

# Case Study: Ethno Catalonia



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# Pilot Case Studies

## July–August 2019

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During July to August 2019, Ethno Research commissioned seven ethnographic case studies at camps located in Europe and the Nordic countries. The purpose was:

1. to ascertain an approach to the fieldwork that would produce discrete stand-alone documents reflecting the uniqueness of each site whilst providing a format to extract, analyze, and understand key themes across multiple sites;
2. to construct an appropriate ethics procedure;
3. to publish and disseminate seven individual case studies and one meta-analysis.

Reflective of the Ethno Camps, the researchers were multicultural in their representation hailing from Croatia, Estonia, France, Portugal, South Africa, Sweden, and the UK. The final reports have gone through a light touch editing process and are conceived as a collective work that reflects different languages and different styles of expression. In December 2019, all the researchers met in York, UK, to discuss the experience and to help the core team with planning the next phase. The reports were used as a springboard to determine future strategies surrounding approaches to research methodologies, key questioning, and thematic analysis.

The 3-year Ethno Research project, led by the International Centre for Community Music (ICCM) at York St John University in collaboration with JM International (JMI), is made possible through a grant from Margaret A. Cargill Philanthropies.



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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Within the format and scope of the Ethno research project, this report highlights some of the key points that emerged from ethnographic fieldwork and interviews carried out at Ethno Catalonia 2019. It also offers a critical analysis of the themes developed through the interviews, including globalisation, approaches to teaching and learning and personal experience. Through its fieldwork and theoretical lenses, it develops upon narratives generated by the participants, to highlight some of the impacts of a growing organisation which offers face-to-face encounters in an age of digital communications.

# Ethno Catalonia

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## INTRODUCTION

This pilot case study took place at Ethno Catalonia 2019. It describes and analyses some of the experience lived and shared by Ethno participants. Employing participant-observation and ethnographic interviews, the author has explored some of the personal and professional impacts of Ethno on its participants and their musics. These findings give an insight into the lived and felt outcomes of such an experience beyond the words used in promotional material. Based on four narratives critically analysed in the light of theories of cultural globalisation and ‘world music’ education, this report presents key elements of transformational socio-cultural and musical significances as experienced by participants.

This report focuses on the three key themes of the overarching study:

- 1) pedagogy
- 2) experience
- 3) reverberation

## CAMP OVERVIEW

Ethno Catalonia was first initiated in 2016 and has taken place once a year ever since. At its core are the two current artistic leaders, who have brought Ethno to Spain. This Ethno is mostly supported by JMI Catalonia, whose chief executive has shown particular interest for the project since the beginning. According to current artistic leaders and funding members of Ethno Catalonia, the head of JMI Catalonia had attended an Ethno performance in Croatia, and was already very keen to develop an Ethno within his community and under the auspice of JMI Catalonia, hence his enthusiasm when the two current organisers presented him with their idea of an Ethno camp. He has been an invaluable support to them ever since, and the camp is now organised yearly in Banyoles. The collaboration seems to have been very successful in the past four editions.

As well as a concert in Barcelona, and a village within the surrounding rural areas, JMI has developed a series of ‘world music concerts’ around the dates of the Ethno camps to maximise the impact on the local audiences within the town of Banyoles.

This project has had the effect of substantially increasing the visibility of JMI in the area, and as a result promotes the profile of the organisation, specifically the office in Banyoles and the JMI network.

The 2019 edition of Ethno Catalonia featured 29 musicians and three artistic leaders. It is benefitting from its association with the Ethno-world organisation, as a large number of participants have taken part in other camps before. The camp took place between the 5th and the 14th of July and was based in Banyoles.

## PARTICIPANTS

Below is a survey of all participants and artistic leaders at Ethno Catalonia 2019. The questions asked were:

- What is your full name?<sup>1</sup>
- How old are you?
- What is(are) your nationality(-ies)?
- Which instrument(s) do you play?
- Have you been to Ethno before? If so, where and when?
- How did you hear about Ethno Catalonia?

Age	Nationality	Instruments	Previous experience	Source
30	French	Accordion Trombone Tuba	Portugal 2018 Bosnia 2015–6	YouTube
24	French	Violin Percussion	Portugal 2018 Estonia 2015	Word of mouth
31	Tunisian	Violin Oud	Croatia 2015 Catalonia 17/18/19 Portugal 17 Estonia 18	Facebook
26	British	Mandola Whistles	1st Ethno	[Anonymised professional musician] mentioned it on stage
26	Indian	Voice Harmonium Tabla	England 2018 Sweden 2019 Portugal 2019 Denmark 2019	Word of mouth

Age	Nationality	Instruments	Previous experience	Source
27	French	Voice Cavaquinho guitar Electronic music	Brazil 2018	Word of mouth
29	British	Flute Fiddle Triangle Guitar	Portugal 2018	Word of mouth
29	Algerian	Percussion Voice	Algeria 2018	Word of mouth
21	Belgian	Viola Piano Voice	Flanders 2016/17/18	Sister
29	Australian	Bouzouki Guitar Flute Concertina Drums	Estonia Finland 17 England / Sweden / Denmark / Estonia / Flanders / Germany 18 NZ England 19	University folk society
23	Dutch-American	Mandolin Guitar Voice Live looping Electronic	Portugal 18	Word of mouth
20	French	Violin Voice	Germany 17 Sweden 18 Germany 18	Internet looking for music related things for the summer
20	Spanish	Violin Piano dolçaina	Catalonia 17/18	Advert in conservatoire
35	Algerian	Bass guitar Mandolin Percussion Double bass Ukulele Gumbri	Algeria 2018	Friend of organiser
23	Belgian	Voice Flute Ukulele Piano	Flanders 18/17/16/15	Friends at other music initiatives in France
29	Iranian	Santour	1st Ethno	Internet looking for festivals
27	Republic of Armenia	Duduk Blul Zurna Pku Shvi	1st Ethno	Word of mouth
24	Algerian Kabyle	Voice Bendir	1st Ethno	Word of mouth

Age	Nationality	Instruments	Previous experience	Source
22	Estonian	Recorder Bagpipe Voice	Estonia 16/17 NZ 2018	Through school
31	Argentinean	Voice Percussion Guitar Piano	1st Ethno	Word of mouth
24	French	Flute Voice	Slovenia 2018	Word of mouth
24	French	Violin Cello Voice	Portugal 2018	Word of mouth
28	Algerian-French	Guitar Percussion Voice	1st Ethno	Word of mouth
29	Argentina	Voice Percussion	Bahia 2018	Ethnomusicology professor in North Brazil
23	Brazilian	Accordion Guitar Voice	Brazil 2018	Through a leader at Ethno brazil
29	British	Voice Piano	Catalonia 18	Word of mouth
38	Spanish	Voice	1st Ethno	Word of mouth
24	Tunisian	Violin	1st Ethno	Word of mouth

### Notes on the survey:

- In bold are the participants and leaders with whom I carried out full ethnographic interviews later on.
- The wording and spelling of the instruments they play have been transcribed as prescribed by each participant.
- For experienced participants, the question about their previous attendance to camps was somewhat challenging, and many were reluctant to attempt an exhaustive list of the camps they have attended along with which year. This explains some slight inconsistencies in the formatting of years and places of attendance.
- The denomination 'word of mouth' in their answer to my last question replaces their mention of particular friend's names who told them about Ethno, mostly past participants of the programme. For anonymity, these names have been removed. It also has to be noted that some participants could not remember exactly who or how they first heard about Ethno.



## METHOD

I took an ethnomusicological approach, as this is core to my research training. I carried out interviews with some participants and filmed some of the workshops without cutting or editing. I also carried out a brief survey of all participants to keep a broad overview of the demographics and the representativity of the sample I interviewed. Indeed, these are all individual musicians, and I am aware that with the wide diversity of the participants, it is close to impossible to work from a 'representative sample' without interviewing every participant individually. Thus, I chose interviewees of different backgrounds, nationalities, amounts of experience with Ethno. I have also tried to keep a gender balance, but, as in the case of any ethnographic work, it was also conditioned by practicalities, time and place (who was here, available, happy to have a chat, there and then), and the very short timeframe available to carry out interviews within the camp. In these conditions, I have notably carried out a double interview (interview in pairs, or mini-focus group, in which two participants are invited to answer the ethnographer's questions within the same meeting). This practice encourages the participants to converse on the topic and exchange and develop ideas with minimal involvement of the researcher. I have notably used this method of double interview during my doctoral studies, and I have critically analysed the impact of such research techniques both in my PhD thesis and in a paper presented at Durham Ethnomusicology conference in 2012.<sup>2</sup>

All interviews were carried out during the camp, and thus reflecting impressions as they were perceived at the time. Due to the time constraint, I was aware that I could not leave the interviews to the last couple of days, even though it could have been beneficial to gather more extensive impressions about the camps and specifically its outcomes. In order to balance this time constraint and need for insightful participant perspectives, I strategically interviewed participant with previous Ethno experience toward the mid-point of the camp, where they already had a firm understanding of potential outcomes, yet a forming idea of difference between this camp and their previous experience. Getting impressions from first-time participants remained crucial, and I attempted to carry out their interviews closer to the end of the camp. Nonetheless, reflections on performances and impacts were rather limited or bound to previous experiences rather than focussed on this particular camp.

In the context of Ethno-camps, whilst English remains the official international language for all participants, during and between workshops, in this instance, some participants' English language level was slightly too low to initiate and maintain an adequate level of social interactions. While they could easily find help from friends and fellow nationals across the group during the workshop and social events, on the contrary during the interviews, some participants have found their English language skills did not allow them

to articulate as clearly and accurately the thoughts they could clearly verbalise in their mother tongue. As a researcher both while carrying out the interview and while analysing them *a posteriori*, this was a very important factor to bear in mind. Benefitting from my language skills, I could allow four of my nine interviewees to speak French throughout their interview. In the case of other participants, I was aware of their linguistic difficulties with English, notably their lack of precise vocabulary, which is very visible in their discourse. Furthermore, they did not hesitate to point out during the interview, sometimes even openly asking them to reformulate, or rewrite their ideas in 'the right way'. As an ethnographer, I remained very wary of a process of reformulating my informants' ideas with words that may seem more appropriate in the English language but may also carry different meaning in different cultures. Thus, I endeavoured to keep an adequate balance between the intelligibility of the ideas which they were attempting to express, and the accurate wording they use along with the deeper meaning they associate to them. This balance had to be mediated on a case by case basis, rather than applying an instant, fit-to-all solution. Some examples of issues and individually designed solutions are as such:

- Informants interviewed in pairs would usually help each other with language issues, thus limiting the involvement of the researcher in the formulation of their thoughts, although increasing the amount one might influence the other's answers;
- My limited knowledge of Spanish allowed me to help one of the informants formulate numbers, and expressions such as 'learning from others', 'become a better person' and 'as time goes by', which I literally translate from Spanish into English for her, while overlooking by inappropriate uses of prepositions or verbal form in the past tense, when it was not creating ambiguities as to what she meant;
- A similar issue of linguistic knowledge arose during the interview with a Farsi native speaker. Finding adequate tools to use during the interview to mediate missing words or expression was more challenging. Therefore, in this particular case, I had to reformulate some of the complex ideas which the informant developed, notably as he linked political discourses to the reality at Ethno, in a shorter way, using more precise wording. While doing this during the interview and getting his confirmation that this is actually what it meant is no guarantee that the final result carries the exact meaning he wanted to convey, I do still believe that such an interview provides a valuable insight to the participants perceptions, experience and understanding of its impacts;
- It also has to be pointed out that some of the informants' geographical knowledge and understanding of the Ethno denominations was not always accurate. The frequent mentions of Ethno Spain instead of Catalonia, Ethno

Belgium instead of Flanders or even Ethno London instead of England were particularly notable. They needed correction within this report, for consistency and accuracy as these reflect the actual actors in the organisation of these events. Few of them had a clear understanding of the relationship between Ethno Catalonia, Ethno-World, JM Catalunya and Jeunesse Musicales International, and the mention of any other these organisations tend to be used only to refer to the concept and the framework of the Ethno camps.

While bearing in mind these important ethical considerations of the accuracy of transcription, and ensuring that the informants' words are not too heavily edited, as an ethnographer, I also believe I have a duty of care to my informants, notably for their comfort and well-being. Thus, if I had let them struggle alone to find words in their mind, they might have felt an overwhelming language barrier between us. If I would have systematically corrected their use of the organisations' name, I believe I would have put them in a position of perceive failure to communicate, which could have a significant impact on their level of communication within the interviews, as well as their confidence, well-being, overall experience, and perceived place within the group, considering a good level of English is a prerequisite to participation in Ethno.

## LITERATURE

In keeping with my area of expertise, I have chosen to analyse the outcomes of my fieldwork in the light of theories of cultural globalisation. This trend of thinking about the Ethno experience in the context of global communication and the relative ease of accessible international musics through the internet, is still present both in the mind of participants and organisers. Ethno offers the advantage of personally meeting cultures, as opposed to simply learning tunes from online resources.

Thus, I will base my analysis on the definition of globalisation in the Encyclopaedia for Music in the Social and Behavioural Sciences by Bratus (2012). The phenomenon of globalisation has been at the centre of constant academic debates, both regarding its characterisation and its significance. This is hardly surprising given that globalisation is commonly understood to be a defining feature of contemporary outlooks, as O'Shea points out: 'one of the features of modernity has been its global aspiration; and one of the particular features of this century has been the internationalisation of culture – or rather, of some cultures' (1996, p. 17).

Monaghan and Just (2000) notably define the 'globalisation of culture' as 'the emergence of a set of hybrid, deterritorialized practices and images surrounding consumption, epitomized by fast food chains, world fairs, sporting events, cinemas, and tourist destinations' (p. 105). As Baltzis (2005) emphasises,

it is clearly a phenomenon that requires the adoption of a broad, all-encompassing objective perspective if one is to acquire a convincing evaluation and representation (pp. 137-150); there are many factors that fuel and shape the dynamics of globalisation including political, economic, cultural, technological and demographical – although it is only relatively recently that economic transactions and political relations have begun to be considered within cultural studies appraisals (p. 140). This follows the pioneering work of theorists such as Appadurai (1996).

Hayden (2006) identifies three main points of view regarding the ongoing trajectory of globalisation (shared by academics and non-academics alike) (see also Holton 2000). Firstly, the globalist point of view suggests that disparate cultures are converging towards a single shared model – specifically, a ‘commodified and commercialized culture, with differences flattened into global uniformity’ (Leysdon, Matless and Revill, 1998, pp. 14-15). However, Monaghan and Just (2000) warn: ‘we must regard the idea of the emergence of a single homogenized global culture with considerable scepticism [...] superficial similarities often mask profound cultural differences that may operate at deep structural level’ (p. 105, 106). Storey (2003) also criticises this point of view, saying that it is decidedly simplistic and inaccurate to regard ‘globalisation as Americanisation’ (p. 110; see also Shuker, 2001, p.72). In Storey’s words: ‘it simply assumes that it is possible to inject the dominant globalizing culture into a weaker local culture and in so doing replicate a version of the dominant culture’ (p. 110).

The second point of view identified by Hayden (2006) regarding globalisation’s trajectory is what he terms ‘the traditionalist point of view’, which minimises the importance of the phenomenon in the long term, proposing that the move towards homogeneity will naturally be hindered by people’s enduring need to preserve traditional distinctiveness. Thirdly, the transformationalist point of view emphasises unceasing cross-cultural influence happening in a myriad of directions and in diverse ways – an understanding that is persuasively upheld by many academics including, for example, Held (2004), who demonstrates that even in those cases where a strongly dominant culture influences wide-reaching changes upon a submissive and accepting culture, the latter also tends to evince significant changes in the former. Baltzis (2005) also promotes this reading. In a section pithily entitled ‘Asymmetries and paradoxes’ (p. 145), he alludes to Bourdieu’s influential theory of the ‘inequality of cultural capital’, according to which different cultures cannot easily be compared, neither in qualitative nor quantitative terms, and accordingly they do not receive the same response by the global public; hence, the democratisation of musical life has tended to reinforce cultural distinctions.

Baltzis convincingly argues that new technologies and the consequent extension of communications may well actually be enhancing these asymmetries, supporting his argument using Kotzias (2005) ‘theories on globalisation and asymmetries of reality’, and evoking the phenomena of transculturation, fragmentation and diversity.

Rather than promoting cultural homogenisation, he suggests that globalisation tends to promote diversity (pp. 143-144). Nederveen (1996) similarly concludes that, from a cultural point of view, the phenomenon of globalisation does not systematically result in homogenisation but rather hybridisation and glocalisation (p. 1393; see also Baumann, 2000).

Within this context of globalised musical studies, and strong power dynamics between musics, educators and academics have increasingly turned their attention to the way musics of the world are represented within western education curricula. Indeed, in recent years, much of the discussion has been around careful representation and respectful depiction of the music of the Other. Notably looking at analysing original musical practices and their contexts to develop a respectful level of understanding, Schippers (2010), for example, devised 'twelve continuum transmission framework (TCTF)'. Through analysing twelve individual characteristics of a musical tradition and placing each on their respective spectrum, one should then be able to develop a more thorough understanding of the meaning of the tradition and its characteristic features. According to him, this scheme for analysis should be applied to any design of courses in world music (p. 124). Furthermore recognising the importance of face-to-face encounters with musicians, he minimises the significance of recordings, staff notations, or any notation at all, in favour of active research about the community life of the people whose tradition is being taught. While mostly written for the benefit of formal teaching institutions in Western Art Music, aiming to develop their offers in courses further, his considerations remain particularly relevant in the context of Ethno, where face-to-face encounters and mutual understanding has been at the forefront of the ethos promoted by the organisation since its inception.

## **NARRATIVES**

A key feature of the ethnographic interview process is how participants both consciously and unconsciously include their personality within the encounter, and within their narrative. While the author is aware that anonymity is required in this report, the following narratives could be clearly attributed to specific participants, the list of which can be found online and through Ethno databases. Despite all the participants in my interviews being asked to electronically sign a consent form allowing me to use their words in the research, and choosing whether or not they wish to be identified by name, they have all been anonymised for the purpose of this output.

The following narratives are raw data, minimally altered words from the interviewees: The researcher has altered mentions of names, summarised some sections when the informant was hesitating or looking for their words, and focussed on the informants' answers which directly relate to the purpose of this report. (Please find details on ethical considerations in the Methodology section.)

In order to remain within the limitations of the report, this section focuses on four narratives. Nonetheless, it has to be underlined that the themes highlighted in the following were chosen because they were recurrent in most other interviews.

Here are, in no particular order, four chosen narratives, depicting the experience of five participants at Ethno Catalonia 2019:

## Interview 1

This first interview was carried out with an experienced Ethno-goer roughly mid-way through Ethno Catalonia 2019. As an Australian the language barrier was negligible and considering his hindsight of past Ethno experience, his interview was substantially longer than others. Here is a summary of this encounter:

Participant 1 first describes his experience of music through his childhood in Australia, being mostly trained in Old-Time music and Irish dancing. Only through travel to Scotland during his university studies did he first hear about Ethno, and he decided to include some Ethno camps in his European travels planned in the summer.

The first year he took part in Ethno, he chose two camps in the close vicinity to where he already had a gig to perform and took part in Ethno Estonia and Ethno Finland. Without being prompted on comparing his participations, the interviewee went on to describe how 'quite different' those two experiences were, notably in their size: 'from 80–90 participants in Estonia to only 10 in Finland, I got the full spectrum of Ethno sizes. I liked them both for different reasons.'

The following summer, in his own words, he 'basically did Ethno all summer'. This included England, and the tour they organise afterwards, Sweden, Denmark, Estonia, Flanders and Germany. The foremost aspect he highlights from this intensive experience is enjoyment, and the energy level, which 'they give rather than take away'. Asked about the core feature of Ethno, he points out that 'there's probably exception to everything, but the open-mindedness and openness of participants' is a common denominator. 'Therefore, you build strong relationships in a very short amount of time. At the end of an Ethno, you feel like you've got many life-long friends.'

Living far away, it is sometimes hard to catch up, but when he is in a country where he knows 'Ethno people', he tries to organise gatherings. 'Going to more Ethnos [the following summer] is a good chance to catch up because once they're in, they're likely to come back to other camps!' He also took part in Ethno New Zealand in 2019, but the practicality of all the Ethno 'happening right near each other in Europe' is a lot better than having one long flight.

The specific Ethno-way to learn tunes is comparable to the Edinburgh university society, some playing a tune through, breaking in down into phrases and learning by ear but it can be a 'pretty steep learning curve, and can make the first few days of an Ethno pretty intense and tiring. It finally gets into your head. The first few days are 'workdays', and the really fun part begins when you start getting the arrangement and get together as a band. In Catalonia, this part has been extended, as we got to hear arrangements from the second day.'

When asked whether he can remember all these tunes, back home:

**If someone starts playing a tune I've learnt at Ethno, I could join in, but [...] remembering them without a prompt is not as easy [...] At the individual concert, I played a tune with people who were in Estonia last year, but I also played it with my band. [...] technically, I didn't learn it at Ethno Estonia, because it was the Scottish tune taught there, and I had already learnt at the Society in Scotland, but there are other examples I guess. The first night at the jam session, the Algerian guys wanted to hear a tune that I had learnt in Flanders last year, and there were a few of us who were at Flanders, so that's an example of opportunity to play a tune.**

Yet he points out that he couldn't play or teach it with his current band, as they are not the right type of music, and they would need different instrumentation.

When asked how he would qualify this type of music: 'Folk music from all over the world', once the arrangement come in, it is more 'fusion', mostly depending on the *artistic leader*<sup>3</sup>. The Ethno organisation is an excellent way as a musician to meet people with similar interest, and great opportunity to learn about other music and rhythm in one place ather than spending a lot of time in a particular country.

**Because of the experience of learning loads of tunes by ears, even though at the final concert, I might only play the chords, I am a lot more comfortable with playing melodies as a result of Ethno, so I tend to play more melody in Scottish and Irish tunes than before. Having more confidence is also very important, at and Ethno, the 'authentic rhythm' you can feel confident you're respecting the music and playing it in a respectful way.**

## **Interview 2 & 3**

The following interview was carried out in French, with Participants 2 and 3 both being French native speakers, respectively French and Algerian nationals. The author has done the translation, and the transcript only minimally altered, in order to keep visible the interaction between both participants whilst replying to the same questions alternatively.



Participant 2 is a violinist and singer. She had done Ethnos before, and just 'wanted to try out several', and especially pointed out the proximity of Ethno Catalonia to her living place. She discovered ethno on the internet, looking for music camps in the summer, and was very impressed by the documentation she found on the JMI website.

Participant 3 plays bass, double bass and other instruments. He heard about Ethno from the organiser of the first Ethno Algeria.

3: defines ethno as a 'musical and human experience, and moment of exchange'.

2: points out the learning process, and the cultural awareness she has developed at her first participation, having never left Europe. Talking about a 'wave of love, with people who are loving and caring, as well as the cultural exchange.'

2: 'I learnt music classically in France and was unable to play by ear, at the beginning it was very difficult, daunting and overwhelming, but I am getting better, and it complements my classical training.'

3: on the contrary, I have both learnt 'on the street' and classically. He points out that the method fits everyone, even those who are not classically trained. [...] He highlights the experience of teaching and the fact that participants are very receptive to the tune they're offering. 'We are ambassadors of our culture, and each export a part of our heritage.'

2: She finds it very funny to see others struggle to pronounce French [her mother tongue]. [...] 'In order to teach, I was quite worried, but we are very well help by the artistic leader. Their intervention depends on the camps. Sometimes, they are very involved, take over your music and take it as a basis, whereas in other cases, they can give you full freedom to do whatever you like, your own arrangement.'

3: 'I have less experience, because I have been working with the same artistic leaders.'

### **Comparing to her experience in Sweden:**

2: 'There were about 100 of us, and I liked it less, there was too many of us.'  
The organisation in the sectional workshop was less attractive to her. She opposed it to smaller Ethno without sectional rehearsals in the learning phase, where the instrument allocation is more fluid, and instrumentalists have the freedom to decide to sing, and/or join the rhythmic sections. In Sweden, the delegation turning around, and catching up, is 'more industrial, less familial.'

3: 'I can't see any difference between Algeria and Catalonia'



### **What are you going to keep from it?**

- 3: 'mostly good memories, get to know people, richer musically, we're here to learn, only positive!'
- 2: 'we gain in maturity, I started very young, it was very liberating for me, we were very autonomous, we gain in personal relations, and people I would never have met before, we learn in *savoir-vivre*, and living together. Additionally, musically, I have learnt a lot too.'

### **Musically, are you going to reuse, re-teach some of these tunes?**

- 3: 'if the opportunity comes up, yes, I would reuse them.'
- 2: 'in symphonic orchestra, I won't reuse them, but I keep singing them, remembering them in my head across the entire year, and playing for fun, on my own. [...]'

### **On potential future collaborations:**

- 3: yes, could be on a project, personal or artistic, just see each other around a drink.
- 2: 'today, one of my best friends is from Germany, we go and visit each other across the summer. It's really weird to have knowledge and acquaintances everywhere! I want to try out many, and come back to those I liked most. I'll go to Flanders at the end of the month, with friends from Ethno. Important is the price, as holidays, they are very cheap!'
- 3: 'I see Ethno a lot more at a working internship than a holiday.'
- 2: 'it is a place where I feel good, it is great to come back and see family.'

## **Interview 4**

Participant 4 is from Iran. It is his first participation in Ethno, and he admittedly did not have a very clear idea of what Ethno was before sending his application. His reactions were collected towards the end of the week. During his interview, it was clear his English language skills were preventing him from expressing clearly the complex ideas he wished to develop. In consequence, this narrative has been slightly more altered (please find details in the Methodology section) for the benefit of the reader:

Participant 4 has been playing the Santour for 18 years and has been studying Islam musicology at the Art University of Teheran. He is now teaching his instrument, 'Persian hammer dulcimer' at the university. He pointed out 'I teach Iranian music.'

When asked about how he found out about Ethno, he replied that he simply searched on the internet, and found the Ethno-world website. He checked all Ethno in other countries, filled an application form for several, and two invited him: Flanders and Catalonia. He had to choose only one because of time constraints and teaching commitments.

The time for Catalonia was more convenient, and I was very attracted to visit Spain first.' He added enthusiastically: 'This is my first Eurotrip, first ethno, first everything.'  
When asked what Ethno is:

**For me, in my mind, it means “colour”, when you see the people from multiple cultures, from the four corners of the world coming together, it is very weird and very good for me. Before Ethno, one week ago, I thought anyone who plays Santour, you should play classical or folk Iranian music, and that was the only thing. Now, my mind is changed, and I should try all the musical culture in the world, any musical culture, because in the Ethnic eras, the music the background of the music is the culture. It is not just the music, it is culture, it is life, many things that come together, and you should explore it, not just play.**

About the experience of learning tunes at Ethno: 'It is not very hard to learn, it is not so easy either, it is medium, but it is an amazing experience, any musician should have such experience in their life.'

About his experience teaching at Ethno:

**It is hard to me, because I think it might be difficult to understand for musicians, it's going to be embarrassing me, if the result is not very good, and it does not satisfy you, but now, I am proud of my work, and what I do in Ethno Catalonia. I want to record all the songs on my instrument after coming back to Iran, change the other musicians' minds about the repertoire. They can choose any song in the world; they will have good experience [...] It will affect my composition: Technically, I use the pentatonic scale, before Ethno, I thought only Chinese can compose in this scale, but American pentatonic is very nice and very good, Argentinean and Brazilian is very nice too! In the material you compose, you can use other material from other countries and do new things. I would consider going to other Ethno. I want to plan for next year, I don't know where, but I should do that. Catalonia is a good choice for me, but I also think about other places. I don't know anything about the other ethnoses, but I should ask the musicians about other Ethnos and choose accordingly' [...] This programme brings all the people around the world here, and we connected to each other, get to know each other, and each other's cultures, and the people in other countries, and if the politicians**

say something, say like “the people in this country is not very good” or “don’t travel to there”, but any programme like this proves that people could choose on our own, to travel somewhere and have experience, meet new cultures and learn something new, it is very nice.

## Interview 5

Participant 5 is an artistic leader and a founding member of Ethno Catalonia. In such a position, he had a somewhat limited time to allocate to reply to my questions. Nonetheless, I felt that the perspective of the artistic leaders should not go amiss in the development of this research. His English level was particularly high, therefore required a lot less editing. Here are his words:

**When I was 21, I was a participant initially, Ethno Sweden 2006. I have been to 16-17 camps since, something like that, cannot really count. [...] I really loved it; this is why I came back, it had a massive impact on my musical life. I wasn’t really interested in anything else than classical music, and I got my eyes open about other music. I started as a child playing the piano, I started the cello aged 17, and I brought my cello to Ethno Sweden. [...] To advertise Ethno to potential new participants, I would just say that this will be the best week of their life, and it will open their eyes, they will learn so much new music. The energy that is created is amazing, everybody is equality important, has their place, everybody is focussed on creating that one thing. It is magic!’**

When asked about his role as a leader:

**As a leader, you never have a moment of rest at the beginning, not for the first five days. We make arrangements plan rehearsals, we give structure, make sure that the end result is interesting and varied for the audience. I think the energy that is created on stage really transmit to the audience, they can’t take their eyes of the concert. I think it stays. The borders aren’t important, for a better world. [...] everyone playing together is a beautiful image.**

How do you get about to helping musician teach?

**If they have no experience of teaching by ear, you give them guidelines. Chords, harmonies, simple, easy to learn, you have some tools you can use, like a lines, breaks. [...] I learnt this simply doing loads of Ethnos, and music in general [...] It’s important that ethno continues, and goes to school, involve music teachers.**

## THEMATIC ANALYSIS

When looking at the outcomes of Ethno, their long-term impacts and the real changes they may initiate in people's lives and community work, one has first to consider the music. This theme remains central in the core aims of the Ethno organisation, and indeed in Jeunesses Musicales International. The Ethno programme aims to offer young people a platform to learn and exchange about their and others' musical heritage. Nonetheless, one cannot dissociate any recent attempt of cross-cultural exchange from the historical approaches to the study of the music of the Other. The colonial past and power-relation between Europe and the rest of the world highlighted in the theoretical framework remain crucial. In addition, along with the idea of Orientalism that shaped European perception of the Other, 'exotic' music, beyond the boundaries of Western Classical music is still, be it often unconsciously, present in the mind of musicians. Any cross-cultural exchange between Europe and the rest of the world requires to be analysed through such a lens, in order to refrain from reproducing such perception and unequal power dynamics.

It has to be underlined that Ethno goes to great length to ensure, at least in appearance, that each culture is treated on an equal level, notably as highlighted by the artistic leader interviewed above. Learning an unfamiliar tune from South America by ear can indeed be as challenging for a European musician trained in Western Art music as for an Algerian traditional musician well-versed in their tradition, but with little experience of that of others. Indeed, in the context of Ethno, participants are exposed to both teaching and learning challenges, and they each describe their experience differently, whether pointing out the unfamiliarity of learning by ear, the pronunciation of foreign lyrics or the difficulty to convey, in a short amount of time, the full meaning of a piece of music. Nonetheless, some elements of Western Art music remain key in the teaching processes at Ethno. In effect, as pointed out by the artistic leader, standard western chord progressions continue to be an essential tool for the arrangement to stage these tunes, which are expressed with standard ABC notation and referred as such throughout the entire learning process. Moreover, like in western traditional music, melodies are often dissociated from arrangements, which is not an appropriate approach to all traditions.

In addition, tunes are adapted to the instruments brought by Ethno participants, which are mostly Western instruments, working on chromatic scales. Thus, quarter tones and different sounds can be ignored: participants can be quite eloquent, when asked why they chose the tunes they taught, and such factors as 'representative, but not too hard for the others to understand and to play with their instrument' are recurrent when the participants are asked to explain their choice. Nonetheless, while many participants point out, at the camp, their willingness to keep playing this new repertoire, teaching it to their friends or their bands, develop further knowledge on that specific culture, many who have been to Ethno before, also highlight the difficulty, once back home after the camps, to keep these promises.

The reasons for this are multiple and varied: be it because the instrumentation of their bands does not suit the new tunes, because their style is too different, because they are not able to find the time to research further what they set out to do during the camp, or simply because they do not have any opportunity, outside of the Ethno camps, to meet up with people who may be interested in this repertoire, or a fortiori already know the Ethno repertoire. Thus, despite the clear intention of the Ethno ethos to go beyond simply learning a tune from a different part of the world, this often remains the only encounter of that music which the participant may have.

It then seems that the most enduring tangible outcome of an Ethno lies in the people and relationships developed through attending the camps. Indeed, in the vast majorities of interviews, when questioned about the definition or the meaning of Ethno, most informants initially talk about people, connections, atmosphere, inclusiveness and open-mindedness of all participants, before even mentioning the musical aspect of the experience. As highlighted in the narratives in this report, the language they use to describe these impacts can be very emotional, colourful, passionate and metaphorical, reflecting the deep connections that shaped their experience at the camp. It is then unsurprising that repetitive participation features heavily in the discourses of participants, virtually all of whom envisage further participation, be it in camps they have attended before, or, even more pre-eminently, in camps they have heard of from other participants. Furthermore, as highlighted in the narratives above, concerted efforts between friends through social media to apply to the same camp in a given year are common practice, simply to have the opportunity to meet once more. Thus, the organic growth of the movement through word of mouth remains a key characteristic of the Ethno organisation, despite a strong online presence and promotional strategy.

Despite the perception of the global outreach of Ethno, it is remarkable how practicalities seem to be a crucial factor in the choice of many participants to their first Ethno ('the closest camp to where I live', 'I just happened to be in the country at the time'...) Nonetheless, these factors seem to fade out after the first encounter with Ethno, in favour of more reputation or socially-based choices ('the friend I met at this camp was going to that other one, and I wanted to join' or 'I heard at this camp that this other one was more focussed on singing/was the biggest/was the oldest/was the one you had to do at least once'...) Furthermore, as clearly visible in the general survey of the participants, a large number of them had previously attended Ethno Portugal and/or Ethno Algeria in the last couple of years, notably the two camps that are the closest geographically to Ethno Catalonia. While this correlation is not to be extrapolated as such, it can clearly be linked to the interviewees' frequent mentions of choosing which Ethno to attend for practical reasons, and confirming these qualitative interview answers with quantitative survey data. Thus, the majority of participants at Ethno Catalonia seems to have gone as close as possible to meet the rest of the world, and share their tradition in a global exchange.

However, it has to be highlighted that much of the theories of cultural globalisation seems to focus on the pejorative aspect of the process. In particular in relation to traditional music, and tradition more generally, the term 'globalisation' is usually associated with the disappearance of individualities and local identities for the benefit of greater powers. In the perspective of 'world music' (terminology itself associated with the commodification of local music for the Western market, and usually frowned upon by traditional musicians), the term 'fusion' has also been used, to describe some elements of musical interaction. While being used positively by audio producers destined for mass audiences, it remains somewhat pejorative to the generation of traditional musicians who started performing before the democratisation of the Internet. On the contrary, at Ethno Catalonia, it seems that 'fusion' is perceived as a positive process, mostly involving experimentation with one's own repertoire and that of others. This word is notably used by informants and academics alike. Coupled with the idea of discovery of other cultures, it features highly in the definition of Ethno by participants themselves.

## **CONCLUSIONS**

In using an ethnographic approach, this report highlighted varying perceptions of Ethno Catalonia's aims and outcomes, and notable discrepancies regarding the Ethno ethos as set out by the organisations and funding bodies, and the experience as lived by participants. Undeniably, organisers and participants globally agree on the cultural awareness which is promoted and delivered by the Ethno experience. Nonetheless, much of the promotion is based on the musical aspect of the camp and the international exchange, whereas participants tend to highlight more heavily the social aspect of the time spent together. While many have heavily theorised about processes of globalisation, musical fusion, the potential disappearance of traditions, or the overpowering presence of Western Art Music in education, on the contrary, the focus of Ethno participants firmly remains on experiencing multiple and diverse social interactions at the camps, before expanding upon their musical technique, vocabulary and repertoire. With a strong sense of belonging and a feeling of doing something good for the world, Ethno Catalonia has been implanted for several years and is now a firm feature of the JMI organisation in the region.

## AUTHOR BIOGRAPHY

Elise Gayraud graduated with a PhD in Ethnomusicology from the University of Durham, UK. Her thesis, entitled “Towards an ethnography of a culturally eclectic scene: Preserving and transforming Folk music in 21st-century England”, explores recent changes in the folk music scene in England. Through ethnographic fieldwork, it discusses new conceptualisations and redefinition of traditions, global perspectives, and intensified transmission of traditional cultures. She also taught at the Ludwig-Uhland-Institut für Empirische Kulturwissenschaft, at Eberhard-Karls-Universität, Tübingen, Germany. Her post-doctoral project focuses on the Ethno-World initiative.

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## Notes

<sup>1</sup> To anonymise the research, this information has been omitted in this report. This data is stored in a safe environment, available from the author, upon request, and to authorised persons only.

<sup>2</sup> Please find details on paired interviews and a critical analysis of this practice in ethnomusicological research in my paper “Fieldwork and methodological issues in the study of British folk music” which I presented at the “Music and fieldwork: observation in cultural studies” Symposium (Durham, May 2012), referenced in my PhD thesis.

<sup>3</sup> In English in her words, despite the interview being in French, her mother tongue.

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