The long road to industrial musicology: the Minorcan example

Industrial musicology in the Catalan-speaking regions

With the publication of the book Cantar a la fàbrica, cantar al coro (Singing in the factory, singing in the choir), by the ethnomusicologist Jaume Ayats, and the musicologist Joaquim Rabaseda (2008: 65) “industrial musicology” was inaugurated in the Catalan-speaking regions. The study enters the world of the factories of the River Ter as it passes through the Catalan region of Osona, the musical singing activity of its workers, and the relationship between this and the origin of the workers’ choirs that were promoted by Josep Anselm Clavé.

However, the path started by Ayats has not continued in the field of Catalan musicology. Indeed, since the nineteenth century, when an interest arose in what was then called traditional folklore, there have been countless collections and studies, old and new, on songs and the whole music scene in the rural area of the Catalan-speaking regions and throughout Europe. In recent times, ethnomusicology has also been interested in popular music and urban music. But it is surprising that industrial work, which for more than 100 years has occupied, and continues to occupy, thousands of workers in Catalonia, the Valencian Community and the Balearic Islands, and the musical activity that takes place in factories and workshops in Catalonia, have aroused so little interest among musicologists.

This does not only happen here: In 2007, a British sociologist and scholar on this subject, Marek Korczynski, warned, with regard to Anglo-Saxon musicology and the powerful British industrial past that, “the processes by which music might have had an effect have been left unexamined. This means that any meanings ascribed by workers to music on the factory floor have been treated as a black box, not to be opened.” (2007: 254). A few years later, he himself insisted that this was still a field for researchers to explore: “[... the way in which music is used as a cultural resource within the workplace has been largely ignored by industrial sociologists and musicologists [...]]” (Korczynski, 2011: 87).

The works of Korczynski over the years, alone or in collaboration with others, have culminated in collective and extensive work written with Emma Robertson and Michael Pickering: Rhythms of Labour. Music at Work in Britain (2013), a comprehensive, historical and ethnographic study which offers a theoretical framework on the relationship between music and industrial work. But in the introduction (2013: 4), the authors repeat the fact that this field had been explored very little by scholars:

“With only a very few notable exceptions, scholars have tended to ignore music at work whether it be in the form of the singing of the workers themselves, or in the form of the relaying of broadcast music.”. Then, as an example, they expressly cite “[...] the excellence and illumination of Betty Messenger’s anthropological study of song cultures among Belfast textile workers in the early to mid twentieth century [...].”.

In fact, the book by American anthropologist Betty Messenger, Picking up the Linen Threads (1980) is, as indicated in its subtitle, “a study of industrial folklore” of workers in the linen industry in Belfast during the period between 1900 and 1935. Carried out in the mid-1970s, when ethnomusicology was just beginning to be considered as...
the study of music as culture” (Myers, 1995: 8), Messenger, with extraordinary clairvoyance, already predicted that a look at industrial folklore would open the door to a deeper understanding of the working and life experience of its workers, beyond material conditions and structures: “[...] My own quest not only led to the discovery of additional examples of objectionable aspects of the factory system everywhere during this era but also revealed a new and brighter dimension to the usual picture.” (Messenger, 1980: XVI).

Messenger’s work is really brilliant, and certainly “illuminating”, but as with the case of Ayats, other researchers did not follow suit; therefore, beyond this and another few shorter studies, only Korczynski’s line of work, alone or with other authors, has expanded the field of British “industrial musicology”.

Returning to Catalonia, the work of Jaume Ayats is undoubtedly the most complete and important work ever done in this area, and because most of its geographical boundaries, the situations described serve as a work model for the rest of the industrialised Catalan territories, especially the closest ones, as the case of Majorca and Minorca; in any case, the Osona region is much more similar to the islands than to Belfast or England. However, it is still exceptional research within the Catalan and even Spanish etnomusico logical field, focused on the study of the rural world on the one hand, and on new urban tendencies on the other: We therefore find that Catalan “industrial musicology” continues to be an area for exploration and studying, still lacking a broad theoretical base and sufficient case studies to allow us to construct a complete analysis model of music as a social space of experience and construction of reality, of Catalonia’s industrial past and present.

In this sense, therefore, the study Popular Music and Industrialisation in Minorca, that we present here, about singing in the context of Minorcan factories and workshops is pioneering in a way, since it takes up the path begun by Ayats, which has served us as a model to establish certain analogies and document here some of the situations that he explains; but at the same time we incorporate much of the theoretical basis of the cited British works, from Messenger to Korczynski, Robertson, Pickering, and others, which place special emphasis on the relationship between the development of Taylorist or Fordist productive systems and workers’ musical habits, and how, in short, music becomes a mechanism of resistance and resilience towards new forms of expression of capitalist work order.

Despite limitations on time and opportunities to do this research, we believe that both the theoretical framework presented, on the one hand, as well as the result and the conclusions on the other, are sufficiently satisfactory, and we hope that they open the door, if it were ever closed, for future researchers to continue along the path of this industrial musicology, understanding it as a window to knowledge and the construction of the great ethnographic account of working culture and the work experience of the industrial workers in the Catalan-speaking regions, with plenty of research still to be done.

Methodology and context
Our research project, entitled Popular Song and Industrialisation in Minorca, with a grant from the Minorcan Institute of Studies (IME) and the Institut Ramon Muntaner (IRMU), includes the whole island of Minorca. Some of the data and first conclusions have already been exhibited in different seminars and congresses, such as the International Congress on Industrial Heritage of Minorca organised by the IME (November 2015), the annual conference of the Irish section of the International Council for Traditional Music (ICTM; Dublin, February 27 and 28, 2016), the Fourteenth Congress of the Iberian Society for Ethnomusicology (SIBE; Madrid, from October 19 to 22, 2016), the Eighteenth Local History
and Cultural Heritage Congress of the Island of Minorca (Alafor, March 15, 2017) or the Music and everyday activities day in Les Terres de Cruïlla in the 5th Music in Terra de Cruïlla 2017 Festival (La Sénia October 28, 2017) organised by the Centre d’Estudis Seniencs and the Ramon Muntaner Institute.

Furthermore, through the Ramon Muntaner Institute, this project has also been part of the Inventory of the Ethnological Heritage of Catalonia (IPEC). The collection and classification of interviewees has been carried out according to the criteria provided by this institution, being the first project of this type in the Balearic Islands.

As for field work, it consisted of a total of 36 interviews between July 2015 and February 2016. This includes more than 50 people, from all the municipalities on the island, of both sexes and aged between 48 and 85. Workers in active employment and retired from the Minorcan shoe and costume jewellery sector. Thanks to them, we know what the singing activity was like in factories and workshops, what it’s like now, and most importantly: how it has changed. Changes, however, are not due to a simple transformation of the workers’ musical tastes, but respond to the forced adaptation to a new working context in terms of schedules and time management, spatial distribution and acoustic conditions.

As with the cited work of Betty Messenger in the case of Belfast at the beginning of the twentieth century, with this study we follow the historical thread of the workers’ musical activity inside and outside their work space, and define their cultural experience in relation to the world of work; for the most part, this allows us to establish a story about the arrival, implementation, resistance and adaptation of industrial capitalism in Minorca during the twentieth century and beginning of the twenty-first century, and the consequences of each phase in the configuration of the social reality of the Minorcan people.

The Minorcan case

The conclusions of the research report, which we present a summary of here, lead us to establish three historical stages depending on the musical activity in the area of factory work. The first phase, called “preindustrial”, shows a great deal of singing activity. It is based on an artisanal production model and a pre-capitalist mentality, which continued roughly until the 1960s. It is what we call the putting out system either domestic work or in small workshops, which in the case of Minorcan shoe workshops were usually four or five benches, with four men working on each bench, plus some assistants. In all, in these workshops there could be about thirty people, between masters of the trade and apprentices. They were spaces, therefore, for men to socialise, where singing obviously served to pass the time, but above all as a framework for community interaction where workers were building themselves as individuals and as a community.

In the thirties, the Majorcan ethnomusicologist Baltasar Samper, a researcher of the missions of the Balearic Islands for the Obra del Cançoner Popular de Catalunya (Collection of Popular Songs of Catalonia), noted the close relationship between work and singing, to the point where singing was considered “an inseparable part” of it by the workers themselves:

“ [...]Majorcan countrymen feel this relationship so naturally, that they would never consider singing a strange thing at work, but for them it is something that goes hand in hand with work, [...] an organic part of it we could say [...]”(Samper, 1994: 36).

In the context of artisanal work then, survival of the mentality, uses and habits that are more typical of a rural pre-capitalist society, where singing was part of the work experience, is not at all strange: Samper himself, in a letter from 1927 to Francesc Pujol, explains how in the village of Alaró, where the entire population works in shoe workshops, there are posters that say A good worker is punctual and works without singing, which indicates the problems that the employers had to implement the new temporal and social capitalist order in a population that continued to function with completely different logic and that obviously sang.

In Minorca, we also see how these agrarian society models remain with the transition from field to workshop. The researcher Robert Alzina (2008: 55) explains how only the man who was in charge of the animals sang in Minorcan fields, and stopped doing so when he passed the job on to another: that is to say, the hierarchy of work was also built around sound. In the workshops, these social construct models related to sound, showing the roles of hierarchy and importance in the workplace through singing, continued to be valid, and as our interviewees explained to us, only master shoemakers could sing, while apprentices never normally did. Despite the change in context and activity, the previous cultural codes continued to regulate work and social life.

In this context, singing in rounds, a common practice in all the Catalan-speaking regions and in general, in the Western Mediterranean, but little described in the Balearic Islands to date (Ayats and Martinez, 2008), was also a feature that survived: Singing in rounds not only makes the physical space evident but also the sound space, the space of socialisation. So, in workshops we find a great deal of heterophonic activity, even explained by the shoemakers themselves with the same traditional
Catalan terminology, that of singing baix (low), primer (first) or segon (second) (Ayats, 2007: 35), as one of our interviewees told us:

“Many shoemakers knew how to do seconds. They worked and they sang, and one was first and another was second...” (Magí Pons Sabater, Ciutadella).

It does not seem that there was an order for singing: One started and the others joined in. Singing in rounds was, therefore, the recreation of the frame of interaction and occupation of the physical space, the workshop, the temporal evidence of a sound space and male fraternity.

As far as we know, women also sang in rounds, in well-differentiated spaces, in the same place or in different venues. There are, however, very few examples of men and women singing in rounds together. However, if that happened, because the spatial delimitation was not clear enough, it was only possible in the case that the man was single, as we were told by an embauladora (packer) about a tallador (cutter) who sometimes sang with the women:

“That one was a young single man. The other cutters were married and they did not sing. (Rosario Pons Pons of Can Biel Buet, Alaior)

In this way, the frameworks, limits and behaviours of the socially acceptable or reprehensible were designed in the workspace through singing.

It is not surprising therefore, that this significant singing activity, and singing in rounds gave Clavé the idea of the male workers’ choirs, which took root in Minorca, in the way that Ayats points out (2008). Choral societies such as the Orfeó Maonès or La Alborada de Ciutadella, among many others, provided both a new model of organised leisure and a new lyrical repertoire that could be sung in the factory through the same sound conventions, and that quickly replaced the shoemakers and costume jewellery makers’ own songs, as Andreu Ferrer lamented in 1932: “[…] Anyone we ask tells us that there have been a lot of folklore songs but not any more, there are no witnesses left, those who knew them are already dead, and that nobody sings if it’s not opera”.

A group of shoemakers and two benches. The work situation and male fellowship favoured moments of singing. Behind we can see the young apprentice, in the background, physically but also socially (early twentieth century).

PHOTO PROVIDED BY THE “SHOE HISTORY GROUP” OF MINORCA
This may be a paradigmatic case, although much later, it is the Orfeó of CATISA (Carretero y Timoner, SA), a Mahon costume jewellery factory, founded in the 1950s. CATISA was a good example of the Franco vertical corporate business model, which provided its workers with all services within the same factory complex: housing, training, leisure, medical care, etc. Among the educational and leisure activities, we should highlight that there was a choir and a theatre where they used to put on zarzuelas organised by the same singing workers, many of whom were also in the Orfeó Maonès, and it was not surprising that the soloists of the Orfeó collaborated in the performances of CATISA.

These male choir groups, mostly made up of workers, also contributed to the change of leisure activities related to the most important and popular festivals and celebrations, such as Carnival or Easter, understood in the context of leisure that was not subject to the logic of time division demanded by manufacturing capitalism, and allowed within a framework of flexibility and dialogue between the needs of modern productive business and the self-management of traditional society to avoid conflicts (Garcia, 1995: 108-109).

Until more or less the 1960s, we not only find choirs related to more or less regulated recreational societies, but also students that are often connected to taverns, eminently masculine spaces, or to the factories, such as the one that existed at the Can Menéndez shoe factory in Ciutadella. These groups used to go out during the Darrers Dies de carnestoltes (Last Days of Carnival), and were licensed to enter the factories and stop production, which is unthinkable today, but prevailing until a few decades ago:

“The Last Days student choir came to the factory, it was Shrove Thurs-

day, it was Carnival Thursday, and as the student choir had come, we had that evening free [...]” (Juana Torrent, Ciutadella)

A similar case happened with the Deixem lo dol, the Minorcan name to refer to the Easter songs known as car-melles or goigs de pasqua that are sung all over the Catalan-speaking regions, always by groups of men. As Arcadi Gomila explains (in Seguí, 2009: 96), “[…] the Deixem lo Dol was already sung in the shoe factories […]. The shoemakers took their minds off the work by singing in chorus, and one of the pieces that was usually sung was the Deixem lo Dol, especially when approaching the Easter celebrations […]” With the creation of the choirs, these more formal entities were responsible for singing it, while maintaining the patterns and models, though not of sound, of the social organisation of time and leisure.

For their part, and in the same period, women, who were excluded from this male scene, had their own mechanisms of interaction within their own female work spaces; in this case, the songs of the Month of Mary:

“I sang with Ferreries choir […] Then they called it ses cantadores and we were a group of young women. We sang the Month of Mary, we did the Month of Mary in May.” (Eulàlia Serra Truyol, Ferreries)

In short, this first phase of our story shows, through observing the singing activity in manufacturing work, a situation of control and self-management of the work experience that was much more horizontal and dynamic, with flexible business supervision agreed with the workers not to violate the social codes in place in a “post-rural” society, with leisure and work time management unrelated to productive demands, where singing was one of the main tools to create a sense of community, strengthen collective ties and create social contexts of enculturation.

Regarding the second stage, we can call it “modernisation” or implementation of factory capitalism and the increase in demand for productivity. This happens initially, due to the concentration of the work force in one larger space: from workshops to industrial buildings, subjecting workers to stricter control (they all enter and leave at the same time) and with a different spatial distribution, individualised and segmented, where communication and visual contact is almost impossible. The great change, however, occurs with the installation of crankshafts, automatic assembly lines, in the case of shoes, and other chain manufacturing systems in the case of costume jewellery. In other words, the consolidation of Fordism, which obliges workers to specialise in a single phase of the process, under strict control of the working time of each phase, and that alienates them from their efforts in relation to the product and the rest of their workmates. “Modernisation” therefore meant a forced change of mentality, frameworks and social spaces that preceded a “new work logic that fractures the workers’ experience to separate the work from other practices”, in the words of Garcia Balarà (1995: 111). For example, as Alzina and Seguí state (2002: 169) the student choir Casino January 17 of Ciutadella, that had survived even the Civil War, stopped acting in the year 1962:

“[…] The processes of assembly in chain and the division of the work arrived definitively in Ciutadella […] When the machines were working, nobody could stop for a second, there was work and people had to take advantage of it, although the traditions resented it; This was the case of the student choir that, after overcoming the Civil War and the difficulties celebrating carnivals during the
dictatorship, was seriously compromised by the new machinery (which could not be stopped), by the new production process and by the considerable demand. Shrove Thursday could not be a time of celebration nor could work be left unfinished when the student choir arrived, since it was even difficult to recruit singers. This one made its last appearance during the carnival of 1962. The decision was taken jointly with the board of directors of the Cercle Artístic, which also organised student music groups”.

Contrary to common belief, and what the workers themselves admit, our conclusion is that it is not the noise of industrial machinery, but rather the application of a new working model and a capitalist logic of temporal and spatial distribution, which put an end to singing at work. However, despite the reconfiguration and loss of control of the physical and sound space, the oldest workers did not stop the musical practice, which was necessary from their point of view, and even socially meaningful. We have not found what Corbera (2015) calls “singing silently” or in other cases, sign singing in Minorca (Ayats, 2008: 30), but there are several situations where the workers sing above the noise, or even establish a certain dialogue with it:

“Maria Morena, who had a good voice, like all of the Morenas, sang a song that stuck in my mind […] She sang this song, because they all went their own way in there […] This woman sang in a lively manner and then the people who were at their tables started singing of their own accord, because one was on one side, another was on the other, and one would sing one song and someone else sang another.” (Carmen Ribas Costa, Ciutadella)

Therefore, the “silencing process” (Korczynski et al., 2013: 114) in the factories, which we understand here as a tool for social control and verticalisation of activity and time management, faced a certain amount of resistant behaviour. Faced with this musical need, then, during the first decades of concentration, the Minorcan factories incorporated centralised music systems that, on the one hand, satisfied the demand for music by the workers and on the other, ensured the control of the sound space, still within a context of negotiation between workers and business owners but at the same time establishing an increasingly hierarchical and less horizontal relationship (Korczynski and Jones 2006: 147).

However, it should be noted that the situation found in Minorca is much more permissive than in other places, it is what we call the “last example of the survival of the mechanisms of pre-capitalist social flexibility”. So, workers were often allowed to bring their own music to be played throughout the factory; a good example is what happened at the Pons Quintana d’Alaior shoe factory.

“The record collection we had here was awesome […] Some didn’t like the zarzuelas they put on and would say “well, can we put another kind of music on, this is boring every day…” […] It was usually the person in charge that brought the music, and then it was another” (Juan Fernando Palliser Sintes, Alaior)

All this ends in the third phase that we have documented in our work, on “consolidation of capitalism”, which reinforces the process of making schedules and more rigid control (Weber,
1978) at the same time that communal musical practices still found in the 1960s and ‘70s was abandoned in favour of individualised consumption of music through transistors and iPods, and occupational isolation.

In this contemporary phase, some Minorcan factories have maintained music sound systems, but there is no longer any negotiation as the choice of repertoire is exclusively the manager’s responsibility, whether the workers like it or not: music acts as a tool for constructing the vertical nature of the current capitalist scene; generating a social reality that is, to paraphrase the Ethnomusicologist Josep Martí (2002), fully hierarchical and where the sound space, like the work, is alienating, thus preventing the possibility of establishing the collective social bonds that emerged in the past through the act of singing.

However, there are still some areas of factory work in Minorca that have been left outside of the “modern” systems, where the codes applied in rural and artisanal society are at play: workshops and car depots exclusively for women workers, the last example of domestic work. They are spaces of socialisation for women, where only women work “and the odd young lad”, but never an adult man; as we have mentioned, the gender and age distinction continues to exist, where there is a certain flexibility regarding work, time and free time, and where music and singing continue to play a significant role in recreating collective frameworks of interaction, in this case, through the negotiation of the chosen repertoire that will be heard on the devices:

“There are four of us at our car depot, and we sing. Whatever: now for Saint John’s we have a CD of Fire and Smoke, or Saint John’s songs, or of Minorcan songs, and we sing along; We put the CD on and sing all the songs. (...) At Christmas we sometimes put carols on.” (Juana Torrent, Ciutadella).

Conclusions
From the musical, sound, social aspect of singing in and outside the factory, but in the context of factory work, we have been able to reconstruct the past to understand the present. We have understood how workers that, in the words of Jaume Ayats (2008: 12) had “a solid habit of singing”, were incorporated into a work model that needed to banish these practices to force adaptation to modern times, different codes and conventions from the previous
ones, where the factory appears to be
the vertex from which the new capitalist
society is structured.

“Modernity” or “productivity” are,
therefore, conceptual euphemisms
used to reduce the physical areas and
sound spaces of collective negotiation
and recreation, for a more horizontal
and autonomous social model in daily
decision-making and the construction
of community conventions, towards a
hierarchical one. In this process, focus-
ing on musical activity, we have been
able to observe resistant and resilient
behaviour that, in some way, refuse
to take on the new scene. Behaviour
that, nevertheless, was not able to slow
down the success of the late industrial
model, and from the 1970s onwards,
it had done away with this singing in
Minorca and with all the cultural rules
that this implied.

The most interesting point, for us, has
been understanding how, through the
study of singing, we can establish the
three phases of this process, that is to
say: we have built a story about the social
history and cultural transformation of a
community, in this case Minorca, which
until now had never been explained, at
least not in these terms. Three phases
that we establish according to this musi-
cultural phenomenon as follows:

1) End of the nineteenth – 1960s.
In craft workshops, workers had full
control over the repertoire they sang
and the circumstances in which they
did so.

2) 1960s – 1980s With the initial
entry in the factory, this control
was reduced, but it did not disap-
ppear altogether: Centralised sound
systems were installed, but work-
ners were allowed to bring their own
music in, and others continued to
sing even within a very different
sound context from the one they
were used to. The employers still
allowed some flexibility in time
management, not to violate the
limits of the pre-existing and still
relatively valid social conventions.

3) 1980s – today. With the total and
absolute centralisation of sound sys-
tems on the one hand, and the final
isolation of individuals within the
factory, the old conventions disap-
ppeared and the community ties made
possible by music along with them,
reducing musical activity to passive
and often individualised listening.

We thereby see how the management
of the sound space, of its creation as an
expressive and aesthetic framework of
relationships and conventions, is the bat-
tlefield where the attitudes of resistance,
resilience and adaptation to the cultural
model of industrial capitalism are repro-
duced. If music, using the famous title
of the book by Josep Martí (2002), is
generating social realities, then control-
ling it becomes a key factor in the control
and manipulation of this reality.

It is this silencing process in the world of
work, in the words of Marek Korczyn-
ski, through the change in productive
needs and time management, a concept
we feel it is important to highlight, and
not the noise of industrial machinery,
which put an end to the singing.

With regard to aesthetics and the reper-
ertoire, we no longer find unique models
in Minorca, but it seems very clear that
the creation of Claverian choral socie-
ties first, and the entrance of the radio
and sound systems later, facilitated the
incorporation of new songs and sound
aesthetics. “To have a good voice” still
means to have a lyric, choir or zarzuela
voice; in this sense, we do find that the
rural aesthetic codes, which in Majorca
was “tener bona miula” and was socially
significant (Ayats et al. 2005), very soon
disappeared. But that of Claverian
choirs is also, we understand, a mas-
culine aesthetic, of an expressive world
reserved for men, and that is perhaps
why women, organised in a less formal
way, did not develop explicit aesthetic
considerations about how to sing, at
least not that we have seen.

On the other hand, their own genres
such as “shoemaker songs”, if they had
existed, were also quickly replaced by
opera and zarzuela choruses, and years
later, boleros and popular folk songs.5

A long way to go
The study presented here, and which
we have tried to summarise in the most
efficient way in this article, is intended
to be one more small contribution to
the slow path of “industrial musicol-
y” in Catalonia. We believe that this
work can serve as a basis for future
studies in the whole of Catalonia or
beyond, since we are lucky that Min-
orca presents the complete past and
present picture, to understand the evo-
lution and transformation of cultural
life of industrial workers, inside and
outside the workspace. Returning to
Marek Korczynski, we fully agree with
his reflection on the lack of attention
to cultural studies in the workplace:

“If we take an inquiry into how
people live with and against the
structures of rational capitalism
as one of the starting points for
contemporary cultural analysis,
then the lack of attention given
to cultural practices within the
labour process is an alarming one.
This is because the labour process
represents the point where the
contradictions of capitalism are
at their sharpest, and it is there,
therefore, where we may learn
much about how people use cul-
trual practices to live with and
against the rational structures of
contemporary capitalism.” (Korczynski 2011: 88)

And so, as Betty Messenger in her
splendid work has already shown, it is
through the analysis of cultural-music
experiences that we can gain a deeper understanding of the implications of the introduction of the contemporary industrial production model in a very specific society, the Minorcan one, but with consequences that can be transferred to territories that are culturally and socially similar.

The objective of our research was therefore: understand how the social mechanism of singing and listening to music inside and outside the factory had evolved, to understand the processes of resistance, resilience and social adaptation to the capitalist times of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries in Minorca. And thereby open the door a little more to building the cultural story of the industrial working class in the Catalan-speaking regions. We still have a long way to go.

BIBLIOGRAPHY


NOTES

1. Although the relationships between leisure and musical attitudes towards industrial work in Catalunya had already been explored earlier in an article by Albert Garcia Balañà (1995), which we cited in this article and in the body of the report several times.
3. Person in charge of cleaning the shoes before putting them in boxes to take them to the storeroom.
4. Person in charge of cutting the leather to make the shoe.
5. Another of the possible arguments, suggested by some interviewees, about the change of repertoire, apart from what we have mentioned, is that many of the workers in the shoe guild, especially in the eastern towns of Minorca, Mahon, es Castell, Alaior, were anarchists or socialists before 1936, and many of their songs were of a political nature. With the repression of the post-war period, therefore, these songs were forgotten.