

# From desire for recognition to desire for independence

## World music filtered in the market economy

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“If artistic creation is always the expression of absolute subjective singularity, the gap and novelty inevitably become the touchstone of work’s value.”<sup>1</sup>

Jean-Marie Schaeffer

In a global plethoric system where music, festivals and travel are offered in overabundance to individuals, creative practices must be leveled. Hence, institutions are responsible for establishing valuation’s logic to classify artistic products. This contribution will involve the structuring of a sector of music industry in a full reconfiguration—the one still awkwardly designated by world music syntagma—into transnational and heterogenous networks of key players.

In this way, I propose to analyze the impact of their decision-making power in new art venues—what its participants commonly call markets, exhibitions, fairs. Circuits, hot spots, honorary awards, expert panels: the question that arises regarding this ecosystem’s functioning is how is the value of an artistic act established and decreed, and what, therefore, is the value of the one who produces it? The word value comes from the Latin “valor”, derived from “valere” which means “to be powerful”. Whoever has value, therefore, becomes desirable and worthy of esteem. In economic jargon, we talk about useable value or exchange value. In this text, I will look at the socio-

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logical acceptance of value, defined by Luc Boltanski and Laurent Thévenot (1991), as economy of greatness.

I will engage in an examination of value(s)-making within the world music industry, inserting my heuristic perspective at the heart of an axiology determined by its actors. For this purpose, I will adopt a participant observation's strategy, a "marginal secant" (Crozier/Friedberg 1977: 52) position, that will make my immersion as an insider researcher within a professional environment a lever for understanding its driving forces, its different and contradictory logics of action and as a way to peer into the evolution of its value's parameter.

In order to understand the zones of influence in which these interpersonal territories operate, it is essential to study their methods of linking. Conducting a thick description of new transnational connections, I'll demonstrate how music exchange occurs through market mechanisms—materialized by selective physical or virtual encounters—approaching the music industry's reality and its migration of sense thanks to the study of flows, movements and inertia's forces weaving the web of a contemporary globalized space.

## **The professional world music markets: inventory of a space with shifting geography**

The prices—and therefore the prizes—are not the privilege of economists. They constitute a central element in the experience of attachment and thus in the study of social structures underlying the exchanges. Music, as an important cultural commodity, has become decisive in terms of monetarization of artistic practice, to the point that the world music niche cannot avoid it.

World music: a worn-out language paradigm, a terminology with questionable historical connotations? Mathieu Rosati, whom I met during a meeting of the Collectif des musiques et danses du monde en Ile-de-France, defines world music as a conceivable compromise of communication that does not dispense to reflect on the actions to be put behind, actions which belong to us. World music has aroused many fantasies and, in some way, has been fueled by its own myths. Why not deliberately set aside the endless debate on the legitimate use of this commercial label—in an absence of consensual defining framework (cf. Laborde 1997: 245)—to instead look at those who mobilize around the music as powerful vectors of economic values?

The professional world music markets, true platforms for negotiating international visibility, want, above all, to represent a means of interaction, to bring protagonists to exchange together in order to improve the functioning of their sector. These “expos” are then conceived as spaces of knowledge where commitment is total in order to establish the conditions for the creation of a network—a true watchword as a promise of providential encounters.

First of all, the discursive use of the overarching category “market” participates in an efficient rhetorical process in terms of ideological authority. This aura of power is embodied in the world music sector by the superstructures of WOMEX (World Music Expo) in Europe and SXSW (South by Southwest) in the USA, which have a bilateral partnership. Would the reality of this professional world of world music be transfigured by the market’s fetishism, this transcendent force producing a dominant ideology? Social relationships coagulate outside men, outside of the most immediate social relationships, because they end up being dependent on social abstractions such as money circulation, financial markets etc. (cf. Blanc/Vincent 2004). Thus, money consists in hypostasis, in the embodiment of a pure function, that of exchange between humans (cf. Simmel 1987). Would the music industry therefore become a regime of truth where culture is measured? Faced with this apparent omnipotence of the profitability logic, nothing could be better than leaving the floor to three protagonists of these markets so that they can give us their own vision of this space at the crossroads of a social collective and individual imperatives.

Let’s start with Bernard Aubert, former director of Babel Med, a professional market in Marseille that prematurely ended in 2018 after 13 years of “good and loyal service” to the world’s music community:

They’re called markets, but the question is, are they really markets? Do the co-ordinations around the tours really happen during these Expos? A market should not only present showcases. However, the current markets, for many, do not exceed the status of storefronts; the two are often confused, storefront and market. There are market specialists who go to all markets, but they’re not necessarily the buyers, by the way. Monitoring is not evaluated for many expos. For ours, we have seen that between 20 and 40 additional dates are obtained for artists thanks to Babel Med. WOMEX is the superstructure, but what are the benefits? Due to its seniority, it enjoys a certain attractive-

ness, but what are the repercussions for artists in terms of tours and funding? Real work must be done on the follow up of artists after the exhibition, otherwise it is only limited to the aesthetic, auditory and intellectual pleasure that a festival provides. But there is a difference of nature between market and festival.

During the first and only edition of Borneo World Music Expo in Malaysia in 2014, I met Divya Bhatia, director of the RIFF (Rajasthan International Folk Festival) in Jodhpur (India). In addition, as a professor of cultural management, he talked about his market conception:

For the market, we—cultural operators—are just in front of one choice: to close it or to open it. To close it would be equal to fascism and to try to define it isn't our job. Our objective is to bring the artist to the audience. But how do we select the artists? First, we work with our intuition, because all the process is subjective, it's a matter of choice, of elective decisions. Then, in a second time, we think about the organization on a practical plan. There is a necessity to link all the different ways of media coverage for a band to be seen, not just the expos but all the ways which are attempts to seed something that can bring a fruit in the future whatever it could be because you don't know. The market can be absent in the creation. For example, the Rajasthani musicians who played with Jeff Lang didn't think about it at all and, in the end, they will showcase in the next WOMEX. So this is an example that the market can come after, it isn't influencing any creation even if it may have an impact after.

Emere Wano, artistic director of WOMAD in New Zealand, whom I met in Melbourne in 2011 at the Australasian World Music Expo, gives her vision of Oceanic artists' integration in the world music market:

Of course, there is an interdependence between the world music market that can format the artists in function of the audience and artists that format themselves in order to correspond to some criteria. But who is establishing the criteria of success on the one hand and those of being authentic on the other hand? With Sounds Aotearoa, we are trying to build the capacity and responsibility of indigenous Maori and Pacific artists, to form managers in

order to participate to the industry. We are trying to do something where no attention was paid to this in the Maori sector.

In the light of these remarks, we can emphasize both the paramount importance of penetrating Western markets and at the same time the emerging desire to create one's own mode of being on the market. Indeed, the geography of the economic power is still implicitly considered to be stronger in Europe and North America, meaning more well-paid opportunities, better technical conditions and increased visibility. But, at the same time, a necessity for Southern countries is felt to create a new formula for their own cultural development that would not have to duplicate that of the developed countries but just learn from them. By wishing to take over from perennial hegemonies, these newcomers nevertheless retain the same functioning as their predecessors, their existence beforehand being very compromised without those connections. Therefore, the world music protagonists find themselves gravitating in the same system, with, in all the expos, the same structure the first time developed by WOMEX: conferences, trade fairs, stands, speed meetings with personalized career coaching and showcases.

Since the professional market is seen as a springboard, a catalyst for economic opportunities, the participation of an artist would be crystallized as an investment—sooner or later—to internationally propel the aura of his creation. WOMEX, a symbolic reference point of the self-baptized “Womexicans” community, is however the subject of strong criticism about its capacity to fulfill this mission. The deprivation of space-time imposed on artists during showcases—these concerts in miniature—would enjoin the opposite effect: the forgetfulness facilitated by overcrowding. Indeed, the hiatus is considerable between the format, the rudimentary listening conditions and the crucial importance of capturing the target audience in record time because, under the guise of informality, contacts are formed, decisions are made and contracts are signed. The border between the concert hall where we speak about art and the backroom, the professional market, where we speak about money, is absolutely necessary for the preservation of the price and masks the fact that a whole set of people works to guarantee it.

## The role of intermediaries in valuation process

The artist—as Howard Becker’s (1982) theory of interaction emphasizes—does not decide everything in a solipsistic manner; his work is constantly interacting with institutions that allow it to come into the world, confronting him with a range of determinations and particular strategies to adopt. If creativity, as a production of mind, is not depending on an external system, it is the case, however, for its presentation on a stage insofar as listening requires a structure. Who, then, are the architects, the conductors, who give themselves the vocation of promoting and disseminating this global creativity?

To make the passage from creation to reception possible, intermediaries are necessary, “gate-keepers” who present these shows to the audience, an audience which is itself a stakeholder in the artistic creation process. My interview with Manu Théron, leader of the iconic group *Lo Cor de la Plana*, is enlightening about the eminent role of the perspective-builder:

The programmer becomes almost an exhibition curator who links works to produce meanings. The view is not fixed but it doesn’t emerge between the bearers of the works since they are not simultaneously presented. The works do not converse among themselves on an equal footing; the meaning appears only in the programmer or in the viewer.

The action of cultural operators is indeed crucial because their adopted mediations bring world music to audience and disclose, from one angle, the meaning they claim to be intrinsic to the musical works of otherness. The shows then become, by capillarity, “goods of belief” that demand (the audience) chooses based on who creates them (the artists and their representatives), perceiving only what they have been taught to see and hear. The professional markets work as authorities of classification and contribute to the evolution of the status on valuable scales. So, we attend an institutional construction which produces standards, horizons of expectations, deliberately granting itself the power of legitimization over the music by protecting its circulation.

At the hierarchy level, the same protagonists are interwoven between various institutions with differentiated status. For example, Gerald Seligman, former director of Borneo World Music Expo, Mercado Centroamericano de la Musica in Costa-Rica, and co-director of IOMMA (Indian Ocean

Music Market) on Reunion Island, was also, until 2009, the managing director of WOMEX and was head of EMI's strategic marketing, one of the most important majors in the global music market. Thus, the multi-polar networks of world music are affinity networks of co-optation, accounting for a certain "entre soi". Networking in world music is not limited to business; it is also and above all based on elective affinities, human relationships between peers, promoters, festival organizers, artists and on the confidence that they hold in each other as reliable colleagues, who are supposed to work in a spirit of collaboration and not competition: The weaving of social interaction is not done from acts of knowledge, but from the material provided by postures of recognition, as elementary forms of intersubjectivity (cf. Honneth 2007).

The question that arises is: within these competitive platforms, do we reveal, or do we build some value? Music can have intrinsic aesthetic value or instrumental value, but its emergence inside the professional markets reveals another concept: the "added value". What are the criteria, the "invariants" that allow programmers and cultural operators to make their choice? When categorization determines the value, how does the musical prescription work? The standard benefits from past success and the original is the guarantee of new success, but the already-known risks of getting tired and the new risks of displeasing (cf. Morin 2008). Thus, my main aspiration is to identify the actual global dynamics of diffusion in the world music industry while describing its process: the artistic fight for accreditation to be on stage. Not all evaluations are based on the same concept of value because there is no universal value but rather disjointed systems of values derived from representations. So, it appears essential to proceed to the analysis of selection criteria—promulgated by a fraction of professionals—in order to succeed in defining what builds the legitimacy and reputation of an artist at an international level. This reflection inevitably leads to a questioning of assignment processes of the artistic value which is determined by the negotiations about what makes sense for its actors. Ideology is not first and foremost an illusion produced by the specialists of ideas, but the subjective and more or less refined organization of objective social appearances born out of the productive and merchant process (cf. Garo 2008). It is interesting to analyze the attempt of these intermediaries to objectify their selection process within a liability scheme, even though it remains fundamentally based on their own subjectivity. The first impression must deliver a strong emotion. While asserting

in unison that there is no magic formula for capturing attention, they point out certain conditions and prerequisites for assigning the value of the artist:

- to use a high definition photo, one very clear biography page and a YouTube link in the press kit,
- to have already a career in local and/or national market,
- to show a willingness to use story telling about the inspiration of one's practice: "Creativity isn't only the music you play, it's also how well you tell your story. The music is a resource for crafting the self" (Gerald Seligman, during a workshop in Mundial Montreal),
- to preserve cultural heritage while promoting its vitality in the present,
- to have a good presentation and interaction with the audience.

But how can programmers absolutely and objectively determine whether or not music will be accessible to an international audience? The same applies to the apprehension of originality. They are measured only in relative terms. There is no univocal measurement scale of this unlimited differentiation. Howard Becker (1982) examined the problems of the charts by indicating that this selectivity is partial because it is not based on a panoptic view of the artistic production of a society.

Moreover, the evaluation of quality combinations that make the difference remains relatively indecipherable and is based on a priori estimation, on a calculus of probabilities, which cannot be assimilated to an expertise of the creative act. We cannot objectively measure the initial talent, but we can only see that reputations, levers of achievement, widen these gaps and bring out the exogenous category of originality on the social scene.

Finally, the works of John Dewey, Nathalie Heinich and Luc Boltanski are of great help in analyzing how the bias of value's negotiation lets us catch a glimpse of the manufacture of a space of social relations. The challenges of social reproduction, in a configuration like the microcosm of professional world music markets, are easily identified thanks to the relationships maintained by its actors and the construction of their sustainability within, paradoxically, piecemeal meetings set around the world. What ensures their presence? A belief based on a rhetoric manifesting the necessity of belonging to these networks in order to make and maintain one's place. For exchange and cooperation to exist, there must be a system of reciprocal expectations:



these systems are deployed in worlds governed by the coherence of principles that are activated there (cf. Boltanski/Thévenot 1991).

An archipelago of places, of justification cities (cf. Foucault 1970), is drawn, in a short-lived temporality, by the reputations conveyed all over the world on those meeting places, generating a performativity of the trade fair: the importance of attendance is built by the speech which makes the event's existence all the more essential. As Foucault (1970) would say, the creators are the instigators of discursiveness. Cultural operators, artists demonstrate a feeling of obligation to appear at WOMEX: if they are not recognizable, they incur the risk of dissolution of their visibility. If this collective configuration works and comforts, it is because its prerogatives respond to the prevailing desire for recognition from actors who accept playing in this family compound. As Nathalie Heinich (2017) notes, the power of values especially resides in the fact that they are lived by actors neither as simple illusions, nor as logical arguments, but as imperatives strongly affectively invested. Anthropology deals with observing, dissecting prospects, enthusiasms, satisfactions and disappointments felt by actors within some configuration. In spite of a feeling of resignation on the part of stake-holders in front of a fundamentally unequal system, the professional markets remain moments of sociable excitement, opportunities of conviviality, in order to form a unique entity on the global scale. These privileged times of networking during trade shows could be indicated as epiphanies which crystallize the symbolic and material investments of world music professionals.

## Fieldwork as an insider researcher

"A triple promise falls to the anthropologist: to himself, to his discipline and to his object."

Sophie Caratini (2012)

In 2016, I was in charge of diffusion and programming for the Festival de l'Imaginaire in the Maison des Cultures du Monde, and since 2017, I have been an artistic advisor to several international festivals: World Sacred Spirit Festival (Rajasthan, India), Festival des Musiques Sacrées (Fès, Morocco)

and Al Kamandjati Festival (Palestine). The adoption of a new posture, at the interface between institution, artists and audiences, has enabled me to live these years of professional learning, not as a derivative effect but rather as an instrument of knowledge, allowing me to alter the gaze on my object. For the ethnomusicologist Michel de Lannoy, the key position of “talent seekers”—that of programmers—requires a rigor equal to the ethnomusicologist’s in the field, in the proper relationship to build between his own problem and the studied object (cf. Lannoy, quoted in Defrance 1996: 336–338).

In this immersive perspective, I therefore question the place and positioning of the embedded anthropologist, at the intersection of the worlds of work and research, and more generally the multiple forms of engagement induced by applied ethnography. This new status and ethical approach, involving an analytical distancing specific to my discipline, induce constant learning about how to elucidate the gossip practice, how to thwart seduction, how to neutralize pressurization from artists who are victims themselves of social bulimia. My participant observation is, indeed, located on a moving field dealing with conjunctural issues, power relations, funding, qualms, etc.

Investigating the ambivalence and the unthought-of in the system by placing myself inside leads me to practice a “cameralistic type of activity”, that is, an activity that would amount to make environments and facts that are more or less transparent visible to the concerned individuals but remain poorly known to those who want to act on these environments and transform them (cf. Lenclud, quoted in Baré 1995: 65–84). If we take a closer look, the Greek etymology of the word “scene” points to what is behind it, which enables the front of the scene, the stage. To quote Dwyer and Buckle (2009):

Our position as qualitative researchers is from the standpoint of being *with* our participants. The *with* is in *relation to* our participants and can suggest a tensioned space. As Sidebotham (2003) reflected, his personal and professional roles added to his research, and through his research he learned what he might never have through his personal and professional experience. So knowing an experience requires more than simply having it; knowing implies being able to identify, describe, and explain (cf. Fay 1996).

For this purpose, it would be appropriate to survey a space between, perceived not as a path but as a dwelling place for people so that insider and outsider are not disparate destinations, but a space occupied by the researcher (cf. Dwyer/Buckle 2009). Without having to justify my presence in the field, I certainly enjoy privileged access and facilitated relationships of trust, but

can, at the same time, meet the difficulties that this posture poses. Fieldwork “at home” is possibly even more complex in terms of the personal relationships it impinges upon (cf. Chiener 2002).

The first field, the one on which we keep coming back, always seems to bear lessons, no doubt because it corresponds to the initial experience, the initiation of an encounter with others that will never again come with the same strength. I had the wisdom to understand that I was there first to follow the movement, see and hear (cf. Augé 2013).

My first observed international professional market was the Australasian World Music Expo in Melbourne in 2011, which launched my reflection on the conditions of access disparity of the so-called native artists on local and international stages.

The question of representativeness is omnipresent in “escort discourses” (Cheyronnaud 2002) of traditional music: what do we want to represent? Would putting on stage an artist with an “ethnic” identity be better to represent the reality of a group and its members? How can the authenticity of an artist or of a musical ensemble be judged, how can what is important about a culture be decreed and presented?

Placing musical practices under the seal of identity, beyond representing a major danger of reifying the fossilization of cultures, initiates processes of putting artists in competition. For example, only one group is selected to represent New Caledonia at the Australasian World Music Expo. Between Ykson and Tevita, two artists met in Melbourne, the trajectories diverge: the first, Kanak, was invited to all the indigenous festivals and the second, who is not Kanak, was much less distributed on the circuit. Here the words of Julien Mallet (2002) resound: the commercial attempt of hegemony from music industry—taking world music as a bait for profit—would therefore have the effect of subjecting otherness to the dominant structures by retaining only the exotic difference, removing it from this universality to which it claims to lead.

At the Australasian World Music Expo, I also met Rhoda Roberts, artistic director and aboriginal activist. She told me about her misadventure with WOMEX before Gurrumul became an iconic figure of Aboriginal music with resounding success in Europe: “WOMEX were saying they didn’t want Gurrumul because he’s not Aboriginal enough. I was accused of lying to the director of WOMEX: ‘You told me he was primitive! He’s western, he plays a western guitar.’” The frustrations of being defined by their aboriginality

relate to the inability of the music industry to integrate hybrid contemporary music. Faced with these norms, barely veiling an ecstatic and nostalgic approach of a time when it was still possible to discover “untouched” indigenous people, an artist, Charlie McMahon, proposed to challenge them by being the first white man with one arm to play didgeridoo. What in the musical matter itself, in the intrinsic character of music, allows the existence of those essentialist discourses? No replies. In a willingness to bring artists and audience together through recognition, the institution ends up orchestrating a restraining order due to an arbitrarily imposed mediation in the link between them. On the pretense of wanting to introduce the unique, the unreleased, to show, in a lancing obsession, musical authenticity as a tacit inheritance on a territory, the institutional compartmentalization of aesthetics hardens, dramatizes otherness and conceals the richness of emerging creative music practices, yet at the heart of a new cartography composed of syncretic “narrative identities.” (Ricoeur 1985)

Following my Australian experience, I decided, in 2014, to look more specifically at a recent phenomenon: the WOMEX consulting relationships with regional markets. As Arslan (2018) affirms, field is a multilayered concept that does not depend on geography, but on the self-constructed identity of the ethnographer and his or her aim.

The exponential creation of world music professional markets—and their international array—brought me to analyze the WOMEX strategies used to increase its influence by an expansion of satellites, which eminently raises the issue of the reproduction of hegemonic relationships of power. On purpose, I did not choose to study one professional market because I wanted to assume a transnational bias by concentrating my analysis on their reticular dimension. In the light of their emergence, it's about describing the swarming strategy thanks to interconnections between decision-making actors and the rhetorics mobilized by them.

My anthropological positioning is divided at the intersection of several affiliation groups. Therefore, I do not favor any site but, on the contrary, juxtapose different levels of geography: to the globalization of the fields corresponds the mobility of the researcher (cf. Copans 2000). In multi-sited ethnography, comparison emerges from putting questions to an emergent object of study whose contours, sites, and relationships are not known beforehand (cf. Marcus 1995).

The notion of circuit allows me to analyze decisive places and key moments, or catalysts, where the protagonists in the game of world music meet. The circulation seems indeed to represent an essential component, even a condition of the actors' existence in this artistic world. The orientation towards places is important because it allows me to identify people and networks, to map actors who appear then disappear.

My participant observation with the pioneer markets of world music includes the following places: WOMEX in Budapest (2015), created in 1994, Babel Med in Marseille (from 2009 to 2017), Celtic Connections in Glasgow, Scotland (2017) and APAP in United States, New York (2017). These events constitute a part of my research but, above all, my reflection has been focused, since five years, on the new generation of regional trade fairs of world music (including "musiques actuelles") such as AME in Praia, Cape Verde (2014), Borneo World Music Expo in Kuching, Malaysia (2014), Visa For Music in Rabat, Morocco (2014), IOMMA in Saint-Gilles, Reunion Island (2015), MOSHITO in Johannesburg, South Africa (2015), Mundial Montreal in Canada (2015), Tallinn Music Week in Estonia (2016), Circulart in Medellin, Colombia (2017), Porto Musical in Recife, Brazil (2018), PMX in Ramallah, Palestine (2018), Primera Linea in La Havana, Cuba (2018) and ACCES in Nairobi, Kenya (2018). These events aim to develop music industry around local actors and to create new international disseminating channels. Therefore, they give shape to economic partnerships and allow new territorial connections that end up creating true "mental landscapes" (Appadurai 1997), unprecedented archipelagos of meanings in which the economic poles are more and more in the Southern part of the globe: Lusophone Africa, Indian Ocean, Latin America, Maghreb/Mashrek, East Africa, etc.

I will look here at two of them: the Atlantic Music Expo (Cape Verde) and the Indian Ocean Music Market (Reunion Island) where I led fieldwork in 2014 and 2015. The AME highlights the specificity of its discourse around the identity marker of creolity. Its founder, Mario Lucio, former minister of culture and a musician himself, presented his ambition in these terms:

Ten islands caught in between three continents, a mother tongue embracing words from all languages, a wide variety of music styles such as funana, batuco, morna and coladera, or else mazurka, contredanse, waltz and samba. Such is Cabo Verde, the country where the world's creolization originated. Cabo Verde was the first transatlantic turntable of slavery trade. The minis-

try of culture is now willing to make it a positive exchange point based upon music and culture.

Reunion Island, also, has grown as a hub for an entire region, the Indian Ocean. It develops projects with neighboring islands Madagascar, Mauritius, Seychelles, Comoros, Mayotte and, simultaneously, has acquired a place on the world market. Not satisfied with the annual visibility granted by WOMEX and thanks to the European Union's support, the IOMMA was created.

These two new markets form a crossroads establishing bridges between continents while highlighting a rhetoric of insularity that exhibits its assets—especially touristic ones—outside and seeks exogenous contributions. It's important to note this insularity's topography insofar as it spatializes, geographically circumscribes, a mental space of “entre soi”. The associates already acquired at WOMEX go to a place where strong cultural history requires them to join. They go there to discover, to change from the “conventional” framework of European metropolises, but they'll find the same people. Following these examples, more and more expos have been developed on islands like Cuba (Primera Linea), Mauritius (MOMIX) or the Canary Islands. Another significative dynamic is the creation of fairs based on a presumed common “identity”, on a privileged transcultural dialogue, between wide geographical areas: for Exibmusica (Portugal) it's Latin America, for Crossroads (Czech Republic) Central and Eastern Europe.

It should be noted that these communities of actors, a priori unshakeable and all powerful, are nonetheless dependent on political and economic institutions that regularly recall the transitory and volatile nature of these events by suspending their funding, thus resulting in the temporary cancellation of the market or even its complete end, e.g. the end in 2018 of the Mediterranean market Babel Med; the suspension of Porto Musical in 2017; the strong threats to Atlantic Music Expo and Visa for Music even though they have been considered promising platforms since their creation.

The evolution of the relation between these regional professional markets and the WOMEX has been, moreover, fulgurant in a five year time span: the WOMEX which was sought-after when these platforms were created as a marker of credibility, as a way of increasing professional capacity, is now denied its role and usefulness in relation to the financial shortfall and accumulated debts due to its expensive service for franchising (with the label Piranha). As a result of this shift, but not only because of it, new networks

have appeared between regional markets themselves and have formed new clusters of influence:

- Tallinn Music Week (Estonia) - Colisium Music Week (Russia) - MENT (Slovenia),
- FIMPRO (Mexico) - BIME (Spain) - Circulart (Colombia),
- MusiConnect, born in Canada,
- Global Music Market Network (GloMMnet) which gathers now the major part of regional fairs in the world.

The inconsistency issue of this sector is crucial insofar as it's fast and fluctuating: are we heading from now on to a segmentation of the world music markets or to a unique global network of interconnected actors? Wouldn't the proliferating profusion of professional world music markets correspond to what Baudrillard (1986) calls the saturation of a system neutralized by its own strengths?

## **Interstices, intervals and bridges: at the time of new prescription**

"There is no single, absolute, privileged system, but subsystems; between them, cracks, holes, gaps. The irreducible manifests after each reduction."

Henri Lefebvre (1968)

One might believe that when one is dominated, there is no other choice but to occupy the designated place in the framework delivered by the dominant power. For instance, does the expectation of a "permanent revolution", induced by the music industry, undermine the very concept of marginal? It's nevertheless important to highlight the fact that the artists are not reducible to the sum of the predeterminations which weigh on them. Monique Sélim evokes, for instance, "kaleidoscopes revealing endless meshings between incorporation of local and global dominations, exile fantasies, alienations, re-

statements and shifting constraints.<sup>29</sup> The final step will be now to analyze the amplitude of this issue of situational adjustments in the manufacture and broadcasting of the sounds of today.

Transnational practices are not specific to the world music market; they also occur for other artistic genres such as jazz (Jazz lam in Barcelona) or performing arts like theater, circus, dance or street art (MAPAS on the Canary Islands). In the field of “musiques actuelles”, there are also MAMA (Paris) and Linecheck (Milan), which actually integrate world music in their showcases. Bill Smith, member of the American company Eye for Talent—whom I met at the Borneo World Music Expo—precisely evokes a significative shift in the world music valuation and reveals how institutions, in order to last, make way for emergent niches:

Artists need to incorporate elements that people enjoy, like hip-hop. The market is different of the artistic vision. Contemporary manners are now more interesting for the market than pure folk traditions. It's a recent change in the world music market, a turn into the electronic, the alternative music.

We could also find the same dynamics of reputations, trends and value negotiation in Biennales or contemporary art fairs (FIAC, Paris). But beyond those large-scale events, more and more emerging independent music markets are focusing on entrepreneurship like Show Me (Switzerland), created in 2018 at the artist Blick Bassy's initiative, or IndiEarth Exchange (India), a trade event for independent music, film and media. The link of music with the creative industry is more asserted than ever, especially in Africa and South and Central America. For Octavio Arbelaez, director of Circulart (Colombia), whom I met in Medellin, culture is the most important factor in generating wealth nowadays. Panama, Nigeria, Argentina, Chile: the global role of cultural operators is now to take advantage of music's power to increase the economic force of their country.

Behind the term artist, there is a multitude of logics of action, of different economies within trajectories driven by different conventions. The artists who are visible at fairs, inscribed in the art market's laws, do not prevent those, transformed into real “artisans-entrepreneurs”, from existing at the

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periphery and from developing their own networks by creating new cartographies of membership. This is particularly obvious with the growth of virtual network platforms allowing individuals to federate their initiatives and to directly share resources with this back and forth dynamics between singularity and need for belonging.

World music 2.0, post world music, world music revisited: the regime of the music industry's prescription, the figure of authority regarding the qualitative identification of taste, has been indeed upset by the digital boom and the fact that now everyone can become an influencer, whether on a blog, on a YouTube channel or even a producer with a home studio, which is completely restructuring the relationship between artist and audience and between artist and professional intermediary which is the topic of the Future Music Forum (Barcelona). With an appropriate name or an evocative native myth, the appointment of a friends' group will appear from outside as a fervent world of activity and the online exaggeration can turn into a self-fulfilling prophecy (cf. Clayton 2016).

In this wild disintermediation, artists' presence and communication on social networks seem to be a *"sine qua non"* condition of their new autonomy; nowadays, even Madonna posts on Instagram. The unlimited access to musical creation online brings the artists, one more time, to distinguish themselves in a regime of evanescence, to stand out by drawing their own path among a multiplicity of tags and new categories which don't elude the risk of homogenization. The digital era with these new spaces of diffusion and interaction—where consumer, amateur and professional are more and more difficult to differentiate—raises a lot of issues in terms of value attribution. From prescribers, we've moved to influencers but especially to online aggregators, to playlist editors, who have, precisely, acquired the increased role of creating value by making their artists visible and identifiable by the greatest number. It is, however, important to question the expertise of these extremely competitive distribution platforms (Believe, Klox, Spinup, Tradespotting) regarding the appropriate targeting of audiences. Their ranks include not longstanding musical specialists but rather geniuses of databases, algorithms of recommendation, assisted by the artificial intelligence of the machine, who see their adaptability to a very wide panel of music as an asset.

All the means to try to be more inventive and create visibility are good. With Goover, the customer is paid by listening. In other development sys-

tems of micro-influencers, such as Verve, the word-of-mouth process and recommendation are replicated on a larger scale by converting fans into ambassadors in exchange for rewards.

The world music 2.0 takes shape based on the fundamental web's asymmetry. It's an autochthonous native structure of the internet in compliance with the logic of information economy. More than creating it, is worth knowing where to find it. The artists take a back seat. The fact that an intermediary can have a stronger impact on the meaning and on the reception of a song than the one who has created it, is one of the constitutive paradoxes of world music 2.0. (cf. Clayton 2016).

Last but not least, if the Internet and streaming platforms—these new “machines du goût” (Gras 2014)—have somehow improved artists' visibility and their symbolic value, it has unfortunately not been the same so far regarding the economic value, namely their financial incomes. Indeed, the digital contents have truly become collective goods (cf. Bacache et al. 2010), impossible to sell and to extract value from, insofar as they can easily circulate from one consumer to another. An album that was worth between 15-20 Euros is now included on platforms whose unlimited access costs 10 Euros per month. Denis Ladegaillerie, Believe's boss, asserts that as long as you don't have quality of service, something that justifies the payment, the price of music is zero euro (cf. Fanen 2017). For his colleague, Arnaud Chiaramonti, music has become contents like any other, which you have to be able to listen to with the least affect to spot artists according to audience research figures, popularity on social networks and ability to make it on the right playlists. The heart of tomorrow's music business is a technical infrastructure (Ibid).

Therefore, compensation scales and value allocation are now organized around the unique criterion of the circulation intensity defined by clickbait, number of views on YouTube or likes on Facebook. Only an exponential ridership finds a market value on Internet, anything that does not produce a huge impact in the very short term is excluded from the outset (cf. Brunet 2018). The following helps soften the blow of this disarming observation.

The most appropriate measures are not quantifiable: a song which settles in the mind of all the ones who learn it by heart, a choral song that lifts a room full of strangers on a shared emotion, the soundtrack of a first kiss that after

decades still leaves two lovers transfixed and speechless. The value of these songs is inside ourselves (cf. Clayton 2016).

## Conclusion

I shall end this paper with Michel Agier's (2013) words: "Anthropology has to shift its view, or more exactly duplicate it, while transforming its manners to investigate, to accompany the transformations and the movements of the actors and the studied practices, starting with networks rather than normative structures."

By considering local and international scales simultaneously, the professional world music markets and its virtual go-between constitute a point of entry to empirically question the impact of the globalization within cultural industries. They also incite to think about the function of representations in order to move from the desire to recognize to the challenge to see.

Through the circulation of musical practices at the crossroads of genres and geographical spaces, undeniable relations of power are drawn which raise the fundamental issue of access to cultural diversity for a wider audience. From the circulation spaces of WOMEX and its international satellites to the digital platforms and their increasing number of services providers, the discriminating power relationships are reproduced with a lot more strength, increasing the role of reputations and influencer networks. Therefore, we're observing a constant and parallel development of possibilities and disparities for artists' visibility insofar as the evaluations, the expertises, are made from non-representative samples of artistic exponential creativity upon which the assumed "objectivity" of selection builds itself, accounting for a bigger heuristic gap regarding the legitimate understanding of musical practice and creative talent.

In this paper, I have tried to demonstrate the functioning of a professional micro-society in terms of explicit conventions and shared equivalency systems. As it owns these objective values, a plurality of subjective commitments is nevertheless unbreakable among its members, serving as a motivation to develop distinct action strategies. The changing role of intermediaries from a transnational market centered on big trade fairs to new satellites and then to the current digital platforms has allowed me to observe the mutation of value parameter in the music industry around the world: previously indexed

to a presumed authenticity of a singular territory, then coupled to independent creative attempts bridging transcultural spaces, it is now entrusted to statistics and maps of listening. The qualitative value of the artistic message belongs to the old world; instead, databases reign supreme!

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