MUSIC GEOGRAPHIES AND ICONIC MUSIC LEGENDS: MAPPING CÉLINE DION'S OUTSTANDING CONTRIBUTION TO MUSIC AND GLOBAL POPULAR MUSIC CULTURE

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ABSTRACT

Between music geography and iconic music legends, a strong connection has been established in terms of spatial and temporal analysis of popular music and the representation of national identities in the contemporary global cultures of popular music. The existing literature unveils a gap in the analysis of music geography and famous musicians, real global music icons identified with particular cultures. This paper argues that such music legends must be geographically studied to unveil their outstanding contribution to the world music cultures. Against such a background, a geographical approach that takes Canadian singer Céline Dion as a case study is developed. The research aims to analyse Dion's outstanding contribution to global music culture in both spatial and temporal terms. Based on the music industry emergence, the paper focuses on how and why Céline Dion appeared in global music culture and examines her outstanding contribution with specific reference to music cartographies and statistical research. National identity and related cultural issues beyond the music, lyrics, and performances are also addressed. The empirically led study is based on a multi-method approach and makes use of statistical data analysis, GIS methods, biographical inquiry, the analysis of lyrics and visual methodologies, all suggesting that Dion's contribution has greatly influenced the global popular music culture of the last few decades. Although the topics in question cannot be fully discussed within the limits of this paper, it highlights the importance of these issues and calls for further in-depth research to provide a new critical understanding of the intimate connections between popular music, legendary music icons and the recent perspectives in music geographies.

Keywords: music industry, cultural globalisation, diffusion, music scenes, famous artists

INTRODUCTION

This paper deals with music and geography since these fields are "intimately connected" and a legitimate topic of academic research (Johansson & Bell, 2009, p. 1; Anderson *et al.*, 2005). Music is "one of the world's defining products" (Florida *et al.*, 2010, p. 787), a singular form of symbolic expression shaping human existence (Lull, 1987), a part of people's lives and human experience. It is a universal cultural norm, an expression of human culture (Johansson & Bell, 2009; Lashua *et al.*, 2014; Levitin, 2006), and "a means by which cultures defined themselves" (Throsby, 2002, p. 2). Music is an agent in the social and cultural reproduction of space and everyday life (Cohen, 1995) with a key role "in the formation of social life and identity" (Milburn, 2017, p. 3) providing multiple opportunities to gain new understandings in

geographical analysis based on its continuous development over space and through time (Kearney, 2010; Waterman, 2006). Consequently, music “is by nature geographical” (Hogan, 2007, p. 1). It could be used as a platform for specific topics, arguing the contribution of high-profile musicians and emphasizing the global issues of their music (Kearney, 2009, 2010).

Acknowledged “as perfect models of consumption” (Till, 2010, p. 71), global music legends shape representative spatio-temporal pathways in music consumption and thereby influence the global cultures. A review of the existing literature in the field of geography revealed a gap in terms of scientific inquiry into geography and music, especially examining the living famous artists and their contribution in the global popular music culture. Several studies investigated passed away music icons as Beatles, Elvis Presley and Frank Sinatra (Kruse, 2004, 2005; Fraser & Brown, 2002; Milburn, 2017; Rodman, 2013). Since musicians’ behavior is highly encouraged to be geographically studied (Florida *et al.*, 2010) and geographers have only very rarely investigated major figures and legendary music icons of popular music (see Milburn, 2017, p. 3), this paper aims to fill this hiatus. It focuses on music geographies and living music legends and particularly on the global music icons with a geographical study of Céline Dion’s outstanding contribution to global music culture and on the worldwide cultural influence of this global fame songstress, a real phenomenon in the global music mainstream (Grenier, 2000, 2002). Dion is one of the best-selling female artists of all time and an iconic legend in the contemporary global music culture. “After 35 years as a performing and recording artist, Dion has become a legend of popular music, one of the most powerful and moving voices ever heard” being the 6th most admired woman on the planet (Dahlgreen, 2016; Bouvia, 2017).¹ She is a Canadian singer who has diffused her music from local audiences to the world through domestic music deterritorialisation and cultural globalisation (Brown *et al.*, 2000; Connell & Gibson, 2004, 2009; Richardson & Wilkie, 2015).

Living music legends contribute to the spatio-temporal development of local and global music cultures shaping representative pathways in music production and consumption, and in local, national and global identity representation, influencing the world’s cultures. Since the diffusion of music in recent decades has expanded through commercial and digital broadcasts, recordings and tours (see Lashua *et al.*, 2014; Shuker, 2016), legendary musicians have removed the cultural borders, with people recognizing their common identities through music (Smith, 1997). Where different boundaries (national, political, cultural, artistic or musical) have maintained for various reasons, music has had the power to penetrate them. Consequently, Dion’s music has crossed the globe, sharing the real values of music and culture. This songstress became one of the most important artists in the world, a global living legend promoting the identities of French and English music (see Grenier, 2000).

Thoroughly admired, with a global popularity or sometimes criticized, Dion remains one of the most iconic legends of the global music culture. Since the spatial focus is relevant in the contemporary culture of popular music (Florida & Jackson, 2010; Milburn, 2017), the overall goal of this research is to advance a geographical analysis of how music has made this singer a global music legend. In addition, the main objective of the study is to map and discuss Dion’s musical career through the lens of a geographical approach to provide professional maps using GIS methods and to present a spatio-temporal geographic examination of the outstanding musical contribution of this artist to music and global popular music culture.

¹ See <http://www.celinedionforum.com> and www.celinedion.com, Accessed September 2017.

MUSIC GEOGRAPHY AND LEGENDARY MUSIC ICONS: TOWARDS A THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

The main issues in music geographies were considered in the following theoretical background. In line with different states of the art in music geography recently provided by different scholars as Milburn (2017) and prior by Byklum (1994), Johansson & Bell (2009), Kearney (2009, 2010), Carney (1987a, 1987b, 1990, 1998a, 1998b), Cohen, (1995), Kong (1995), Leyshon *et al.* (1998), Revill (2005), all the studies in music geography remain influential for decoding the intimate connections between geography, music and legendary artists. The older studies highlight traditional approaches to music, with cultural hearths and spatial patterns of diffusion, key factors in the geographic analysis of music. The complex patterns of diffusion have been found to engage economic development through the emergence of the commercial music industry, advances in information/communication technology and globalisation. Therefore, local music has expanded into contemporary global music through music legends from various cultural hearths all-across the world, generating certain spaces where famous musicians are strongly internalised by fans, people, audiences and communities. Their delimitation is important, particularly when music legends are involved given the strong relationships between music, place, identity, musical practices and music demand (Leyshon *et al.*, 1998; Lieb, 2018).

Since music is “a mirror of society” (Attali, 1985, p. 4), the interchangeable connections between music, culture and the role of economies in music evolution have been discussed without paying much attention to the famous musicians’ contribution in the global music cultures. As music permanently inhabits the geographic space (Hudson, 2006), in the same vein music legends are iconic figures for different communities, with a spatio-temporal involvement from local to global cultures influencing places and identities. This approach stated by Cohen (1995) emphasises the meaning of music as residing in “a cultural form that actively produces geographic discourses and can be used to understand broader social relations and trends, including identity, ethnicity, attachment to place, cultural economies, social activism and politics” (Johansson & Bell, 2009, p. 2). In light of this argument, scholars have focused on music related to the sense of life, to place and cultural identity, to music scenes and the relationship between local and global. Traditions and cultural diffusion, music cartographies and the analysis of lyrics to decode the geographical meanings of music were also unveiled (see Anderson, 2004; Bennett, 2000; Bennett & Peterson, 2004; Carney, 1974, 2003; Cohen, 2017; Connell & Gibson, 2003; Gibson & Connell, 2004; Hudson, 2006; Finn & Lukinbeal, 2009; Kong, 1995, 1999; Kruse, 2003, 2005, 2009; Kuhlke, 2009; Pesses, 2009; Romig, 2009; Stokes, 1997; Young, 2002). These studies argue the relevance of music geographies by revealing the ways music artists diffuse their cultural values, which are then internalised by different communities worldwide.

The cultural diffusion has enabled music to be consumed under the umbrella of globalisation (Shuker, 2016) and of new creative industries, because music is an integral part of these industries, one that has rapidly expanded in space and time. It dominates markets and media environments and creates music scenes the world over (see Florida *et al.*, 2010; Throsby, 2002). Globalisation is also the background of the music legends production. Through cultural globalisation, music has been the main contributor to the creation of iconic music performers as products and agents of world music, intensely demanded by a large audience. From 1987, world music has connected the local to the global and the traditional with the modern, thus deterritorialising cultures and spreading music worldwide. Therefore, music broadly expanded (Florida *et al.*, 2010) starting to be largely diffused from the West (Connell & Gibson, 2004)

shifting places and identities and producing “a displacement of place by space” (Brown *et al.*, 2000, p. 438). In this context, music legends are agents in the cultural diffusion of cultural values and music contributes to the spatial diffusion of various musicians based on consumer demand, turning them into famous artists, thus constructing iconic music legends.

Through digital recordings, broadcasting, internet and media, tours and live concerts, consumers and music fans have been always connected to their favourite artists. Therefore, the cultural diffusion of popular music appeared as a multi-channelled process (Waterman, 2006) (re)producing social systems through the spatial distribution of music, musical activities and performers. Hence, music hearths, music diffusion, geographic delimitations of areas with certain musical traits and musical traditions connected to place and identity remain meaningful (Kong, 1995) and could be associated with different music legends. The above-mentioned elements have been incorporated into a global culture with music production, distribution and consumption sustaining iconic music legends that are now recognised and in demand worldwide. Against such a background, a key merit is given by music industry expanded through the rapid emergence of creative industries (Leslie & Rantisi, 2017). They are part of economic development and assumed an important role in many global economies over a period of significant economic evolution across the twentieth century (Florida & Jackson, 2010; Hracs *et al.*, 2016), governed by technology, tastes of music consumption, commercialism and music marketisation (Smith, 1997).

Musicians became unique actors, their music being an important economic resource for social, cultural and economic development (Florida & Jackson, 2010; Hudson, 2006). From a classic creative industry, popular music has become broader and produced intangible products, involving cultural producers, agents and various market actors (Caves, 2000; Florida *et al.*, 2010). Through the global cultural flows and spatial networks (Kearney, 2010; Lovering, 1998), they turned popular music into an agent in the spatial distribution of music values, producing important music performers and iconic music legends. Their music penetrated by global structures and spatio-temporal mobility reflects the economic importance of arts and music on a global scale (Brown *et al.*, 2000; Banks *et al.*, 2000). That is because music is always in a state of movement. It travels through commercial activities and artists' tours (Finn, 2011; Lashua *et al.*, 2014), being (re)produced by cultural events and economic networks. Music became a mobile cultural expression (Connell & Gibson, 2004) sustained by music legends travelling worldwide and sharing their music (see Milburn, 2017). Therefore, “music and fans, collectively, share their common musical tastes” (Bennett & Peterson, 2004, p. 1) in specific places, creating authentic music scenes and music legends. This aspect is particularly visible regarding legendary musicians who perform worldwide.

Music scenes appear to be music locations for the music industry (Florida *et al.*, 2010; Florida & Jackson, 2010; Kruse, 2009a) and for the production and consumption of music (Kong, 1995; Kruse, 2005). They are places for music practices and performances illuminating authentic connections with mainstream music, audience demand and famous musicians (see Forman, 2002; Krims, 2007). As live music is a key feature in contemporary society (Frith, 2012), music scenes are sites of live performances of living legends, where producers and consumers meet for production and consumption to take place. They frame regions spatially delimited by those large markets offered by cities and regions where artists perform (Florida *et al.*, 2010). Furthermore, music scenes are produced by the concentration of musicians in geographical centres (Currid, 2007), providing opportunities for unique artistic goods to be produced and consumed in certain places and in different ways, articulating the geography of inequality (Lloyd & Clark, 2000; Smith, 1997). As music scenes, cities are homes and venues for global

music legends and often places to which global music icons are embodied identifying themselves in many ways through fans, through music production, or through feelings framed by the various senses of belonging. Furthermore, music scenes are sites of music consumption connected to specific artists and to communities' demand for specific musicians perceived as music legends (Glaeser *et al.*, 2001; Johansson & Bell, 2009; Kearney, 2009).

Against such a background, iconic music legends are prominent artists, whose lives, careers and songs have constructed important traditions in music mainstream, setting their performances on the world's cultural map. According to Beauregard (2002, p. 3), "every musical decade has embraced its superstar acts that generated iconic music legends, branding the global popular music culture stardom" and they must be studied to gain new understandings into the pathways shaped by their music in world's cultures. In spite of being only emblematic figures of popular music, these artists are legends through their commitments to other areas across the social, cultural, economic and political fields. Iconic music legends have influenced world cultures, people's way of life and regional and local communities. They are universally recognized through performances, sales, awards and humanitarian involvement. Iconic music legends are devoted to their audiences and fans and contribute to the production of music scenes as veritable locations for live performances. Concerts, awards, chart statistics and in-demand performances are important features in the music legends construction. Since music and global audience produced legends, in 2011, media brand Billboard established the *Billboard Icon Award* to recognize singers and their contribution to global music culture.² The *Icon Award* is the highest form of worldwide recognition an artist can receive, often marking a career that has spanned decades and is deserving of respect and admiration. Only a few select performers have received the *Icon Award*, with Céline Dion joining the list in 2016.³ Even though she was already considered a music legend, this recognition officially turned this artist into a worldwide iconic music legend with a global recognition.

METHODOLOGY

Since case studies remain an important facet in music geography research (see Anderson, 2004; Cohen, 1991; Milburn, 2017), this study focuses on Céline Dion artist, a global music living legend, with an outstanding contribution to music and to global popular music culture. The research was conducted between 2016 and 2019.⁴

The first step of this investigation was an inventory of available data concerning Dion's musical career. A huge database of spatio-temporal information was uncovered.⁵ It was approached

² According to Billboard www.billboard.com, Accessed September 2017.

³ Legends officially recognized: Neil Diamond, Stevie Wonder, Prince, etc.; see <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sIJbFawC>, Accessed September 2017.

⁴ The starting point of the research was the time after Dion officially received the Icon Music Award by Billboard, May 2016.

⁵ The analysis of statistic data was an attempt to comprise the data on the artist's albums, tours and concerts as accurately as possible. Due to various sources of information providing different data or due some inexact values during the data processing, some minor errors may occur ($\pm 0-5\%$), without altering neither the main spatial and temporal results at different geographical scales, nor the general findings of the study on the outstanding contribution of the artist to music and global popular music

through a set of methods. The topic's complexity required geographical methodologies that overlap with other fields of research (Smith *et al.*, 2017). Therefore, a multi-method approach was used. In line with the general aim of the investigation of the career evolution, from the initial cultural hearth of Quebec to a musical involvement with a global reach, biographic analysis with autobiographies, biographies and discourse analysis related to narrative research (Roberts, 2002; Shuker, 2016) provided meaningful information on Dion's artistic life, involvement and musical commitments. Hence, biographic textbooks, video and online biographic documentaries were useful. Then, quantitative research, as a key method in gaining accurate findings in music geography (Cohen, 1995; Florida & Jackson, 2010), was used.

Statistical data analysis based on multiple variables was useful in acquiring objective results to assess Dion's contribution to global music. The statistical method provided critical, explanatory and correlational analysis (bivariate correlative research). The main variables considered from available sources were international tours and concerts examined per continents and countries, albums sold per continent, home videos, and tickets sold, the music scenes (as places of performances) and the gross sales. In addition, the spatial distribution of the artistic activities from Dion's hometown to far across the globe was examined. The data was mapped highlighting that musical cartographies and maps remain relevant to study this phenomenon from a geographical perspective (see Finn & Lukinbeal, 2009; Florida & Jackson, 2010). The maps were realised using ArcGIS Desktop 10.3.

Quantitative cartographic methods using graduated symbols were used, providing a representation of worldwide spatial distribution of concerts per continent and country and highlighting each music scene in which the artist performed. The qualitative research was based on the internet resources and digital environment using visual methodologies as key methods in geographical approach on music (Connell & Gibson, 2004; Rose, 2016). The research made use of the internet since its "potential to increase the connectivity across the world" (Verboord & van Noord 2016, p. 59), contributes to the popular music diffusion thus reaching to a global audience. Specifically, YouTube, online videos and materials, suggested by Chenail (2011), Rogers (2010) and Rossetto & Andrigo (2017), were used to assess Dion's musical contribution. Special attention was paid to the official YouTube channel of the artist and to YouTube statistics included in Social Blade database. Through these channels the artist's most highly ranked songs in online videos considering the numbers of viewer 'likes' and comments as representations of the cultural perception and popularity were analysed. A number of 18 videos were studied. Given the extraordinary amount of data available online, selecting relevant media materials and data was difficult.⁶

culture. Since different albums are still on sale in the present days and the album sales are an ongoing process it is difficult to determine certain and complete results on the total album sales.

⁶ Internet search returned in October 2017 an enormous amount of results: 14,100,000 results including 5,890,000 video materials, 186,000 news and 45,100 texts. In December 2019, Internet search returned an approximate value of 97,600,000 results in 0.49 sec., 40,600 000 videos in 0.19 sec., and 8,050,000 news in 0.13 sec. The selection was difficult. However, 50 video clips, 100 live performances, 30 documentaries, and 30 TV shows have been examined. Articles from specialized magazines, documentaries and concerts produced by Laporte & Snyder, 2010; Lamoureux *et al.*, 2008; Lamoureux & Snyder, 2009, 2010, 2013, provided relevant information. Statistic data processed in the study and available up to 2014 was selected from <http://www.celinedioncharts.com/online> accessed during the research. The maps are based on <https://www.setlist.fm/> with data available in 2016. Internet resources and websites with data and information were approached under the *fair use*

To portray Dion's music and to understand its meanings and messages, discography and videography analysis (with English and French versions) helped with careful consideration of the messages that the artist has attempted to convey to her global audience. Therefore, phonographic methods through listening investigation, songs research and lyric analysis – as suggested by Carney (1998b), Gallagher and Prior (2014), Gallagher *et al.* (2017) – provided important information.⁷ This helped in understanding how this iconic music legend gained her unique international music stardom mirrored in the outstanding contribution of the artist to global popular music culture and in the musical meanings of her performances. Based on this methodology, the next sections unveil the main findings.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

From the Quebequois dream to a musical career with a global reach: music, identity and place through a biographic analysis

Born in Charlemagne near Montréal in 1968, Dion first expressed her wish to become a singer at the age of five. When she was twelve, she sang to her first official audience (Caraman-Fotea & Nicolau, 1999). Music has been Dion's passion for as long as she can remember,⁸ and her native town was the first cultural hearth from which her music started to resonate. To investigate Dion's outstanding contribution to global music, one must look at it in three separate stages that shifted different music types, identities and places.

The first stage (1980-1990) stands on the French identity diffusion and national music culture enrichment and reveals multiple changes in music industry when Dion appeared on the Canadian music scenes. Her first albums were released in French, and in a short period of time, her music expanded in Europe (France) and Asia (Japan). These were some of the regions where she would go on to register huge success. A distribution contract through EMI, diffused her music in Europe with the first single released in 1982. Her performance at the World Popular Song Festival in Tokyo, where Dion represented France (organized by the Yamaha Music Foundation) won a Gold Medal and a special prize. This event was watched at that time by 115 million TV spectators. This enormous success under the French identity was acknowledged by the Quebecer authorities with Dion receiving the local mayor's recognition for the great honour offered to Canada, Quebec and Charlemagne (Beauregard, 2002; Dion & Germain, 2000). Thereby, this space officially became the cultural hearth of Dion's French music.

In 1983, Dion represented Canada at MIDEM (International Market of Disc and Musical Edition, Cannes) and became the first Canadian artist to win a global award. Four albums released in Canada, a French single and four ADISQ awards (the Quebecer version of the Grammys) completed Dion's contribution to French popular music, which was then diffused in Germany. A number of new albums and singles were released in Canada and France, distributed by Trans-Canada Music Company and she won five Felix Awards – the most anybody had won to date. Even though she sold almost one million albums in Quebec, CBS Records (Toronto) had not heard of her. This was a consequence of national cultural and

regulation since online public data can be used without copyright permission in research, educational purposes and scholarships with non-profit and non-commercial aims.

⁷ Based on the author's personal collection of materials (original albums and DVDs).

⁸ As Dion officially admitted; see <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cJXvDFN-pxE>, Accessed July 2017.

political tensions since English Canada ignored the cultural values of French Canada and vice-versa (Beauregard, 2002; Hurley, 2011). In 1987, a contract for an English album was signed to be released under Carrer (CBS). A large tour with 42 live performances followed in Quebec, and Dion's English album was distributed in Europe (Denmark, Spain and Germany). The French-Canadian chanteuse started her English performances by including English songs in her repertoire, which would ensure a larger audience and new music markets. Attending the 1988 Eurovision Contest in Dublin (Ireland), Dion represented Switzerland and won, watched by 600 million European TV viewers. With all of this success, the UK and Germany had still not adopted her songs. However, she won four ADISQ Awards in Canada. In 1990, CBS Recording released Dion's first English album (*Unison*) and sold two million copies (Beauregard, 2002).

A new stage began in 1990 and continued until 2000, which transformed Dion into an international singer with an outstanding career. This stage saw massive internationalisation of her music through different channels: tours, live performances, new albums with impressive sales, media and broadcasts. The continuous development of music industry contributed to Dion's success in the coming decade. CBS was bought over by Sony International to become Sony Music Canada with a branch in Quebec (Sony Musique). In 1991, a \$10M contract – the biggest for any Canadian to date at that time – was signed for five new albums over the next 10 years. It was fulfilled in less than five, and a new contract followed. This decade brought the most important successes for Dion all-across the globe (including the UK and Germany), with her music officially acknowledged in the Anglophone music markets. The first large US tour started in the 1990s with other tours completed in Asia, Australia and Europe. New singles and another English album, *The colour of my love*, were released worldwide together with a French album and a special Christmas one. In 1994, Dion recorded a huge success, with *The power of love* holding the No. 1 position on the Billboard Charts for four weeks.⁹ In the same year, her sold-out shows at the Olympia Music Hall in Paris ended with a recording of a live album, *A l'Olympia* (Glatzer, 2005; Gerra, 2007; Beauregard, 2002; Jones, 2001). Dion has continued to perform worldwide in French, promoting her native language through her music. Consequently, the important French album released in 1995 (*D'Eux*) became the best-selling Francophone album with a huge impact in France and Canada. Thus, Dion was acknowledged as the No. 1 artist in France and another French album was released. In Japan, huge sales were recorded by *To love more*, one of the artist's most emblematic hits (Laporte & Snyder, 2010; Dion & Germain, 2000).

In 1995, Dion was the biggest selling artist in the French and English languages and in 1996 new tours and live performances were held at international music scenes including Marseille, Lyon, Paris, London and Brussels. The new album, *Falling into you*, was released worldwide alongside the single of the same name. The album was a best seller in almost every country with its songs ranking highly on the Billboard charts. A new worldwide live tour started with 148 concerts from America to New Zealand covering every important music scene of the world. Dion sung not only in French and English, but also in Spanish and German, unveiling a multicultural approach in her artistic performances that in the US culminated in more than 250 concerts. Two short concerts were held in Las Vegas at the Caesar Palace, which would go on to host her emblematic residency show. In addition, many European cities hosted Dion's live concerts across France, Belgium, UK, Germany, Netherlands, Sweden, Italy, Norway, Switzerland and cities as Paris, London, Dublin, Berlin, Milan alongside other many European cities became important music scenes both for the artist and for Dion's fans. The album *Falling*

⁹ According to <https://www.billboard.com/articles/columns/chart-beat/7743569/celine-dion-biggest-billboard-hot-100-hits>, Accessed July 2017.

into you held the number one position on the Billboard chart for three weeks. The French music industry also achieved huge international recognition with the albums *Live à Paris*, *D'Eux* and *Falling into you*. More than 1.5 million spectators attended Dion's concerts and at the Opening Ceremony of the Atlanta Olympics in 1996 where the artist performed her *The power of the dream* anthem in front of 200,000 spectators and 3.5 billion TV viewers. It was a huge international performance for a French singer. The tour that opened in 1996 continued accompanied by other epic representations in Japan, Korea, and Montreal, performing on the most important music scenes across four continents (Beauregard, 2002).

Dion's musical contribution made her next studio album the most anticipated album in 1997. *Let's talk about love* overlapped with the release of the *Titanic* movie, which brought further international success. The song *My heart will go on* – the theme song of the motion picture – became one of the artist's most important hits, registering huge success worldwide. The song also recorded the largest radio audience ever, being No. 1 all around the globe. The reason stands on the emotional love message of the song that touched millions of people worldwide and on the exciting movie multiple awarded at that time unveiling on the background of Titanic disaster a true and dramatic love story. Besides, love appears to be as the major topic in Dion's songs. The true love expressed and shared through the moving music and the moving voice of the artist is the core argument for people, and fans appreciate Dion as a unique songstress. Following this huge success, the artist performed at the Oscars Awards Ceremony for a third time. A new world tour then started, spanning 15 months with more than 2.3 million tickets sold. At the same time, a new French album was released. Dion's outstanding contribution to global music cultures turned her into an international artist in the global popular music. Thereby, to frame her contribution in a single product, the album *All the way – A decade of songs* was released with its content varying from "one region of the world to another, to reflect the songs that had more impact in some regions" (Beauregard, 2002, p. 24). Two important moments were then designed: an impressive event in Montreal on 31 December 1999 – *The Millennium Concert* – to which fans from all over the world attended, tuned in on TV and the TVA Network; and a break in her musical activity. The major reason for the break was her desire to become a mother, which she described as the most important thing in life (Laporte and Snyder, 2010).¹⁰ It happened in 2001, when her first child was born (Dion & Germain, 2000).

Following this period, **a new artistic journey started** and has not stopped despite various changes in the artist's life and in the global music industry. The key features of this stage were: new studio albums and compilations; a new residency show in Las Vegas – a real music scene for the fans and tourists from round the world who have the chance to see Dion in person there (see Lamoureux *et al.*, 2008) and a new epic world tour, *Taking chances* (2008-2009), with Dion being joined by all her music team and family. A special documentary was released then to unveil the most important cultural issues of the tour and Dion's own personality-experiencing people, places and cultures through music. The film portrays the cultural traits of Dion's behaviour related to different cultures of the world. Place, identity, peace, human rights, politics, love, cultural diffusion and diversity, true human values, music perception and related themes were illustrated, triangulating Dion's artistic and personal involvement in global music cultures. Humanitarian commitments, philanthropic endeavours, care, respect and unconditional love for people, cultures, nations and world identities are some of the key

¹⁰ See also <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yRsoPiKR1bY>;

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oLcq3W1cKyc>, Accessed July 2017.

features that define the artist in the contemporary culture of global popular music (see Laporte & Snyder, 2010; Lamourex & Snyder, 2009, 2010, 2013).

In 2011, Dion's Vegas show was re-launched, with the artist now a mother of three children.¹¹ Between 2011 and 2019, live concerts and performance were held in Las Vegas, the artist's long-run residency show ending in 2019, after 16 years of live performances with 1,141 concerts, shared with more than 4 millions of fans (Katsilometes, 2019). At the same time, Dion continues touring in 2016 and 2017 in different European countries with multiple sold-out shows. Since 'the show must go on' – a powerful motto in the artist's life (see Lamourex & Snyder, 2010) – a new regional Asia-Pacific tour was held in the summer of 2018 and new musical projects started: a new large world tour designed for 2019-2020 and a new English album released at the end of 2019 (both of them under the title *Courage*).

All these demonstrate that Dion continues to represent one of the most demanded artists in the world, and the artist, with a legendary career spanning almost four decades, continues to share her music and her love with millions of fans worldwide being on top positions in the contemporary music industry. That is because the people and fans all over the world demand both for Dion's music and Dion artist. In this respect, the singer continues her musical commitments with the fans and the music and this artistic involvement goes on.

Towards a statistical analysis

Turning the brief biographic investigation to statistical analysis, the data show relevant issues of Dion's career and the impact of her music on global music cultures. The first investigated item focuses on her albums. Table 1 shows worldwide albums sales (French and English). Of these, 26 were studio albums¹² – a real record for an artist. Due to sales data, all albums were internationally awarded with tens of millions of copies sold worldwide. English albums account for more than 50 percent of the gross sales. They include the most important songs placed in the top positions of the international music charts.¹³ Of these, the most relevant remains Billboard, the world music Bible of all times (Beauregard, 2002). The French albums are detailed in Table 2, showing the same patterns of success. Statistics on album sales at a regional scale (Table 3) reveal the artist's sales in North America, with over 83 million copies sold in the US and Canada. These massive sales are due to most Dion's fans being from her native Canada and with the US becoming her country of residence (Laporte & Snyder, 2010). Europe is the second top-selling continent, with sales exceeding 50 million. The impressive sales in France, UK, Germany, Switzerland, Austria, the Netherlands, Ireland, Norway, Sweden, Denmark, Finland, Spain, Italy, Portugal, Poland, Hungary and Belgium are justified for many reasons.

Firstly, the music industry and media development were responsible for the spatial distribution of Dion's music, as some of the most important global music companies supported the singer's management. CBS (Canada, France), Columbia and Carrere (France), Epic (UK, Japan), Sony Musique Canada, Sony 550 US and Sony Music are all international companies with an important role in the global economy of music (Shuker, 2016) and made a decisive contribution in the spatial diffusion of Dion's albums. Secondly, consumption of Dion's music and public demand

¹¹ See <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oLcq3W1cKyc>, Accessed July 2017

¹² According to *Today Show*, available at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fYJSMd2gSeA>, Accessed December 2016.

¹³ According to Billboard, available at <https://www.billboard.com/articles/columns/chart-beat/7743569/celine-dion-biggest-billboard-hot-100-hits>, Accessed July 2017.

were determinant, as communities enjoyed the artist both from media channels and live in concert. Overall, Sony Music had and still has a key role in Dion's music production and in the spatial diffusion of the artist's albums. In addition, an outstanding contribution in Dion's successful career had René Angélil as Dion's husband and musical manager.

Table 1: Statistics on albums sales 1981 – 2014

	Album title	Year / Released	Copies sold in millions	Percent	Awarded
1	First French albums	1981-1990	1.3	0.73	YES
2	Unison	1990	3.1	1.74	YES
3	Dion chante Plamondon/Dion sings Plamondon	1991	1.2	0.67	YES
4	Céline Dion	1992	5.4	3.04	YES
5	The color of my love	1993	16.6	9.34	YES
6	Céline Dion á l'Olympia	1994	0.8	0.43	YES
7	D'Eux/From them	1995	7.7	4.31	YES
8	Falling into you	1996	30.3	17.07	YES
9	Live á Paris/Live in Paris	1996	2.3	1.30	YES
10	Let's talk about love	1997	32.1	18.09	YES
11	S'il suffisait d'aimer/If only love could be enough	1998	3.9	2.19	YES
12	These are special times	1998	12.1	6.81	YES
13	Au coeur du Stade/At the heart of the Stadium	1999	1.2	0.69	YES
14	All the way... a decade of songs	1999	22.5	12.68	YES
15	The collector's series Vol. 1/Tout en amour	2000	2.6	1.47	YES
16	A new day has come	2002	10.5	5.90	YES
17	One heart	2003	5.1	2.90	YES
18	1 fille&4 types	2003	1.4	0.81	YES
19	A new day – live in Las Vegas	2004	1.2	0.69	YES
20	Miracle	2004	2.6	1.48	YES
21	On ne change pas	2005	1.2	0.67	YES
22	D'elles	2007	0.7	0.40	YES
23	Taking chances	2007	3.4	1.90	YES
24	My love. Essential Collection	2008	2.6	1.47	YES
25	Taking chances world tour	2008	0.4	0.23	YES
26	Sans attendre	2012	1.4	0.76	YES
27	Loved me back to life	2013	1.5	0.87	YES
28	Un seule fois	2013/2014	0.1	0.06	YES
29	Other albums	2014	2.3	1.31	YES
TOTAL		1981-2014	177.7	100	

Source: <http://www.celinedioncharts.com/byalbum.html>, Accessed May 2017.

Table 2: Statistics on French album sales 1981 – 2017

Album title	Year/ Released	Copies	Awarded Certified
La voix du Bon Dieu/The voice of God	1981	50,000	NO
Céline chante Noël/Céline sings Christmas	1981	25,000	NO
Tellement j'ai d'amour/I have so much love	1982	125,000	YES
Les chemins de ma maison/The paths to my home	1983	100,000	YES
Du soleil au coeur/Sunshine in the heart	1983	50,000	YES
Chants et contes de Noël/Songs and tales of Christmas	1983	50,000	YES
Les oiseaux du bonheur/Birds of happiness	1984	50,000	YES
Les plus grands succès de Céline Dion/Greatest hits of Céline Dion	1984	75,000	YES
Mélanie	1984	175,000	YES
C'est pour toi/That is for you	1985	50,000	YES
Céline Dion en concert/Céline Dion live	1985	50,000	YES
Les chansons en or/The Golden songs	1986	150,000	YES
Incognito	1987	500,000	YES
The best of...	1988	100,000	YES
Dion chante Plamondon/Dion sings Plamondon	1991	2,000,000	YES
Les premiers années/The first years	1993	250,000	YES
Céline Dion a l'Olympia/Céline Dion at the Olympia	1994	1,500,000	YES
D'Eux	1995	8,000,000	YES
Céline Dion Gold	1995	250,000	-
Céline Dion Gold 2	1995	75,000	-
Live à Paris/Live in Paris	1996	3,000,000	YES
C'est pour vivre/It's to live	1997	50,000	YES
The Collection 1982 – 1988	1997	50,000	-
S'il suffisait d'aimer/If only love could be enough	1998	6,000,000	YES
Au couer du Stade/At the heart of the Stadium	1999	1,000,000	YES
1 fille&4 types	2003	1,400,000	YES
On ne chage pas	2005	1,200,000	YES
D'elles	2007	700,000	YES
Sans attendre	2012	1,400,000	YES
Un seule fois	2013/2014	100,000	YES
Encore un soir/One more night*	2017	1,500,000	YES
Un peu de nous**	2017	80,082	YES
Total	1981 -2017	30,105,082	

*According to Montet, 2017;
**According to: UnPeuDeNous @celinedion certifié Album Or" (in French). Syndicat National de l'Édition Phonographique. 4 September 2017.

Source: Beauregard, 2002; <http://www.celinedioncharts.com/byalbum.htm> Accessed May 2017.

Table 3: Statistics on album sales per continent 1991 – 2014

Album title	Year	America	Europe	Asia	Africa	Oceania	Total
		Album sales (in thousands)					
Unison	1991	2,425	500	100	40	20	3,085
Dion chante Plamondon	1991	400	710	45	35	5	1,195
Céline Dion	1992	4,705	280	275	80	60	5,400
The color of my love	1993	8,325	4,855	2,395	300	725	16,600
Céline Dion à l'Olympia	1994	260	400	50	45	5	760
D'Eux	1995	1,100	6,085	150	300	22.5	7,657.5
Falling into you	1996	15,850	8,247	3,630	1,350	1,260	30,337
Live à Paris	1996	365	1,740	100	90	20	2,315
Let's talk about love	1997	15,550	10,120	4,530	1,200	745	32,145
S'il suffisait d'aimer	1998	790	2,675	150	250	25	3,890
These are special times	1998	7,550	1,849	2,050	500	150	12,099
Au Coeur du Stade	1999	110	935	75	100	10	1,230
All the way a decade of songs	1999	11,950	5,581	3,750	900	360	22,541
The collector's series Vol. 1	2000	1,375	765	300	150	25	2,615
A new day has come	2002	5,050	3,603	975	600	255	10,483
One heart	2003	2,775	1,498	475	300	100	5,148
1 fille&4 types	2003	238.14	1,020	75	100	10	1,443
A new day: live in Las Vegas	2004	699.1	329	100	80	15	1,223.1
Miracle	2004	1,345	540	100	100	45	2,630.5
One ne change pas	2005	220	820	75	60	10	1,185
D'elles	2007	240	388.5	40	35	7.5	711
Taking chances	2007	1,605	1,123	360	200	95	3,383
My love: Essential collection	2008	960	1,331	245	50	21	2,607
Taking chances World Tour	2008	231	126	30	20	7.5	415
Sans attendre	2012	310	971	35	30	5	1,351
Loved me back to life	2013	620	781	45	80	21	1,547
Une seule fois	2013	21	78	10	5	1	115
Total		83,694.74	57,350.5	20,165,000	7,000	4,025.5	174,111.24

Source: Processing data according to <http://www.celinedioncharts.com/byalbum.htm>, Accessed May 2017.

Beyond the market reasons, Europeans recognized part of their cultural identity in Dion's music, which acted as a driving force for consumption, especially in France and in countries where the French language is spoken. Following the release of English albums, there were no borders between Dion's music, people, audience, spaces and places. This is demonstrated by strong sales in South Africa, Asia, Australia and New Zealand. The reason stands on the cultural and language globalisation, with these regions being either areas where English is spoken or regions where, in spite of the different national languages, English appears as a universal way of communication through music. This also explains Dion's music consumption in other language areas under the contemporary cultural globalization.

Globalisation flows ensured the spatial diffusion of Dion's music in many countries, even though statistical information for most of them is not available due to various reasons including political systems (Eastern Europe, South America), cultural differences and economic

status (Asia), reduced sales in some regions, music piracy, and the huge influence of YouTube (see Hui & Png, 2003). Sales in Switzerland, Ireland and France are consequences of Dion's attendance at Eurovision and other performances, these countries being the European cultural hearths of her music, with important communities of fans. In the same vein, Asia discovered Dion since she won the Yamaha Contest in Japan. Dion's music has spread to every continent, reaching out to people of different cultures and identities, with all of them resonating with the universal expression of her music. Even though according to available data showed in Table 1 and Table 3 that counts over 200 million albums, overall, Dion has sold over 250 million albums worldwide as of 2016,¹⁴ making her the biggest female artist of all time – a true legend in global music cultures¹⁵ and a singer with one of the most famous voices in the world.¹⁶ The pattern of how Dion became successful around the world based on the album sales is argued by the massive involvement of the music companies in the diffusion of the albums all around the world where the artist made relevant communities of fans. This is arguable by the high rates sales of the most relevant albums from America to Asia and Oceania. Table 3 illustrates this pattern of the artists' global success that can be related to the tours data unveiled in table 4. The most relevant tours all-across the world were close connected to Dion's new released albums to share and promote globally the music from the native places of the artist to far across the planet (from America to Australia and New Zealand). This fits to the new released album *Courage* in 2019 accompanied by a world tour from America to Europe and Middle East.

The Pearson correlation provides a high rate (0.901) between albums sold and number of concerts per country with the US, Canada, France, the UK, Japan and Australia being positioned in the top ten countries where the artist has performed (Figure 1). A similar value (0.9281) establishes a correlation between albums sold and tickets sold (Figure 2). Statistical correlation argues that Dion's tours and concerts were produced in different countries, where she was in demand, experiencing people and cultures and their diversities. Dion's in demand music and performances are argued by the historic residency show from Las Vegas, a sold out spectacle for four years in a row,¹⁷ as her European tours from 2016 and 2017 were, with multiple sold-out shows in music scenes including Paris, Avers, Montreal, Quebec, etc.¹⁸ These patterns illustrate the high correlation between the number of concerts and grossing sales value in 2014, with a rate of 0.9467 (Figure 3).

A comparative approach between statistics of album sales and the live-concerts and tours in the last decade illustrate a decreasing trend of the album sales in favour of concerts and live-performances. This is because the artist always paid attention to live artistic commitments to the fans, people and audience, involving live concerts thus ensuring continuously a direct contact between the singer and the fans and audience. On the other hand, this is argued by the artist's passion for live singing in the front of the people, either in her musical residency or live in concerts and different other events. Adopting and practicing always live performance

¹⁴ According to Today Show 2016, Sony Music, 2019 available at <https://www.sonymusic.co.uk/news/2019-11-15/celine-dion-releases-new-album-courage>; other source mention 185 million records worldwide; see <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8KoBHrcSMs>, Accessed July 2017.

¹⁵ *Ibidem*.

¹⁶ *Idem*.

¹⁷ *Idem*, See also Lamoureux *et al.*, 2008.

¹⁸ According to Retrospective 2016 available at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wWE0vnMAGvQ>, Accessed July 2017 and Retrospective 2017 available at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ecU1GnV3mhM>, Accessed January 2018.

certainly is the key argument for the music authenticity of the artist, for the artist's respect to her audience and for the public appreciation of a wider audience.

Nevertheless, in line with music industry emergence and based on a professional music management, such an artistic perspective brought to the artist important financial profit. In this regard, the data show Dion's income based on albums sales, world tours and her Vegas show. Statistics reveal increasing an evolution of gross sales between 1983 and 2009, with the *A New Day* and *Taking Chances* tours being the most profitable (Table 4).

Figure 1: Pearson correlation between sold albums and the number of concerts

Figure 2: Pearson correlation between sold albums and the sold tickets to live concert

Figure 3: Pearson correlation between gross sales value and the number of concerts in 2014

Since 2011, with Dion's return to Caesar's Palace in Vegas, she has continued to achieve significant income and remained one of the richest artists and one of the most important and wealthiest female musicians in the world based on music industry (Forbes Magazine, 2017; Martin *et al.*, 2016; Matthews, 2018; O'Malley-Greenburg, 2016). In all, the residency show from Vegas cumulated 1,141 spectacles in 2019 with more than four million tickets sold. In addition, an impressive amount of sold tickets was registered in the latest European tours from 2016 and 2017, as well as in the Asia-Pacific tour (2018). In the same vein, the ongoing

critically acclaimed Courage world-tour received positive reviews being considered as one of the best live shows of 2019 according to Billboard (see Warner, 2019). Beyond this status highlighting the role of music industry in the global popular culture, the most important remains the worldwide fans and people's demand for Dion's live concerts and albums. This question is argued by the different extents of album sales all around the world and by sold-out concerts from America (USA and Canada), to Europe (France) and Asia.

Table 4: Statistical data of most important international worldwide tours and concerts 1983 - 2009

Tour	Year	Number of concerts	Tickets sold	Gross sales	Continents and countries
Les chemins de ma maison	1983-1984	40	40,000	200,000	America: Canada; Europe: France.
C'est pour toi	1985	36	45,000	400,000	America: Canada
Incognito	1988	75	150,000	1,500,000	America: Canada
Unison	1990-1991	75	150,000	2,000,000	America: Canada
Celine Dion	1992-1993	74	500,000	12,000,000	America: USA, Canada.
The colour of my love	1993-1995	98	1,300,000	33,000,000	America: USA, Canada; Europe: France, UK, Switzerland, Netherlands; Asia: Japan
D'eux	1995	47	500,000	13,000,000	America: Canada; Europe: France, UK, Switzerland, Netherlands, Belgium, Ireland, Germany, Norway, Sweden, Denmark.
Falling into you	1996-1997	148	2,220,000	80,000,000	America: USA, Canada; Europe: France, UK, Switzerland, Netherlands, Belgium, Ireland, Germany, Norway, Sweden; Denmark, Italy; Asia: Japan, South Korea; Australia; New Zealand.
Let's talk about love	1998-1999	97	2,300,000	133,000,000	America: USA, Canada; Europe: France, UK, Switzerland, Netherlands, Belgium, Germany; Asia: Japan, China; Australia;
A new day	2003-2007	723	2,930,000	390,800,000	America: USA
Taking chances	2008-2009	132	2,300,000	279,200,000	America: USA, Canada, Mexico, Puerto Rico; Europe: France, UK, Switzerland, Netherlands, Belgium, Ireland, Germany, Finland, Sweden, Denmark, Italy, Czech Republic, Poland, Austria, Monaco; Asia: Japan, South Korea, China, Malaysia, UAE; Australia; Africa: South Africa.
Total	1983-2009	1,545	12,435,000	945,100,000	

Source: <http://www.celinedioncharts.com/concerts.html>, Accessed May 2017.

The global sales of Dion's home videos show the same pattern of musical success. Table 5 illustrates that more than 5 million of video copies were sold with high rates in America and Europe that brought multiple awards.

Table 5: Statistics on home videos sold worldwide with a continental approach (1991 – 2010)

Title / Year	America	Europe	Asia	Africa	Oceania	Total	%	Most successful country	Awards
	(in thousands)								
Unison / 1991	80	10	5	1	1	97	1.92	Canada	1G
The colour of my love / 1995	285	205	100	25	35	650	12.89	USA	3P
Live a Paris / 1996	80	220	50	15	3	368	7.30	France	4P
Live in Memphis / 1998	75	72	20	5	2	174	3.45	Canada	3G
Au Coeur du Stade / 1999	40	170	40	30	5	285	5.65	France	1D
All the way, a decade / 2001	470	195	150	25	55	895	17.75	Australia	5P
On ne change pas / 2005	25	120	10	5	1	161	3.19	France	5P
Live in Las Vegas / 2007	1,015	422	100	150	65	1,752	34.74	Canada	3G, 8P
Céline sur les plaines Live à Paris / 2008	105	53	3	2	0.5	164	3.24	Canada	2G, 2D
Céline. Through the eyes of the world / 2010	261	67	30	25	15	398	7.89	Canada	-
Other videos	-	-	-	-	-	100	1.98	-	-
Total	2,436	1,534	508	283	182.5	5,044	100		9G, 25P, 3D
Legend: G – Gold; P – Platinum; D – Diamond									

Source: <http://www.celinedioncharts.com/byhomevideo.html>, Accessed May 2017.

Countries from Asia, Africa and Oceania are also places where Dion's home videos were sold. These statistics argue that the music industry is one of the most profitable in the contemporary global economy as artists are in demand by audiences the world over. This is argued by the most successful sales acknowledged with important awards in terms of Diamond, Platinum and Gold prizes. They were multiple times achieved by Dion, from the countries of the native continent to Europe and Australia. The analysis of this issue shows countries as Canada and France prevailing. These awards say important things about relative standing of the artist in top positions of various musical charts in different countries. On the one hand, Canada and France are countries with important communities of fans based on the place attachment of the artist to the native country and to the French people and culture. Then USA remains the country of the artists with relevant fans communities belonging to Anglophone culture. It also fits to the case of Australia where the synthesis album *All the way...* was repeatedly awarded with Platinum. Furthermore, data highlights Dion's music consumption based on the people's demand related to their cultural and musical preferences.

Within this context, the music consumption on a global scale and public demand for music, regardless of identity, age, religion and ethnicity, remain important (see Laporte & Snyder, 2010). For instance, considering the first-ever concerts scheduled for Taipei in July 2018, "over 300,000 fans desperately clambered to buy up the 20,000 seats available (...), causing the system to crawl to a standstill for 30 minutes" (Everington, 2018). This shows the huge demand from Dion's fans and the examples could go on. These findings demonstrate Dion's

outstanding contribution to music on a global scale in spatial terms. To understand geographically these facets, the maps remain relevant, conveying the spatial involvement of the artist through music cartographies across the world. They are disclosed in the next section.

Mapping and representing Dion's outstanding contribution in the global musical culture and beyond

Mapping Dion's live concerts worldwide from 1984 to 2017 argue the artist's outstanding spatial evolution at a global scale. From Western America to Eastern Asia and from Northern Europe to South Africa (Figure 4), Dion has shared her music and love with hundreds of communities of fans regardless of their location, nationality, cultural identity and ethnicity. As expected, the map reveals her presence in states where she registered important albums sales and large audience demand. Canada (the native country and the cultural hearth for the Dion phenomenon) and the US are the countries with the largest amounts of concerts with more than 1,000 live performances in the US alone. In Europe, France has enjoyed the live performances with over 70 concerts followed by Germany, the UK, and Belgium.

In terms of cultural background, France is the European music hearth of Dion's music due to her Francophone identity. Asia and Australia are also relevant destinations through globalisation flows of popular music. An interesting case is the UAE, with Dubai being a particularly strong music scene in this context. In spite of strong cultural differences, Muslims appear to highly appreciate Dion's music as evidences provided by *Taking Chances* world tour unveil. This fits in with other states in the region (Iran), also where large communities anticipated live performances in South-Western Asia (see Laporte and Snyder, 2010). Across the world, hundreds of cities and important music scenes have hosted the artist, including Las Vegas, New York, Memphis, Boston (US), Montreal, Quebec, Toronto (Canada), Paris (France), London, Glasgow (UK), Zurich (Switzerland), Tokyo (Japan), Seoul (South Korea), Beijing (China), Sydney (Australia), Johannesburg, and Cape Town (South Africa). They are mapped in Figure 5, next to other important cities where Dion has performed.

A detailed map of North America (Figure 6) illustrates the spatial distribution of the artist's concerts in Canadian and US cities, emphasizing the two distinctive regions. The Western part of the US stands out with Las Vegas remaining the most important music scene, with a continuous stream of live concerts. For years, Dion has travelled the world, taking her concerts to the communities where her fans live. With the Vegas show, the artist invited fans to join her. And they did, with Dion demonstrating that "no other artist on the planet could claim such a power of attraction", with over 700 sold-out shows and more than 3 million spectators "changing the face of Las Vegas forever and marking show business history for all time" (Lamoureux *et al.*, 2008). As it was already stated, in 2019, the Vegas residency-show culminated with 1,141 shows and more than 4 million spectators, arguing the in-demand status of the artist (see Katsilometes, 2019). Eastern Canada hosts such emblematic music scenes as Montreal, Toronto, Ottawa and Quebec, the latter being the native region of the artist, the place to which the artist is attached, and the place that she acknowledges as home, which has turned geographically into the cultural hearth of this music legend. The European music scenes relate to French culture and to those countries where the music industry is intensely developed (Figure 7).

Dion's presence is emphasised in places where her music is widely consumed and where European charts have ascribed her music top-rated positions. Paris, London, Dublin and Zurich are emblematic for the artist's tours. Overall, Dion has performed all over the world (with few exceptions, e.g. South America), travelling to share her music with all those communities that

cherish true cultural values and trust her talent, devotion and passion for music and singing. Economic social and cultural backgrounds played a key role in her presence in particular places. Globalised capitalist cultures and economies have enabled the artist to be present in Western European countries where the music industry has triggered both demand for and the consumption of particular artists' music. Even though Dion has been absent from Central and South-Eastern European countries, perhaps due to post-socialist political and economic transitions and to the slow-go paces in music industry and business development, they remain states where important communities of fans appeared. The ongoing *Courage Tour* includes for the year of 2020 important live concerts in states as Hungary, Croatia, Romania, Malta, etc., countries where the artist has never performed before. These countries are places and music venues where Dion is also in demand, and, as Figure 8 unveils, the artists' albums are currently on sale in stores specialized in music in cities from Austria, Hungary, and Romania. This statement fits to other countries across Asia, South America, and Africa.¹⁹ In this regard, Romania with Bucharest as a music venue for various emblematic artists is just an example alongside cities as Zagreb and Budapest in South-Eastern Europe.

Although the artist did not perform live in a number of states – arguing the geography of spatial inequality in music (see Smith, 1997) and generating certain delineated areas where she performed – her music has spread worldwide. Whether cultural, physical, economic and political borders separate these areas, the virtual environment appears more homogenous. The cultural perception of Dion's audience through YouTube channels shows important results. Table 6 illustrates the artist's most important music videos, with various songs viewed by tens of millions of people worldwide.

In all, the artist's videos have been viewed by more than a billion viewers (the 7th part of the global people), who have expressed a total *like* rate of 95.77%. This demonstrates alongside the YouTube comments' content the global admiration for the artist in the virtual environment, showing that Dion's music has penetrated all spatial, physical and virtual borders. The official YouTube channel of the artist registers 3.67 million subscribers and 2,149,421,608 video views in December 2019. These data are specific only for the official Dion's YouTube Vevo channel without considering the fans and virtual communities YouTube channels, where countless of video uploads are recorded with tens of millions of views. A complete analysis of this data is difficult to make, but at a glance at YouTube channel, Dion appears to be one of the most viewed artists of the world.²⁰ Furthermore, according to Social Blade channel, statistics show that the artist has 3.67 of million subscribers, with almost 1 million video views for the last 30 days of December 2019 (958,646). In all, in 2019 December, 30, Dion's YouTube channel recorded 11.471.229 video views with daily average subscribers of +2.66K, a monthly average subscriber of +18.6K. The average for the last 30 days in December 2019 was +89K. The situation of views shows a daily average of +31,955, a weekly average of +223,685 and for the last 30 days of December 2019, a value of +958,646. The prediction data for the next 5 years announce a value of 22,558,046 subscribers and an amount of 25,661,772 views.²¹ These data, correlated with particular statistics unveiled in Table 6, demonstrate the artists' success and an outstanding contribution to music and global popular music culture both in the physical and online environments.

¹⁹ Fans communities are relevant through fan clubs as Céline Dion Latino-America, Brazil, Argentina, Peru, Romania, Russia, Armenia, Morocco, Vietnam, etc. For a full list see <https://www.viralvagon.com/facebook/pages/celine-dion>, Accessed July 2017.

²⁰ According to various YouTube channels of different fans and virtual communities and to Dion's official YouTube channel visited in December 30, 2019.

²¹ According to Social Blade Channel, accessed online December 30, 2019.

Figure 4: The spatial distribution of Dion's concerts in the world (1984 – 2016)

Source of data: Setlistfm, 2017

Figure 5: Cities as music scenes where Dion performed (1984 – 2016)

Source of data: Setlistfm, 2017

Figure 6: American cities as music scenes where Dion performed (1984 – 2016)

Source of data: Setlistfm, 2017

Figure 7: European cities as music scenes where Dion performed (1984 – 2016)

Source of data: Setlistfm, 2017

Figure 8: Dion's albums on-sale in Villach (Austria), Budapest (Hungary), Bucharest & Braşov (Romania) (from vinyl *D'Eux* album, upper-middle, to *Encore un soir* and *Courage* CDs, lower-right side). Source: authors' photos 2018 – 2019

Table 6: Statistics on YouTube video views with like rates and commentaries

Analyzed songs	Views	Rate of likes %	Commentaries
I'm alive	176,781,871	94.52	20,591
That's the way it is	161,879,290	95.06	18,331
A new day has come	145,098,350	94.74	18,279
My heart will go on (official video)	135,428,894	96.29	39,035
The power of love	120,376,122	95.48	17,613
Pour que tu m'aimes encore	113,876,321	93.24	12340
It's all coming back to me now	99,493,941	95.91	15565
Ashes	76,721,509	99.99	51764
Parler a mon père	75,332,021	94.59	12,931
Encore un soir	62,250,347	93.26	11,322
I drove all night	54,200,642	94.61	6,019
Because you loved me	43,505,789	96.32	2,362
To love you more	21,665,607	95.42	3,944
Falling into you	10,889,428	96.20	1,277
Where does my heart beat now	9,554,511	96.56	2,895
Immortality	37,327,012	96.02	4,848
Courage	3,992,970	98.18	7,840
Flying on my own	3,653,081	97.56	3,020
Total	1,352,027,706	-	249.976
Medium average	75,112,650.33	95.77	13,887.55

Source: YouTube, Updated December 30, 2019

Beyond the physical and virtual, direct or indirect audience, Dion's contribution was recognised worldwide by countless awards. In 2016, she won the *Icon Award* at the Billboard Music Awards. It is the highest prize that a music legend would achieve in a lifetime as recognition of the artists' involvement both in global popular music and in other community backgrounds worldwide.²² Throughout her career, she has also received numerous awards for different artistic accomplishments: artist of the year, women of the year, favourite artist, best sales, best female albums, best singer, best movie soundtracks, most successful artist, top female artist, and top selling Canadian artist. These awards have come from Canada, the US, Japan, France, Switzerland, the UK, Malta, Germany, Spain, Denmark, Greece, South Africa, Poland, Hungary, etc. Numerous worldwide prizes have also come her way including the Billboard Music Awards, World Music Awards, American Music Awards, Grammy, Felix and Juno Awards. Dion was acknowledged as the *Millennium Entertainer* receiving an Honorary Doctorate in Music by Laval University (Quebec) for professional achievements in music and has won two Academy Awards. In terms of cultural and political contexts, Dion was awarded *The Order of Canada* and *The National Order of Québec* as an officer for her outstanding contribution to world music, for her worldwide musical influence and for her commitments to numerous humanitarian causes.²³ For her influence on the French language, she became a *Knight of the French Legion of Honour* and was decorated by the former president Nicolas Sarkozy in 2008 (Figure 9, left), who stated: "France thanks you because your talent and your success; you have taken our language beyond our own borders. It's extraordinary to have an artist who sings in French who takes our language to every continent."²⁴ Considering the sense of belonging and the cultural identity in her discourse (Figure 9, right), Dion dedicated the medal to her French family since she always recognized her French-Canadian identity worldwide as a proud Quebecois.²⁵ Her origin is the cultural heart of her music, reached to a global audience. In keeping with this, at the 1990 Adisq Gala, despite the global success of her English music, Dion refused *The English Artist of the Year Award* (Dion & Germain, 2000; Young, 2001; Wilson, 2014).²⁶

This demonstrates the sense of belonging and the place attachment of the artist. Her native language is practised in her family everyday life (see Laporte & Snyder, 2010), and Canada is always acknowledged as the artist's home. In keeping with Dion's place attachment to her native country and her native culture, places, people and fans, in the course of her 2016 Canadian tour, the artist said deeply emotional: "I am ecstatic to be home," while related to her native audience acclamation Dion stated: "I did not expect what happened tonight" (Retrospective, 2016). These statements argue the artist's identity mirrored in her native culture also confirmed by the *Medal of Arts and Letters*. It was offered to the artist by France's Minister of Culture to recognize the best-selling French-language artist in history, the Quebec artist achieving the most success outside the Province of Quebec, and the most success Quebecois artist in a language other than French. *The Governor General's Award* was honoured with a recognition medal on Canada's 125th Birthday for Dion's contribution to Canadian culture. As a Quebecois artist achieving the most success outside Quebec in the

²² According to <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sIJBfawCbKE>, Accessed July 2017.

²³ See <http://www.celinedion.com/about> Accessed July 2017; a complete list of awards is included in this website.

²⁴ Laporte & Snyder, 2010.

²⁵ *Ibidem*; see also Lamoureux & Snyder, 2013; Beauregard, 2002.

²⁶ See Dion & Germain, 2000; Beauregard, 2002. A video is available at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ivXa4mWebC4>, Accessed July 2017.

Francophone market, she was awarded the *Trophy of Radio France International/Francophone Council of Music*. Furthermore, *Victoires de la Musique Award* acknowledged Dion as the best Francophone artist. For the most successful Quebecois artist in a language other than French, multiple Felix Awards complete Dion's success in global music culture.²⁷

Figure 9: (left) Céline Dion receiving the Legion of Honour from France, President Nicolas Sarkozy in May, 2008. (right) Céline Dion's discourse dedicating the medal to her French-Canadian family

Source: Gulliver Trade, Romania, a master delegate of gettyimages, 2018.

Then *The Legend Award (World Music Awards)* in recognition of a top recording artist in terms of global success and outstanding contribution to the music industry was awarded. The Nevada Commission on Tourism acknowledged Dion as the *Entertainer of the New Millennium* for contribution in the bettering of the quality of life for Nevada residents and for the immense success of the Las Vegas show, a revolution in music industry. Many awards attest the humanitarian involvement as *ELLA Award (USA)* for contribution to music, humanitarian and community support as the artist has always been devoted to many humanitarian causes regardless of places, identities, cultures, races, or regions.²⁸ She supports the Foundation against Cystic Fibrosis – a fact that she has mentioned on all of her album covers. *Stand up to cancer*, *American Red Cross*, *Voices that care* (supporting the troops in the 1992 Gulf War), *Les yeux de la faim* (helping starving Ethiopians) are other humanitarian causes together with support to the victims of the terrorist attacks in New York in 2001, Paris in 2015 and recently Manchester and Las Vegas in 2017. Crossing cultures and music identities, Dion has performed together with important music legends with some of the best voices in the world, including Luciano Pavarotti, Andrea Bocelli, Barbra Streisand, Frank Sinatra, Mariah Carey, Aretha Franklin, etc.

As Dion has stated, through her music she is always thrilled to share her love with the world. Therefore, love is the major theme of her repertoire since she considers that everything in life

²⁷ See www.celinedion.com/about Accessed July 2017. The awards situation of the singer could be a new avenue for further research dealing with music, geography and the greatest rewards.

²⁸ See Laporte & Snyder, 2010, and Billboard at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xklZ5wysniE>, Accessed July 2017.

is based upon love and she shares the love with the world (through her music and fans).²⁹ Since her songs speak about love, miracles and power, when asked in Shanghai about China's future, Dion stated "if you follow your dreams it means you follow your heart. If you do follow your heart, I don't think you can go wrong" (see Laporte & Snyder, 2010).

Such messages transcending music are the main reasons for which this legendary music icon is worldwide appreciated. Songs like *The power of the dream*, *The power of love*, *Let's talk about love*, *Love can move mountains*, and many others remain emblematic as love is their central theme. Lyrics analysis demonstrated this finding, revealing that Dion's outstanding contribution to global music culture stands on the message conveyed in the music that she has performed. Love, trust, life, hope, joy optimism, courage, generosity, family and the landscapes of home and native places, prayers, memories, children and childhood, care for all those in need, peace, freedom and fraternity are relevant issues in Dion's music.³⁰ Overall, true values and real virtues are expressed in her universal music touching the audience worldwide.³¹

The moving messages conveyed in Dion's music make people find and resonate itself with the artist's music culture arguing the universal trait of popular music that appears as a pervasive mean of global identities and communication. In summing these questions all up, the song *Let's talk about love* remains emblematic portraying this issue, with the singer saying that: "Everywhere I go, all the places that I've been/Every smile is a new horizon on a land I've never seen/There are people around the world – different faces different names/But there's one true emotion that reminds me we're the same.../Let's talk about love... ." This is just an example. Therefore, Dion's outstanding contribution to global culture is confirmed through musical messages expressed through a unique and moving voice, through epic live performances, concerts and worldwide tours alongside her respect and admiration for the audience, fans, people and communities. In 2016, addressing her fans, Dion stated: "My voice does not resonate without you. You have made my childhood dream come true. I hope I have inspired you to reach out for yours."³²

Behind the signs of "divafication" (see Lister, 2001), Dion's music, career and life define her as a symbol of kindness, honesty and generosity, showing in her turn, respect and admiration for fans, audience, people, cultures, communities and the world's cultural values. Through music, the artist always shares her love and supports people regardless of their age, race, nationality and other cultural identities. Certainly, beyond the music, this is the most important contribution of an iconic music legend to the global popular culture.

CONCLUSIONS

This paper has dealt with the intimate connections between music geography and iconic music legends, taking Céline Dion as a case study. Its analysis has demonstrated the spatial focus relevance for music, unveiling the rise of Dion artist as a global music legend, with an impressive contribution to global music culture. Both issues are supported by the emergence

²⁹ According to *Making of Somebody love somebody*. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MzkJf9899rs>, Accessed July 2017.

³⁰ These findings are based on the analysis of lyrics.

³¹ See the statement in Laporte & Snyder, 2010.

³² According to <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wWE0vnMAgvQ>, Accessed July 2017.

of popular music through globalisation and music industry alongside the music consumption by the fans and communities and by the people admiration for iconic artists. Music industry has shaped representative pathways in music production and consumption, producing a large international audience for specific singers. As has been argued, artists' domestic music has been deterritorialised, replaced and diffused to a global audience, turning them into music legends based on the audience perceptions, admiration and public demand.

From her French musical hearth of Quebec, Dion's music has spread across the world through various channels of cultural diffusion. Supported by some of the most important music companies, by family, by fans from worldwide communities and through professional management, Dion developed her career through different ways. Recordings and epic performances were the most important music products, allowing her to reach out from her domestic public to a global audience that in time produced large communities of fans worldwide. Then, in line with music consumers' demand, important sell-out concerts and tours were realised worldwide to share the music with the world, demonstrating the global distribution of Dion's music. Specific pathways were followed in line with local, regional and global features of cultural and economic backgrounds.

The passion for singing allowed Dion to share her music with people through her unique voice, songs and performances, which has been internationally acknowledged. The French-Canadian songstress spread her French musical culture to France, Paris being both the most important European music scene and the cultural hearth for Dion's music diffusion in Europe. Dion's determination to be successful in the global music markets through fair competition and always striving for excellence brought her to Dublin and Japan where she won important prizes. This demonstrates not only her spectacular reach in Europe and Asia but also worldwide, as well as her preference to connect with a large international audience, even though she only performed in French at that time.

Turning to English music (without altering her native French identity of which the artist is always so proud), Dion soon dominated the Anglophone music markets and became the most important Anglophone and Francophone artist of her day. Continuous recordings and live performances in English and French, with numerous albums released and sold by the most important global music companies, kept the singer in the top positions of the global music charts. This pathway has been ensured by the singer's professional epic performances. Since gaining her worldwide success, Dion has continuously strived for excellence in her performances and devotion to her audiences regardless of their identity, age, gender, ethnicity, and religion. Respect and admiration for her audience made the singer a generous artist who through music has diffused her unique messages of love that made communities resonate in unison with her. Regardless of different cultural traits, people and communities find themselves in the same specific cultural identity of the singer and her music, thus demonstrating the universal expression of music as a cultural global product. Through recordings, tours and epic concerts on different worldwide music scenes, Dion has broadcast the music to her fans. Even though her residency show in Las Vegas ended, it remains emblematic in the global music industry and in music tourism for allowing people to join her live performances. With every show selling out for years, these concerts demonstrate the singer's unique power of attraction for people and the music consumers' demand.

Music cartographies have revealed particular delineating regions, unveiling certain geography of inequality in spatial terms. The key territories of the hegemonic Anglophone music industry prevail. In light of this finding of spatial heterogeneity, the virtual musical environment appears more homogenous since numerous communities of fans are present online in regions

where Dion has never performed live. Broadcast, TV and the internet are relevant channels by which her music is consumed and appreciated. Her outstanding contribution to global music culture can be seen in her gross sales, countless tours, sold-out concerts and personal recognition. Multiple acknowledgements from various awards offered by global musical forums and official national authorities are further testament to her outstanding contribution to global music culture. Dion is the only artist diffusing French and English music worldwide who has enriched the global culture of popular music in recent decades. She dominated both the Anglophone and Francophone markets for years, framing a unique cultural expression through which people find itself as part of Dion's music culture. It is argued by the music products as recordings, tours, epic concerts and sales worldwide developed and consumed by a global audience under the umbrella of its musical preferences and its cultural perception of the true values of popular music culture.

The findings of this geographical analysis testify Dion's outstanding contribution to music and to global popular music culture and it opens new fertile backgrounds for further research both on the present case study and on other legendary music icons of the world. Considering the first avenue, further research might focus on the cultural geographies of legendary artists, on their global recognition through greatest rewards and on the analysis of lyrics in different emblematic songs to understand why music of different famous artists has such a power of attraction to the wider audiences belonging to different cultural identities. Pioneering the links between music geographies and legendary music icons through this particular case study, this research opens new avenues for further research and invites for critical debates and academic dialogues on this complex and challenging topic related to geography, music and the geographical analyses of iconic music legends.

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This paper contains copyrighted material the use of which has not always been specifically authorized by the copyright owners. I make such a material available in my effort to advance understanding of music geographies in relation to legendary music icons through a particular case study. I believe this constitutes a *fair use of any such copyrighted material* as provided for in section 107 of the US Copyright Law. This material is distributed without profit, and no financial gain is followed by the author. The information of this article is for research and educational purposes with students and researchers in academic field. The paper has no commercial scopes being a geographic non-profit article for teaching, scholarship and research using positive academic criticism, commenting and reporting findings and results in the field of music geographies. The article has no defamatory content. The paper aimed to present, to map and discuss in a manner of positive criticism, through a geographical analysis, the outstanding contribution to music and global popular music culture of Dion legendary iconic artist.

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