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Gibson, Sarah-Jane (2024) 14. Experience, Understanding and Intercultural Competence. In: Minors, Helen Julia, Östersjö, Stefan, Dalagna, Gilvano and Salgado Correia, Jorge Salgado, (eds.) Teaching Music Performance in Higher Education Exploring the Potential of Artistic Research. Open Book Publishers, pp. 271-286

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TEACHING MUSIC PERFORMANCE IN HIGHER EDUCATION

EXPLORING THE POTENTIAL OF ARTISTIC RESEARCH

EDITED BY
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Helen Julia Minors, Stefan Östersjö, Gilvano Dalagna, and Jorge Salgado Correia (eds), *Teaching Music Performance in Higher Education: Exploring the Potential of Artistic Research*. Cambridge, UK: Open Book Publishers, 2024, https://doi.org/10.11647/OBP.0398

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ISBN Paperback: 978-1-80511-272-3
ISBN Hardback: 978-1-80511-273-0
ISBN Digital (PDF): 978-1-80511-274-7
ISBN Digital eBook (EPUB): 978-1-80511-275-4
ISBN HTML: 978-1-80511-277-8

DOI: 10.11647/OBP.0398

Cover image: Cover image: Wassily Kandinsky, *Gelb, Rot, Blau* (1925), https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Kandinsky_-_Gelb-Rot-Blau,_1925.png

Cover design: Jeevanjot Kaur Nagpal

Co-funded by the Erasmus+ Programme of the European Union

This book was produced as a deliverable for the Erasmus+ project 2020-1-PT01-KA203-078541.

The European Commission's support for the production of this publication does not constitute an endorsement of the contents, which reflect the views only of the authors, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein, https://react.web.ua.pt

Thanks are due to FCT/MCTES for the financial support to INET-md (UIDB/00472/2020), through national funds.

11. Experience, Understanding and Intercultural Competence
The Ethno Programme

Sarah-Jane Gibson

Considering the differences between intercultural experience, understanding, and competence is relevant to anyone engaging in higher music education (HME) as we prepare our students for careers in an ever-changing industry and a global society experiencing more deeper and urgent challenges. As discussed by Randi Eidsaa and Mariam Kharatyan in Chapter 10 of this volume, it is vital that HME explore diverse music practices, however, much like Helen Minors in Chapter 12, I argue for the importance of critical reflection as part of the learning process to ensure students engage critically with music and issues within society. Gage Averill challenges music educators, saying: 'we may unwittingly indulge our student participants and our audiences in a form of concert tourism that superficially nods to multicultural diversity without challenging preconceived notions or acknowledging the noisy clash of cultures, politics, and musics in the contemporary world'.[1] It is vital that we approach intercultural engagement in such a way that we critically reflect on our epistemological understanding of music-making and the sociological effects of engaging with cultures different to our own.[2]

Ethno is a 10-day residential event for young musicians. Intercultural immersion takes place there when attendees, who come from a variety of places around the world, engage with one another through sharing and learning folk tunes and songs from each other's cultural heritage. Participants also spend time together eating meals and socialising. The Ethno Gatherings do not have a standardised approach

1 Gage Averill, '"Where's 'one'": Musical Encounters of the Ensemble Kind', in *Performing Ethnomusicology: Teaching and Representation in World Music Ensembles*, ed. by Ted Solis (Berkeley and Palo Alto: University of California Press, 2004), 108.

2 Robert Aman, 'Other Knowledges, Other Interculturalities: The Colonial Difference in Intercultural Dialogue' in *Unsettling Eurocentrism in the Westernised University*, ed. by Julie Cupples and Ramón Grosfoguel (Oxford: Routledge, 2019), pp. 171–86.

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towards facilitated discussions surrounding issues of intercultural understanding, and not all Ethno organisers believe such time for critical reflection is necessary. Based on this perspective, I consider the following research questions: To what extent should an intercultural music programme also focus on developing intercultural understanding and competency? Is it enough for participants to have an intercultural musical experience without allowing time for facilitated discussions to develop intercultural competencies? Further to this, I consider how the Ethno approach may influence intercultural understanding in formal higher music education programmes, specifically within UK HME contexts.

After a brief description of Ethno and its pedagogical approach followed by a review of interculturality, I will explore various notions of intercultural understanding such as Gordon Allport's contact hypothesis, intercultural competence, as outlined by Darla Deardorff, and intercultural understanding through critical reflection using examples from Ethno research.[3] I argue for more time in ensemble rehearsals for critical reflection in the form of facilitated discussions so that people who engage in intercultural music-making are able to develop their intercultural competency skills.

Ethno

Ethno is a residential gathering of 10 days where young musicians teach one another songs from their folk music traditions and work towards public concerts held at the end of the event. It was founded by Magnus Bäckström, a Swedish folk musician, in 1990. The inspiration was to create a programme that provided opportunities for folk musicians that complimented the more Western classically orientated World Youth Choir and the World Youth Orchestra, all programmes facilitated by JM International (JMI), a global network of NGOs that provide opportunities for young people and children to develop through music across all boundaries.[4] Ethno became part of JMI's programmes in 2000 and has now expanded to over 40 countries around the world.[5]

Bäckström wanted to create an opportunity for young folk musicians to 'meet and play', hoping to create a space with a 'structure that gives some kind of order but still allows creative encounters to happen'.[6] The result was an event that focuses on a culturally democratic approach.[7] Peers have the opportunity to teach and share their music and their culture. An Ethno organiser describes the process of sharing

3 Gordon Allport, *The Nature of Prejudice* (Cambridge: Addison-Wesley, 1954); Darla Deardorff, 'Assessing Intercultural Competence', *New Directions for Institutional Research*, 149 (2011), 65–79.

4 'About JMI', JM International, website [n.d.], www.jmi.net/about

5 Sarah-Jane Gibson, Lee Higgins, Ryan Humphrey, Linus Ellström, Helena Reiss; and Lisandra Roosioja, *30 Years of Ethno: The History of Ethno* (York: York St John University, 2022).

6 Magnus Bäckström, Hugo Ribeiro, Peter Ahlbom, 'An Autobiographical History of Ethno Sweden: A Testimonial about its Origins, Underlying Ideology and Initial Goals', *ORFEU*, 4.2 (2019), 7–29 (pp. 17, 18).

7 Cultural democracy refers to supporting diverse cultures in a respectful and celebratory manner, resisting dominant ideologies and cultural hierarchies, and promoting a philosophy of empowerment

and learning tunes and songs as making 'everyone equal. Everyone has something to teach and something to learn').[8] In this sense, Ethno can be seen to epitomise a model that furthers student autonomy, lifelong learning, and musical identity in a supportive learning environment, a key concern of the REACT project.[9]

Ethno Pedagogy

Ethno Pedagogy embraces a foundational principle of 'valuing others through critical approaches to intercultural and experiential learning'.[10] Andrea Creech, Maria Varvarigou, Lisa Lorenzino, and Ana Čorić, the researchers of the Ethno Pedagogy report, concluded that Ethno works within a non-formal and scaffolded expansive learning framework using core pedagogical practices of learning by ear, peer learning, and self-directed, situated learning. They describe the residential nature of Ethno as 'shaping the pedagogical environment'.[11] This approach has led some participants to consider their Ethno experience as transformational and led towards a lifelong interest in learning music.

Two aspects of the pedagogical framework are relevant to this chapter: situated learning, which results in a level of autonomy regarding learning and an openness to exploring new ideas both within the facilitated sessions and in the non-formal and social settings of the gathering, and learning by ear.

Method

Ethno Research comprised an international team of twenty researchers led by the International Centre for Community Music at York St John University. The project was led by Professor Lee Higgins. Research findings were drawn from participant observation at 11 Ethno gatherings, over 330 interviews, online social media analysis, onsite and video observations, surveys, and questionnaires. The complete catalogue of research reports is available at www.ethnoresearch.org.

I have worked with this project since its inception in May 2019, first as a post-doctoral researcher then as a research associate until the project's completion in December 2022. The research question under discussion here is born out of a meta-analysis of all the research reports and my final research project into the global growth of Ethno, which was published in December 2022.

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through participation. Lee Higgins, *Community Music: In Theory and in Practice* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012), pp. 32–35.

8 Focus Group Meeting, June 2021

9 Gilvano Dalagna, Stefan Östersjö, Clarissa Foletto, and Jorge Salgado Correia, *REACT Symposium – Reflective and Critical Approaches to Teaching and Learning* (Aveiro: UA Editora, 2022).

10 Andrea Creech, Maria Varvarigou, Lisa Lorenzino, and Ana Čorić, *Pedagogy and Professional Development: Research Report* (York: York St John University, 2022), p. 12.

11 Creech et al., p. 13.

The chapter also draws upon the authors' HME teaching with a particular focus on an 'Ethno inspired' band, which I facilitated between 2019–2020 and a drumming module I currently coordinate wherein I focus on diverse percussion traditions. I have drawn upon these HME experiences to demonstrate how this research has broadened sociological and musical understandings of other cultures for music students at York St John University, an institution with a commitment to social justice and a strategic aim that embeds this value in the daily working of the university including standing up against inequality.[12]

Interculturality

Huib Schippers explains that 'in an intercultural environment conscious efforts are made to enable cultural meetings and mixing'.[13] Across the literature, there is an acknowledgement that intercultural understanding is a constant process that involves both awareness of one's own culture as well as a knowledge and respect for different cultures.[14] The value of intercultural understanding in a global community is that it can support 'peace and tolerance building between different communities and cultures across the globe'.[15]

Where intercultural understanding refers to an awareness of and respect for one's own culture and different cultures, intercultural competence extends interculturality to include a particular outcome within intercultural situations. Deardorff highlights the need for greater intercultural competency as society becomes more diverse; however, she acknowledges that there is no consensus surrounding intercultural terminology across academic disciplines.[16] She defines intercultural competence as 'any who interact with those from different backgrounds, regardless of location' with a desired outcome of '*effective* and *appropriate* behaviour and communication in intercultural situations'.[17]

Roger Mantie and Pedro Toroni suggest that interculturality within Ethno could be theorised through Allport's contact hypothesis or intergroup contact theory, which proposes that interpersonal contact, under certain conditions, can promote tolerance and acceptance between minority and majority groups.[18] This is most effective when

12 York St John University, 'Strategy 2026 Refresh' (York: York St John University, 2021), p. 3.
13 Huib Schippers, *Sharing Songs, Shaping Community* (York: York St John University, 2022), p. 12.
14 Mark Heyward, 'From International to Intercultural: Redefining the International School for a Globalized World', *Journal of Research in International Education*, 1.1 (2002), 9–32; Ian Hill, 'Student Types, School Types and their Combined Influence on the Development of Intercultural Understanding', *Journal of Research in International Education*, 5.1 (2006), 5–33; Debra Williams-Gualandi, 'Intercultural Understanding: What Are We Looking For and How Do We Assess What We Find?', *International and Global Issues for Research* (2015), https://www.bath.ac.uk/publications/department-of-education-working-papers/attachments/intercultural-understanding-what-are-we-looking for.pdf
15 Gibson et al., p. 39.
16 Deardorff, p. 65.
17 Ibid., p. 66,
18 Roger Mantie and Pedro Toroni, 'Marvelling at the Ethnoverse: Intercultural Learning through Traditional Music', in *Ethno Music Gatherings*, ed. by Sarah-Jane Gibson and Lee Higgins; Allport.

groups 'share similar status, interests, and tasks and when the situation fosters personal, intimate intergroup contact'—as Ethno does.[19] Mantie and Toroni suggest that Ethno offers an example of how 'intercultural' success in breaking down stereotypes and negative assumptions may be dependent upon the mode or mechanism of interaction: music. They argue that 'music's ubiquity as a cultural practice makes it exceptionally powerful as a form of interaction with the potential for mediating intercultural differences'.[20] This is a similar position to that found in the 'White Paper on Intercultural Dialogue'. In this White Paper, it is recognised that:

> Cultural activities can provide knowledge of diverse cultural expressions and so contribute to tolerance, mutual understanding and respect. Cultural creativity offers important potential for enhancing the respect of others. The arts are also a playground of contradiction and symbolic confrontation, allowing for individual expression, critical self-reflection and mediation. They thus naturally cross borders and connect and speak directly to people's emotions.[21]

JMI draws their conception of intercultural dialogue from the Council of Europe definition: 'Intercultural dialogue is understood as an open and respectful exchange of views between individuals and groups with different ethnic, cultural, religious and linguistic backgrounds and heritage on the basis of mutual understanding and respect'.[22] Regarding interculturality, Ethno organisers believe that they create the space for intercultural dialogue through informal jamming and discussions where participants speak about their culture and political situations amongst themselves.[23] They write:

> at the root of intercultural understanding lies intercultural curiosity, which is stimulated by entering into contact with different cultures (for example during an Ethno camp). The curiosity sparked at/by an Ethno camp inspires musicians to learn more when they return home, sometimes driving lifelong interests and/or involvement in a new musical culture/genre.[24]

Both intercultural understanding and competency definitions suggest the need for active facilitation or critical reflection which results in an awareness of cultural differences or in developing effective patterns of behaviour in intercultural situations. This statement of the Ethno organisers suggests that Ethno does focus more on a contact hypothesis approach: putting diverse cultures in a space together, but not actively developing intercultural competency or understanding. Contact hypothesis

19 Thomas Pettigrew and Linda Tropp, 'A Meta-Analytic Test of Intergroup Contact theory', *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 90.5 (2006), 751–83 (p. 752).

20 Mantie and Toroni, 112.

21 Council of Europe, Ministers of Foreign Affairs, 'White Paper on Intercultural Dialogue: Living Together as Equals in Dignity, 7 May 2008, p. 109, https://www.coe.int/t/dg4/intercultural/source/white%20paper_final_revised_en.pdf

22 Ibid.

23 Focus group meeting, 2021.

24 Ethno Research Key Questions, Feedback, 2021.

could thus be comparable to an intercultural experience where people meet different cultures, but do not necessarily develop deeper understandings or competencies.

In the following sections, I shall explore how these three approaches relate to the experiences of participants at Ethno Gatherings and how some of these concepts have been explored in the HME setting at York St John University (YSJU).

Intercultural Experience

As Mantie and Torino argue, musical engagement can be seen as an effective tool for people from different cultural backgrounds to engage with one another from an interpersonal, contact hypothesis perspective.[25] The primary requirement appears to be bringing people from diverse or conflicting backgrounds into a space together to enable engagement or an intercultural experience. For example, a memory shared by an Ethno participant named Keon describes a pivotal, interpersonal contact moment at Ethno that he felt was transformational. It was in 2005 at a time when the impact of the Kosovo war was still felt in Europe.[26] The participant paints a picture of two musicians jamming late into the night at an Ethno gathering, whilst at the same time also describes a conversation that he is hearing next to him. Whilst in a heightened state of music-making he is hearing another person share their experiences of being a solider in the Kosovo war:

> He'd been a soldier in the Kosovo war, and his father being a soldier there as well. And every family in Serbia, there is at least one or a few male members of the family who one way or the other would've been involved in [...] the Kosovo war. And how that war is really, also in Serbia, a national trauma. And he was [...] at all talking about like, 'Oh, yeah. It's a shame that we lost' or whatever it was. It was nothing about making the Serbians heroes, or making the international community into villains [...] He was really only talking about the human aspects of being in a war. And to hear that from... Because, I mean in Western media, or the Swedish media, the Serbians were really... Kind of... Everyone knew that the Serbians were the bad guys, and the Kosovo were the kind of... The ones that needed protection. I was hearing snippets of this conversation that gave me a really, really strong experience of: 'Yes, of course! They are also human beings, they were on the other side, but they were also human beings. And it's something that affected them really strongly as well.' And I think THAT experience, THAT moment is something that's changed me. I think that very experience made me definitely more humble. Towards life in general, and towards... Understanding that there are always, there's always a different side. There's always another side of things. And also, we're all humans with the will to protect our lives and our families.[27]

25 Mantie and Toroni.

26 The Kosovo war was an armed conflict between Serbians and Albanians between 1998–1999. Kosovo was seeking independence from Yugoslavia, and Serbia responded by the persecution of Albanians. The conflict ended through a NATO intervention of air strikes. Yugoslavia withdrew their forces. The area remains a contested space. Tamara Kovacevic, 'Kosovo: Why is Violence Flaring between Ethnic Serbs and the Albanians?', BBC News (2023), https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/62382069

27 Keon, Interview, 2020.

Keon is describing a situation where a new understanding is developed in an unmediated manner. There was no facilitation, rather the experience occurred during an informal situation. In his description, it does not appear that he is engaging with the Serbian participant through conversation or music-making. Rather, he is listening to a conversation. The content of the discussion and sincerity of the Serbian's story resulted in a realisation that became transformational for the participant. What is striking about this experience is that there appears to have been no personal engagement between Keon and the Serbian he overheard. The experience occurred because they were in close proximity to one another and in a residential setting.

The Ethno committee emphasise that their decision not to facilitate sessions on intercultural understandings is 'intentional and does not undermine the effectiveness of the experience'.[28] The encounter described above was enabled due to the residential nature of the Gathering, something that Elise Gayraud argues is essential for 'sufficient intercultural immersion' at Ethno.[29] It happened because people were in constant engagement with one another, an approach identified as a successful method of connecting diverse people.[30]

Participants attend Ethno Gatherings with the expectation of sharing music from their cultural heritage and learning music that their fellow participants have brought with them from their musical cultures, thus Ethno Gatherings are perceived by participants as a learning opportunity. I would like to suggest that it was the particular learning environment created at the Ethno Gatherings that enabled this encounter.[31] The facilitation during sharing sessions encouraged an attitude of 'respectful musical exchange'.[32] This attitude embeds the core pedagogical value which may have created a space safe enough for the Serbian participant to share his personal experiences of the Kosovo war and for Keon to be in a receptive position. The sense of openness that had been cultivated throughout the gathering allowed for the opportunity to be open to a differing perspective, enabling a transformational experience.

The need for conversation in diverse cultural settings is noted as extremely important in intercultural settings.[33] Yet, HME settings do not always allow for space

28 Ethno Research Key Questions, Feedback, 2021.

29 Elise Gayraud, *Towards an Ethnography of a Culturally Eclectic Music Scene* (Durham: Durham University, 2015), p. 119.

30 Peter Block, *Community* (San Francisco: Berret-Koehler, 2009); Deardorff.

31 Sarah-Jane Gibson, 'Case Study: Ethno Sweden. A Catalyst for Change, in *Ethno Research Pilot Case Studies* (York: York St John University, 2019).

32 Lee Higgins, 'Case Study: Ethno Portugal: Crossing the Threshold', in *Ethno Research Research Pilot Case Studies* (York: York St John University, 2019).

33 Block; Benjamin Brinner, *Playing Across a Divide: Israeli-Palestinian Musical Encounters* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009); Pamela Burnard, Valerie Ross, Laura Lis Hassler, and Lis Murphy, 'Translating Intercultural Creativities in Community Music: Introducing the Role of Interculturality in Community Music Practice', in *The Oxford Handbook of Community Music*, ed. by Brydie Bartleet and Lee Higgins (New York: Oxford University Press, 2018), pp. 44–70; Deardorff; Sarah-Jane Gibson, *Community Choirs in Northern Ireland: Reimagining Identity through Singing* (Bristol: Intellect, 2023); Juliet Hess, *Music Education for Social Change: Constructing an Activist Music Education* (New York: Routledge, 2019).

for conversation and relationship building in musical ensembles. Spaces around the peripheral of musical engagement allow for moments to become familiar with the social context of fellow musicians. Through conversations, new understandings can be expanded upon, opening a door towards intercultural competence.

Making space for conversation was one of the challenges of the 'Ethno inspired band' that I facilitated at YSJU. I incorporated 'check-ins' before we began each session, where participants expressed how they were feeling. Each person in the group brought a piece of music to share, and I encouraged participants to share their abilities and skills, thinking about what they could contribute to each piece we were learning. Feedback from the students was that some of them wanted even more detail about each participant and more time to get to know each other's abilities, emphasising academic findings of how much time is needed for conversation in such spaces.[34] As students began to share their musical backgrounds and cultural heritage, it became striking how diverse the students were. Further feedback from students is that they value the bonding moments and believe it can lead to more successful performances.

Providing space for dialogue and discussion within intercultural environments is vital in bringing awareness to issues of cultural dominance and appropriation. It also enables the opportunity to work together to resolve any concerns members from ethnic minorities may have. This complexity needs to be constantly reflected upon, and in doing so, will lead to intercultural experiences that are meaningful, respectful, and promote social change.[35]

Intercultural Competence

Deardorff points out that intercultural experts agree on one aspect of intercultural competence: that of seeing from others' perspectives.[36] This is evident in Keon's reflection in the previous section. He was able to see another perspective, one that was not being promoted by the media surrounding the Kosovo war. This realisation of there being 'another side of things' led to a moment that he describes as transformational. Ethno appears to be particularly effective in developing the attitudes of respect, openness, and curiosity which are a further basis for developing intercultural competence.[37] However, Deardorff emphasizes that intercultural competence is ongoing, arguing that critical thinking skills are vital in acquiring knowledge. Critical thinking skills are an

34 Jing Yeo, 'The Methods to Intercultural Musical Engagement and the Effects on Musical Performance Practice' (unpublished BA (Hons) Dissertation, York St John University, 2019).

35 Solis, Introduction; Bob White, 'The Promise of World Music: Strategies for Non-Essentialist Listening,' in *Music and Globalization: Critical Encounters* ed. by Bob White (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2012), pp. 189–218; Brydie-Leigh Bartleet, 'How Concepts of Love can Inform Empathy and Conciliation in Intercultural Community Music Contexts', *International Journal of Community Music*, 12/3 (2019), 317–30; Gibson, *Community Choirs*; Hess.

36 Deardorff, p. 68.

37 Deardorff.

area that some Ethno participants felt were lacking, as one, Olivia, explained in 2014, '[We needed] Activities to communicate better and develop the understanding apart from music because...you learn, you play and you rehearse it. And that is (it). It's not that hard. That's the easy part, the hardest part is developing the real understanding behind the cultural difference'.

This issue of cultural difference is stressed by Robert Aman who writes that there may be 'unequal positions from which participants in an intercultural dialogue may encounter each other'.[38] Aman is referring to the power dimensions that come into play due to globalisation and colonisation in particular. He stresses the importance of the 'geopolitical dimension of knowledge production',[39] concluding that 'part of the challenge in achieving an intercultural dialogue [...] involves understanding the social-historical power relations that imbue knowledge production'.[40] This is particularly interesting when considering how we teach and learn music. Often assumptions can be made that students all learn music through the same cognitive processes. However, Deborah Bradley argues that we need to 'approach all music, and all philosophies of music education, with an understanding of their contextually situated nature'.[41]

This is highlighted in relation to the Ethno approach by Mio Yachita in their analysis of Ethno Cambodia. Yachita noted an interesting response to the use of learning by ear in which musicians who learned orally in their everyday practice resorted to using notation to aid their learning of Ethno songs.[42] The feedback from these musicians was that they felt they did not have enough time to learn the music effectively by ear during the workshops, so they used their own notation systems as a memory aid. The musicians' understanding of how and why they learn by ear and appeared to be conceptually different to the way it was being used in Ethno. Yachita argues that '"learning music by ear" is at the core of the Ethno programme because it allows musicians to escape from formal western training',[43] which is rooted in reading a musical score. For some of the musicians in Cambodia, learning by ear was considered a 'formal' approach, thus becoming a challenge for them in the non-formal situation of Ethno. Yachita notes that fundamental concepts such as 'learning by ear'[44] may need to be reconsidered when 'bringing Ethno into the non-Western world'.

38 Robert Aman, 'Other Knowledges, Other Interculturalities: The Colonial Difference in Intercultural Dialogue', in *Unsettling Eurocentrism in the Westernised University*, ed. by Julie Cupples and Ramón Grosfoguel (Oxford: Routledge, 2019), pp. 171–86 (p. 172).

39 Aman, p. 184.

40 Ibid.

41 Deborah Bradley, 'Good for what, Good for whom? Decolonising Music Education Philosophies', in *The Oxford Handbook of Philosophy in Music Education*, ed. by Wayne Bowman and Ana Lucia Frega (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012), pp. 409–33 (p. 429).

42 Mio Yachita, 'An analysis of Ethno Cambodia 2019: Youth, Tradition and the Unavoidable Issue of Ethnicity in Asia' (unpublished paper 2019).

43 Ibid., p. 10.

44 Ibid.

Meki Nzewi, Israel Anyahuru, and Tom Ohiaraumunna explain: 'most ethnomusicologists have come to accept that the standard theories about the music of one human society are often inadequate for a cognitive understanding of the music of another, culturally differentiated society'.[45] This suggests that everyone views music from a particular cultural lens, including how we understand and conceptualise music-making. Thus, while intercultural music-making may be a successful starting point for contact hypothesis and reducing prejudice, it fails to recognise deeper conceptual differences. Acknowledging such difference in perception may prevent Eurocentric dominance in intercultural music-making processes such as those that occur at Ethno and may lead to greater intercultural competence.

It is within this context that formal education, and in particular HME, may complement a non-formal residential gathering, or, where lectures may supplement the learning that takes place during world music ensembles. This is an approach taken in a module that explores world drumming traditions at York St John university. Workshops are alternated with lectures. During the lectures, time is spent exploring and reflecting on the contextually situated nature of the music students are learning in their workshops, allowing them to critically reflect on their learning and to develop their intercultural competence when engaging with music from different cultures.

Critical Reflection

Gibson et al. consider 'understanding in terms of conceptual knowledge brought about through critical and reflective thinking'.[46] Higgins notes that, for some participants, the Ethno experience becomes a 'critical thinking tool', meaning that some at Ethno were actively utilising the experience as 'a lens through which to think and reflect on both current contemporary affairs and broader aspects of personal life'.[47] In this sense, they were choosing to engage in critical thinking as a tool for helping them process their experiences at Ethno. Opportunities for such discussion between participants currently occur between the scheduled musical rehearsals at the gathering. These were not facilitated discussions or sessions enforced upon participants. Critical reflection can result in profound intercultural understanding, as one participant, Carina, experienced in her first Ethno in 2014:

> The first Ethno I went to I shared a lot with an Indian singer [...]. And I remember that she asked the crew of the Ethno to open the woman's bathroom in the nights only for her because in the morning when we used to go to take a shower, we were naked [..] and all of us together and that wasn't comfortable for her. I always remember that because it is

45 Meki Nzewi, Israel Anyahuru, and Tom Ohiaraumunna, *Musical Sense and Musical Meaning: An Indigenous African Perception* (Pretoria: UNISA Press, 2008), p. 1.

46 Gibson et al., '30 Years of Ethno', pp. 76–77.

47 Higgins, 'Case Study: Ethno Portugal'.

> important to have the comprehension that we have to be empathic with another person because they can require different things and not every person feels the same.

Carina was able to critically reflect on the needs of her fellow participant, which led to a new comprehension of empathy for people who may have different circumstances to her own. Her intercultural competence developed towards a recognition that some people have different needs that need to be met.

In another situation, an Ethno participant was able to critically reflect on his encounters in a transcultural music group called the Världens band, which comprised people who had 'aged out' of the Ethno Gatherings:[48]

> This is the dangerous thing with Ethno because it started in Europe, with European values and ideas, in music as well. When you go to an Ethno, most of them are based on having a melody, accompaniment and rhythm and we always talk music theory in Western terms. There's this big risk that it's Western culture being implied on other cultures and being told this is the right thing. I started realising these things […] because of Ethno.[49]

This participant is recognising the Eurocentric nature of the structure of music-making during Ethno as well as the ideology behind the gathering. Interestingly, he comments that it was because of his attendance at Ethno that he became aware of the dominance of European musical approaches in world music settings. He continues with an example of an experience that occurred early on in the Världens band:

> I have a very concrete example with our first singer [in our multicultural band]. He was playing the mbira and he had his way of tuning it which didn't work together with our own instruments. We were young and not conscious of how different music cultures are. And we said, 'why can't you just change the tuning?'. And he said, No, it will lose the African spirit'. And we were like, 'come on, that's not a real thing' – but of course it is and when you read about it more […] it was tuned in a […] natural harmonic series, so [it] would vibrate and sound in a certain way, which it doesn't in equal temperament.[50]

This musical group, the Världens band, acknowledge that they need to use a harmonic and tonal system in part to be accessible to their largely Euro-American audiences.[51] Balosso-Bardin argues, however, that 'commercial compromise […] is different from intercultural compromise which encourages the musicians both to make their music intelligible to their audience and to find a common ground in order

48 The Världens band visited YSJ in November 2019 as part of the University's strategic aims to engage our students with research at YSJ. The band provided workshops for our students and then gave a performance at the University. Our students were able to perform alongside the band by playing the tunes they had learned at the workshops. The intention of the visit was to allow students to experience some of the collaborative learning practices that the band engage in when learning folk music and to enable our students to perform alongside a professional touring group.

49 Världens band member G, focus group, 2019.

50 Ibid.

51 Cassandre Balosso-Bardin, '#No Borders. Världens Band: Creating and Performing Music across Borders', *The World of Music*, 7.2 (2018), 81–105.

facilitate musical collaboration'.[52] Balosso-Bardin is recognising a tension: using harmony from outside the Western tonal system may alienate their audience, thus losing them revenue. They have therefore come to compromises, such as agreeing to resist singing any English lyrics.

In these examples, we observe a comprehension of what the participants have experienced. They are able to articulate their experience explaining a realisation that not everyone thinks in the same way that they do, or that not everyone has the same needs as they may have. Their critical reflection enabled intercultural understanding. What we need to consider is the value of the understanding behind the experience; the praxial and embodied versus the cognitive processing, or, being able to articulate what one has just learned. This is a point that Deardorff emphasises regarding study abroad programmes, suggesting that students need to be given preparation prior to their journey 'in order to articulate the learning that occurs'.[53] Brydie-Leigh Bartleet, Catherine Grant, Charulatha Mani, and Vanessa Tomlinson also acknowledge that 'global mobility programmes can become powerful sites for embodied learning and understanding'; however, they also note that students who wish to 'readjust their prior acquired artistic schema' successfully need to reflect and explore 'action-based processes'.[54] Through data gathered from our interviews, the Ethno research team have identified that most participants already attend Ethno with an openness and curiosity to learn about different cultures. The challenge is how to encourage further critical reflection upon their learning once they return home and how this may then influence both their musical practice and social interactions in intercultural settings. This challenge could be met within HME if critical reflection is incorporated into the learning that takes place in intercultural ensembles.

Conclusions

In this chapter, I have interrogated the differences between intercultural experience, competency, and understanding. Using the narratives of Ethno participants as examples, I have related intercultural experience to interpersonal contact theory. I have argued that intercultural experience is effective due to the residential nature of the gathering, which can enable a 'reduction of prejudice' due to the learning environment and constant interaction participants have with one another. This is an example where non-formal immersion into music cultures can complement learning in formal HME. I have also argued for the value of more time within intercultural ensembles for conversation within HME, to further develop understanding and

52 Ibid., p. 98.
53 Deardorff, p. 71.
54 Brydie-Leigh Bartleet, Catherine Grant, Charulatha Mani, and Vanessa Tomlinson, 'Global Mobility in Higher Education: Reflections on how Intercultural Music-Making can Enhance Students' Musical Practices and Identities', *International Journal of Music Education*, 38.2 (2020), 161–77 (pp. 173, 174).

competency, as feedback from students at YSJU suggest that they believe deeper understanding and connections within their ensemble can strengthen their performances.

I have suggested that intercultural music programmes could enhance their participants' experience by developing intercultural competency, particularly regarding musical transmission. Developing awareness of the dominance of Western musical systems can better allow musicians to engage with world music in a more equitable manner and further enhance their own understanding of their music-making practice. This may be an area where formal HME can complement learning in world music ensembles with lectures. This is vital if HME aims to challenge dominant hegemonies.

Finally, I reflected on the value of critical reflection for intercultural music engagement. I argue that this is a vital element to the practice of intercultural music-making. Participants at Ethno reflect on how their intercultural experience is 'the easy part' but feel that there is value in developing this experience towards a better understanding of how different cultures engage with the world and music. Critical reflection can support students in better understanding their experience of an intercultural encounter, enabling them to apply their learning in different situations and perhaps better engage with people from different cultures in future encounters.

Patrick Kabanda suggests that 'we need to ask how we should recalibrate and sharpen our tools of engagement. We need to take time to understand cultural activities and how they can play a meaningful role in building a more secure and peaceful world amidst modern globalisation'.[55] The development of intercultural competence may not just happen through learning about other countries' backgrounds or because persons from differing backgrounds are in the vicinity of one another or even interacting with each other. Contact hypothesis may be an important starting place as it brings people together, but intercultural competence occurs when people experience a transformation of their understandings. It is here where HME has the potential to develop intercultural understanding through deeper critical reflection. Whilst students are engaging in intercultural music-making in their musical ensembles, providing spaces that challenge and acknowledge dominant epistemologies of music-making and encourage critical reflection can lead to deeper intercultural understanding.

55 Patrick Kabanda, *The Creative Wealth of Nations* (New York: Cambridge University Press 2018), p. 41.

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