

Framing and production of stardom in the digital age. Case study: Rosalía's *El Mal Querer* in the Spanish written press (2018-2020)

El framing y la construcción de estrellato en la era digital. Estudio de caso: El mal querer de Rosalía en la prensa escrita española (2018-2020)



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Abstract:

We still have not found academic research on the figure of Rosalía. Stardom in popular music within the framework of the digital age, as a phenomenon typical of post-massive societies, is an unexplored scientific realm in our country. Our main objective is to analyze the frames provided by the four main media agencies of the national general press (*El País*, *El Mundo*, *La Vanguardia* and *ABC*) around the Catalan star. After a narrative and rhetorical framing analysis of 331 articles, we have found a total of 10 culturally embedded frames. The results of the research show the presence of frames and counter-frames within the same media, which makes clear the complexity of the phenomenon and the polymorphic nature of stardom in the digital age, as well as the transformations in identity in globalized culture.

Keywords:

Rosalía and *El Mal Querer*; narrative and rhetorical framing; stardom in the digital age; digital culture and popular music; frames and press.

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Resumen:

Aún no hallamos investigaciones académicas en torno a la figura de Rosalía. El estrellato en la música popular dentro del marco de la era digital, como fenómeno propio de las sociedades posmasivas, es una parcela científica inexplorada en nuestro país. Nuestro objetivo principal es analizar los frames generados por los cuatro principales medios de la prensa generalista nacional (*El País*, *El Mundo*, *La Vanguardia* y *ABC*) al rededor de la estrella catalana. Tras un análisis de framing narrativo y retórico de 331 artículos hemos hallado un total de 10 frames culturalmente imbuidos. Los resultados de la investigación muestran la presencia de frames y frames antagonistas dentro de los mismos medios, lo que hace patente la complejidad del fenómeno y el carácter polimórfico del estrellato en la era digital, así como las transformaciones que experimenta la identidad en la cultura globalizada.

Palabras clave:

Rosalía y *El mal querer*; framing narrativo y retórico; estrellato en la era digital; cultura digital y música popular; frames y prensa.

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1. Introduction

We propose Rosalía as one of the most relevant mass phenomena of the digital age in our country. After the publication and dissemination of *El Mal Querer* (Sony) on November 2, 2018, the Catalan urban, *flamenco* and pop musician managed to become the most searched personality on Google by the Spanish population in 2018¹. Since her surprise concert in Plaza Colón in Madrid, through her interpretation of *Me quedo contigo* at the Goya 2019 festival and her appearance in Almodóvar's film *Dolor y gloria* (2019), we have not stopped witnessing its ubiquity in Spanish public life and its consecration as a global mass phenomenon.

Framed within a doctoral thesis project in social communication and music journalism, this article focuses on the journalistic treatment of this figure from the analysis of the frames generated by the Spanish press. Given our approach to a powerful and rapidly growing contemporary phenomenon, this constitutes the first academic and holistic approach to this novel object of study. Although we still do not find scientific literature on the Rosalía case or on the study of stardom in our country, we cite two exceptions belonging to the informative / essay field: the book *La Rosalía. Ensayos Sobre el Buen Querer* (Carrión, 2021), still unpublished at the time of writing this article, to be published by Errata Naturae on March 8, 2021. This volume, coordinated and orchestrated by the cultural critic Jorge Carrión, explores the various aspects of the cultural industry and the post-massive society that Rosalía, as a phenomenon, has brought to the public debate. On the other hand, the book *El Trap. Filosofía Millennial para la Crisis en España* (2019) by the philosopher Ernesto Castro dedicates a few pages to Rosalía's work as a *flamencamp* manifestation and her relationship with trap music as a soundtrack to the crisis in Spain.

In the same way, the application of framing theory to the study of popular music, both in the general press and in the fields of music journalism, is non-existent in the Spanish-speaking sphere and equally scarce at the international level (McClain, 2016; McClain and Lascity, 2019). As a reference for this methodology, we can take the narrative framing analysis applied to the media representation of topics such as dementia: the presence of culturally embedded frames that reinforce (dominant frames) or reject (counter-frames) the stigmatization of mental diseases that are associated with socially shared values such as personal fulfillment, autonomy or individualism (Van Gorp and Verduyck, 2012). In the case of framing from the international press of gender movements such as #MeToo, we also find the presence of archetypes, values and relevant metaphors when describing public personalities and their social roles: "The frames of objectives and agency create the image of strong women with a cause, contrary to the classic victimization frame applied to victims of sexual violence, which portrays a weak person" (Erickson, 2019: 8). These studies mentioned constitute methodological and conceptual references that lead this pioneering analysis of narrative and rhetorical framing applied to the journalistic representation of stardom in popular music.

Likewise, the study of stardom in popular music through the collection of essays entitled *Popular Music, Stars and Stardom* (Loy, Rickwood, Bennett, 2018) contributes to the academic dissection of stars in the context of the digital age. Due to its proximity with Rosalía's world, the chapter *Intimacy, Authenticity and 'Worlding' in Beyoncé's Star Project*

¹ Data extracted from Google Trends: <https://trends.google.es/trends/yis/2018/ES/>

(Macrossan, 2018) is of great interest, where the musical, narrative, aesthetic and conceptual notions that make up the universe generated by singer Beyoncé on the album *Lemonade* (2016) are analyzed through the lens of world-making. Following these precepts, the need for a universal approach in the investigation of the field of stardom and celebrity culture is evident (Marshall and Redmond, 2015). Thus, disciplines such as cultural studies and the conceptualization of identity as a discursive and historical process (Hall, 2003), the construction of collective identity through musical practice (Firth, 1996; Martí, 2000) or racism implicit in the ethnic differentiation incorporated by excluded groups (Mbembe, 2016), will be enriching contributions in the formation of our conceptual apparatus.

1.1. Stardom and popular music in the digital age

We define stardom as the collective recognition that an outstanding individual receives in a certain socio-cultural field (Loy et al., 2018). Being able to occur in areas such as sports, cuisine, cinema, politics or popular music, in the case of this research, we distinguish said phenomenon from the concept of “celebrity”, which refers to a more immediate and ephemeral fame that does not necessarily entail extraordinary abilities (Rojek, 2001; Busquet-Duran, 2012). We assume that stardom occurs within necessary conditions, since it is located within a hierarchy of talent (Rosen, 1981), is mediated by the consumption capital of the public (Adler, 2006) and is a phenomenon typical of a culture of masses where a globalized and detraditionalized language is favored (Cusack, 2011: 404).

Beyond mass culture, through the digitized ecosystem we are witnessing a change in modern communication paradigms that bring us closer to an interactive or postmassive culture model (Rizo García, 2013). In this framework, the relationships between stars and audiences are transformed, where the asymmetric relationship of idolatry is dissolved allowing more direct and committed forms of interaction (Marshall, 2010). In contrast to the passive viewer portrayed by the Frankfurt School (Horkheimer and Adorno, 1944/1988), the prosumer is the main agent responsible for the rise of new interactive online scenarios: the broadcast yourself phenomenon and collaborative blogs, the non-linear dynamics of hyperlinks and hypertext, forms of interpersonal / group communication through instant messaging, creative self-production, customizable streaming platforms or the creation of communities around conspicuous personalities. It is in this context where the star-system only manages to emphasize and expand its evangelizing power to a greater global and hyper-connected environment with greater speed. This is because the stars, invested with charismatic authority, enjoy “a privileged position in the definition of social roles and types, and this must have real consequences in terms of how people believe they can and should behave.” (Dyer, 1998: 8) .

In their role as semiotic-cultural (Dyer, 1998) and somatic-emotional (Redmond, 2015) receptacles, these public figures catalyze and reflect complex processes that contemporary identity goes through. In the case of Rosalía: the collision between tradition and modernity, the (in)visibility of women in the music industry and the tensions between the local and the global in the digital age are good examples of this (see section 3. Results). Whether through the mimesis of their extraordinary qualities or the morality extracted from their tragedies, the stars and the entire star-system act as a kind of contemporary mythology that, as happened with the heroes of ancient civilizations, satisfy the affective-mythical needs of the people (Morin, 1972; Busquet-Duran, 2012).

In the case of popular music, and according to data from the *VEVO Music Fan Report: The Millennial Fan Tribes* (2015), 51% of the subjects surveyed chose musical celebrities as vital references who hold the highest levels of perceived talent. Likewise, music is the most shared multimedia content position on social networks above television, cinema, humor or sports) (VEVO, 2015). It is in the most recent digitized context that we have witnessed the explosion of urban music, as well as the globalization of the exotic through Latin music and Rosalía's *flamenco* pop. This situation is indisputably favorable for the artists themselves, where the computer stands as the meta-instrument that controls all phases of creation (composition, recording, production, mastering and dissemination) (Márquez, 2010). The capacity for freedom and self-production that this technology allows brings us closer to a much more autonomous conception of the artist, which also has consequences on the dissemination of their work: "The immediacy and global capture of contemporary technology and social media provide greater opportunities for popular musicians to establish an audience base and then to operate more independently of the major industry players" (Loy *et al.*, 2018: 11).

1.2. Narrative and rhetorical framing in the analysis of the written press

The international prominence that framing theory has gained in communication studies in the last two decades is undeniable (Sádaba, 2001; Sabrina Koziner, 2013). Bryant and Miron (2004: 693) included framing as one of the "26 most distinguished theories" in the field of communication. On the other hand, since Robert Entman (1993: 51) evidenced the "fractured paradigm" of this theory, in the last two decades we have witnessed a concern and effort in the methodological solidification of framing (Tankard, 2001; Sádaba, 2001; Reese, 2001; Van Gorp, 2010; Van Gorp and Vercruyse, 2012).

By guiding applying this theory, of anthropological-sociological origins (Bateson, 1972/1993; Goffman, 1972/1986), towards research in communication and the media, "we opened an important field of analysis: Precisely how are issues constructed, discourse structured, and meanings developed?" (Reese, 2001: 7). From the multiplicity of meanings and proposals that the theory has taken in recent decades, the definition of frames proposed by Stephen Reese is very useful as "organizing principles that are socially shared and persistent over time, that work symbolically to meaningfully structure the social world" (2001: 11). This type of definition proposes the conception of a frame as a device that interacts with social reality, which we consider, under the vision of social constructionism, a story mediated and created by actors who handle shared information (Gamson and Modigliani, 1989).

Likewise, Reese's definition contemplates the notion of *persistence*, which produces, as a corollary, the consideration of frames as autonomous socio-cognitive structures that transcend the individuals themselves and their temporality (Polletta, 2004). We must consider that the frame not only is found in the manifest content of the text, but also in the tensions and relationships of the text-subject-culture nucleus (Entman, 1993; Sádaba, 2001). Given the characteristics of frames aforementioned and that, as we have mentioned, stars act as semiotic-cultural (Dyer, 1998) and somatic-emotional (Redmond, 2015) receptacles of the social collective that engenders them, we need an analytical tool sensitive to the symbolic content of these manifestations. The ability of narrative and rhetorical framing to extract deep meanings and reveal latent sociocultural structures seems the proper option when it comes to addressing the Rosalía phenomenon and its media reflection as a holistic object of study.

Given the novelty of the object of study, this research takes an exploratory nature and, necessarily, must limit its universe of action. Our choice when analyzing the reference Spanish written press resides in the enormous influence of the newspaper on multimedia formats: “Due to their greater experience in the world and in communication systems” (Cabrera González, 2001: 1), we observe how “newspapers provide an environment of credibility and proximity that most other media cannot provide” (Solís Baena, 2016: 177). This reference position of the traditional press is explained by three factors: i) “The provision of informative content”. ii) The presence of “qualified personnel”. iii) The maintenance of a “determined organizational structure” (Cabrera González, 2001: 1). Likewise, within the framework of the construction of stardom in the digital age, the phenomenon of media convergence (Jenkins, 2006) causes content between the written and digital press, and that of other media such as blogs, podcasts or social networks, to end up crossing. This ensures that the analysis of our sample does not constitute an isolated reality, but, on the contrary, is based on a living intertextual reality where the continuous dialogue – and therefore the presence of frames – between the newspaper and the rest of the formats constitute a representative and pertinent sample of the universe that we try to understand.

According to this conceptual framework, we formulate the following hypotheses:

Hypothesis 1 (H1): The frames produced around Rosalía help us understand and configure this phenomenon.

Hypothesis 2 (H2): The Rosalía phenomenon reflects the sociocultural processes that we go through as a civilization in the digital age.

Our derived objectives are:

O1: Extract the culturally embedded frames used by each medium.

O2: Relate each frame, in its culturally embedded character, with the substratum of collectively shared values, narratives, stereotypes, archetypes and metaphors.

2. Methodology

2.1. Sample

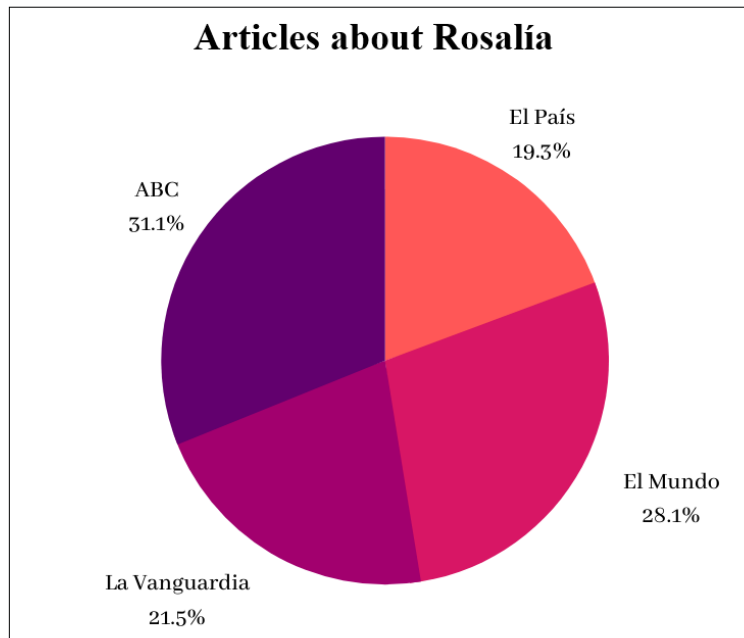
This corpus has been selected through the academic search engine *MyNews*, where we have placed as search criteria “Rosalía” and her presence in the title or subtitles of the four selected media agencies. The search is between January 1, 2018 (beginning of the year of the phenomenon) until March 15, 2020 (proximity of the 2020 Grammys and beginning of the COVID-19 crisis). We have chosen the four primary generic media companies with the largest national circulation and their respective supplements with cultural content: *El País* (together with *Babelia* and *El País semanal*), *El Mundo* (together with *El Cultural*, *La esfera de papel*, *Yo Dona* and *Metrópoli*), *ABC* (together with *ABC Cultural*) and *La Vanguardia* (together with *Cultura/s*)².

2 The selection criteria for these four media agencies is their volume of readers: excluding the sports press (Marca and As), the four selected media represent the top four positions with the largest national circulation. In addition, the ideological variety of the four sources allows us a more equanimous

From the total of 331 articles obtained we extract the following figures:

1 - <i>El País</i> = 64 articles	2 - <i>El Mundo</i> = 93 articles
3 - <i>La Vanguardia</i> = 71 articles	4 - <i>ABC</i> = 103 articles

Chart 1.



Source: own elaboration (table and graph)

2.2. Procedure

Our methodological proposal will proceed from the synthesis of three aspects of the framing analysis:

- a) The *narrative analysis* proposed by Baldwin Van Gorp (2010; Van Gorp and Vercruyse, 2012), a procedure that contemplates the notion of culturally embedded frames as “ news frames that express culturally shared notions

vision about the vision of the Rosalía phenomenon in Spain. Source: <https://es.statista.com/estadisticas/476795/periodicos-diarios-mas-leidos-en-espana/>

with symbolic significance, such as stereotypes, values, archetypes, myths, and narratives” (Van Gorp, 2010: 2). We will look for the relationship of each frame with deeper structures of collective thought (*cultural theme*), which will lead us to connect the topic of a news item and its treatment with values, narratives and foundational aspects of our culture (O2).

- b) The *rhetorical analysis* proposed by Jim Kuypers (2010), which contemplates the necessary integration of the researcher’s personality within the hermeneutical work, which enables the critical analysis of frames and highly symbolic phenomena (Igartua, Muñiz and Cheng, 2005). Given that qualitative research is deeply linked to a philosophical position (Vasilachis de Gialdino, 2006), rhetorical analysis considers the argumentation and justification of methodological, analytical and interpretive processes fundamental. Through this rhetorical approach, we ensure the rigor and interpretive validity that qualitative research must display in order to provide generalizable or extrapolated data.
- c) The understanding of each frame as a symbolic container with a *narrative sense* and guided by the frame functions proposed by Robert Entman (1993): definition of the issue, causes, moral evaluation and solution. According to the author, “to frame is to select some aspects of a perceived reality and make them more salient in a communicating text, in such a way as to promote a particular problem definition, casual interpretation, moral evaluation, and/or treatment recommendation for the item described” (Entman, 1993: 52). The reader is often not aware of this treatment of the information that, ultimately, has the purpose of influencing its own perception of the news and of social reality (Kuypers, 2010). Given the latent nature of frames (Igartua, Muñiz and Cheng, 2005), we must look for manifest indicators that signal their presence. These indicators are called *framing devices*, among which we find: titles, subtitles, images, quotes, final paragraphs, recurring arguments, figures of speech, set phrases or expressions, paratextual elements, the choice of vocabulary, the citation of related actors and the use of descriptions (Gamson and Modigliani, 1989; Entman, 1993; Tankard, 2001; Van Gorp, 2010).

Based on this framework, we propose an inductive analysis that will culminate in the development of a matrix for each framework. Given that “the intention of an inductive framing analysis is to reconstruct the frames that are useful to define a certain topic” (Van Gorp, 2010: 12), our inductive procedure will be guided by three phases proposed by Strauss and Corbin (1990), They are based on the precepts of grounded theory and are expanded by Van Gorp (2010)

- 1.- **Open coding:** we examined the texts “without the use of a predefined coding instrument” (Van Gorp, 2010: 15), identifying possible units of framing devices.
- 2.- **Axial coding:** next we group each frame device with “similarities, differences and contrasts between” the identified elements (Van Gorp, 2010: 15), forming larger conceptual categories.
- 3.- **Selective coding:** we will include the groups of frame devices within the narrative sense of the following categories of the matrix:
 - 1) Cultural theme.

- 2) Issue definition (problematic or not³)
- 3) Cause
- 4) Moral evaluation
- 5) Solution
- 6) Framing devices
- 7) Examples (verbatim quotes).

The use of a matrix will allow us greater systematization, clarity and replicability when generating the frames (Tankard, 2001). Given that we are faced with an object with a high symbolic load, the inductive methodology is suitable and sensitive to the sociocultural context that our analysis must integrate. On the other hand, the strength of grounded theory lies in “open coding and the use it makes of questioning and constant comparisons [that] enables investigators to break through subjectivity and bias. Fracturing the data forces preconceived notions and ideas to be examined against the data themselves” (Strauss and Corbin, 1990: 13). The following table is an example of the matrix used in this methodological process.

3 Jiménez-Yáñez (2000: 58) defines the issue as “the subject of the thought expressed” in a series of texts or news; adding the distinction of *problematic* issue as one “that creates social debate and resulting conflict” (Jiménez-Yáñez: 58). In problematic issues, conflict resolution is essential, whereas in normal issues there is an absence of conflict and, thus, do not require solution proposal.

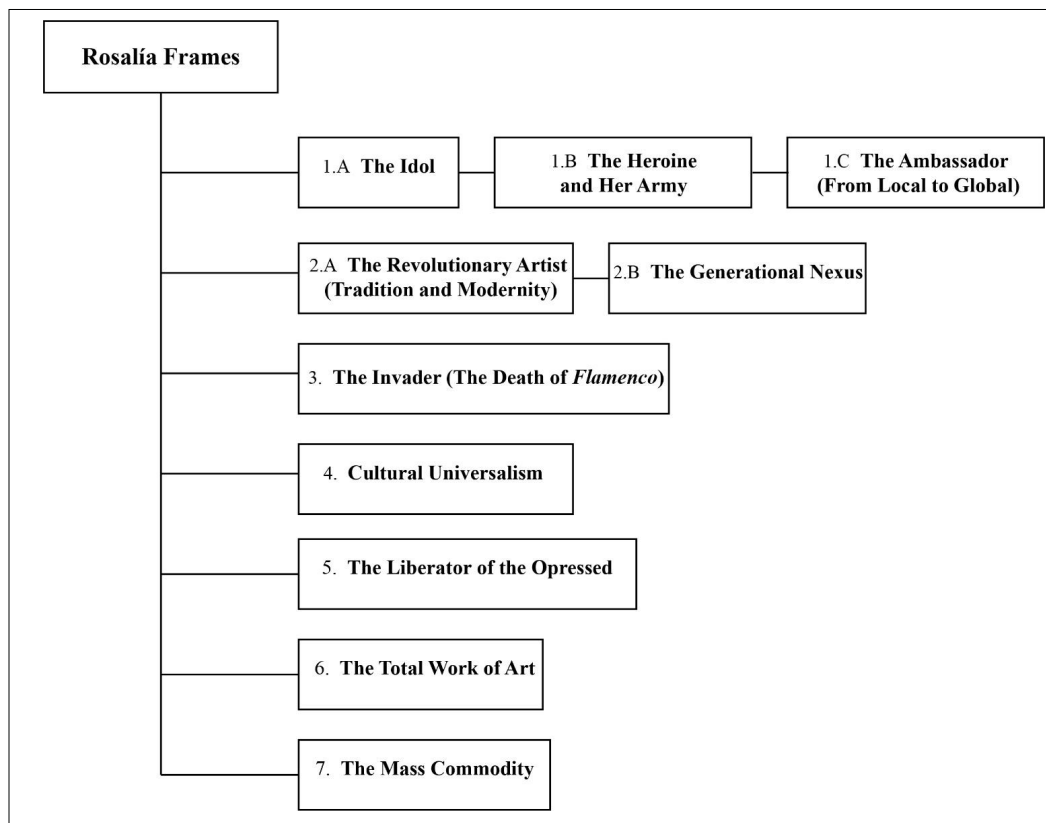
Table 2.

Cultural theme	Issue definition	Cause	Moral evaluation	Solution	Framing devices	Examples
3 - The Invader (The Death of <i>Flamenco</i>) [Problematic Issue] [Counter-Frame of "4 - Cultural Universalism"]						
The tradition / values of a group is threatened by the figure of the invader. There is a call to defense: <i>us versus the strangers</i> .	The work of singers such as Rosalía and El Niño de Elche is considered flamenco music by audiences. On the other hand, experts warn that the music of these artists does not fall within the parameters of the <i>jondo</i> .	Rosalía is a singer, not a <i>canta-ora</i> . The artist takes elements of <i>flamenco</i> and translates them to pop. This misunderstanding creates confusion in the unfamiliar public.	These artists show a lack of knowledge and skill regarding the execution of the rules of <i>flamenco</i> , thus damaging the genre. Rosalía moves within ambiguity, misleads audiences and degrades <i>cante</i> in a purely melodic solution.	There is a call to protect against the intrusion of those artists who do not meet the quality standards of the genre.	Choice of vocabulary: Intruders, confusion, <i>flamenco</i> music, misleading, demean, appropriation, controversy. Metaphors and expressions: the rules of the genre / takes it away from its roots. Actors related to the problematic issue: Niño de Elche, Pedro G. Romero, Israel Galván; "the 'false' sages".	"She is a singer who uses the <i>flamenco</i> repertoire to make pop, since it does not comply with the rules of the genre and distorts the <i>jondo</i> essence of the <i>cantes</i> " (García Reyes, ABC, November 25, 2018).

Source: own elaboration

3. Results

We present the total list of frames that we have obtained in each medium and their relationship with the context in which they are culturally embedded (O2):



Source: own elaboration

1.A - The Idol

Present in: *El País* / *El Mundo* / *La Vanguardia* / *ABC*

This frame defines the issue of the skyrocketing stardom and media presence of Rosalía after the publication of *El Mal Querer* through the use of a religious frame: a figure of worship or divinity (the Catalan artist) provokes a reaction of collective idolatry (the fan phenomenon; the “rosalieber”) within the framework of a religion (pop and mainstream culture). The following quotes and expressions are examples of said frame: “The young messiah in tracksuit” (Belmonte, *ABC*, February 5, 2019), “A contemporary goddess” (Álvarez, *La Vanguardia*, December 14, 2019), “She doesn’t need to open her mouth in order to have the *trupe* of «rosalieber» begging at her feet” (Higuera, *ABC*, June 17, 2019),” in the books on the history of music, the Rosalía brand is already patented “(Arbat, *La Vanguardia*, August 28, 2019a), “she

turns everything she touches into gold” (Domènech, *La Vanguardia*, August 28, 2019b), “the aristocracy of pop” (ABC, November 3, 2019), and “a voice capable of rapturing the masses” (Rigalt, *El Mundo*, February 10, 2019).

The representation of stardom in popular music through a religious frame is symptomatic of how we stand before a fully postmodern object of study: “Pop as a transversal and unifying phenomenon” (Morán, ABC, December 8, 2019), becomes the new religion of the masses. Stars and celebrities replace heroes, saints and other figures of worship, with stardom being the new “embryonic religion” and modern Parnassus to aspire to (Morin, 1972: 23). In the words of TvBoy, the Sicilian street artist who made a mural painting of Santa Rosalía in the Fossar de les Moreres:

I named the work *Santa Rosalía* so that the public can reflect on idolatry and the cult of entertainment icons in our contemporary society. Religious icons, as traditional objects of worship, are now replaced by the stars of music and influencers. That is why in this mural appears the new international *flamenco* pop star that I wanted to characterize as Santa Rosalía de Palermo, the patron saint of my hometown (TvBoy cited in *La Vanguardia*, January 10, 2019).

1.B - The Heroine and Her Army [*Counter-Frame of “7 - The Mass Commodity”*]

Present in: *El País* / *El Mundo* / *La Vanguardia* / *ABC*

The metaphor is the most direct rhetorical resource and mental shortcut when it comes to delving into collective forms of thought (Lakoff and Johnson, 1981). Metaphors such as *climbing* to the top, the *conquest* of cities or the act of *devastating* festivals are examples of outcomes that come from the act of achieving appealing values such as social success, media visibility or professional fulfillment of the individual at the peak of their career. Under this frame, Rosalía embodies these ideals that, in turn, are sublimated through warlike metaphors that emphasize the heroic/exemplary character of said attitudes: effort, discipline, leadership or total dedication to work are attitudes/values reflected in her quotes such as “I did not have a normal adolescence having given my heart and soul to *flamenco*” (Gil, *El Mundo - Papel*, October 30, 2018).

In this same sense, the notion of the “large and well-armed team” (Serrano, ABC, August 31, 2019) of professionals led by Rosalía evokes values such as camaraderie, achievement and collective cooperation synthesized under the popular phrase “strength in numbers”. This dynamic of collaboration is a reflection of the phenomenon known as hypermediation, under which we are witnessing a growing involvement of more intermediaries in all online processes due to the increasing complexity of the environment and digital transactions (Carr, 2000). In this sense, Rosalía’s holistic team reflects this growing hypermediation and specialization where, citing some examples, we find Rebeca León (booking manager), her sister Pili Vila (styling assistant and community manager), her mother Pilar Tobella (in charge of the Rosalía brand), Pablo Díez Reixa “El Guincho” (producer), Jaycen Joshua (mixer) or Charm La’Donna (choreographer). In summary, with the image of the heroine and her army, this culturally imbued frame poses how “behind the meteoric rise of the Catalan singer there is a whole team of managers, producers, composers, choreographers and stylists who have helped her to conquer the music industry music. The army with which Rosalía has achieved global success” (Serrano, ABC, 31 - 8-2019).

1.C - The Ambassador (From Local to Global)

Present in: *El País* / *El Mundo* / *La Vanguardia* / *ABC*

This frame portrays the figure of an ambassador representing a civilization abroad, exporting said culture beyond its limits and borders. Rosalía, the most international Spanish citizen since Julio Iglesias, is evaluated as “our best *flamenco-reggaeton* ambassador” (Serrano, *ABC*, November 12, 2019) and as “*prima donna cañí*” (Lucía Ramis cited in Peirón, *La Vanguardia*, 17 November 2018). In this way, this frame emerges through the use of contrasts between the Spanish idiosyncratic aspects (local) and the American culture (equated with global culture):

Table 3.

Local	Global
San Esteve de Sesrovires (Rosalía's hometown)	The Big Apple (New York)
<i>Quejío</i> , acapella voice, catalonian <i>flamenco</i>	<i>MTV</i> , U.S., <i>pop</i>
Spanish flags waving	Chicago Lollapalooza festival
She already has her own “ <i>caganer</i> ”	Global reach

Source: own elaboration

This framing compels the reader to avoid a pessimistic position, such as the ones involving the criticism of the ethnocidal dynamics of globalization (Moreno, 2002), to bring us closer to the internationalization of the artist as a desired value. In this sense, she is one of the agents in charge of expanding the Spanish brand and *flamenco* culture globally: “I come from Barcelona and I am so happy to be here and represent my country and my culture” (Rosalía stated in Domènech, *La Vanguardia*, August 28, 2019). Under this moral evaluation, *glocalization* is assumed as the triumph of “the identity reaffirmation of human groups, localization” (Martí, 2000: 55) in a global and digitized environment. In this context, Rosalía stands as “the first great global pop diva born with the skin of *the bull*” (Serrano, *ABC*, October 30, 2018), being a symbol of the power of identities in a digital and globalized world (Castells, 1997).

4 As an animal, the black bull stands as a Spanish typical symbol associated with *El Toro de Osborne* and the cinematographic work of Spanish directors such as Pedro Almodóvar and Bigas Luna. Functioning as a metonymy, the bull is a direct reference to Spain.

2.A - The Revolutionary Artist (Tradition and Modernity) [Problematic Issue] [Counter-Frame of “3 – *The Invader* (The Death of *Flamenco*)”]:

Present in: *El País* / *El Mundo* / *La Vanguardia* / *ABC*

This culturally embedded frame presents the artist as a prophet with the power to see *beyond*, capable of advancing the collective sensibility of civilization. The figure of the revolutionary artist is an archetype fed by the artistic avant-gardes of the early twentieth century (especially by the nonconformist character of futurism, cubism and abstraction). This revolutionary figure was extended to the collective imagination through the writings of the Russian painter Wassily Kandinsky in *Concerning the spiritual in art*:

There never fails to come to the rescue some human being, like ourselves in everything except that he has in him a secret power of vision. He sees and points the way. The power to do this he would sometimes fain lay aside, for it is a bitter cross to bear. But he cannot do so. Scorned and hated, he drags after him over the stones a heavy chariot of a divided humanity, ever forwards and upwards (Kandinsky, 1911/1979: 13).

In academic terms, this form of advancement in a certain craft or field of knowledge has the name of *creative contribution* or *propulsion* (Sternberg, Kaufman and Pretz, 2001; Harrison, 2018). Under this idea, Rosalía embodies the *synthesis* or *integration* model, which “represents an attempt to move the field by putting together aspects of two or more past kinds of contributions that formerly were viewed as distinct or even opposed” (Sternberg et al., 2001: 80). This synthesis impulse is reflected through the use of contrasts between the concepts of tradition (the organic character of *jondo* art) and modernity (the technological aspect of popular urban music):

Table 4.

Tradition, <i>tangos</i> , el duende ⁵ , <i>palos</i> , <i>bulerías</i> , old <i>cantes</i> , <i>cante</i> , <i>seguiriyas</i> , <i>cantaora</i> , <i>quejío</i> , flamenco dance, <i>paya</i> (white non-gypsy girl), fringed and ruffled traditional dress.	Versus	Contemporary, sample, autotune, pre-recorded tracks, subwoofers, electronics, trap, engine noise and car crash, experimental, <i>adidas</i> platform shoes.
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Source: own elaboration

In this way, this frame acts as an antagonistic frame (counter-frame) of *The Invader* (p. 14). Reflecting that the mechanism that allows the creation of “cultural identity supposes an incessant mediation between tradition and renewal, permanence and transformation, emotion and knowledge” (Hormigos, 2010: 94). This argument is also

5 *El duende del flamenco* (“the goblin or little elf of the *flamenco*”) references to a traditional *flamenco* myth and expression that represents the *soul* of this music. When we talk about the presence of “*el duende*” we mean that there has been truly inspiration and rapture in the context of a *flamenco* performance.

underlined by ABC in a manifest way: “An art that reinvents itself with herself and that enters the 2.0 era. Welcome to the *flamenco* of the 21st century by the hand of a global star that transcends genres. Tradition and avant-garde. For many years” (Escribano, ABC, December 11, 2019).

2.B The Generational Nexus

Present in: *El País* / *El Mundo* / *La Vanguardia* / ABC

In addition to representing an advance in her creative field (frame 2A - *The revolutionary artist*), the Catalanian artist, under the purview of this frame, functions as a generational bridge connecting *jondo* art and the millennial (1982-2004) and centennial generation (2005-present). Baptized as “Intergenerational *cante jondo*” (Neira, *El País*, January 18, 2018), her work and her figure play the role of nexus between two historically divided audiences (*flamenco* and mainstream), a union that “has enabled new generations to connect with a music until now reserved for purists” (*El Mundo*, March 5, 2018).

The aforementioned nexus function has been represented by other bands from the Spanish musical past such as Pata Negra, Kiko Veneno, Camarón de la Isla and Ketama, who introduced Baby Boomer (1943-1960) and Generation X (1961-1981)⁶ to *jondo* art. In the case of Rosalía, she is a new link that massively introduces flamenco to an intergenerational public and projects it to the global arena: “She is the voice of her generation, she is 25 years old and has hundreds of thousands of followers on Instagram, but her music equally attracts millennials who for the first time have approached *flamenco* and veterans with extensive musical background” (López Enano, *El País - Semanal*, September 16, 2018). In such a way, this nexus function is recognized as an important achievement in the musical history of our country: “To achieve massive and devoted attention for a *flamenco* song without contemporary effects, production tricks or artificial *jaleos*, is a more important triumph than the feverish response to the hits of *El Mal Querer*” (Rosalía’s concert at BBK 2019, Bilbao) (Benito, ABC, July 13, 2019).

3. The Invader (The Death of *Flamenco*) [Problematic Issue] [Counter-Frame of “4. Cultural Universalism”]

Present in: *El Mundo* / ABC.

This frame portrays the Catalanian artist as the archetype of the invader (representing the *strange other*, “the false revolutionaries of *flamenco*”) who threatens a group (*us*; the integrity and evolution of *jondo* art). This moral evaluation positions Rosalía inside an outgroup under the label of “intruders” (García Reyes, ABC, October 2, 2018) or “infiltrators disguised as transgressors” (García Reyes, ABC, October 2 2018). This outgroup of intruders mentioned includes El Niño de Elche, the *bailaor* Israel Galván, the intellectual Pedro G. Romero and Rosalía herself, all of whom make up the archetypal figure of *The invader* that, under this frame, cheapen the “*jonda* tradition” (García Reyes, ABC, September 30, 2018). Regarding the elements of cause and moral evaluation of said frame, we find that Rosalía “does not comply with the rules of the genre and distorts the *jonda* essence of *cantes*” (García Reyes, ABC, November 25, 2018) and “simply proposes a type of *flamenco* that does not pass the minimum quality controls” (García Reyes, ABC, October 2, 2018).

⁶ Dates drawn from Strauss-Howe generational theory (Strauss y Howe, 1997: 176–177).

The use of said vocabulary and expressions constitute frame elements that demonstrate a positioning and a moral evaluation regarding Rosalía's work and its harmful consequences for the *jonda* tradition. The creation of identity (*we*) by defining otherness (*the other*) is a basic mechanism in the construction of collectives (Luchetti, 2009). When this mechanism is polarized, that is, the superior qualities of the ingroup (*us*) are enhanced and the characteristics of the outgroup (*the strange other*) are excluded, it results in a typical dynamic of racist discourses (Van Dijk, 2016). Given that “frames are used to naturalize and justify ideologies” (Moernaut and Pauwels, 2017: 4), the frame of *The invader* imperatively calls to the ingroup (*flamenco* lovers and their sympathizers) to defend the purity of *flamenco* music .

Despite not directly showing such moral evaluations, the medium *El Mundo* also integrates this frame (reflecting the polyphony and the varied number of frames present in its ideology) highlighting two statements (paratextual elements) regarding Rosalía's music: “Rosalía has a lot of talent but her place is not *flamenco*” (Cristina Heeren Cited in Moreno, *El Mundo*, February 5, 2019), by Cristina Heeren, and “What Rosalía does cannot be called flamenco” (*El Mundo*, March 25, 2019), by *cantaor* José Mercé.

4. - Cultural Universalism [Problematic Issue] [Counter-Frame of “3 - *The Invader*”]:

Present in: *El País* / *El Mundo* / *La Vanguardia* / *ABC*.

The definition of this problematic issue lies in the accusation leveled by the gypsy community against the Catalanian artist, where her condition as a privileged *paya* (white non-gypsy) woman places her as a negative reference for the gypsy ethnic group and the *flamenco* culture. Unlike “*The Invader*”, this frame stands in defense of Rosalía promoting the mantra of “Culture has no owners” (Rosalía cited in Fajardo, *El Mundo: Metrópoli*, June 29, 2018).

As prominent framing devices we point out the use of Rosalía's own statements highlighted in subtitles and within the body of the text (paratextual elements): “we live in a global world where genres no longer exist” (Rosalía Cited in Fajardo, *El Mundo: Metropolis*, June 29, 2018). This perspective tries to deconstruct the essentialist vision of culture as well as the fundamentalist processes of exclusion/racism that result from the polarization between the ingroup (*us*) and the outgroup (*the strange other*) evident in the third frame “*The invader*” (Van Dijk , 2016).

If we consider *cultural difference* (eg: being gypsy or *payo*) as a social and historically constructed identity process hidden under the naturalizing idea of an “essence” or biologization of difference (McLaren, 1997: 147), then we can understand how “the difference appears as result of power dynamics and hierarchies incorporated by the excluded themselves” (Mbembe, 2016: 18). The need to affirm identity through the act of belonging to a group (and therefore, the need to exclude any individual who is left out of this categorization) is a survival mechanism that functions as “the inverted language of the desire for recognition and inclusion” (Mbembe , 2016: 321).

As a recommended solution, this frame claims the appreciation of cultural appropriation as an act intrinsic to the creative process and cultural evolution, an argument evoked by Picasso's famous sentence: “An artist copies and a great artist steals” (Belmonte , *ABC*, February 5, 2019). In the digital age, essentialist differentiation between groups is replaced by a more fluid characterization of traditions and cultures, a dynamic that moves us further and further away from cultural immobility: “ethnic conflicts actually arise when ethnic inequalities and systems articulated by racial

criteria begin to break down. And, without a doubt, one way to avoid conflict, in order to maintain a given *status quo*, is to remember that there are differences “(Martí, 2000: 180).

5. - The Liberator of the Opressed [Problematic Issue]

Present in: *El País* / *El Mundo* / *La Vanguardia* / *ABC*.

This frame evokes a female figure that guides an oppressed group towards emancipation. It is the allegorical figure that we find in the painting *Liberty leading the people* (1830) by Eugène Delacroix. The problematic issue addressed here is the patent lack of visibility and female leadership in the music industry sector. This criticism aligns with the agenda of the fourth wave of gender movements: public denunciation against sexual violence, mistreatment and oppressive agents; the search for justice and the urgent solution of an unfinished social equality proposal (Sternadori, 2019). In the words of Rosalía herself: “I will never stop fighting until I find the same number of women as men in the studio, thankfully there are more and more!” (Sotillo, *El Mundo - Yo Dona*, January 5, 2019).

It is through this frame that the Catalanian artist “symbolizes an urgent feminization of the music business” (Neira, *El País*, July 11, 2019). As elements of cause we find: the narrative and conceptual themes of *El Mal Querer* (gender violence and women's liberation), the leadership that Rosalía herself exercises as the architect of her own career and her role as a catalyst for various LGBTIQ+ groups (her support of the gay community or her public friendship with the transgender actress Hunter Schafer are examples of this). In order to highlight Rosalía as an allegorical figure of power and freedom, an agency frame is used, which “reflects an active individual having strength, capability, a voice, leadership, power, and the like” (Lind and Salo, 2002: 221). In the case of the Catalanian singer, this frame is emphasized through the use language, for example, with words such as *leadership*, *fighting*, *struggling* or through the evaluation of her attitude: “Rosalía. Female. Empowered. In orbit” (Martínez, *El Mundo*, November 11, 2018). In addition, all the four media agencies mention other actor related to the problem that reinforce said framing, including: Lauryn Hill, Björk, La Zowi, Chavela Vargas, Miley Cyrus, Lola Flores, Beyoncé and Soleá Morente, all being referents in the management of their own artistic project and in the struggle for equality within the music industry.

6. - The Total Work of Art

Present in: *El País* / *El Mundo* / *La Vanguardia* / *ABC*.

The following frame evokes the concept of “The total work of art” (*Das Gesamtkunstwerk*) developed by the German composer Richard Wagner in his various operas and through his essay *The art-work of the future* (1849/2000). This holistic conception of artistic performance also places us under the Greek conception of *Mousiké*: the union in synergy of various arts such as declamation, poetry, music, theatrical performance and dance. In the same way, the universe that surrounds Rosalía's *El Mal Querer* (2018) and “her total concept of the show” (Zanón, *La Vanguardia*, December 8, 2019) is evaluated under characteristics such as “her highly aesthetic videos”, “Instagram stories where she herself analyzes her work” (Sotillo, *El Mundo - Yo Dona*, January 5, 2019), as well as “the songs, the choreographies carried out by her and eight dancers, the lighting display (not overwhelming but of an efficiency ...dazzling) and a script for the different songs” (Linés, *La Vanguardia*, July 16, 2018). Making it clear how the Catalanian artist “has projected her own global brand” (Domènech, *La Vanguardia*, September 25, 2019) allied with professionals from other domains

such as dressmakers like María Escoté, Palomo Spain or María Simún, as well as the visual aesthetic that the creative production company Canada has deposited in the Rosalía brand and her music videos.

The intertextual nature of the Rosalía universe derives from the superposition of her various roles as composer, performer, protagonist of her music videos and subject of the conceptual narrative that unfolds in the eleven chapters⁷ of *El Mal Querer*. To these characteristics we could add the private life of the artist, which overlaps with her digital and media persona; shaping the diversity and complexity of identity layers that make stardom a polyhedral phenomenon (Dyer, 2004; Wolfheil et al., 2019). Updating the Wagnerian concept, the *total work of art* in the digital age has one of its fundamental pillars in the use of social networks (eg: parasocial communication between stars and fans through platforms such as Twitter and Instagram), as well as in the taste for the audiovisual format and the dissemination of content on streaming platforms such as YouTube or the ephemeral Instagram stories.

In this way, all these elements act in synergy, contributing to the formation of a new language and a generational mythology: Her “perennial long ponytail” (Mellado, *ABC*, February 15, 2019), “a Nazarene with a hood and on a skateboard, as the mixture of the racial with the cutting-edge” (referring to the music video of *Malamente*) (Hidalgo, *El País*, July 16, 2018), her *tracksuit* style, her long gel nails and her *flamenco* and trap vibe, agitated and elegant” (*El País*, August 6, 2019), and that “her ‘tra tra’ will be generational heritage” (Navarro, *El País*, November 5, 2018), are elements that reflect Rosalía’s imaginary and the ramified character of stardom in the digital age.

7. - The Mass Commodity [Problematic Issue]

Present in: *ABC / El Mundo*.

This culturally embedded frame refers to the critique of mass culture and the cultural industry exercised by Horkheimer and Adorno in *Dialectic of Enlightenment* (1944/1988). Under this notion, the popular artist and his work are conceived as a commodity created to satisfy consumers and their predisposition for fleeting phenomena. Despite the interactive context that the digital age supposes, we must not rule out certain aspects of continuity concerning mass culture: in the case of the Spanish cultural industry, we observe a remaining inclination toward triviality and uniformity of taste, the tendency towards passive entertainment or the stratification of cultural production condensed into large business groups (Núñez-Ladevéze & Irisarri, 2014: 473).

In this example, the evocation of this frame is applied to Rosalía as an artist belonging to the mainstream sphere. The inclusion of terms such as “industry”, “ephemeral”, “business” and “tendency to futility” (Serrano, *ABC*, July 11, 2019; *ABC*, July 6, 2019), as well as the quote “the Catalanian decided to try this type of music under the pressure of her record company” (García Reyes, *ABC*, November 25, 2018), emphasize this type of apocalyptic reading about mass culture (Eco, 1984). In contrast to other frames that place the Catalanian artist as a figure with the capacity for leadership and autonomous action (eg: “1.B - *The Heroine and Her Army*” or “5. - *The Liberator of the Oppressed*”),

⁷ In order to delve into this intertextual nature, we must also point out how the plot of *El mal querer* maintains a conversation with the anonymous Occitan novel *Flamenca* (1287). In his YouTube channel, the well-known musical youtuber Jaime Altozano uploaded a video called *ROSALÍA: lo que nadie está diciendo sobre El mal querer* (“ROSALÍA: what nobody is saying about *El Mal Querer*”), where he points out this relation between musical analysis and narrative content. See: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NgHXFTgaVT0>

this frame considers the inclusion of the Rosalía phenomenon as a cultural commodity within the hegemonic global world-system of capitalism (Wallerstein, 1979). From this perspective, Illescas Martínez (2011: 12) underlines the use of “authenticity” or the “mark of origin” of the artists as a mere advertising strategy forged by “the hands of the suits” (Illescas-Martínez: 223.). Or in the words of *ABC* itself: “[Rosalía] seems to have the industry in her hands. But let no one be fooled: no matter how much an artist may have appeared to have the *business* at their mercy, it has never happened (Serrano, *ABC*, July 11, 2019).

4. Discussion and conclusions

In conclusion, we have verified the heuristic potential that the synthesis of narrative and rhetorical framing analysis (Van Gorp, 2010; Kuypers, 2010) permit in this pioneering application to stardom and popular music. This qualitative and inductive research broadens the past framing methodological approaches in music journalism (McClain, 2016; McClain and Lascity, 2019). Under the notion of culturally embedded frames (Van Gorp, 2010), this framing analysis shows a more prominent sociocultural dimension more connected to its the living context. After analyzing the total of 331 articles present in the newspapers *El País*, *El Mundo*, *La Vanguardia* and *ABC*, the extraction of their respective frames and their relationship with their deep socio-cultural context (compliance with O1 and O2, respectively), we have found the following culturally embedded frames:

In “1A. - *The Idol*” Rosalía is portrayed as a semi-divine figure, confirming the religious and mythological character that the stars adopt with the advent of late capitalist societies (Morin, 1972, Busquet-Duran, 2012). Epic language and war-mongering metaphors in the frame “1B. - *The Heroine and Her Army*”, reflect the phenomenon of hypermediation (Carr, 2000) as well as the possibilities of autonomy and leadership attained by certain artists and their teams favored by the digital ecosystem (Loy et al., 2018). This same context results in the growing globalization of the local, where the frame “1C. - *The Ambassador (From Local to Global)*” positively values the internationalization of Rosalía as a representative of the *Spain brand* abroad.

Through “2A. *The Revolutionary Artist (Tradition and Modernity)*” and “2B. *The Generational Nexus*” we see that Rosalía works, respectively, as a integrator within the artistic propulsion model (Sternberg, Kaufman and Pretz, 2001) and as a bridge between the millennial generation and the *jonda* tradition. The frame “3 *The Invader (The Death of Flamenco)*” uses polarization as a mechanism to place Rosalía and other heterodox artists within the category of false revolutionaries (outgroup), who are classified as a threat to the integrity of flamenco and their lovers (ingroup). On the other hand, the perspective of “4. - *Cultural Universalism*” brings awareness to the idea of how all racial differentiation and “biologization” of its origins hides an exercise of power historically constructed that, oftentimes, is incorporated by the marginalized group itself (McLaren, 1997; Mbembe, 2016). Furthermore, this last frame proposes the act of cultural appropriation as a necessary step for the creative development of societies.

Fifth, “5. *The liberator of the oppressed*” is based on an agency frame (Lind and Salo, 2002), since it portrays Rosalía as one of the figures in charge of making visible the struggle for female liberation and equality in the music industry. The frame “6. - *The Total Work of Art*” evokes the Wagnerian idea of the different arts in synergy applied to the album *El Mal*

Querer (composition and production, video clips, artistic design, costumes and makeup, social media, etc.). Lastly, the frame “7. - *The Mass Commodity*” echoes the Frankfurt School in its conception of the artist as a puppet of the cultural industry and its dynamics: standardization, triviality of products, serial production and the emphasis on the creation of entertainment assets for a passive and uncritical audience (Horkheimer and Adorno, 1944/1988).

In this way, we verify the remarkable variety of frames (a total of 10), some of these being antagonists within the same medium (eg: the presence of “3. *The Invader*” and his counter-frames “4. *Cultural universalism*” and “2A. *The Revolutionary Artist [Tradition and Modernity]*” on ABC and *El Mundo*). This polyphony present in the four media agencies confirms the complexity and multi-faceted character of stardom as shown by the reference academic literature (Dyer, 2004; Marshall and Redmond, 2015; Wolfheil et al., 2018). In their quality of semiotic receptacles of cultural meaning (Dyer, 1998), the stars “stand as mirrors of the dominant values of a time” (Busquet Duran, 2012: 13). Considering this framework and given the extraction of the aforementioned frames, we explain how Rosalía catalyzes such a rich myriad of current social problems (we confirm H2).

Ultimately, this article expands research on music in digital culture within the Spanish-speaking sphere (Márquez, 2010; Hennion, 2010; De Aguilera, Adell and Borges, 2010; Illescas Martínez, 2014) within the field of journalism, theory of framing and social communication. Likewise, it should be noted that the limitations of this work assigned to the analysis of the national written press leave the door open to new paths of research such as: the study of the frames around the Rosalía phenomenon in specialized music press and international media, the application of narrative and rhetorical framing analysis adapted to other traditional formats (radio and television) and digital platforms (YouTube, TikTok or Instagram), and the study of other mass phenomena and their relationship with values, desires, metaphors, fears, archetypes and culturally embedded narratives of the digitized post-massive societies.

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