHERES"

The decline in collective ambient music and ambient specialisations that Eno introduced allows us to identify the emergence and development of other types of ambient music bubbles. In order to do so, there is a need to differentiate the two types of atmospheres or bubbles: collective bubbles and individual bubbles. Thanks to technological transformations, freedom in musical choice at any moment has gradually increased, essentially thanks to the portability of music devices. Nowadays, when we are in a waiting room, bus or at a shopping centre, it is possible to choose the music we want to listen to. In other words, individuals can decide what ambient music they want to hear and choose their sound environment. Currently, ambient music is not only understood as a collective sound that transforms the way shared spaces are experienced. Different ways of listening to personalised music enables to customise the emotional surrounding. Ultimately, this leads to the creation of new microenvironments. In this sense, public spaces are not filled with the same sounds, but fragmented in different musical ambiances.

¹⁴ As a metaphor, the double meaning is present in colloquial expressions where the physical atmospheric condition is applied to a social situation or space. For example, “the atmosphere was tense, or relaxed, or there was a welcoming atmosphere, etc.”

Technological development and ambient music are linked in time to our social relations with waiting spaces. This is why collective bubbles have been gradually substituted by the possibility of established individual ambient bubbles. These new sources of portable music are associated to the idea of modernity. The iPod arrived after the Walkman and then mobiles began to carry out functions to play music. Ambient music is reduced and became an object of prosumers. We are no longer consumers of ambient music with no control on the musical environment. At this stage, individuals have the ability to create their ambient music and customise it according to their mood.

Customising ambient music with this new technology (individual spheres) has restored a different inhumanity and, without a doubt, it is more profound than the physical non-places. It is impossible to know where or what mood a person is in when they are using headphones. Again, the breakdown of social relationships is present in these waiting non-places. First, technology humanises non-places, at the price of sharing ambient music. Then, freedom is granted, but also complete solitude. New technologies enable information to be absorbed while waiting and ambient music is transformed into an individual choice. This allows ambient music to be generated from a particular non-place within a social non-place, just like Russian matryoshka dolls.

Nonetheless, as well as enhancing the dynamics of individualisation with the intensification of social isolation that was part of the definition of non-places, the new virtual non-places emerge identified by their music. A new technological breakthrough (the internet) enabled music to be created on public streaming platforms, such as Spotify. Music chosen on the platforms can be completely personal, but also chosen from a catalogue of ambient music. Streaming platforms suggest lists according to moods. They generate virtual non-places which have multiplied and fragmented on the internet. Streaming has enabled temporal and spatial delocalised spheres. In this sense, collective ambient music returns in a segmented form, associated to the establishment of virtual non-places on the internet.

If collective spheres initially referred to ambient music in non-places, at a specific time, in a space with a specific character (for example, music in a lift, ambient music in a shopping centre, at a live concert), later, individual spheres referred to individual music environment that could or could not nest within a collective environment. For example, when you go to a shopping centre with your own music device and generate your own environment, there are no spatial limits and individuals can move around with it. Current technological developments have allowed another step to be taken regarding the impact music has on daily lives. Streaming platforms have generated delocalised and

timeless spheres. Individual spheres connected according to theme but disconnected in time and space. This type of sphere has a sense of belonging and identification in a delocalised virtual space.

An example of this could be streaming music on platforms such as Spotify, Apple Music, Deezer, or Tidal, among others. In the case of Spotify, the platform has 100,000,000 users, alongside its main competitor, Apple Music, with 17,000,000 users. Spotify emerged in Europe for the first time in October 2008 and currently allows users to access millions of songs from their computers, tablets or smartphones¹⁵. In Spain, streaming music has 82% of the digital music market share, being used by half a million Spaniards who pay for these platforms¹⁶. Spotify suggests playlists to offer ambient music (emotions). These lists are characterised according to three main features: moment to listen to them (morning, afternoon, night, Friday), space or activity being carried out (gym, home, shower) or individual emotions (romantic moment, happiness, sadness...). These atmospheres have the aim of being used to create musical spheres considered as individual spheres, collective spheres (Alaminos Fernández, A. F. 2014) and delocalised spheres (Alaminos Fernández, A. F. 2017). Thus, streaming music can be used for collective atmospheres of public non-places (collective ambient spheres), to personalise music as a prosumer (individual spheres), as well as sharing playlists with friends or strangers (delocalised spheres on the internet). In the last case, music and emotions are segmented and fragmented, thus defining a physically disconnected virtual space, yet shared at the same time. Once physical non-places were humanised, music and technology have enabled virtual non-places to be humanised again. This enables the creation of atmospheres and furnishing of non-places built through modernity. Ambient music for non-places in their virtual or physical expression identify a specific way of daily life. This daily life is transformed by technology in which music has had and currently has a humanising role.

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