What does it mean to process field recordings from the Ukrainian war in an electronic music track? How can the sampling of an Armenian keyboard melody be read as a critique of traditional gender roles? And what does it say about voyeurism in our culture when a techno producer uses viral YouTube videos as the basic material of his compositions?

Across five detailed case studies, Hannes Liechti discusses the culture and politics of musical sampling from a new perspective. Giving particular attention to the reasons behind sampling processes, Liechti’s in-depth analysis of sampling strategies by artists such as COOL FOR YOU and Lara Sarkissian shows that sampling political material, and sampling with political intentions reveals a complex net of contexts, meanings, and often deeply personal choices and creative decisions.

Offering tangible tools and concepts for further exploration of sample-based music, the book illustrates the potential of popular music to tell stories about the world, and it describes the habits, thoughts, and realities of the laptop producer, one of the core actors in 21st century music-making.

Hannen Liechti’s careful study is a welcome and needed contribution to our understanding of sampling as a central practice in the production of music – and of meaning. Grounded in ethnographic fieldwork and focusing on poetics rather than reception, this book steers clear of interpretive speculation about what certain samples might mean. With analytical rigor and nuance, and a laudable focus on non-commercial productions spanning various styles, Liechti foregrounds producers’ perspectives as he examines a range of approaches to “political” sampling. Going beyond questions of what is being sampled and how it has been processed, Liechti’s work crucially addresses why certain producers deliberately link sampling to politics.

Wayne Marshall,
Berklee College of Music
It’s sharing your narrative. That’s what it is. This phrase could also serve to explain Sarkissian’s reasons for sampling. It is through sampling—the technique of musical production whereby external sound material is taken and processed in new musical compositions—that Sarkissian shares these narratives. It is through sampling that she talks about Armenian culture and history and her own role as a female electronic music producer.

In this book, I argue that analysis of the culture of sampling is one possible way to access particular narratives of the world. The inclusion of external music, environmental noises, or found media material brings the world into popular music tracks in a condensed form. Timothy Taylor (2001, 139) describes sampling as providing “aural glimpses of the social.” Every process of sampling represents a complex net of contexts, meanings, choices, creative decisions, and musical strategies. In-depth analysis of such processes and their socio-cultural ramifications means revealing and interpreting this net as far as possible.

To examine what a particular sampling strategy tells us about the narrative of a music producer, and thus about the world we live in, we particularly need to ask about the reasons for adopting such strategies: why has a particular sound been sampled? This task has to date rarely been undertaken by researchers. This is thus a book about reasons for sampling. In this introduction I first want to embed my research in a historical context and to offer a very brief overview of the history of musical sampling. Second, I will comment on the relation between sampling and the political. This book focuses on electronic music tracks that contain political sampling material. I have identified at least seven dimensions on which sampling and the political clash: only two of them are covered by this book. A historical overview and a discussion of the social-political potential of sampling will then help to identify gaps in the research on sampling. Accordingly, this book focuses on the reasons behind the sampling of non-copyrighted material beyond hip hop. At the core of this book there are five in-depth anthropological, musicological, and production-oriented analyses of experimental electronic popular music tracks. Ultimately, I will close this first chapter by presenting in detail the object of study, its core interests, and its structure.

A Very Brief History of Musical Sampling

Four rough stages have so far shaped the development of sampling in popular music and the research on this production technique.¹

Stage One: Technological Development (1970s and 1980s)

The first devices to make sampling available to music producers were developed in the 1970s. Most authors claim the Fairlight CMI (Computer Musical Instrument), arriving in 1979, as the first instrument with a built-in sampling function. Paul Harkins emphasizes that the Fairlight CMI was not the first tool allowing the reproduction of externally recorded sounds. It was, however, “the only most commercially successful of the first digital sampling instruments; it was also the most widely used instrument for sampling” (Harkins 2016, 14).

Still, due to its high cost, the Fairlight CMI was only affordable for a few producers with high-end studios—such as Stevie Wonder, Peter Gabriel, and Kate Bush—or institutions such as broadcast companies and academic departments. This first stage of sampling was thus shaped by technical and economic developments. Later, drum computers with built-in samplers, such as the E-mu SP-12...
(1965) and the Alia MPC60 (1988) were much cheaper, making the technique available to a broader range of producers. Moreover, new instruments continuously increased sampling capacity, from a half-second to one-second (Fairlight CM) up to more than thirty by the end of the decade (Kaplinks 2016).

In the second half of the 1980s and the early 1990s, the technique of sampling became increasingly widespread in popular music, especially in hip hop and newly emerging electronic dance music (EDM; gemes such as house, techno, and drum and bass. The technique was particularly embodied in hip hop, because producers adapt to previously developed DJ techniques — cutting and repeating breaks — into new recordings. Mark Katz (2015) and Joseph Scholz (2004; 2005; 2013) both highlight the significance of DJ practice for the understanding of sampling in hip hop. Beyond the early breakthroughs of hip hop, the academic literature discusses further precursors to sampling in music history. Among them we find versioning in dub (Sankay 1994) and avant-garde improvisation from art music (musique concrète, e.g. Dawes 1997, de La Motte 1995) and beyond (cut up by William S. Burroughs; Cutler 1994). Rather than tracing a single line of development, sampling should be explained non-teleologically, with reference to multiple origins.

With regards to the sampled material, at first the focus was primarily on single sounds from instruments or the environment (such as breaking glass). As the storage capacity on sampling devices increased, longer “sound bites” became possible, such as larger melodies; lines and rhythmic patterns from other records, or media material from popular culture and daily political life such as movie dialogues and political speeches (Butler 2006; 6).

Stage Two: the Golden Age of Sampling or “Samplingadelic” (1988–1991)

It was toward the end of the ’80s that sampling became a celebrated production technique in popular music. In relation to hip hop, Kembrew McLeod labeled the period between 1986 and 1992 as the “golden age of sampling” (McLeod and DoCo 2011; McLeod 2015). Among the sample-based music production of this period is Public Enemy’s album Fear of a Black Planet (1990), which makes use of samples of “fragmentary samples” (McLeod 2005; 8; Sewell 2014a).

Sampling in EDM also flourished during this period. Between 1989 and 1990, Junior Mecene (2014) observed “flowering of sampling practice in underground dance music and the mainstream.”

3 Fischer (2020); 39–42 offers a well-argued overview on the historical development of sampling.

4 McLeod (2010) describes the year 1990 as her “holy grail” year, which marks an important turning point in the history of sampling, as well as in Beatport era’s milestone.

The history of sampling should be explained non-teleologically, with reference to multiple origins.

5 Morey further concludes that “is a largely post-sampling musical landscape, the habit of finding ways to work with sound materials as if they were samples enduring” (2007: 46); “the original, in his study on sampling, copyright, and creativity (Georg Fischer 2007–15) labels these practices with the term “Umgebungsinselwelt” (workaround creativity).

6 Behr, Negus, and Street (2017, 2; 15; 5) describe a “post-sampling” musical environment as the combination of sampling and other musical practices. According to them, sampling has lost its standalone character and must be considered as a “musical field in which listening practices, creative habits and habits are informed by and realized through a technical and musical approach, which is sampling intensive.” These thoughts directly correspond with my own understanding of sampling as a multi-level creative process.

After this brief outline of the history of sampling, I will now address my own focus on the subject. To do this I will discuss two perspectives from which I can develop the scope of my research: the socio-political potential of sampling and the lack of anthropological perspectives in the academic literature.

The Socio-Political Potential of Sampling

In approaching narratives behind sample-based music, I focus in this book on political sampling material or political strategies. I conceive of “the political” as a signifier of the social. In search of significant styles and traceable intentions and motivations, I was looking for tracks in electronic popular music whose sample material contains layers of meaning, pointing beyond a merely musical or personal level. In other words: I was interested in sampling material (or sampling processes) with significance and relevance for a broader society of people.

Meanwhile, these areas—sampling and the political—potentially clash in many ways. I have identified at least seven dimensions of this clash. In combination, they illustrate the socio-political potential of sampling. To strengthen these perspectives, I have elsewhere published a collection of short essays (Liechti, Burkhalter, and Rheinbold 2020) which provides examples for most of these categories. Some of these articles were thus presented briefly below, among other references from the academic literature on sampling.

(a) Sampling Political Material

The processing of political material is a common strategy in popular music. Especially in hip hop, samples from black political leaders and activists such as Malcolm X, Martin Luther King Jr., and Stokely Carmichael became “commonplaces,” as Russell A. Potter asserts (1996, 43). Beyond hip hop, early examples include the avant-garde synth-pop group Art of Noise, who sampled a political speech in their 1984 track “A Time for Fear (Who’s Afraid)” (Warner 2003, 99), and Paul Hardcastle’s 1985 synth-pop track “19,” which used samples from a documentary about the Vietnamese war (Warner 2003, 22) as references for many of these categories. Some of these articles are thus presented briefly below, among other references from the academic literature on sampling.

1 The case studies on M.E.S.H., M.E.S.H.’s case study (1991) or captures the destruction of products from multinational enterprises (as Rado Bajo). In her brief survey of the sampling of political speech across dance music, Lora Banali (2020) looks for strategies that go beyond the well-known media

2 This subchapter was previously published in Liechti 2018. The subject of each essay offers the example of sampling strategies within the genre.

3 The political sampling strategies of Matthew Herbert later focused on microsampling (Herbert 2007; Eomac’s “Perversas” 2010; Matthew Herbert 2010). The political sampling strategies of Matthew Herbert later focused on microsampling (Herbert 2007; Eomac’s “Perversas” 2010; Matthew Herbert 2010).
of social commentary and disputation, often taking the shape of danceable satire. Just as this book does, Baraldi examines the arts, motivations, and intentions behind particular sampling strategies. This dimension further includes the processing of police sirens and gunshots, a practice popular in various fields, from hip hop and dancehall to recent experimental electronics (Amadio 2015).

(b) Sampling with Political Intent

Even if sampling material is not political as such, it can be used in combination with intentions or concepts that are political in nature. Prominent examples include John协调发展’s Pharmakon (1998) and Don Sorte Skole’s Selection d (2018). Both projects combine a broad range of samples from external musical recordings—samples that are not explicitly political—to “challenge the laws and the music business” (Don Sorte Skole cited in Lund 2015). They can be conceived of as musical protest against copyright norms.

Again, Matthew Herbert’s highly conceptual sample art serves as an example here, for instance when he processes sounds from a pig’s life (One Pig) to criticize the food industry.2 Another example is mentioned by Money (2017, 212) in the track “Power to the Beasts,” the electronic group Utah Saints sample testimonies from Metallica and Chuck D again before U.S. Congress as part of the debate around the Rehearsing platform Napster. Producer Jez Wilks remembered that this was “a statement for me but again, no one got the reference.” (ibid). This example is a first indication that political sampling strategies do not need to be obvious to the listener.

(c) Sampling in Conflict with the Law

A third category collects sampling strategies that neither process political material nor are linked with a political intention per se. Instead, they are in conflict with the law because they process copyrighted samples without clearing the rights. There are countless examples of this political dimension of sampling one could for instance look at the German lawsuit between electro pioneers Kraftwerk and the hip hop producer Moses Pelham, who used a two-second clip from a Kraftwerk track in one of his productions (Jemmis 2016; 17–84; Fischer 2020, 13–19).

The academic literature has broadly covered this area. The ramifications of such laws regarding musical practice, for example, were raised by Michel Brod, who portrays the sampling practice of underground beatmakers in the local hip hop scene of Belo Horizonte, Brazil.3 He shows that the decision to use a technique depends on the political intentions behind the sampling.

In the previously discussed dimension, sampling is political because sample material becomes problematic through established power relations. This fifth dimension now categorizes direct provocations through the use of particular sound material. The British techno DJ Dax J was sentenced to one year in jail after playing a track that sampled a Muslim call to prayer in a live set at a nightclub in Tunisia in spring 2017. Dax J had to immediately flee the country to avoid arrest. On social media, he later apologized for the incident, mentioning that “it was never my intention to upset or cause offence to anybody” (D’Connor 2017).

(c) Sampling in Politicalized Contexts

Another encounter between sampling and the political occurs when a non-political, sample-based music devoid of political intentions, is played in a politicized context. One striking example was raised by Michel Brasil, who portrays the sampling practice of a group of students at Den Sorte Skole’s Lektion III (2013).

(d) The Problematization of Sampling Strategies

The processing of external sound material has always stood (and continues to stoke) controversy among scholars, journalists, and fans. In most cases, they criticize an imbalance of power between the sampling artists and the authors of the sampled material. In their search, the processing of ethnographic sound recordings in partic- ular is criticized by many authors as an “outsider’s language.”4

Taylor brings up the case of the new age band Enigma, who sampled a Taiwanese folk singer’s “Swedish Lullaby” (1992) for a new age group Deep Forest, which is based on a Melanesian lullaby from the Solomon Islands. In EDM, sampling practices are also regularly criticized as exoticizing or as cultural appropriation. DJ and label owner Simon Keizer (2016), for example, criticizes the exoticizing tendencies in club culture’s sampling of African music, the so-called “outernational sound”—exemplified by Four Tet’s 2013 track “The Teid I’ve Been Playing That People Ask About And That You Used In His RA Mix And Daphni Played On Boiler Room.”

(e) Provoking Conflict

In the previously discussed dimension, sampling is political because sample material becomes problematic through established power relations. This fifth dimension now categorizes direct provocations through the use of particular sound material. The British techno DJ Dax J was sentenced to one year in jail after playing a track that sampled a Muslim call to prayer in a live set at a nightclub in Tunisia in spring 2017. Dax J had to immediately flee the country to avoid arrest. On social media, he later apologized for the incident, mentioning that “it was never my intention to upset or cause offence to anybody” (D’Connor 2017).

This case is also discussed by Liam Maloney (2020). He con- sidered sampling “a microcosm for political and ideological dispari- ties across the globe” and argued that sampling has turned into a “politi- cally charged act, trapped between secularism and theocracy.” Despite its unifying history, he says, sampling has become “a divi- sive process.”

(f) Sampling in Politicized Contexts

Another encounter between sampling and the political occurs when a non-political, sample-based music devoid of political intentions, is played in a politicized context. One striking example would be the use of sample-based music as propaganda or within a political campaign. The (meanings) of the sampled ma- terials might change considerably in such contexts. While I cannot offer concrete examples here, I should be evident that such situa- tions are rampant throughout the process.

Another fitting example, discussed by Mattia Zanotti (2020) and Nico Mangifesta (2019), is Stregoni, an Italian music project that draws on political intentions behind the sampling. Another fitting example, discussed by Mattia Zanotti (2020) and Nico Mangifesta (2019), is Stregoni, an Italian music project that draws on political intentions behind the sampling. Again, Matthew Herbert’s highly conceptual sample art serves as an example here, for instance when he processes sounds from a pig’s life (One Pig) to criticize the food industry.2 Another example is mentioned by Money (2017, 212) in the track “Power to the Beasts,” the electronic group Utah Saints sample testimonies from Metallica and Chuck D again before U.S. Congress as part of the debate around the Rehearsing platform Napster. Producer Jez Wilks remembered that this was “a statement for me but again, no one got the reference.” (ibid). This example is a first indication that political sampling strategies do not need to be obvious to the listener.

\[\text{Political sampling strategies do not need to be obvious to the listener.}\]
### Gaps in Sampling Research

Sampling studies have so far been largely centered on questions of copyright, authorship, originality, and creativity. This is no surprise: legal issues are key when one examines the political dimensions of sampling. However, critics (2010) have pointed out that this interest might “overemphasize the role of the law in making musical decisions.” A second focal point of sampling studies has been the genre of hip hop, a topic that has only in recent years that a larger number of studies started to focus on genres associated with EDM. Today, there are around twice as many available studies on sampling with a focus on EDM than there are on productions of both fields, sampling is even less analyzed. As a result, we do not know much about the differences in sampling practices between various genres.

Schiöss (2014) has further argued that “symbolic meaning (sense conveyed to pragmatic value within the sam- pling paradigm) is almost universally overshadowed by a motive for sampling.” In his critique, the ethnomusicologist refers to the predominating conception of sampling as a referential or intertextual practice. Jaoma Demers (2010), 52 seconds ends this view and offers an overview of quotations as “intentionally included.”

This book is, on the one hand, yet another study with a strong emphasis on the generation of meaning and the analysis of intertextual relations. On the other hand, how- ever, I develop an approach that allows us to carefully differentiate between a broad range of motives and intentions behind sampling processes. Another gap concerns the lack of in-depth analyses of musical examples. There are only a few studies that substantively analyze individual tracks of sample-based music. In most studies, tracks are instead addressed through short references to underline a particular argument. It is surprising that one of the main objects of investigation gaps. This study does, however, focus more on the sampling processes.

In another dissertation, Justin Morey (2017) studied sampling practices in British dance music between 1987 and 2012 with a close focus on concepts of creativity and creative practice. He examined the pathways of creation and explored how they became successful. He further analyzed the ramifications of copyright law on the sampling practices under analysis. In his history of sampling in EDM-associated genres in the UK, a focus on what has been sampled and how producers processed their material, without much stress on the “why.”

By focusing on the production- and artist-related aspects of sample-based music, this book aims to close some of the knowledge gaps on this study shows, however, focus more on the culture of musical production than on musical production itself. Moreover, the issue of copyright and the genre of hip hop, a track-oriented approach by analyzing five particular sampling strategies. The triangulation of methods—between musical analysis and anthropological fieldwork—will offer new and in-depth perspectives on the artistic application of the producing method, which allows for the aforementioned gaps in the academic literature, remain absent. Furthermore, existing track analyses rarely consider the sampling artists in Montréal, Canada.

In search of the narratives behind popular music, this study focuses on the field of experimental electronics. This field allows for a fruitful analysis of sampling strategies. Experimental electronic tracks are predominantly instrumental and, in places of lyrics, it is the task of samples to connect them with extra-musical content. These tracks represent 21st century music: they are hybrid, digital, and globally connected. These tracks regularly discuss socio-political issues such as gender, queer identity, racism, and colonialism. As I will show, this field offers an in-depth analysis of sampling strategies and gives access to narratives of present-day music making.

However, a fascinating prospection of the field that does not focus on all forms of sampling, instead highlighting sampling strategies that have not been addressed to a great extent by previous research. Accordingly, I will not analyze the samples that have been officially released. This can be conceived as the “classical” sampling method, and it is already well documented—no surprise considering the academic literature’s fixation on issues of copyright. Moreover, I do not examine the processing of single notes from musical instruments, nor the sampling of domestic musical material that has been generated for previous musical projects. Hence, this book focuses on the sampling of external sound material.
In summary, this book examines the culture of sampling in experimental music. The basic goal of this study is to shed light on the techniques (how) and reasons (why) behind processes of sampling in experimental electronics. On the basis of the case studies, I want to illustrate how political sampling material is processed in experimental electronics, and how seemingly “neutral” or non-contextual sampling material can be politicized. In particular, I am interested in analyzing the strategies behind these tracks: what attitudes, intentions, motives, and motivations are decisive.

A few core interests of the present research, separated into a first set of general (1–3) and a second set of more specific (4–6) issues. This study seeks to:

1. shed light on the understudied field of the culture of musical production, how it produces music? What kind of choices, decisions, and musical strategies shape the creative process?

2. unlock narratives. The research seeks to reveal what I call the “semiotic substance” behind popular music: what can we learn about the world when we study popular music? The insights gained through this approach reveal some of the complexities that we live in. Andrew Wiles (2000) has argued that “mathematics is about revealing context and thus complexity.” As a consequence, this study does not in itself in the question of how popular music changes the world, which would be another highly important question.

3. enhance the understanding of sampling: it is a time when sampling has become a ubiquitous studio technique, and the academic literature has predominantly focused on questions of copyright and authorship, this study wants to show further nuances in the culture of sampling and its heterogeneous functionalities and modes of application.

4. identify a range of strategies behind the appropriation and processing of pre-existing sonic material. This range reaches from the hidden processing of sampling material on one end to obvious sampling on the other. This includes, in particular, an examination of the reasons for sampling. Hence, this qualitative study identifies neither a single strategy preferred by all nor even a set of strategies that can be considered as representative. The range presented here illustrates five potential strategies in experimental electronics and could serve as an orientation grid for further studies, which could add other strategies within or even exceeding this range. The last two core interests can be conceived of as methodological “side effects”—albeit significant ones—of this study.

5. the first is to offer an overview of the various typological attempts undertaken by other scholars to classify the parameters of sampling. This overview will help to identify further gaps in the research and to develop new tools for the analysis of sampling processes.

6. as a consequence, this study also becomes a methodological investigation of the analysis of sample-based popular music. It finally makes a suggestion for how processes of sampling could be fruitfully analyzed with a close focus on popular music tracks.

In each case study, the research question is divided into further sub-questions. A brief overview of the key conclusions from the five case studies gives a further impression of what the reader can expect in the following pages. Thus, the individual case studies will reveal:

- how specific, subcultural identities and lived experiences are articulated or reflected through processes of sampling.
- how sampling is used as a tool for the communication of political ideas, concepts, and thoughts.
- how processes of sampling reflect habits of media consumption and how important these media are for the production of music.
- how hidden processes of sampling are meaningful both for the producer and the musical product.

This study will develop qualitative research methods. By examining the previously outlined core interests, I will combine methods ranging from musical analysis to anthropological fieldwork (semi-structured interviews and direct observation) and the method of case studies.

I want to make one more remark before closing this introduction. As core interest (4) illustrates, this study also highlights highly delicate issues that of intention. This issue might provoke further methodological and epistemological questions.

Eccursus: The Problem of Intention

Maria Alonso wrote that “questions that ask for reasons, and in particular, reasons for action, are among the commonest questions humans have” (Alonso 2016). Related to sampling, it was Johann Georg Hamat (2011, 50) who emphasized the importance of this endeavor. He said that we need to ask why a particular reference is presented in popular music, and what experience the popular music track transmits through it. However, despite this claim, research has not much concerned itself with this question with regard to sampling.

I want to make one more remark before closing this introduction. As core interest (4) illustrates, this study also highlights highly delicate issues that of intention. This issue might provoke further methodological and epistemological questions.

production of popular music. This may be related to the considerable analytical and methodological challenges this focus presents: is there such a thing as an original intention? How can we identify reliable motives and intentions? How can we identify something as the intention behind a particular action (see also Aristotle on causality)? While keeping these critical questions in mind, let me first justify why I consider it important to care about sampling motivations at all.

First and foremost, I’m interested in knowing what people are doing and why they are doing it. Translating these facts to music, I want to know why something sounds the way it does and what went into its creation. Again, these questions do not tell us much about how the world is affected or even changed, but they do tell us something about the world as it exists, and about humanity. Questions like these are at the core of the anthropological endeavor or itself.

Second, the understanding of intentional positions can lead to more informed debates around controversial issues. How can we, for example, effectively discuss the accusation of cultural appropriation regarding the processing of certain samples, or understand satire and irony as stylistic devices, without knowing anything about the potential intentions behind an artistic object? Certainly, such debates always need to consider positions of reception too, but they should not be restricted to them. I am convinced that by knowing more about authorial intentions we can contribute to these controversial debates more precisely. In summary, knowing and discussing the artistic positions behind processes of sampling is one step on the way to a better understanding of the development of art in general.

Finally, this leads to a “more informed listening experience,” as Robert Rabinoff (2016, 96) claims.

Of course, we may always be careful not to lose the position of authors as absolute. Most of all because we cannot “access the intentions of musicians” but only “their reports of those intentions” as Allan Moore (2012, 208) thoughtfully notes. Second, because reception will always add its own, and often contradictory, readings. Roland Barthes’ (1977) dictum of the “death of the author” perhaps signaled the death knell for authorship’s elevated position. In this regard, Richard Dyer also points to the problematic aspects of the concept of “intention.”

I want to know why something sounds the way it does and what went into its creation.

This study will focus on understudied sampling material such as found footage, environmental noises, media material such as found footage, environmental noises, media

Let me return to the beginning of this introduction: “It’s sharing your narrative. That’s what it is.” This is one of several motives behind the sampling practice of electronic music producer Lasse Sarkkinen. However, as I should have made clear in this introduction, on my way to an in-depth analysis of sampling processes, I will not only concern myself with the obvious and observable motives and intentions. Thus, I analyze them as a complex entity of various reasons, motives, motivations, and intentions instead of identifying singular, exclusive intentions.

structure and Case Studies

This book could be approached in two ways. Readers who are interested in concrete analyses of popular music should start directly with the case studies. Readers who are interested in how I approached these analyses, in a more general discussion of the analysis of sample-based music, or in an examination of reasons for sampling in experimental electronics should continue on after this introduction. However, no matter how you decide to read it, each part of the book makes references to the other parts, allowing you to jump back and forth as you see fit. The glossary explains key terms and concepts in a condensed form.
In this regard, Richard Dyer also points to the problematic aspects of sampling material (von Appen et al. 2015). To pave the way for a thorough and in-depth examination of musical production, this book aims to close some of the aforementioned gaps in sampling research, including a suggestion for a new field of study, trackology, focusing on the analysis of tracks. Chapter 3 once again discusses the academic literature on sampling. Here, I assemble a broad range of typological approaches so far made by scholars to describe various parameters of the sampling process. In doing so, I will identify crucial gaps in the research, including the little-studied focus on questions of the "why." Chapters 4 and 5 will introduce and develop two analytical tools: the "fader of visibility" (FOV) and the "spider of sampling reasons" (SSR). These tools are based on the preceding discussion of the literature and are to enable the analysis of sample-based music, and will be applied in the case studies which follow. Chapter 6 also addresses the, on a broader level, the question of why artists sample in experimental electronic music. Chapters 6 to 10 form the core of this book. These chapters offer detailed analyses of five sampling strategies by laptop producers of experimental electronic music. Each analysis aims to deliver a detailed description of the respective sampling process and a thorough discussion of the sampling reasoning involved.

In the "introduction," I approach the core interests of this book from yet another angle. Having analyzed the sampling processes of released tracks, I here focus on a direct observation of a musical production in the making. This will offer further insights into the creative choices of a particular sampling process and allow a well-grounded discussion of sampling as a multilevel process, as I have defined in the term before.

To close this book, I will finally present a few conclusions and an outlook in Chapter 12. I will compare case studies, illustrate the range of the sampling strategies examined, and offer some concluding perspectives on sampling in experimental electronic music. I will discuss sampling as a substitute for the voice, as a deeply personal project, and as a digital experience that is shaped and influenced by media. In the second part of the chapter I will look beyond this study, summarizing its value for a multi-perspective ethnography of sampling.

Although the case studies will be analyzed at length in Chapters 6 to 10, I will refer to them in other parts of the book wherever appropriate. As such, it is useful to first offer a short introduction to the five analyzed tracks and their producers. For a more detailed introduction, see the respective case study chapters. All tracks can be accessed via online platforms (SoundCloud and/or Bandcamp). Note that throughout the book, artists presented in the case studies are referred to by their full names rather than their pseudonyms to illustrate my relative closeness to them during my research. Further artists not represented in a case study, with whom I had more superficial contact, are referred to by their pseudonyms.

**COOL FOR YOU: "STABILIZED, YES!" (2017)**

The brain behind the project COOL FOR YOU is German interdisciplinary artist Vika Kirchenbauer (1983), based in Berlin. Kirchenbauer has so far released two EPs: GIVE YOUR CONVENIENT ABSENCE (2016; self-released) and MOOD MANAGEMENT (2017; on Creamcake). In spring 2019, she released her debut album COMMUNICATION/MONSTERS on Creamcake. On all three releases she exclusively processed material from the Northern-American Sacred Harp tradition, a religious choral tradition stemming from a colonial context. The track "STABILIZED, YES!" comes from her second EP and had received 2,800 plays on SoundCloud by June 2019 (Creamcake 2017b).

**Lera Sarksisian: "kenatas" (2016)**

Lera Sarksisian (1982) is an electronic music producer based in Oakland, California. She further acts as a DJ (DJ FOO DOOL), filmmaker, party organizer, and label owner (Club Chai). Sarksisian is of Armenian descent, and grew up as part of an Armenian diaspora community. This Armenian heritage is a strong influence on her compositional practice, including her sampling strategies. "kenatas" was one of her first published tracks. Released in January 2016, the track had reached 3,512 plays on SoundCloud by July 2021 (Sarksi- sian 2016). Sarksisian released her debut EP DISSECTION on her own label in 2016. In the same year, she contributed to the Hexa- dome project from the Berlin-based Institute for Sound and Music (ISM), at the invitation of research platform tentoon. In this context she undertook a four-week artist’s residency at the Center for Art and Media (ZKM) in Karlsruhe, Germany, where I had the chance to observe her production process.

**Moro: "Libres" (2018)**

The next case study focuses on a track by Argentinean producer Mauro Guz Bejar (1993). To date, Guz Bejar has released two EPs: his first, San Benito, through NON Worldwide in 2016, and his sec- ond, Inevitable, through Janus in 2018. In 2016, Bejar moved from Buenos Aires to Berlin. In his track "Libres," from his first EP (NON Worldwide 2016), he sampled a sound of a chain from an online database. No statistics on clicks or plays are accessible for this track.