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An ethnographic study of performance on the transverse wooden flute in the urban Asturian folk scene from 2015

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Abstract

This thesis is an ethnographic study of performance on the transverse wooden flute in the urban Asturian folk scene from 2015 onwards. The work examines how the transverse wooden flute was used in this scene to perform Asturianidad (Asturianess) and how the cultural ideas shaping performance on transverse wooden flutes affected and reflected the non-musical elements of cultural identities and value systems of this specific scene. The work identifies the types of transverse wooden flutes used by performers in this scene and the key repertorial and stylistic features of Asturian folk music. It examines constructs of identities connected to Asturian Celtic and folk revival music and how space and place shape identity and performance. The project was the first to examine performance on the transverse wooden flute in the contemporary Asturian Celtic and folk revival music scene. I demonstrate that performance on this instrument in this context and constructions of cultural and national and regional identity around it are an example of rooted Celtic cosmopolitanism.

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1. Introduction

1.1 Contextual and theoretical underpinnings

This thesis is an ethnographic study of the transverse wooden flute in the urban Asturian folk scene in northern Spain from 2015 onwards. The flute provides a lens through which to examine how musical performance informs and displays identity in spaces where the concept of nation is contested. Similar instruments, and the sounds they produce, can be imbued with differing cultural and social meanings, and here the flute becomes a site for exploring how identities are constructed, negotiated, and transformed over time.

The study draws on ethnomusicological methods of participant observation and in depth interviews, alongside associated academic literature. The theoretical framing is provided by debates on cosmopolitanism, nationalism and the role of music in identity construction. These perspectives allow me to reflect critically on how identities expressed through flute performance intersect with evolving notions of Asturianidad (a sense of being Asturian) and Celtismu (a sense of being both Celtic and Asturian). This framing is important because it situates Asturian practice within wider scholarly debates on how music mediates contested national identities.

The transverse wooden flute is particularly revealing because of its liminal status in Asturias. Unlike the gaita (bagpipe) or pandereta (hand drum), which are more established symbols of Asturian identity, the flute has become what Billig (1995) would term, a banal marker of nationalism. Billig himself did not apply this concept to music, but in this thesis I extend his

framework to the sonic domain, treating the flute as a banal sonic marker of Asturianess. This is a secondary framing that complements the primary theoretical lens of rooted cosmopolitanism (Appiah 1997) and Turino's (2000) application of cosmopolitanism to music through cosmopolitan loops. Its presence highlights tensions in the construction of authenticity, rural versus urban and Celtic versus pan-Hispanic, and demonstrates how sonic symbols can shift meaning across contexts. As will be shown in later chapters, this banal presence is crucial for understanding how Asturian identity is sedimented through everyday musical practice.

The instrument also exemplifies transnational circulation. Tracing stylistic influences from Roscommon in Ireland, via Brittany in France and into Asturias illustrates how revivalist practices travel and are adapted locally. This trajectory exemplifies Appiah's notion of rooted cosmopolitanism (Appiah 1997), where global or transnational borrowings are re-embedded in local attachments. At the same time, Turino's application of cosmopolitanism to music, particularly his concept of cosmopolitan loops, clarifies how transnational styles circulate through revival networks and feed back into local contexts. Such adaptations are not incidental; they reveal how Asturian musicians negotiate belonging by situating themselves simultaneously within Celtic and folk revival networks and Asturian cultural politics.

In this way, the flute becomes both object and metaphor. It embodies the multi-layered discourse of Asturianidad and Celtismu, while also serving as a sonic thread that connects local practice to transnational folk revivals. This introduction therefore establishes the

theoretical and methodological foundations for the thesis, clarifying why the flute is central to understanding how musical performance constructs identity in contested national spaces

The study draws on ethnomusicological methods of participant observation and in depth interviews, alongside associated academic literature. The theoretical framing is provided by debates on cosmopolitanism, nationalism and identity. These perspectives allow me to reflect critically on how identities expressed through flute performance intersect with evolving notions of Asturianidad and Celtismu. This framing is important because it situates Asturian practice within wider scholarly debates on how music mediates contested national identities.

Asturias, a region in northern Spain, has long been associated with distinctive musical traditions, particularly the gaita and vocal repertories. Since the late twentieth century, however, Asturian music has been increasingly framed through Celtic revivalism, positioning the region within a pan-European network of minoritarian identities. The transverse wooden flute, introduced into Asturian practice during the connection by Asturian urban academic elites with a Celtic identity in post-Franco Asturias of the 1980s, has become emblematic of this shift. Initially perceived as a Celtic instrument, it has been re-embedded in Asturian repertories, performance, pedagogy and session culture. This trajectory raises questions about how instruments mediate identity, how cosmopolitan practices are localised, and how revival movements negotiate authenticity and innovation. The central research problem can therefore be articulated as follows: how does performance on the transverse wooden flute in the Asturian Celtic and folk scene exemplify rooted cosmopolitanism, mediating between local identity and transnational networks? Addressing this problem requires engagement with

theories of cosmopolitanism, ethnomusicological studies of revival, and organological approaches to instruments as cultural artefacts.

Cosmopolitanism has long been a contested concept, celebrated for its ethical aspirations yet criticised for its exclusions and blind spots. Classical formulations, rooted in Enlightenment universalism, often assumed a Western vantage point, privileging elite mobility and abstract notions of global citizenship. Hannerz (2004) notes that cosmopolitanism has historically overlooked non-European epistemologies, failing to account for the lived realities of communities outside the metropolitan centres of Europe and North America. Nussbaum (2019) critiques cosmopolitanism's insufficient engagement with economic inequality, arguing that lofty ideals of world citizenship ring hollow when structural disparities remain unaddressed. Stokes (2007) goes further, describing cosmopolitanism as acquisitive and consumerist, a lifestyle choice for privileged elites rather than a genuine ethic of solidarity. In this view, cosmopolitanism risks becoming a form of cultural tourism, excluding poor migrants and marginalised groups whose mobility is constrained by economic and political structures. Later chapters will show how these critiques resonate in Asturias, where revivalist musicians negotiate both the promise and the limits of cosmopolitan belonging.

The opposition between cosmopolitanism and the local has been another persistent theme. Kruijer and Versluys (2024) observe that cosmopolitanism is frequently positioned as antithetical to local attachments, as if global belonging necessarily erodes regional or national identity. Yet Enlightenment thinkers such as Kant and Herder proposed that global and local allegiances could coexist, suggesting that cosmopolitan ethics need not negate rootedness. This tension remains central to contemporary debates, as scholars seek to reconcile universal

commitments with situated identities. In the Asturian case, the flute's trajectory from Celtic branding to vernacular rootedness exemplifies this negotiation, a dynamic explored in detail in subsequent chapters.

In response to these critiques, a range of adjectival cosmopolitanisms has emerged, each attempting to reconfigure the concept in ways that embrace difference, inequality and situated universality. Harrison (2021) describes these as adjectival cosmopolitanisms including cosmopolitanism from below, recuperative cosmopolitanism, critical cosmopolitanism and ecological cosmopolitanism and in particular, rooted cosmopolitanism in her work on Sámi joik. Each framework seeks to address specific shortcomings of classical cosmopolitanism, whether its elitism, its neglect of inequality, or its abstraction from lived experience. These frameworks provide useful lenses for understanding Asturian revivalism, where cosmopolitan practices are re-embedded in local contexts and instruments become carriers of plural identity.

Cosmopolitanism from below emphasises grassroots agency, highlighting how transnational practices emerge from marginalised communities rather than elite networks. Järvenpää (2017) examines South African reggae culture to show how cosmopolitanism can be shaped by local social conditions, grounded in ghettoised communities and articulated through music as a form of resistance. This perspective challenges the assumption that cosmopolitanism is always top-down, instead foregrounding the creativity and resilience of communities whose mobility is constrained. In Asturias, similar dynamics are evident in how revivalist musicians

adapt cosmopolitan repertories to local pedagogical and session contexts, a theme developed later in this thesis.

Recuperative cosmopolitanism seeks to reclaim the ethical aspirations of cosmopolitanism while acknowledging its historical exclusions. Chen (2021), focusing on the rooted cosmopolitanism of Sámi CD production, argues that cosmopolitanism can be recuperated as a framework for global justice if it is re-grounded in local contexts and attentive to difference. Critical cosmopolitanism, meanwhile, interrogates the power dynamics embedded in cosmopolitan practices, asking whose voices are heard and whose are silenced. González-Ruibal (2014) warns against romanticising marginality, cautioning that vernacular practices are not inherently resistant or emancipatory. Ecological cosmopolitanism extends the concept beyond human communities, emphasising interconnectedness with non-human species and ecological systems. This perspective resonates with ethnomusicological approaches that situate instruments within ecological heritage, highlighting how materiality and craft traditions embody cosmopolitan entanglements (Heise, 2008).

Among these frameworks, rooted cosmopolitanism offers the most compelling lens for this thesis. First conceptualised by Mitchell Cohen, rooted cosmopolitanism reconciles cosmopolitan ethics with local, regional and national attachments (Cohen 2012; Chen 2021). It proposes that individuals may draw upon multiple cultural roots to shape their identities and interactions, engaging globally without abandoning the significance of place. Appiah's (1997) notion of the cosmopolitan patriot exemplifies this dual allegiance, suggesting that cosmopolitans can celebrate national institutions while pursuing transnational justice. Turino (2000) similarly observes that cosmopolitans often play key roles in constructing

nation-states, challenging the assumption that cosmopolitanism is inherently anti-national. Rooted cosmopolitanism foregrounds ethical commitments to global justice and human rights, while recognising that such commitments must be enacted through local legal and political structures (van Hooft and Vandekerckhove 2010). Later analysis of Asturian flute practice demonstrates how musicians embody this dual allegiance, sustaining Asturian identity while engaging transnational Celtic circuits.

Closely related is vernacular cosmopolitanism, first introduced by Bhabha (1996) and later developed by Werbner (2006). This framework emphasises non-elite, situated forms of transnational engagement, often emerging from migratory or marginal contexts. Vernacular cosmopolitanism highlights how migrants, minority artists and peripheral regions assert cultural agency within transnational networks. It is particularly useful for analysing Celtic revival movements, which articulate minoritarian identity while engaging transregional and transnational circuits. However, the debate between rooted and vernacular cosmopolitanisms hinges on how transnational belonging is theorised and enacted. While vernacular cosmopolitanism foregrounds marginality and local resistance, rooted cosmopolitanism seeks to integrate universal ethical commitments with strong cultural attachments. The Asturian case illustrates this tension, as musicians negotiate between Celtic cosmopolitan branding and vernacular rootedness in local practice.

Turino's theoretical framework deepens this analysis. Drawing on Bourdieu's (1977) concept of habitus, Turino (2000) shows how cosmopolitan orientations are embodied through musical participation, shaping taste and identity. He distinguishes between nationalist habitus, formed through rural participatory musics, and cosmopolitan habitus, cultivated through

colonial schooling, global media and urban popular styles. Crucially, Turino introduces the idea of cosmopolitan loops, circuits through which musical styles circulate globally and return to local contexts where they are re-embedded and resignified. In Zimbabwe, cosmopolitan loops mediated between colonial infrastructures and nationalist projects, demonstrating that cosmopolitanism and nationalism are not opposites but co-produced through musical practice. These insights resonate with Asturias, where the flute's trajectory from Celtic circuits into local session ecologies exemplifies similar looping dynamics. Musicians acquire a cosmopolitan habitus through Celtic musical aesthetics, while sustaining a vernacular habitus rooted in Asturian dance and language. Together, these orientations exemplify rooted cosmopolitanism, where global dispositions are re-embedded in local practice.

Feminist critiques of cosmopolitanism have been particularly influential in exposing the gendered dimensions of mobility, belonging and cultural participation. Yuval-Davis (2011) argues that cosmopolitan discourses often erase the everyday politics of belonging, which are deeply shaped by gender, race and class. Anthias (2001) similarly critiques the tendency to treat women as a homogeneous category within cosmopolitan frameworks, pointing out that differences of ethnicity, class and life-cycle are often ignored. Vieten (2012) develops this further, showing how gendered symbolic boundaries of national communities complicate cosmopolitan ideals, particularly in European contexts. These feminist perspectives are crucial for understanding Asturian revivalism, where women musicians and teachers have played central roles in sustaining and transforming practice. Later chapters will demonstrate how female flute players and singers challenge patriarchal norms within revivalist spaces,

asserting agency through performance and pedagogy. Comparative ethnomusicology reinforces this point: Sugarman (1997) shows how Albanian women's singing mediates both local identity and transnational circulation, while Shelemay (2006) highlights Ethiopian women's musical labour as central to diasporic cosmopolitanism. These studies underscore that gendered participation is not peripheral but constitutive of cosmopolitan practice, a theme that will be revisited in the Asturian case.

Decolonial critiques deepen this re-framing by insisting that cosmopolitanism must be de-centred from Eurocentric universals. Mignolo (2009) introduces the concept of decolonial cosmopolitanism, or the decolonial option, which seeks to delink from both neoliberal globalisation and liberal cosmopolitan ideals. Santos (2014) advances a similar argument through his "epistemologies of the South," calling for recognition of knowledge systems marginalised by colonial modernity. Bhambra (2011) critiques the Eurocentric framing of cosmopolitanism, urging scholars to acknowledge the colonial histories that underpin global interconnectedness. These perspectives resonate strongly with Asturias, a region historically positioned as peripheral within Spain and Europe. Later analysis will show how Asturian revivalism negotiates identity within both national and transnational circuits, resisting homogenisation while asserting plural belonging.

Comparative Indigenous studies reinforce this point. Levine and Robinson (2022) demonstrate how First Peoples' musics articulate sovereignty through cosmopolitan circulation, showing that Indigenous communities use transnational networks not to dissolve identity but to strengthen claims to cultural and political agency. This resonates with Asturian Celtic and folk music revivalism, where musicians assert regional identity while participating

in Celtic circuits, reframing cosmopolitanism as a practice of empowerment rather than erasure.

Ethnomusicological case studies provide further comparative insight. Sámi musical performance in northern Europe exemplifies Indigenous cosmopolitanism. Harrison (2021) describes how Sámi theatre employs music to present cosmopolitan versions of Sáminess, articulating Indigenous cosmopolitanisms that engage both local identity and global circuits. Chen (2021) extends this by analysing Sámi music CDs from the 2000s, showing how recorded media circulated Sámi identity globally while sustaining local heritage. Ramnarine (2017) demonstrates how Sámi popular music asserts collective rights and cultural distinctiveness while participating in global imaginaries. Hilder (2023) documents how the revival of joik, once suppressed, has become central to Sámi political self-determination and global Indigenous solidarity. These examples demonstrate how Indigenous musics embody rooted cosmopolitanism, negotiating between local heritage and transnational circulation. Later chapters will show how recorded Asturian flute performance and pedagogical materials operate in similar ways, embedding local identity within transnational Celtic networks.

African popular music provides another instructive case. White (2002) analyses Congolese rumba as a form of layered cosmopolitanism, negotiating colonial histories, diasporic flows and local identity. He argues that rumba embodies multiple cosmopolitanisms, simultaneously engaging with European modernity, African heritage and diasporic circulation. This case demonstrates that cosmopolitanism is not a singular phenomenon but a multiplicity of practices shaped by historical and social contexts. For Asturias, with its inclusion of rumba in its traditional canon, White's analysis underscores that revivalist

musics can embody several cosmopolitanisms at once: Celtic branding, Iberian heritage, diasporic connections and local rootedness. The transverse wooden flute, reintroduced to Asturias through Celtic cosmopolitan habitus yet re-embedded in vernacular practice, exemplifies this multiplicity.

Digital contexts further expand the terrain of cosmopolitanism. Sendra (2024) examines affective performances of rooted cosmopolitanism through Facebook during the Festival International de Folklore et de Percussion in Louga, Senegal. She shows how participants used digital platforms to extend local belonging into transnational circuits, performing cosmopolitan identity through online networks. This case highlights how cosmopolitanism is increasingly mediated through digital technologies and broadcasting media, where affective performances sustain both rootedness and transnational connections. In Asturias, similar dynamics are evident in how revivalist musicians use social media to circulate flute performances, pedagogical materials and festival repertories. Later chapters will demonstrate how broadcast networks sustain Asturian identity while embedding it within Celtic cosmopolitan circuits.

Ó Briain (2018) adds a lens on Southeast Asian perspectives, applying Turino's concept of cosmopolitan loops to late-colonial Hanoi. He shows how Vietnamese musicians negotiated French colonial modernity and local identity through cosmopolitan musical practices, demonstrating that cosmopolitanism is historically situated and mediated by colonial infrastructures. This comparative case underscores that cosmopolitan loops are not unique to

Europe or Africa but operate globally, offering a framework for understanding how Asturian revivalism similarly negotiates external frames and local agency.

Irish diaspora sessions in London and the USA provide another instructive parallel. Ferraiuolo (2019) documents how sessions in the US became codified as diasporic practices, simultaneously sustaining Irish identity and participating in cosmopolitan networks. Hall (2016) shows how pub-based sessions in London functioned as responses to displacement, later institutionalised through Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann (The Irish Musicians Association). These examples highlight how participatory musical practices embody rooted cosmopolitanism, sustaining local identity while engaging transnational circuits. Asturian sessions, where the flute mediates between solidarity and virtuosity, operate within similar dynamics, balancing inclusivity and skill while articulating both Asturianity and Celtic cosmopolitanism.

The above critiques of various forms of cosmopolitanism are particularly salient for the analysis of Asturian musical revivalism, where cosmopolitan aesthetics, such as pan-Celtic instrumentation combinations, festival formats, and international cultural branding, interact with local heritage, minority status within Spain, and grassroots activism. Applying cosmopolitan frameworks uncritically risks flattening Asturian cultural specificity or reinforcing elite narratives of openness. A critically attuned cosmopolitanism must account for regional agency, subaltern voice, and the politics of representation within transnational cultural circuits.

Celtic identity has been a contested component of Asturian identity and has long been a site of myth-making, scholarly contestation and symbolic reinvention. Chapman (1992) and Cunliffe (2003) argue that the term ‘Celt’ was historically used by Greeks and Romans to denote foreigners, and that Iron Age cultures such as Hallstatt and La Tène, while sharing material traits, do not constitute a coherent ethnic group. In Spain, Campos Calvo-Sotelo (2019) describes the Celts as ideal symbolic figures for modern cultural and political projects, precisely because of the historical ambiguity surrounding their origins. During the Franco regime, the notion of a Celtic origin was mobilised to support a unified Spanish racial narrative. Archaeological efforts focused on the castros of northern Spain, but post-Franco scholarship has largely rejected this paradigm as ideologically compromised (Ruiz Zapatero, 2006; Lorrio and Ruiz Zapatero, 2005). These critiques challenge the exclusion of Iberia from broader Celtic frameworks and call for a reassessment of Iberian peninsular Celticity.

Contemporary understandings of Celtic identity owe much to the Romantic revivals of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Literary constructs such as MacPherson’s Ossianic ballads, though later discredited, played a central role in shaping European perceptions of the Celt as a melancholic, noble figure (Gaskill, 2008; Chapman, 1978). Romantic poets and nationalist movements embraced Celtic symbolism to articulate regional distinctiveness, often portraying Celtic lands as sites of nature, virtue and mysticism (Carruthers and Rawes, 2003). In neighbouring Galicia, these myths were adapted to counter Spanish exoticism and support local nationalist narratives (Zarandona, 2012; Campos Calvo-Sotelo, 2016).

In Asturias, the idea of Celtic identity has been periodically revived since the seventeenth century (Llope, I. 2018). Early references by Asturian authors sought to legitimise aristocratic

power through ancient civilisational links (Barreiro, 1993). Jovellanos's eighteenth-century concept of Asturianism connected regional identity with pre-Roman civilisation and Iron Age resilience (San Martín, 1998; Marín Suárez and González Álvarez, 2012). In the twentieth century, Celtismu became associated with left-wing and regionalist politics, notably through the Junta Regionalista Asturiana in 1916 (Zimmerman, 2012).

The linguistic criterion for Celtic identity remains central to contemporary nationalist discourses. The Celtic League and related organisations define Celtic nations as those with a Celtic language spoken as a historical community language within living memory (Ellis, 1993). This definition has excluded Asturias and Galicia from formal recognition, culminating in the rejection of their applications to the Celtic League in 1987, a moment known as the 'Galician crisis' in Pan-Celtic circles (Ellis 1993:20). Despite this, Asturian musicians and cultural actors continue to engage with Celtic symbolism through festivals, media and musical branding. Celtic spirituality and Druidic imagery have also shaped some revivalist aesthetics. From John Leland's sixteenth-century association of stone monuments with ancient Britons to Romantic mythologists' invention of Bardic ceremonies, these themes have been central to Celtic revivalism (Morgan 1983; Hagmann 2021). William Butler Yeats drew on Druidic motifs to articulate an alternative spiritual nationalism in Ireland (Bradley 2011). In the 1960s, neo-Druidism and New Age movements reimagined these traditions, though scholars such as Dietler (2006) caution against conflating ancient oral practices with contemporary digital spirituality. Foundational Celtic revival musician Alan Stivell drew on this imagery, and early Asturian folk revivalists arguably did the same. This symbolic

repertory informed the work of the Asturian ethnographical organisation, Fundación Beleño critical in the development of Celtic identity and Celtic music from the 1980s.

The transverse wooden flute provides a compelling lens through which to examine these processes in Asturias. Introduced into the Asturian folk scene during the 1980s through a Celtic cosmopolitan habitus, the flute was initially framed as a Celtic instrument, resonant with pan-European revival aesthetics. Over subsequent decades, however, it has been re-contextualised in Asturias as a vernacular artefact, embedded in session ecologies, pedagogical practices and festival repertories. Its material craft, embodied pedagogy and symbolic resonance exemplify how instruments act as cultural mediators, linking ecological heritage to transnational imaginaries (Bates 2012; Tresch and Dolan 2013). By tracing the flute's trajectory from Celtic branding to Asturian rootedness, this review situates the instrument as a modal mediator of plural identity. It embodies the tensions between commodification and authenticity, revival and innovation, local agency and circulation of cosmopolitan transnational flows.

Ethnomusicologists and cultural theorists document how musical and dance performance enact Celtic identity across diverse regional contexts (Wilkinson 2003; Matheson 2010). Threaded through Asturias, Galicia, Cornwall, Brittany and Scotland, Celticity emerges as a mode of reimagining marginality as cultural capital, a way of performing place, kinship and resistance against dominant national narratives (Taylor 2003; Bohlman 2004). In Asturias, García Flórez (2022) describes how Celtic aesthetics reframe the gaita, transforming it from a folklorised sound into a dignified artefact. He argues that modern constructs of Celticism enable Asturian music to operate glocally, interpreting Asturianity through both global and

local lenses (García Flórez 2022) . Llope, I. (2018) traces musical Celtismu to debates as early as the 1900s, predating Alan Stivell's influence, in the post-Franco era, Celtic music offered Asturian musicians a way to reach transnational audiences. The transverse wooden flute participates directly in these dynamics.

Folk revival is not a singular or regressive phenomenon but a dynamic, multi‑layered process shaped by ideology, cultural policy, historical reimagination and creative agency (Livingston 1999; Bithell and Hill 2014). In Asturias, Álvarez Sancho (2022) frames musical practice as activism. Asturian revivalism resonates with broader Iberian and European patterns. In Galicia, Colmeiro (2017) introduces the concept of a peripheral gaze, through which revival navigates both local rootedness and global circuits. Across Europe and beyond, revival movements reflect shared tensions between tradition and reinvention, from Hungarian Táncház (Quigley 2014) to Finnish new folk (Ramnarine 2003). The flute exemplifies how revivalist practices are both local and transnational. Its presence in Asturian repertories reflects vernacular agency while participating in transnational Celtic branding, embodying rooted cosmopolitanism.

Bates (2012) argues that instruments participate in networks of meaning, carrying embedded histories and symbolic force. Durkin (2024) expands organology into an interdisciplinary platform, combining acoustics, ethnography, material studies and museology. The transverse wooden flute exemplifies ecolocal style and material heritage. Ali‑MacLachlan et al (2013) demonstrates how timbral nuance emerges from embodied technique interacting with wood resonance and flute geometry. McLoughlin (2023) critiques Irish institutional curricula that marginalise oral transmission and embodied fluency, showing how stylistic signatures are

acoustically legible and culturally embedded. Morgan (2023) explores the maultrommel's revival as symbolic repair, while McKerrell (2015) illustrates how instruments serve nationalist narratives. The transverse wooden flute in Asturias similarly embodies symbolic repair, of broken or unbroken traditions, reframed as Celtic yet rooted in the discourse of vernacular craft and pedagogy.

Webster‑Kogan (2014) describes concentric circles of audiences, with contested connections across ethnic and elite groups. In Asturias, ensembles and performers such as Ambás and Tuenda navigate similar concentric audiences, connecting local participants, regional revivalists and transnational Celtic networks. Wilkinson (2003) shows how Breton round dance represents inclusive bretonnitude and celtitude. The flute mediates between dancers (formal and informal) and audiences, linking concentric circles of reception and embodying both local Asturian identity and pan‑Celtic inclusivity.

Ferraiuolo (2019) traces the word session to nineteenth‑century bardic gatherings and documents its diasporic codification in post‑war London. Hall (2016) describes pub‑based sessions as responses to displacement, later institutionalised through Comhaltas. Williams (2010) and Ferraiuolo (2019) frame sessions as globalised practices, fostering cohesion and ambiguous ethnicity. Fairbairn (1994) defines sessions as flexible gatherings, while Turino (2008) distinguishes participatory and presentational modes. Stock (2004) contrasts egalitarian English sessions with hierarchical Irish ones, while Ferraiuolo (2019) highlights humour and heterophony as central to session life. Sessions operate within a benevolent meritocracy, balancing inclusivity and skill. Pinheiro (2013) and Cawley (2008) emphasise virtuosity and immersion as pedagogical strategies, particularly for flute players. Sessions are

thus one ecology within Asturian revivalism. The flute mediates between solidarity and competitiveness,and embodying ritual spontaneity, while sustaining communal identity and transnational resonance.

This literature review has traced the conceptual, historical and performative dimensions of cosmopolitanism, Celtic identity, folk revivalism, organology and session culture across diverse geographies and disciplinary frameworks. From debates on authenticity and commodification to the pedagogical nuances of instrumental practice, the review has shown how music functions as a site of symbolic negotiation, cultural authorship and political resonance. The Asturian transverse wooden flute exemplifies rooted cosmopolitanism. Introduced through Celtic cosmopolitan habitus in the 1980s, it has been re-contextualised as a vernacular artefact, embedded in revivalist ecologies, pedagogical practices and symbolic repertories. It mediates between local rootedness and transnational circulation, embodying plural identity and cultural agency.

1.2 Methodology

This thesis employs a multi-modal ethnographic methodology grounded in fieldwork, participant observation, organological inquiry, and reflexive documentation. The approach is shaped by a commitment to rooted cosmopolitanism, which frames musical practice as both locally situated and transnationally entangled. The methods are designed to illuminate how Asturian musicians negotiate identity, place, and aesthetic meaning through session participation, instrumental symbolism, and revivalist discourse.

1.2.1 Ethnomusicology Methodological Debates

Ethnomusicology has long been defined by its methodological debates as much as by its subject matter. Alan Merriam's *The Anthropology of Music* (1964) provided a foundational framework, insisting that music must be studied as concept, behaviour, and sound. As he wrote: *"Ideas about music lead to behavior related to music and this behavior results in musical sound"* (Merriam 1964, 6). This tripartite model established the discipline's ethnographic orientation, reminding us that musical sound cannot be separated from the social and conceptual worlds that produce it. In the Asturian case, this means that flute performance must be understood not only as sonic practice but as behaviour embedded in revivalist identity and conceptualised through Celtic imaginaries.

Bruno Nettle (2008, v-x) describes the reflexive turn in ethnomusicology from the 1970s onwards to emphasise the importance of fieldwork processes in the final result of the published work. This reflexive stance underpins my own methodology: interviews and conversations are treated as interpretive acts, revealing how musicians articulate stylistic choices, negotiate revivalist symbolism, and position themselves within translocal ecologies of practice. In his reflections in The Study of Ethnomusicology: Thirty-Three Discussions (2015), Nettl further highlights the discipline's reflexive self-awareness. Nettl observed that ethnomusicologists are always aware of their own position in the field, and of the discipline's history of self-examination (Nettl 2015). This insistence on reflexivity resonates with my own fieldwork, where my identity as an Irish flute player positioned me simultaneously as insider and outsider. Nettl's call to acknowledge positionality underscores the importance of

recognising how my presence influenced repertory choices and social dynamics, even when musicians themselves commented that "more Irish material was played because you were there."

Ferraiuolo's (2019) reflexive account of Irish sessions, oscillating between immersion in the craic and critical distance, provides a model for embracing subjectivity as an epistemic condition rather than a flaw. His concept of "ritual spontaneity" is particularly useful for interpreting the tension between individual agency and communal cohesion in Asturian sessions.

Timothy Rice advanced this reflexive turn by proposing a tripartite metaphor of time, place, and metaphor as a way of understanding ethnomusicological knowledge. In his essay *"Time, Place, and Metaphor in Musical Experience and Ethnography"* (2003), Rice argued that in musical experience there are; "three dimensions of this imaginary, ideal space are time, location and metaphor" (Rice 2003, 158). His reflections on insider/outsider dynamics in Bulgarian *gaida* playing, where his ability to perform complicated his positionality, resonate strongly with my own experience in Asturias. Like Rice, I found that my ability to play the flute at a high level in Irish traditional music but with little knowledge of Asturian repertory, both facilitated access and complicated neutrality, situating me in what he calls a "theoretical no-place" (Rice 2008, 51).

Steven Feld's work on acoustemology further expands methodological horizons by treating sound as a way of knowing. Feld (1996), through the lens of his theory of Acoustemology and his research with the Kaluli people of Papua New Guinea demonstrates how listening

practices are inseparable from sociality. This perspective informs my own attention to affective listening in Asturian sessions, where sonic intimacy and heterophony are not merely musical textures but social negotiations. Feld's insistence that sound is epistemology itself helps frame my interpretive emphasis on listening as a methodological act, not just a research technique.

Stokes's Ethnicity, Identity and Music: The Musical Construction of Space (1994) emphasises the role of music and its performance structures in expressing class, ethnic, national and gender differences that connect with people's understanding of specific places and comprehension of self relation to specific geographical locations (Stokes 1995). This perspective is crucial for understanding Asturian Celtic revivalism, where repertory choices and symbolic instrumentation, such as the transverse wooden flute or pandereta (hand drum) are acts of identity construction and construction of place. Methodologically, this means treating musicians' discourse not as commentary but as interpretive acts that reveal how identity is performed and contested.

Philip Bohlman notes that World music was an invention of the West from its engagement with cultures beyond the west (Bohlman 2002). This is a reminder that categories of music are themselves constructed, informs my analysis of Asturian Celtic and folk revival music as a symbolic translation of transnational revivalist discourse into local practice.

Ethnomusicology has also engaged with phenomenology and embodiment. Berger's (1999) phenomenological approach highlights how musicians experience sound as action, gesture, and affect. Kay Kaufman Shelemay (2011) examines musical communities and transmission,

noting that; "'Community' has attained a status across the disciplines as a 'keyword,' a term that organizes knowledge in powerful ways" (Shelemay 2011, 349). These perspectives inform my attention to vernacular pedagogy in Asturian flute practice, where learning occurs through immersion, imitation, and embodied fluency rather than formal instruction.

Taken together, these methodological debates shape the framework of this thesis. Merriam's tripartite model reminds us to attend to sound, behaviour, and concept; Nettl's reflexivity insists on acknowledging positionality; Rice's metaphors situate practice within time and place; Feld's acoustemology foregrounds listening as relational knowledge; Stokes highlights identity as methodological concern; Berger and Shelemay emphasise embodiment and transmission. My methodology is therefore multi-modal: combining ethnographic fieldwork, organological inquiry, and reflexive documentation, while situating Asturian practices within comparative Celtic contexts. Rooted cosmopolitanism provides the interpretive lens, but ethnomusicology's methodological canon provides the scaffolding through which this lens is operational.

Fieldwork was conducted intermittently from 2015 onwards, shaped by the rhythms of family life and professional commitments. This episodic engagement allowed for a layered understanding of Asturian musical life across seasons, festivals, and evolving aesthetic contexts. Participant observation included active musical engagement in sessions, informal interviews, and documentation of rehearsal and performance practices. Following Nettl's reflexive model, fieldwork is understood here as dialogic and embodied, where knowledge is co-produced through sound, memory, and sociality.

1.2.2 Gender and Participation

Early contacts and session spaces were predominantly male, particularly among flute players and session leaders. This absence of female instrumentalists raises questions about access, visibility, and symbolic legitimacy. Interviews with Leti Baselgas were especially illuminating, as she reshaped session aesthetics in Avilés, challenging stylistic conventions and foregrounding gendered performance. These perspectives inform later analysis of aesthetic rupture and revivalist negotiation. While gender is not the central analytic lens of this thesis, it remains an important consideration, particularly in Chapter 5, which reflects on feminist activism and changing patterns of participation.

1.2.3 Translation and Linguistic Transparency

This thesis employs translations throughout, often retaining original Castilian or Asturian terms where they carry cultural or political significance. Initial translations of interview transcripts were assisted by Xiomara Garzón, while culturally specific terminology was checked collaboratively with interviewees. The Asturian language's ongoing process of standardisation created orthographic variation, reflecting deeper tensions between regional identity, institutional recognition, and vernacular usage. Terms such as cuchu/cucho illustrate this contested terrain. Retaining multiple variants reflects a commitment to linguistic transparency and epistemic justice, recognising that ambiguity is not a flaw but a reflection of lived complexity.

1.2.4 Analytical Emphasis

This thesis does not rely on exhaustive modal analysis or systematic theoretical taxonomies. My background as a traditional musician taught by ear shapes my approach: stylistic nuance is interpreted through fieldwork transcriptions, interviews, and conversations rather than abstract formalism. These discursive reflections are treated not simply as commentary but as interpretive acts, revealing how musicians articulate stylistic choices, negotiate revivalist symbolism, and position themselves within translocal ecologies of practice.

Over the course of fieldwork, I became increasingly aware that the repertory I had initially approached as instrumental flute music was deeply embedded in other expressive contexts. Much of the material was originally danced to, sung, or, in the case of sones, both simultaneously as sung dances. These layers of meaning shaped how musicians understood and performed the repertory, requiring a conceptual shift from analysing flute performance in isolation to recognising its multi-contextual nature. While song and dance are central to shaping revivalist aesthetics and repertorial transmission, a detailed analysis of their relationship to instrumental practice lies beyond the scope of this thesis, though it remains a promising area for future research.

Sessions are interpreted here as rooted cosmopolitan spaces, layered with revivalist aesthetics, symbolic instrumentation, and vernacular negotiation. This conceptual framing did not guide the initial fieldwork but emerged inductively through reflective analysis of session formats, leadership structures, audience dynamics, and repertorial flows.Turino's (2008) participatory/presentational continuum informs the analysis of session aesthetics and audience engagement.

1.2.5 Reflexive Tools and Editorial Practice

The dialogic use of digital tools, including AI, proved helpful in sustaining focus and momentum during the writing process. One technique often used by people with ADHD (I have ADHD) is shadowing, in which another person sits alongside to help maintain attention. Working with AI, in particular Chat GPT, provided a similar function, enabling me to reflect aloud, clarify structure, and return to my research questions and chapter architecture after periods of editorial drift during a day of work. While useful for grammar correction and structural reflection, I found the Chat GPT tools did not replace my interpretive voice or analytical priorities. Ultimately, the methodological emphasis remains on ethnographic immersion, reflexive documentation, and critical synthesis, all of which are from my efforts.

1.2.6 Comparative and Interdisciplinary Frameworks

Asturian practices are situated within a broader comparative framework that includes Irish, Scottish, Breton, and Galician traditions. This enables analysis of symbolic translation, institutional mediation, and aesthetic convergence across Celtic and post‑Celtic contexts. The methodology draws on interdisciplinary sources from ethnomusicology, cultural studies, organology, and postcolonial theory. Within this framework, the transverse wooden flute serves as a modal mediator, linking Asturian rootedness with transnational Celtic circulation.

1.2.7 Methods

The main research approach employed in the production of this thesis is participant observation in the field in Asturias and at the Festival Interceltique Lorient, undertaking in

depth interviews with central figures, most of whom were practicing musicians. This consisted of two extended summer trips to Asturias in 2015 and 2016 and attending Lorient twice in 2016 and 2022. Subsequent communications with participants allowed clarification and expansion where necessary. I also attended Llarfest in Asturias in 2024 which provided further opportunity to observe the music scene.

Fieldwork was complemented with published media. The use of online media included RPA television broadcasts to watch and analyse the programme output of Ambas (see 1.4 terminology) and other performances. RPA radio broadcasts were used to generate evidence for the Celtic and Folk revival influence on audio communications such as jingles. I also referenced Xune Elipe's radio programme *Al Son*. These broadcast resources are explicitly referred to in Chapter 2 but inform other aspects of my thesis. MusicaAsturiana.com informed my understanding of (sub)genre classification and development. I transcribed a number of fieldwork recordings which are presented at various points in this thesis.

This thesis has ethical approval from the University of Sheffield.

1.3 Conclusion and Thesis Outline

The methodological approach is therefore multi-layered. It combines ethnographic immersion with analytical reflection, organological study with spatial observation, and reflexive dialogue with critical synthesis. This triangulation ensures that the flute is examined not only as a musical instrument but as a cultural artefact, a pedagogical tool and a symbolic mediator. By weaving together these perspectives, the thesis seeks to capture the complexity of

Asturian revivalism and the ways in which cosmopolitan practices are re-embedded in vernacular contexts.

Research Statement:

The aesthetics of transverse wooden flute playing in the contemporary Asturian folk scene are an example of rooted cosmopolitanism, reflecting complex transnational, national and trans-local aspects of identity development and the power dynamics that flow between connected cosmopolitan sites.

Research Significance/ Gap:

A limited amount of academic research has focused on the case of Asturian national identity and music as is the case with the use of the transverse wooden flute in Celtic, European and Anglo-American folk revival contexts. I am one of three people currently documenting the role and constructs of Celtismu in Asturian identity construction, I am the only person writing about this from an etic perspective. This work builds on the small amount of literature that applies Cosmopolitan theory to identities connected with Celtic, European and Anglo-American folk revival music. It raises exciting questions about the Celtic cosmopolitan identities and Asturias as an example of a liminal evolving cultural identity, at once Asturian, Spanish and Celtic, while not fully recognised, socially or politically, by the core establishments of either.

This chapter has introduced the conceptual and methodological foundations of the thesis. Rooted cosmopolitanism provides the interpretive lens through which Asturian Celtic revivalism is examined, while ethnomusicology's methodological canon from Merriam's

tripartite model to Feld's acoustemology and Nettl's reflexive ethnography, provides the scaffolding for analysis. My own fieldwork, shaped by episodic immersion, insider/outsider dynamics, gendered participation, linguistic transparency, and vernacular pedagogy, situates the flute as both rooted artefact and cosmopolitan mediator.

The thesis proceeds by first establishing its conceptual framework and methodology, situating the flute within debates on cosmopolitanism, revival and organology. The chapters that follow build on this foundation. Chapter 2 outlines how is Asturias constructed as a place and space. Chapter 3 examines the key repertorial and stylistic aesthetics of Asturian Celtic and folk revival music Chapter 4 examines the specific stylistic components used in transverse wooden flute performance and the discoursal meanings applied to the instrument as a physical object in the contemporary Asturian Celtic and folk revival scene. Chapter 5 considers the recontextualisation of performance on the transverse wooden flute within the contemporary Asturian Celtic and folk revival scene and if this reflects the development and evolution of constructs of musical Asturianidad in the twenty-first century.

1.4 Terminology

The word Celtismu is the Asturian word for a sense of Celtic Asturianess. The Castilian and Galician word for this is Celtismo. I use Celtismu to express a sense of Asturian Celticness. Where I use Celtismo, it represents a wider Spanish context or if a fieldwork informant uses it.

In Asturias, it is custom in the cities and towns to include the name of a person's village in their name or to refer to them just by the name of their village. A central character to this work is Xosé Antón Fernández Martínez. He is known as 'Ambás', the name of the rural hill village he originates from in north Central Asturias. Another example of a prominent musician who is referred to in this way, flute player José Serbando Menéndez is referred to as 'Pepín de Muñalén'. 'Pepín' is a nickname for José or Xosé. It means little Pepé. Muñalén is the village he comes from. In the Asturian language, an 'x', sounded as 'sh', is used where a soft 'j' would be used in Castilian. I will refer to Xosé Antón as Ambás and José Serbando Menéndez as 'Pepín de Muñalén' for the rest of this thesis.

I use the term Celtic and folk revival music as a generic term to cover the various forms of music connected to the terms 'Celtic', 'folk' and 'traditional' music, both terms used in the field in various ways and often interchangeably. Gubbins (2024) describes how in the context of the island of Ireland, where much of the current Asturian transverse wooden flute aesthetic originates, 'traditional' music is associated with instrumental music. 'Folk music' is associated with singing in the English language accompanied by string instruments whereas in Britain 'traditional' and 'folk music' where used interchangeably "and refer to all forms of instrumental music and song" (Gubbins H. 2024, 51). Whereas in Asturias 'traditional' might be associated with music that is danced to with structured choreography, sones (sung dances), Tonada song, gaita, percussion. In this context 'folk' is associated with the aesthetics originating in the post-World War Two American second folk revival, of songs accompanied by string instruments such as guitars. As I explain in Chapter 3, and evidence in the Llar Fest vignette in Chapter 5, the word 'folk', and its uses and meanings, are complex. They are

interlinked with Romantic national and Celtic revivals, the second Anglo-American folk revival, Franco era and the post-Franco Celtic and folk music revival and subsequent evolution I chart in this work. These are all shaped by the particular socio economic, political and cultural context of Asturias. When I refer to ‘folk and traditional’ or ‘folk’ in the context of Asturias I am referring to unamplified music constructed as originating a rural space, music that is danced to with structured choreography, including sones (sung dances) in the Asturian language, Tonada song in the Asturian language, gaita and percussion such as pandereta (see Chapter 3 for explanations of these terms). When I use the word ‘folclorica’ it refers to choreographed dance and music performance as described in ‘folk and traditional# but with the addition of formal costumes that are constructed as traditionally Asturian. I do not attempt to provide a single definition of what the term ‘folk’ or ‘traditional’ musics in the Asturian context, but instead I describe the performances and personal perspectives of people I observed that feed into the discourse of what Asturian music is and what it means to them as part of their Asturian identity.

2. The construction of place (physical and imagined) through performing Asturian Celtic and folk revival music on the transverse wooden flute in the contemporary Asturian folk scene

In this chapter I consider, through the lens of the contemporary Asturian Celtic and folk revival scene, how Asturias is constructed as a place and space and what this may reveal about how identity is constructed through music in liminal places where the national identity is contested. The idea that music constructs place, rather than merely reflecting it, has gained significant traction across ethnomusicology, cultural geography, and popular music studies. Scholars increasingly argue that musical performance is a dynamic social practice through which identities, memories, and symbolic geographies are actively shaped. As Martin Stokes writes; "Music is socially meaningful not entirely but largely because it provides means by which people recognise identities and places, and the boundaries which separate them" (Stokes 1994, 5). This framing positions music as a spatialised and politicised practice, where sound and performance become tools for negotiating belonging, difference and power.

Timothy Rice (2007) proposes a triadic model for understanding music and identity, integrating historical time, physical place and individual experience. He argues that musical meaning emerges through embodied practice, memory and social relationships, and that identity is constructed through recursive engagement with these dimensions. This approach moves beyond static or essentialist notions of identity, emphasising process, interaction and situated experience. Sara Cohen (1997), in her study of Liverpool soundscapes, demonstrates how urban identity is enacted through local music scenes, while Peter Moser (2018) explores

how community music fosters belonging through place-based creativity. More recently, The Bloomsbury Handbook of Popular Music, Space and Place (Stahl and Percival 2021) consolidates interdisciplinary perspectives on soundscapes, music tourism and spatial politics. This chapter responds directly to the research question: Through the lens of the contemporary Asturian folk scene, how is Asturias constructed as a place and space, and what does this reveal about how identity is constructed through music in liminal places where national identity is contested?

Asturias is constructed both as a place, rooted in landscape, language and regional memory, and as a space of performance, negotiation and symbolic projection. Musical practices such as session formats, modal ornamentation and revivalist aesthetics do not merely reflect Asturian identity; they actively shape it. In a region where national identity is culturally expressive but politically ambivalent, music becomes a key medium for articulating belonging, asserting difference and navigating liminality. This chapter describes the physical place of Asturias, the places and spaces where Asturian Celtic and folk revival music is performed and consumed: concerts and festivals in Asturias and in Brittany, bars where informal music-making sessions take place, virtual spaces and broadcast media. These sites are not neutral containers but active contexts in which identity is negotiated and place is symbolically constructed. To theorise these dynamics, I draw on Thomas Turino's conceptualisation of cosmopolitanism as; "objects, ideas and cultural positions" that circulate transnationally yet remain particular to specific social groups, a form of "cultural formation" or "habitus" that is translocal in essence (Turino 2000, 8). I use this framework to understand how Asturian musicians engage with transnational Celtic and folk revival aesthetics while

asserting regional or ‘national’ distinctiveness. To address the power dynamics embedded in cosmopolitan exchange, I incorporate Kwame Anthony Appiah’s notion of Rooted Cosmopolitanism (1997), which emphasises ethical engagement and local agency within ‘global’ flows. Turino’s concept of cosmopolitan loops (Turino 2000) further illuminates how musical ideas travel, transform and return, shaping identity through recursive transnational circuits.

Turino’s notion of syncretism is also central here: it highlights how people view the centre of a cultural phenomenon, such as the nation, differently depending on their cultural positions and perspectives. Yet, despite these divergent views, there exists sufficient shared habitus for cosmopolitans to recognise and participate in a common identity. In the Asturian context, this allows musicians and audiences to engage with Celtic revival aesthetics, regional traditions and broader Iberian imaginaries without collapsing into a singular narrative. Instead, identity is negotiated through layered affiliations and symbolic convergence.

Additionally, Augusto Ferraiuolo’s application of the concept of inter-sensorial scape to Irish music sessions (Ferraiuolo 2019) assists in conceptualising how musical performance and its context interact with place and space to create a multi-sensorial construction of Asturian musical identity habitus. This approach foregrounds the embodied, affective and spatial dimensions of session practice, revealing how sound, gesture and social interaction coalesce to produce a lived experience of place.

I argue that in many cases, the music and identities performed, drawing on Judith Butler’s theory of performativity (Butler 1990), in the contemporary Asturian Celtic and folk revival

music scene, and the construction of place and space in this context, exemplify rooted cosmopolitanism. Since the post-Franco era, there have been significant shifts in the centres of cultural power within this scene and in the broader Celtic and folk revival movements. A group of Asturian individuals, many of whom were urban-based students and bourgeois academics, who felt linguistically, culturally or politically disenfranchised, sought, both consciously and subconsciously, to construct a habitus that promoted Asturian identity and culture as a means of reclaiming agency. The result is a complex, layered formation: a rooted cosmopolitan blend of Celtic and folk revival culture with distinctively local, regional and national elements.

Within this construction, there are also competing and overlapping considerations of Españolidad (a sense of Spanishness), Asturianidad, pan-Hispanicity and pan-Iberian conceptualisations. These frameworks shape how musicians and audiences negotiate identity across multiple scales, local, regional, national and transnational. The Asturian folk scene thus becomes a site of dialogic tension, where cultural expressions are filtered through historical memory, linguistic politics and aesthetic affiliations. Rather than resolving these tensions, musical performance holds them in productive suspension, allowing for plural and situated articulations of belonging.

2.3 The Physical Place of Asturias

The Principality of Asturias is an autonomous community located along the northern coast of Spain. It is bordered by Galicia to the west, Cantabria and the Picos de Europa mountain range to the east, Castile and León to the south, and the Cantabrian Sea to the north. Asturias

is one of seventeen autonomous communities (comunidades autónomas) established under the Spanish Constitution of 1978. These communities form the first sub-national tier of political administration in Spain, each with varying degrees of autonomy as defined by the constitution. Regions with stronger nationalist movements have typically been granted greater devolved powers, a system referred to as asymmetrical devolution (Börzel 2002).

The term ‘nationality’ (nacionalidad) was introduced into the 1978 Constitution following a highly contested parliamentary and legal debate. It was, in part, a recognition of the diversity of national identities within Spain and a response to the demands of peripheral nationalisms after decades of repression under the Franco regime (1936 to 1975) (Conversi 2002). Although never fully defined or agreed upon, the terms ‘historical nationalities’ and ‘nationalities’ have come to denote regions with strong historical and cultural identities (Keating, 2007). Neighbouring Galicia, which shares with Asturias certain constructions of Celtic identity, is categorised as one such historical nationality. Under its 1981 Statute of Autonomy, Galicia was granted a regional parliament and co-official status for the Galician language (Conversi 2002). Asturias, by contrast, is designated a ‘historical community’ (comunidad histórica) and holds a more limited form of autonomy. It has pursued a slower or more moderate path towards self-government, with secondary-level devolved powers (San Martín 1998; Zimmerman 2011).

Asturias is characterised by its mountainous terrain, agricultural economy, tourism sector and a historically significant but now declining coal mining industry. Demographically, the region is experiencing sustained population decline. Between 1996 and 2022, the total population fell by 7.7 per cent, from 1,087,885 to 1,004,686 (Instituto Nacional de Estadística, 2023).

The decline is particularly acute in rural municipalities, which saw a 26.9 per cent reduction in population between 1996 and 2020 (Esade, 2022). By comparison, Galicia's overall population has grown modestly, reaching 2,693,451 in 2022 (Instituto Nacional de Estadística, 2022), although its rural areas also experienced a decline of 16.9 per cent over the same period (Esade, 2022).

These trends reflect broader demographic shifts across Spain. Between 1996 and 2020, population growth was concentrated in major cities such as Madrid and Barcelona, along the Mediterranean coast, and in the Canary and Balearic Islands. Some rural areas near large urban centres also experienced growth, but more remote regions like Asturias have continued to depopulate (Esade, 2022). In recent years, however, there has been growing concern about internal climate migration, with wealthier individuals relocating from southern Spain to cooler northern regions such as Asturias. This trend is contributing to rising property prices and placing pressure on local infrastructure and housing access (Sosvilla-Rivero et al., 2025). The region now has the highest proportion of residents aged over 65 in Spain: 28 per cent, compared with the national average of 20.7 per cent (CaixaBank 2025).

The implications of depopulation, rural to urban migration and outward emigration from Asturias are explored throughout this thesis. Particular attention is paid to the impact of historical migration, especially to North, Central and South America, on folk repertory. The thesis also examines how urban–rural tensions shape constructions of authenticity within the Celtic and folk revival, and how Celtic and folk revival music has become a medium for identity construction in Asturias following the 2008 financial crisis (see Chapter 5).

Politically, five parties or groupings currently hold seats in the Asturian regional parliament, the General Junta of the Principality of Asturias. The centre-left Asturian Socialist Federation (FSA–PSOE) governs with the support of Compromisu por Asturies (CxAst), a regionalist centre-left party, and one independent deputy. The opposition is formed by the conservative Partido Popular, supported by the regionalist Foro Asturias and the far-right Vox party (Junta General del Principado de Asturias 2025). Each block holds twenty seats, making governance precarious and often reliant on negotiation.

Asturian nationalist and regionalist parties have achieved only limited success, primarily at the municipal level. Unlike Galicia, there has been little sustained interest in a nationalist political project in Asturias since the democratic transition (Zimmerman 2011). Instead, cultural and linguistic rights have become the principal vehicles for expressing regional identity (San Martín 2002; Álvarez Sancho 2022). In this context, music, particularly folk and Celtic revival forms, plays a central role in articulating belonging, asserting difference and navigating the region's ambiguous position within the Spanish state.

These demographic, political and administrative features form the material substrate upon which symbolic constructions of Asturias are layered. Scholars such as Massey (1994) and Casey (1996) have argued that place is not a fixed location but a dynamic process shaped by social relations, cultural memory and embodied experience. Asturias is not only a physical territory but also a cultural imaginary, shaped by intersecting discourses of rurality, industrial heritage, Celtic affiliation, Hispanic identity and Atlantic orientation. These symbolic geographies are continually rearticulated through musical performance, discourse and spatial

practice. The following section explores how Asturias is constructed as a place through these overlapping imaginaries, and how music plays a central role in this process.

2.2 Constructing Asturias as 'Place'

Beyond its physical geography, Asturias is constructed through a complex interplay of psychological, cultural, political and social imaginaries. It is simultaneously imagined as a nation, a principality, a region within Spain, an industrial and agricultural zone, an urban and rural space, and as both Celtic and Hispanic, Atlantic and European. These overlapping constructions reflect not only the region's historical trajectories but also its symbolic labour: the ways in which Asturias is made meaningful through discourse, performance and everyday practice.

Place, as Stokes (1994) argues, is not a neutral backdrop but a product of cultural activity. People construct place through language, memory, music and movement, embedding meaning in landscapes and soundscapes alike. In Asturias, music plays a central role in this process. It references place names, evokes past events, and carries aesthetic motifs that are discursively constructed as Asturian. These sonic discursive constructions do not merely reflect place; they actively produce it.

Asturian folk musician Diego Pangua articulates this layered construction of place in striking terms. He evokes a 'magical space' populated not only by cattle grazers and fishermen but also by miners, figures often overlooked in romanticised rural framings of Asturias:

> “So it's about the industry and about mining. But somewhat miners are allowed too; along with pests and cattle grazers in that magical space of where the Asturian identity comes from. fishermen too.” (Diego Pangua. Interview with author 2016).

This formulation challenges the dominant construction of Asturias as a purely rural or pastoral region. It foregrounds industrial labour, particularly mining, as central to the symbolic geography of Asturianidad. The ‘magical space’ Pangua describes is not a static landscape but a dynamic cultural imaginary, shaped by intersecting histories of labour, land and sea.

By contrast, Pepín de Muñalén emphasised the rural foundations of Asturian identity and musical practice:

> ‘The Asturian identity in general and the music as well, it is rural.’ Pepín de Muñalén. Interview with author 2016).

Pepín’s framing reflects a revivalist ethos that locates authenticity in village lifeways, oral transmission and pastoral memory. His emphasis on rurality aligns with some tendencies in folk scenes to valorise traditional forms and resist urban or industrial dilution. The contrast between Diego and Pepín reveals how musicians construct place through different symbolic repertories: one inclusive of industrial heritage, the other rooted in rural continuity.

These complexities were echoed in the conversations I heard and participated in during fieldwork. Musicians and cultural actors often spoke of Asturias as a place in flux, a region

whose identity is continually redefined through music, discourse and political change. At certain moments, Asturias is constructed as Celtic; at others, as Hispanic or Atlantic. These constructions are not mutually exclusive but layered and contested, reflecting the region's position within broader national and transnational imaginaries. As explored further in Chapter 5, movements such as Los Indignados, resulting from the 2008 world economic crisis, have contributed to the emergence of new Asturian subjectivities, challenging older narratives and reimagining the place of Asturias in Spain and beyond.

2.4 Asturianidad, Españolidad, and Iberian Identity: Negotiating Belonging in a Contested Frame

Asturias occupies a liminal position within the Spanish state: neither fully central nor fully peripheral, neither statutorily recognised as a 'historical nationality' nor devoid of distinctive cultural sovereignty. This ambiguity renders Asturian identity a site of ongoing negotiation, shaped by tensions between Asturianidad, Españolidad, pan-Hispanic affiliation and broader Iberian imaginaries. The construction of identity in this context is not a matter of fixed categories but of relational positioning, symbolic labour and strategic articulation.

Scholars of Spanish nationalism have long noted the asymmetrical nature of the state's territorial configuration. Moreno (2001) describes Spain as a 'plurinational state' characterised by uneven federalism, where regions such as Catalonia and the Basque Country assert strong national identities, while others, like Asturias, remain ambiguously situated. Álvarez Junco (2011) argues that Spanish national identity has historically operated through Castilian cultural hegemony, marginalising peripheral voices while appropriating their

symbolic capital. In this framework, Asturianidad emerges not as a separatist claim but as a mode of cultural differentiation, a way of asserting specificity within a shared administrative structure.

This negotiation of identity unfolds within a broader discursive field shaped by Españolidad, pan-hispanidad and Iberian imaginaries. Pan-hispanidad, rooted in imperial nostalgia and cultural homogenisation, offers a transnational frame that often flattens internal diversity. As Juan-Navarro (2025) observes, it functions less as a fixed doctrine than as a malleable cultural repertory, capable of adapting to shifting political contexts while retaining its core emphasis on Hispanic unity. In contrast, Iberian identity, as theorised by Sousa Santos (2014), suggests a more plural and dialogic model, one that recognises the peninsula's layered histories, linguistic multiplicity and regional sovereignties. Asturian musicians navigate these imaginaries with strategic ambivalence: asserting local specificity while resisting both Castilian hegemony and homogenising pan-Hispanic narratives. Their musical practice thus becomes a site where Iberian plurality is enacted, rather than merely claimed.

The myth of Covadonga exemplifies how Asturias is positioned within these competing imaginaries. Covadonguismo refers to the Spanish Catholic nationalist discourse that draws on the mythic and historical significance of the Battle of Covadonga, fought between 718 and 722 CE in the mountainous terrain of Asturias. The battle, led by Don Pelayo against the Islamic Umayyad Caliphate, has been variously interpreted depending on the teller's political and cultural perspective (Remensnyder 2014; Busto X.C. 2019). While the historical details remain contested, the mythic narrative, in which Pelayo, aided by divine intervention from the Virgin Mary, defeats a superior Islamic force, has become foundational to both Spanish

and Asturian nationalist imaginaries. The ‘Cross of Victory’, said to have appeared miraculously in the sky, is now emblazoned on the official flag of Asturias**.**

Spanish nationalists have long used the myth to construct a narrative of Catholic unity, positioning Covadonga as the birthplace of Spain (Boyd 2002; Zimmerman 2011). Asturian regionalists and nationalists, by contrast, have invoked it to assert that Asturias predates the formation of modern Spain, with Don Pelayo becoming king of Asturias before the unification of Castile and León. However, as Zimmerman (2011) argues, the dominant focus of Asturian nationalism has not been Covadonguismo but the defence and promotion of the Asturian language. From the early twentieth century to the surdimientu movement of the 1980s, language rights and cultural autonomy have been central to Asturian nationalist discourse, while Covadonga’s symbolic power has remained ambivalent due to its appropriation by Francoist ideology.

This ambivalence was reflected in my fieldwork. While Covadonga was occasionally referenced in broader discussions of Asturian history, musicians and cultural actors in the folk scene did not foreground it as a central trope of identity. Their focus lay instead on the preservation and revitalisation of Asturian music and language, which were seen as living expressions of place and belonging.

Flute player Pepín de Muñalén offered a nuanced reflection on Asturias’s foundational role in the Spanish imaginary:

> ‘To create Spain, Asturias is a fundamental piece. Asturias is a guarantor of that entity. It is where they come from. Where the reconquest begins. Where the monarchy begins.’ (Pepín de Muñalén. Interview with author 2016)

His statement illustrates the tension between regional pride and national integration, a tension that musicians navigate not through mythic symbols but through aesthetic choices, linguistic advocacy and sonic specificity.

Diego Pangua, when asked how he would label his musical practice, replied:

> ‘My first tag would be Asturian. If I’m far from home or overseas: Asturian North-Western Spanish Traditional Music. You can’t talk about Asturians [abroad]… you have to give a little intro.’ (Diego Pangua. Interview with author 2015).

Here, Asturian identity is foregrounded but nested within a broader Iberian frame. Pangua’s formulation reflects what Spivak (1988) terms ‘strategic essentialism’, a temporary simplification of identity for the sake of transnational legibility, without surrendering its internal complexity. His self-description also echoes Gilroy’s (1993) notion of ‘routes’ rather than ‘roots’, where identity is shaped by movement, translation and contextual adaptation.

Ismael González Arias offered a more explicitly political reading of Asturian identity, noting that folk groups in Asturias deliberately distanced themselves from Castilian aesthetics:

> ‘They wanted not to be Spanish… not to have a Spanish aesthetic… the groups here didn’t want to look like the Castilian groups.’ (Ismael González Arias. Interview with author 2015)

This rejection was not merely stylistic but symbolic, a way of constructing Asturianidad as a counter-image to Españolidad. Arias García’s observation aligns with Hall’s (1996) argument that identity is always constructed through difference, through what it is not as much as what it is.

The reflexivity of some of the Asturian musicians is striking. Pangua noted:

> ‘We do here in Asturias… we psychoanalyse ourselves a lot.’ ’ (Diego Pangua. Interview with author 2015).

This self-analysis is not merely personal; it is cultural and political, shaped by the region’s liminal status and its ambiguous relationship to Spanish and Iberian identity. Asturias is not simply a place: it is a space of negotiation, where identity is performed, contested and reimagined through music, myth and symbolic geography (see also Chapter 5, for further analysis on evolution of Asturianidad and its relationship to Asturian traditional repertory in the twenty-first century). This reflexive stance sets the stage for the symbolic repertory of Celtismu and Asturian Celtic and folk revival music, where musicians draw on imagined affinities with Atlantic cultures to articulate a plural, situated sense of belonging. The following section explores how Celtic tropes are mobilised not as historical claims, but as

affective and aesthetic strategies through which Asturian musicians navigate the politics of identity.

2.5 Language, Oficialidá and Musical Activism

Castilian (Spanish) is the official language of Spain. Other languages with co-official status include Basque, Catalan, Aranese or Occitan, Valencian and Galician (Government of Spain, 2025). In Asturias, Castilian is the sole official language, while Asturian and Astur-Gallego, spoken in border areas between Asturias and Galicia, do not hold co-official status. Article Four of the Asturian Statute of Autonomy offers limited protection for the Asturian language, permitting its use in education and workplace settings (Comunidad Autónoma del Principado de Asturias, 1998).

A hybrid form known as Amestáu, a mix of Asturian and Castilian and sometimes referred to as Asturian Spanish, is also spoken, although it is not recognised as a distinct language (Álvarez Sancho, 2022). It is estimated that around one third of the Asturian population, or just under one million people, identify as Asturian speakers, albeit with varying levels of fluency (Muñiz-Cachón, 2018). According to data from 2017, 90 per cent of Asturian inhabitants were considered potential speakers, and 40 per cent supported full official status for the language (Llera, 2017).

During the Franco regime, which lasted from 1936 to 1975, languages other than Castilian were actively suppressed as part of the regime's construction of a Catholic, centralised and monocultural Spanish identity (Balfour and Quiroga 2007). In response, the Conceyu Bable, or Bable Council, was founded in 1976 to preserve and promote the Asturian language and

associated linguistic rights (Zimmerman, 2011). The term Bable was historically used to describe Asturian as a dialect. Today, many language rights activists consider the term derogatory, although I encountered it in fieldwork conversations with Asturians outside the contemporary folk scene, often referring to it as something from their grandparents' village. It was also used by the Conceyu Bable in the early stages of the post-Franco language rights movement.

The development of Asturian language activism and the Celtic and folk music revival were both part of a broader cultural resurgence known as the surdimientu. Within this movement, folk musicians and cultural actors adopted a paradigm of cultural and linguistic nationalism that diverged from the more conservative, Catholic-inflected Covadongan discourse (Zimmerman, 2011). This shift foregrounded language as a key site of identity construction, with music serving as a medium for articulating regional distinctiveness and reclaiming cultural agency.

The contemporary campaign for co-official status, known as the movimientu pola oficialidá, builds on this legacy. The first public demonstration for language rights took place in 1976, marching under the slogan "Bable nes escueles, Autonomía rexonal" (Bable in our schools, regional autonomy), demanding legal recognition of Asturian and the right to teach it in schools (Álvarez Alba 2008). Achievements of the movement include the creation of a category for Best Asturian Song in the Asturian Academy of Music (AMAS) awards, and legal recognition by the regional government for the use of Asturian in official administrative contexts.

An umbrella council of activist organisations, Conceyu Abiertu pola Oficialidá, or Open Council for Oficiality, coordinates rallies, concerts, demonstrations and recordings that foreground Asturian music. This includes subgenres connected to Celtic and folk revival music performed by many of the musicians I observed, which serves to amplify the campaign's visibility and cultural legitimacy. Figure 1 shows the poster for the twenty-eighth Conciertu pola Oficialidá, held in 2016 in the Plaza Mayor of Oviedo, the capital of Asturias. I address the use of music in the Asturian language rights movement in Chapter 5.

Figure 1. XXVIII Conciertu pola Oficialidá 2016 (Asturies.com, 2016)

In the past decade, the campaign has faced increasing resistance from the political right, particularly from the far-right party Vox, which opposes the allocation of government resources to promote and institutionalise the use of Asturian. This opposition reflects broader tensions between Asturias and the Spanish state, and between competing visions of Asturias within Spain. The Oficialidá campaign therefore operates not only as a linguistic rights movement but also as a site of cultural and political negotiation, where music becomes a medium for asserting regional identity and resisting homogenising narratives.

The use of Asturian language in musical performance, session discourse and revivalist aesthetics will be examined in greater depth across the following chapters, where it emerges as a key site of identity negotiation, cultural labour and symbolic resistance.

2.5 Celtismu and the Imagined Atlantic

Asturian musicians often navigate identity through symbolic repertories that exceed historical or linguistic continuity. Celtismu, in particular, functions not as a claim to ethnic descent but as an affective and aesthetic strategy through which musicians articulate belonging, difference and transnational affinity. It offers a way of positioning Asturias within an imagined Atlantic cultural space, aligned with Galicia, Brittany, Ireland and Scotland, while resisting the homogenising pull of Castilian Españolidad.

Rubén Bada reflected on this layered ambivalence with insight:

> ‘There is a feeling in Asturias, in the whole north of Spain, especially in Galicia and Asturias. We feel part of some Celtic thing, even though Celtic languages haven’t been spoken here for over 2,000 years or more, or if ever. But at the same time, we are part of a different reality which sometimes clashes with our reality. Our daily life sometimes; life is not as Spanish. I’m talking about the sense of Españolidad, that was so, since the dictatorship. One Country, Free blah blah blah, Grande, Libre, so they try to sell us something uniform. Spain is Spanish. It’s great for tourists, or not, because they come to the north and it’s raining! But we are realising that that is not true in some sense. That we can be Spanish too, but we are not Spanish in the way the official idea of being Spanish is.’ (Rubén Bada. Interview with author 2016).

This articulation captures the ambivalence at the heart of Asturian identity: a sense of belonging that is both within and against the Spanish state, both Celtic and not, both humorous and politically charged. Celtismu, in this context, is not a historical assertion but a symbolic tool, a way of claiming cultural space, aesthetic legitimacy and regional pride.

The appeal of Celtismu lies partly in its transnational reach. Festivals, such as Lorient in Brittany region of France and Ortigueira in neighbouring Galicia, provide platforms where Asturian musicians perform alongside Irish, Scottish and Galician acts, engaging in what Turino (2008) might call cosmopolitan formations. These encounters allow Asturian musicians to situate themselves within a broader Atlantic frame, one that privileges musical

affinity over linguistic descent. Pepín de Muñalén described his experience at Lorient in affective terms:

> ‘When they play what I hear… that soul is familiar to me. I understand that language.’ (Pepín de Muñalén. Interview with author 2015).

Here, ‘language’ refers not to speech but to musical grammar, emotional resonance and shared symbolic codes. Celtismu thus becomes a mode of recognition, a way of feeling part of something larger while retaining local specificity. This dynamic reflects rooted cosmopolitanism: a form of transnational engagement grounded in local histories and cultural particularities.

At the same time, Celtismu is not without its tensions. Some musicians expressed discomfort with the essentialism implicit in Celtic branding, noting that it can obscure the plural and contested nature of Asturian identity. Others embraced it strategically, using Celtic tropes to access international circuits, funding and visibility. As Diego Pagua put it:

> ‘If you say “Celtic”, people listen. If you say “Asturian”, they ask where that is.’ (Diego Pagua. Interview with author 2015).

This strategic essentialism echoes Spivak’s formulation: a tactical simplification of identity for the sake of legibility, without surrendering its internal complexity. Celtismu, in this sense, is not a fixed identity but a repertory, a set of symbols, sounds and affiliations that can be mobilised, contested and reconfigured. As Antuña Gancedo (2019: 645) notes, reinvented Celticism offered a cultural reference whose antiquity legitimised it as tradition, while also

functioning as a pagan counterpoint to the Catholicism that had long dominated Asturian popular culture and carried the stigma of collaboration with the Franco regime

Asturias's position within the imagined Atlantic is therefore both aspirational and ambivalent. Celtismu offered a way of resisting Castilian centralism, asserting regional pride and engaging in transnational dialogue. However, it also raised questions about authenticity, appropriation and the politics of representation. As explored further in Chapters 3 and 5, musicians navigate these tensions through performance, repertory and discourse, crafting identities that are plural, situated and reflexive.

The symbolic repertories explored above, Celtismu, Españolidad, rooted cosmopolitanism and strategic essentialism, do not remain abstract. They are actively negotiated, embodied and reimagined through musical discourse. For Asturian musicians, identity is not only theorised but performed: through instrumentation, repertory, staging and audience interaction. In fieldwork interviews, these constructs surfaced not as fixed categories but as lived tensions, aesthetic choices and strategic alignments. Musicians articulated their sense of belonging, difference and transnational affinity through sonic decisions, lyrical framing and visual codes. The following section examines how these identity frameworks are acted out in places of formal and formal musical performance, revealing the dialogic interplay between cultural imaginaries place and performative agency.

2.6 Celtic and Asturian Folk Revival Music Context

In the post-Franco Spain of the 1980s, Celtic and folk revival music became the musical mode for transmitting cultural, economic and, to a lesser extent, political Celtismu. There

was, at this time, what musician and folklorist Ambás described as, an "explosion of identity" and a "search for musical identity" (Ambás, Interview with author 2016) after the repression of regional and national identities within Spain. In the mid-1980s, a small group of what flute maker and foundational folk revival transverse wooden flute player Marcos Llope identified as "students" and " intellectuals" took an interest in using folk revival music from 'Celtic' countries (Llope, M. Interview with author 2016). This was a way of expressing Celtismu as an integral part of their Asturian identity. This reflected the process of using folk revival music as an expression of Celtic identity emanating from countries connected with the construct of Celticity and used by the recording industry to market 'Celtic music' internationally. Celtismu and the use of folk music revival format music performance to express this, was at this time, a minority interest in Asturias (see Chapter 3 on repertory, sub-genres and musical arrangement of music). Marcos Llope estimated there were "between 20 and 40 people" (Llope, M. 2016) involved out of an Asturian population of 1,128,756 in 1980 (Instituto Nacional de Estadística, 2024). I describe in more detail genres and subgenres, including Celtic and Folk Revival music, in Chapter 3.

One of the central cultural products of the Celtic and Folk revival music scene was the introduction of informal music making in bars, playing folk revival and Celtic repertory.

2.7 Defining a Session in the Asturian Context

What I describe is both the places, objects that I see in the session, layout, instruments, the sensorial sphere but also how we construct understandings of what the session is and how this is connected to construction of place and habitus. Various terms are used in Asturias to

describe what is, in many respects, the same activity structure but with variations in practice and interpretation of meaning that indicate changes and evolutions in the constructions of Asturianidad to some extent. The sessions at Cá Beleño in Oviedo were called 'Jam Session'. I asked several sources who were involved with the sessions from the start why 'jam session' was used and no one knew why they were called a Jam Session. One person suggested that perhaps it was a name that reminded them of something they liked, that could be in both the context of liking Irish sessions and of jam sessions from other musical genres in Asturias that already existed. Another suggested that perhaps it was a mistake that caught on. The consensus was that it was a session in the same format and context of sessions in other places linked to Celtic culture, Celtic cultures and diasporic spaces. Other names for sessions in Asturias included 'Les Sessiones' (in the Asturian language) and 'Sesión folk' (El Cafetón Bar Avilés), 'Sesión' (L'Esperteyu Bar, Oviedo) and 'Sesión Vermú (Bar Ixixu, Piedras Blancas, Taberna Folk Las Ubiñas). Vermú refers to the time of day, between 12 noon and 2 pm, when the first alcoholic drink, usually vermouth, is taken in the run-up to lunchtime. In other parts of Spain 'Las session' is used, for example at the Irish Fleadh in Caceres in central Spain.

2.7.1 The structure and formation of bar-based folk and Celtic music sessions in Asturias.

The sessions in Asturias adhere to much of the Irish traditional music session culture it draws from. They happen on a regular basis, the three case studies are, or were, weekly. Sessions in Asturias are free to enter for the audience and musicians and a number of musicians may be paid to lead the session. The circle formation of musicians facing inwards

to each other found in Irish traditional music session is replicated here. Irish traditional music, the culture from which session culture in this scene is drawn from, is largely aural/oral. In these types of cultures, the ability to memorise repertory and learn in situ is at least valued and at most considered essential.

In each of the sessions I describe the layout of the session and what they look like, the repertory played, the tensions between inclusivity and hierarchy; the heterophonic texture of the session. I consider session individualism and demonstrations of virtuosic skills. I note the changes to musical structure, does larger mean more blurred and less focused and monodic, how harmony through backing on guitars and bouzoukis challenges heterophonic and monophonic texture. I consider what might be the motivations for engaging, performative and participatory, I consider what the performance might mean with regards to identity and consider functions of professional development and networking.

2.7.1 Cá Beleño Jam Sessions

The first bar-based 'jam sessions' in Asturias started in 1987 with the opening of Cá Beleño close to the centre of the University City of Oviedo by Celtic and folk revival music activists Xuan Prado, Frankie Delgado, both members of the Asturian folk group Beleño, and Atilano, a member of the Asturian folkloric research group l'Aniciu (Llope, N. 2015). The bar was created for informal music sessions, concerts, and to celebrate Asturian culture, language and folixa (an Asturian word for partying and relaxing) (Llope, N., 2015). It was later rebranded as a 'brewpub' with the installation of its brewing facility. The bar/brewpub did not serve food, which is unusual in Asturias. Although this was the first pub with regular

sessions, I was told by various sources that there were some occasional sessions in other bars such as El Triskel in Gijón and El Naranco in Oviedo. The weekly Cá Beleño jam sessions adapted the format of Irish traditional music sessions inspired by a visit by the Asturian folk and ethnographic group Beleño to the Pan-Celtic Festival in Killarney, Ireland in 1984 (Llope, N. 2015).

I visited on a number of occasions from 2015 during my fieldwork. I observed that the customers were mainly Asturians, a mixture of men and women. Some listened carefully to the music, for others the music was background entertainment. However, I observed over time how the presence was essential to what it was to be in Cá Beleño and what this meant in their habitus construction of what the bar represented. There were regular customers whose presence indicated something more than just a place to drink. Aurelio Argel, characterised by the presence of his smoking pipe, presented Asturian Celtic and folk revival music programmes on Asturian Radio. He was held in such high esteem that, after his death, a road near to the bar was named after him. Another regular, Ástur Peredes, was a leading figure in the Fundación Belenos, (an ethnographic collective founded in 1983 to preserve and promote Asturian culture, in particular the Celtic history of Asturias) and an expert on Asturian architecture. Xose Antón Del Campo was a regular who stood out as he wore t-shirts with Irish Republican slogans and was well known to and was friends with the musicians.

The decor provided visual clues to the ethos of the place. A revolutionary poster commemorating the 1934 2nd Republic and autonomy for Asturias, suggests support for left-wing politics and Asturianess of a republican type. In the area where the musicians played, pictures of the Irish drink Guinness had been hung alongside posters of the Festival

Interceltique de Lorient featuring Breton dancers in lace coiffes. These were surrounding a large map of Asturias. The late Angus Grant from Scottish folk band Shooglenifty looked down from a photograph, over the table where the session leaders sat. On the section of the bar that opens up to allow the bar staff in and out stickers display Celtic festivals visited by staff and customers. The microbrewery in the pub produced the craft ale Ordum. The usual alcoholic marker of Asturianness is cider, made from apples.

The weekly jam sessions started at 10 pm and lasted until the session players decided to leave or the licensee called time, which could be 3 or 4 a.m. The musicians were seated in the corner of the pub in a slightly raised area, away from the bar noise, around extended tables in a roughly oval formation, facing inwards, the same format as Irish traditional music sessions. The session was unamplified. Placed on the tables were one or two drinks, capos for the guitar and bouzouki players, and the more portable instruments such as low and high whistles and transverse wooden flutes. Beer, brewed on the premises, was provided free to the musicians. The drinking culture in sessions in Asturias involved only a small amount of alcoholic consumption during the session in comparison to my experiences in Irish music, traditional and folk sessions in Ireland, England, Scotland and the USA amongst other places. Four people were paid to lead the jam session. I understand that the owner offered a fixed fee and the musicians split it four ways. The space in Cá Beleño was substantial compared to other session venues in Asturias. It meant players had more space and the other non-players and listeners were not directly standing around the musicians unless exceptionally busy.

The session was led regularly by multi-instrumentalist Pepín de Muñalén (aged 40 at the time of my first fieldwork), playing a variety of transverse wooden and end-blown fipple

flutes in D, E♭ and F pitches (see Chapter 4 for explanation of flutes and pitches) and the fiddle (violin) and Alberto Ablanedo on the bouzouki (aged 39), Juanco Marquéz on fiddle (aged 35) and Borja Vasquez on guitar. Pepín, from the rural village of Muñalén in the northwest of Asturias, lives in Oviedo and is a music teacher and professional musician playing with two prominent bands in Asturias, Tuenda and Caldos y Os Rabizos. Alberto Ablanedo, from Oviedo, has played with high-profile Asturian folk bands Tejedor and Felpeyu. He is also an English teacher and translator. Further session leaders included violin player Juanco Marquéz and acoustic guitarist Borja Vasquéz. Other regular session participants were Verónica Rodriguez Rubio on bodhrán (an Irish round frame drum with a goatskin stretched over and secured onto the frame), a professional musician who plays in many musical genres. Musicians outside of this group were welcome to join in as long as they adhered to session etiquette. This included deferring to the session leader, playing in time and not at a volume level that prevented other performers from being heard.

The repertory played on the nights I attended was a mixture of Asturian, Irish, Breton, and Scottish folk music instrumental dance pieces. Pieces played were referred to as ‘temas’ or, in English, ‘tunes’. Sets played in the session were sometimes replications of recorded material, sets that were regularly played and those that were improvised, one tune added on after the other, in an impromptu manner as the set was in progress. In this session, the Asturian repertory is often played in a part order of ‘AABBAABB’. In some cases, this is an adaptation to suit the format used in Irish music which generally follows this pattern (for more details on Asturian repertory see Chapter 3). Some sets of tunes were purely Asturian. In some cases, Asturian, Irish and Scottish tunes with the same time signature were played

together, one after the other in a set. For example, in the Llan de Cubel concert finale set of two Asturian marches, Xuan de Mieres and San Roque played either side of 'Siomadh rud a chunna mi (the melody from a Scottish Puirt à Beul). To indicate that the musician leading the set of tunes was changing from one tune to the other, he would nod, and shout the key of the next tune e.g. 'ré' or shout 'hup' which is taken from Irish session culture. When I visited the bar, there was rarely singing in the session. One exception was a painter, Odón del Paganéu, who sang Tonada and Asturianada (highly ornate ballad types sung in Asturias, see Chapter 3). There were no Asturian sones (sung dances: see Chapter 3 on repertory) sung during my visits to the bar. However, from conversations with Asturian folk musicians observing videos on social media and YouTube of sessions in the bar, singing has happened occasionally but was not generally a feature of the jam sessions in this bar.

Although the repertory played at the sessions was described as dance music, there was no dancing during the session. I understand that occasionally, but not very often, dancers came to the bar and danced, but it was not the primary purpose of performing the music in the session. On the final night of Cá Beleño the last dance was a round dance led by singer, musicians and activist Xosé Ambás. The bar finally closed in February 2019 resulting from the introduction of licensing restrictions by the Oviedo local authority, which restricted noise levels affecting residents. Music, in particular amplified music, was banned in the neighbourhood making Cá Beleño untenable as a business.

In constructing 'place' through musical performance, the first decision lies with the owner of the venue and is to allow the music to be played and secondly to decide if they should be paid. To be asked to lead the session in Cá Beleño is prestigious among the

musicians involved in the Celtic and folk revival scene. The owner of the bar, Frankie Delgado, chose carefully. The leaders must have a large repertory of music memorised. In this context a mixture of Asturian, Irish, Scottish and Breton. They must be able to play to a high standard. The bar has a reputation amongst touring Celtic and folk revival musicians from outside of Asturias and regularly has high profile professional Celtic, folk and traditional musicians joining the session and the leaders must be of a standard to be able to play along with these musicians. Virtuosity is valued and useful if there are few in the session or there is a lack of suggestions for tune sets. These are one-off kinds of moments when a virtuosic display can lift the atmosphere of the session. If one of the leading musicians is a flute player, the ability to have a strong full flute tone is essential to be able to cut through the heterophony of the session, enabling others to follow and play along. The leaders need to have sufficient interpersonal skills to encourage participation by less experienced musicians. encouraging others. The flute player Muñalén has, from participation and observations, has all these qualities. He knows a vast amount of Irish, Breton, Scottish and, in particular, Asturian music. His central presence as leader results in the flute, by his very presence, shaping this place both from a musician and listeners perspective. In this scene he is respected as a performer with professional performances in particular with Tuenda and for his knowledge. Several of the flute players I contacted in the field indicated that he was the person with the greatest knowledge of the history of transverse wooden flute in folk and traditional music in Asturias and in particular old rural flute players. Observing Muñalén leading the sessions on multiple occasions, I observed how he was able to create multiple places depending on the moment, what musicians were in for the session and sometimes

guided by what he felt like doing. If there were Irish musicians present, he may react out of respect by playing more Irish repertory to encourage them to feel included. On other occasions the repertory would concentrate on Asturian tunes. Stock (2004) in his work on English folk sessions in Sheffield, England suggests that some elements of session leadership are subtle. Muñalén has a particular style. He is not a person who talks a lot and leads by playing, encouraging with words but sometimes with body language, eye contact and a head nod. Men led and dominated the session as with all sessions I observed in Asturias. One female musician noted that a woman singing and playing the pandereta as opposed to a bodhrán would have been frowned upon in this bar. She said that this had gradually changed and she had felt welcome to sing and play pandereta in the later years of the existence of the bar. The repertory was largely instrumental music.

2.7.2 El Cafetón Session

El Cafetón bar and cafe was opened in 1981 in Calle de Sol, in the industrial town of Avilés in the north of Asturias. Carlos Garcia Rúbio ran the café from its start with his partner Maribel Alberti through its relocation to Calle de Muralla in Avilés until their sudden death in July 2024. El Cafetón sessions were held weekly. Both buildings were small compared to Cá Beleño. The latter version of El Cafetón had a terrace on the market square at the back of the building. The business operated as a café during the day, serving breakfast, pinchos (similar to tapas, except they are normally spiked with a wooden skewer or toothpick) and drinks for vermu (afternoon drinks) and cakes. In the evening beers and wines were served. Traditional cider pouring was not a feature of El Cafetón. In the original building, flags of the Celtic

nations, including Asturias and Galicia, were draped behind and around the bar. The walls were bare brick with photos of old Avilés. It also served as a place to sell Asturian crafts, literature and music. The new bar had more space, with local art exhibited, and pictures of clients and the owner's family. The café hosted literary events, sessions and concerts from different genres. On the nights of the sessions, customers were mainly Asturian, a mixture of men and women. The bar promoted the sessions as the main attraction on those nights. The size of the original premises meant it was impossible to avoid the session music. However, music for some customers was secondary to socialising and conversation. There were friends of the musicians present who listened to the music and talked with the musicians and between themselves. More recent sessions started at 8 pm, previously at 10.30 pm, and continued until the licensee decided it was time to go home, usually in the early hours. In the old bar, the session space was at the end of the rectangle space in a corner so session members could play with their backs to the wall on two sides. In the new building, sessions were held in various positions inside and on the terrace at the back. Joint sessions were held on the terrace in collaboration with the neighbouring Les Aceñes bar. Usually, four musicians were paid to play, unamplified. The same musicians returned weekly to lead the session, the longest-standing members were Asturians Dolfu Fernández on fiddle, Alberto Ablanedo and Rubén Bada on Fiddle, Guitar and Bouzouki. Dolfu and Rubén have played together professionally with notable Asturian bands DRD and ¿AÚ?. Other regular contributors were David Fernández on transverse wooden flute, an IT specialist from Illas, Asturias, Argentinian professional musician Gonzalo Llau playing flute, guitar and bouzouki and pandereta (hand drum), Luis González Alonso on flute and singer, percussionist and

professional musician Leti Baselgas. Leti played a central role in the session during my visits to El Cafetón, playing pandereta to accompany her singing of sones, such as the Son D'Arriba (see Chapter 3 for information on repertory). Musicians sat in a circular formation around tables.

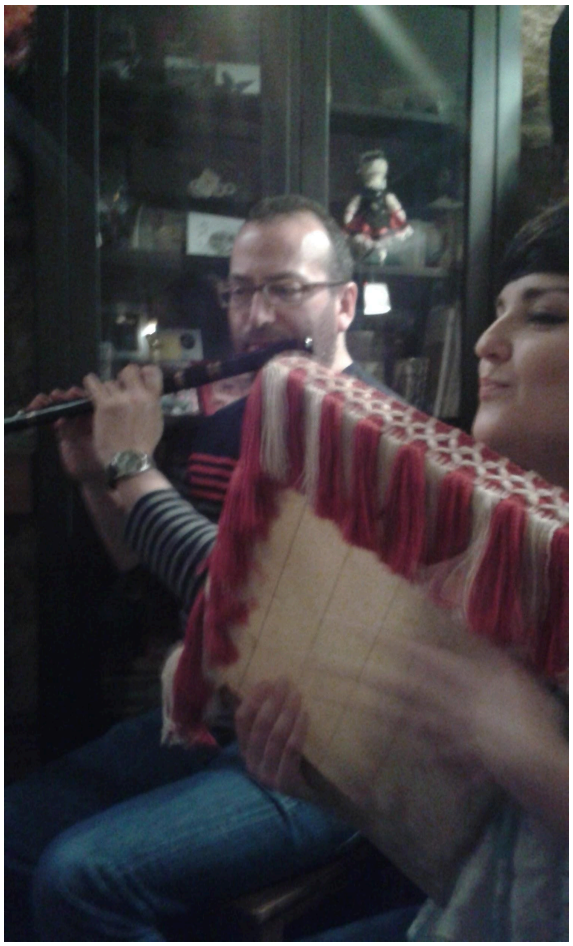


Figure 2. Leti Baselgas playing Cuadrado, Luis González Alonso, on Flute, Bar Cafetón, Avilés. 2016

Like Cá Beleño, the repertory was a mixture of Asturian, Irish and some Scottish and Breton sets of instrumental tunes. However, the significant difference in this session was the

presence of Leti Baselgas, whose singing of sones and playing the pandereta changed the session sound in comparison to Cá Beleño. This would not have happened previously in sessions such as the Cá Beleño ‘jam session’. Dancing was not a feature of sessions at El Cafetón, probably because of space limitations as much as culturally specific norms related to the session culture.

In the El Cafetón Session, the flute tends to take a secondary role in creating the place of the session. This also depends on the particular flute player and how many of the flute players attend. The session here is led by fiddler Ðolfu R. Fernández . He plays a mixture of repertory from the Celtic countries, and like Muñalén, is respected for his professional music performances and his involvement in the initiative explore and document the violin tradition in Asturian folk and traditional music, Xornaes del Vigulín Tradicional n'Asturies. Flute performances within the session also depend on the flute player and the context. When Luis González Alonso was backing Leti in a sones (see photograph in Figure 2), he played gently but with skill in the background. As with the session in Oviedo, the place constructed by the music depends on who is playing it, how they are playing and who with. In the photograph (Figure 2) Leti is singing a sones, Son D’Arriba, and accompanying herself on the cuadrado (see Chapter 3 on Instruments). González Alonso plays along on an E♭ pitched flute. By joining Leti’s performance, with this particular repertory, her instrument, sung words in Asturian and playing that pitch of flute he contributed to creating an Asturian habitus or place more associated with traditional playing than with the Celtic and folk revival paradigm (see Chapter 3 on Repertory). When the flute players play sets of tunes it shifts to the Celtic tune arrangement paradigm.

Flags of the Celtic nations were displayed in the old bar but in the new venue, this may be interpreted as representing a shift in aesthetics away from a Celtic aesthetic to a more contemporary Asturian aesthetic.

2.7.3 L'Esperteyu Session

L'Esperteyu (The Bat in Asturian) Chigre Folk was opened in 1996 and located next to Cá Beleño in Oviedo. L'Esperteyu is a location for concerts and sessions as well as leisure drinking. It focused on beer culture rather than cider. The sign outside the pub advertises Kilkenny Irish beer and Guinness. It moved to new premises close by in 2021. L'Esperteyu sessions started in 2017 in their current format. When Cá Beleño closed, its session leaders were hired by L'Esperteyu. The current session leaders began playing in L'Esperteyu for free but subsequently were brought in as paid musicians by Cá Beleño. In the old bar, walls were decorated with antique bric-a-brac and plaques on the wall displaying slogans using Celtic imagery and the Irish language. Next to the plaques was a map of the Celtic countries, including Asturias and Galicia. The pub promoted the music session as the main attraction of the night. Some customers were there to listen and were connected to the musicians through friendship groups and cultural activities groups, linguistically and culturally as identifying with similar or interconnected constructs of Asturianidad. The last time I went to L'Esperteyu in July 2024 customers sitting at the bar included Diego Camiña, a music teacher and percussionist with La Banda Latira, who plays what would be constructed as traditional Asturian music. He is also the Asturian judge at the Loic Raison band competition in the Lorient Interceltic Festival, which also places him in part in the Asturian Celtic construct.

With Diego on the night was Mai R Cast, a dancer with the traditional music and dance group Xeitu. Both speak Asturian and are associated with more traditional music and dance forms.

The sessions started around 9 p.m. and lasted until the musicians decided to go home or the licensee decided to close, this could be 3 or 4 a.m. Musicians played in the customary session circle or oval shape around tables to the right of the entrance to the pub facing the bar on the left. The session leaders had their backs facing the wall. Alberto Ablanedo, Muñalén, Marquéz and Vasquéz lead the session. Musicians who played in the other sessions described also attended this session. In this session, there were two women flute players who I did not know and David Fernández who plays at the El Cafetón session. This was an open session and people were welcome to join in subject to adherence to the accepted session etiquette.

The repertory played on the nights I attended was, as with Cá Beleño and El Cafetón, a mixture of Asturian, Irish, Breton, and Scottish folk music instrumental dance pieces. The session leader Alberto noticed me keeping a tally of the types of tunes and he said there was no pattern; “we play what we want”, although one of the women flute players suggested they were playing more Irish repertory because I was there. A notable phenomenon at this session was Asturian folk dancers dancing on the edge of the session to the mixed repertory. There was sufficient space between the session and the bar for dancers to dance. The dancers were a mixture of men and women all in their early twenties. They danced saltones and muñeiras. As I will detail in Chapters 3 and 5 there were some strong feelings expressed about constructs of authenticity connected to how dance music should be performed to enable it to be suitable for dancing. However, at the session, dancers danced to a mixture of Asturian and Irish tunes and, as long the time signature was consistent (e.g. 6/8 for a muñeira and jig), the dancers

danced without any apparent problems with the nuances of the performances identified by more purist activists such as Ambás (see Chapter 5 for Ambás' aesthetic perspective on purity). L'Esperteyu has a similar session aesthetic to Ca Beleño.

2.7.4 Session Analysis.

In this analysis I consider how place is constructed in relation to the complexities of Asturianidad and Celtismu and show that the session and the habitus and sensorial scapes are an example of rooted cosmopolitanism, I draw on Turino's application and conceptualisations of habitus to assist in understanding how the session in this context fits in with the construction of Asturianess and what an examination of this sessions reveals about identity construction and the dialectic between music and identity. I use Ferraouillo's (2019) application of "senorial scapes" to add structure to the conceptualisation of the session and its role in constructing habitus. I analyse how sessions exist in a continuum through time, as series of events, connected with other sessions in Asturias and through cosmopolitan flows to other spaces, places and constructs of identity connected to folk and traditional music

For most of the session sets, musicians nominally play the same tunes simultaneously with each other, although there are opportunities for solos to demonstrate virtuosity. However, on further analysis, each individual may play their version. The individual version is a combination of i) individual variations; ii) improvisations; iii) ornamentations iv) repertory and v) aspects of performance shaped by the affordances of the instrument (see Chapter 3 and 4). This dynamic between individual and group performance is called heterophony (see Ferraiulolo, 2019:2). The quirks that create heterophony are shaped by rules

and conventions that inform the etiquette of the session (Ferraiuolo 2019:12). The issue of the anacrucis combined with Fairbairn's (1994) observations on end of tune parts (variations, playing over the bar) in the Asturian context has the extra dimension of the discourse around the anacrusis, authenticity and ethnicity of the music being played.

The session is participatory and performative but not for dancing. There is a lot of discourse about what dancers want from musicians and how musicians should play and how the changes to Asturian music influenced by the Celtic aesthetic but the dancing in L'Esperteyu demonstrates notions of authenticity and ethnicity of aesthetics are social constructs.

The sessions are examples of rooted cosmopolitan to differing extents and in different ways**.** I concur that cosmopolitanism better explains the session, as it is not global. The session in this form did not originate in Asturias and originated in an urban diasporic space in post World War 2 London (Hall, R. 2016). The session took the rural music making of the home (in the flute context) into the public sphere for leisure and pleasure rather than as a function to help with work this is analogous to one construct of the repurposing of the transverse wooden flute from instrument of the house or solo leisure instrument of the vaquero to that of the urban Asturian session and Celtic and folk revival concert band construct. The Asturian session disrupts the connections of music with religion, state and village life and celebrations of seasons of the year. It is anti hegemonic to the use of folk music by Franco and Sección Femenina to promote unified Spanish catholicism and it disrupts the social and cultural constructs connected to drink, serving beer more so than cider and changed bar culture for a minority It represented the physical manifestation of the socio-cultural, economic and psychological construction of Celticity and is the physical manifestation of the celtic modern

habitus. It was further anti-hegemonic as it was performing dance music and ‘foreign’ Celtic repertory in a purpose other than for dancing too. Making instrumental music for the pleasure of the musicians performing or those listening disconnects it from dance and song, although music is made in Chigres (the traditional Cider bars) but in different formats in both rural and urban contexts. (I observed this culture when following one of the Bandinas around in Calle de Gascona, the Oviedo street famous for cider chigres). The session is cosmopolitan in replicating gender division of labour in other Celtic cosmopolitan habitus. These are not immune from sexism and gendering of roles, as argued and experienced by Leti Baselgas.

I observed that in the context of the space of the session, objects that may be conceptualised as adding rootedness, Asturianess and subjective elements of discourse constructed in the mind of the “actors”. Rootedness explains that the conceptualisation of evolution of the session and objective changes (repertory, pandereta, singing and dancing in some cases) demonstrates rootedness. Rootedness can be evidenced from the start of sessions by the use of Asturian repertory and the name “jam session” and not taking place in an Irish or Scottish bar. The rootedness of these various forms shows local agency but it is not glocal because it is not global in the first place. It is rooted as locals are adapting to suit their evolving constructions of Asturianess.

The sessions are led by men as instrumentalists. A female musician pointed out that this was typical gender division of labour in Asturias. Men play instruments and dance, women play pandereta and dance and pandereta was not welcomed in Asturian sessions because it was not part of the Celtic aesthetic.

2.7.5 Regulatory dynamics of a Session

All the sessions functioned through sets of behaviours and commonly understood but unwritten rules (as observed by O'Shea 2007; Williams 2020). The boundaries of these rules are both individual and group-oriented and shaped and led by session leaders. The session reflects the musical interest of their leaders and in part a projection of evolution of their identity. Ultimately what is played on a regular basis reflects what the owner of the bar wants performed in their bar for personal, political, cultural and economic reasons. The session leader managed the balance between participation, quality and virtuosity. The main ethos of these sessions was participation. However, virtuosity was valued as something for musicians to aspire to and learn from, as well as something the musicians and customers would enjoy. Virtuosity may be more valued than the heterophony created by differing levels of technical ability and the melodic variations that are an integral part of folk music performance. Skill requirements for leading a session include a large memorised repertory of both individual and sets of dance tunes and the ability to improvise and learn by ear at speed to pick up tunes played by other musicians. The session leader has an important role in mediating repertory. They need to be able to think of repertory mid-set. Part of the skill of choosing a tune is choosing one that has a contrasting key change. Leading up to the transition between tunes the leader would shout 'hup' (in the Asturian and Irish session context) and the key or mode to the guitar or bouzouki backer. Hup is not universal in folk or trad sessions. In English sessions, "this time" is used for "Hup" and "Out" to indicate the set is finishing. If a guest musician plays a short set the paid musician may want to keep the set going and need to understand what type of tune will suit to continue the set (key, tune type e.g. reel or jig, jota

or muñeira). The consideration of key change, moving up a key or changing from major to minor to change the set mood, is an important aesthetical consideration for other musicians and listeners. If they have the requisite knowledge, the melody player informs the backers what key or mode the tunes are in. The session leaders need to consider what is permitted to be played in the particular session context and how far the boundaries of folk, traditional and Celtic music stretch. The session leader provides continuity from one week to another which contributes to the development of the character of the session, and aids the learning process by weekly repetition of the musical canon. As the session leaders move from one session to the other and it is a small circle of musicians, these leaders have a role in shaping what is sustained, introduced and dropped from the musical canon.

2.7.6 Learning in the session

The ability to see other musicians, for those able to, is important for taking social cues that indicate whether other musicians are enjoying the playing. Part of the session experience is learning. Types of learning in sessions include listening, watching, imitating, learning and discussing new tunes by ear or different versions of tunes already known to the participant. The repertory played in a session is played from memory, known as playing 'by ear'. The use of sheet music is generally not socially acceptable in this context as part of the constructs of authenticity essentialising traditional music as an aural tradition. Part of the learning process is the repetition of the tunes, as well as within a set, very often, the set is repeated each time the session happens. This repetition of tunes assists in learning and internalising the tunes (Cawley 2008, 26). There is an opportunity to improvise and take risks

within the structure of the tune. In this context, being in sight of other musicians is also useful for working out what another person is playing by watching their fingering technique or engagement of mechanical keys. Where they place their fingers can indicate the keys or modes of the tune and any complicated variations or ornamentation that might not be clear in the heterophony of the session. Visual clues may also indicate if someone is about to change to a different tune if the tune is being repeated or if the set is being ended. If possible session participants will avoid having their back to another player. Hearing other musicians is essential to adhere to the speed set by the session leaders or the person leading the particular set of tunes (for discussion of speed see Chapter 3).

2.7.7 The Boundary between Musicians and Audience in Asturian sessions

The boundaries of sessions between musicians and other customers are fluid. When the music is not being played there is banter between the musicians but also between the musicians and other people present. At these moments the boundaries are shaped by friendship groups beyond the musicians through language, and connections through activities in the case of Asturian musicians, playing in bands, playing for dances or attending language rights marches. The session is more than the musical performance.

2.7.8 Analysis: The construction of the place of Asturias through the lens of pub sessions

Spaces and places that allow Asturian musicians and listeners the possibility of exercising their agency to participate in Celtic and folk revival music are important to constructing ‘place’ and identity through music. In bars and pubs, people may join in music

sessions and mediate their level of contribution to music-making and, or, simply be present in a space and place where others are playing. This specific type of space is significant for the construction of ‘place’ because it allows for greater permeability of boundaries between listener and musician as opposed to the more defined audience-performer boundary of a seated concert setting for example.The space or place is a distillation of the construction of Asturias as ‘place’ and identity constructions of those creating, managing, consuming and performing in this context. A session is an example of how ‘place’ is constructed through music and influenced by the space within which it is performed. The session reflects much of the musical aesthetics of folk revival bands. Conversely, the physical space shapes the music and how it is performed or played. The bar space, in Cá Beleño context, is a product of a construct of Celticity.

2.7.9 Is it a community of musicians?

There is a tension between the egalitarian ethos of folk music (national and class based that forms a cohesive force) and that of hierarchies. Egalitarian, in the Asturian context, can mean transnational and rooted cosmopolitan. It is national or regional in the Asturian context (depending on the person's identity construct) but also transnational as the concept of Celticness of the session, a major influence in the music of the founders of that scene. So it is national and transnational at the same time. It is a cosmopolitan construct, something that came from the needs of the city. As Reg Hall (2016) describes, Irish migrants living in rented accommodation needed a place to recreate home, either that of the céilí or rambling house experience or simply the sound of home.

2.8 Festivals and Concerts.

At festivals and concerts, music is performed in a more presentational form with a greater distinction between audience and performer and an onus on skill and virtuosity (Turino, 2018). The flute when performed contributes to place by both the content of the performance and the perception of the audience. Festivals and fiestas and open air public concerts as a whole in Asturias are wide ranging and beyond the scope of this work. I focus here on three examples of festivals I use as a lens to consider the relationship between Asturian Celtic and folk revival music and Asturian identity and the complexities of Spanishness and Celticness in the discoursal mix. I tended to focus on where transverse wooden flutes were being performed by Asturian folk musicians to focus the data set. There were some culturally significant events, such as Noche Celta that I was unable to experience but I refer to them through secondary sources.

2.8.1 Festival Intercélticu d'Avilés y Comarca

Figure 3. XXII Festival Interceltic d'Avilés y Comarca advert featuring the festival tartan.

The Festival Intercélticu d'Avilés y Comarca is held over nine days at the end of every July in Avilés. Inspired by the Festival Interceltique de Lorient (see below), it was founded in 1997 by the Esbardu School of Folk Music and Dance. The festival promotes folk and traditional music, song and dance, wrestling and food from Asturias and other Celtic countries. The name of the festival is written in Celtic-style font in Asturian, the Asturian 'U' replaces the 'O' of Castilian Interceltico. Its publicity material talks of its " deep rooted festive tradition" in Avilés and the festival logo and marketing material uses the festival's own tartan, drawing on the Scottish culture of patterned cloth indicating surnames or clan. Pipe bands and folk dancing schools are invited from Asturias, Galicia, Ireland and Scotland and Celtic diasporic communities. In the 2016 edition of the festival, I watched the Auckland Scottish pipe band perform a medley of tunes including "Nkosi Sikelel' iAfrika", the South African National Anthem, demonstrating the malleability of what is included in Celtic music

culture and who can be part of the Celtic world. The music formats included concerts of Celtic and folk revival format of bands, Nueches en Danza (see Chapter 5: Tuenda concert), marching pipe bands and music workshops. The concerts are partly in the open air and in marquees. The seating for Celtic and folk revival music concerts is set out in rows with space at the front to dance. For Nueche en danza style events, and what they describe as a 'Ceylidh', the seats are arranged around the sides of the space to provide room for the dancing. The stage provided a physical boundary between the musicians and the audience. However, when people dance they connect with the musician to create a habitus. The festival Asturianises Celticity by using the Asturian language in its name and literature and placing Asturias in the middle of the Celtic world. It encompasses the plasticity of Celticness to include activities of and those interested in the culture of the Celtic diaspora and a good example here is the Auckland Scottish Pipe Band playing the South African national anthem as part of their performance. In Chapter 5 I use the performance of Tuenda at this festival as a case study to examine the complexities of musical Asturianidad in the twenty-first century.

2.8.2 Flutes and constructing place at Festival Intercélticu d'Avilés y Comarca

In the festival lineup, bands with flute players created different constructs of place and space. Llan de Cubel (see Chapter 3) created the place of Asturias connected to the urban Asturian Celtic and folk revival music. The band plays and the audience listens. The flute players' presence (Borja Baragaño) is part of the soundscape of the Celtic and Folk music revival, placed between the violin and the gaita. Although the repertory originates, in part, in rurality, the performance represents the urban Celtic and folk music revival scene. The

transverse wooden flute performance of Muñalén, as part of the Tuenda concert, with its aesthetics moving towards the new rural aesthetic (see Chapter 5) constructs Asturias as a rural place.

2.8.3 Festival Interceltique de Lorient

The Festival Interceltique de Lorient (FIL) was founded in 1971 and is held every August over ten days in Lorient, Brittany in northern France. Organised by the Association Festival Interceltique de Lorient (AFIL) it recognises the following places as country delegations: Scotland, Ireland, Wales, Cornwall, Isle of Man, Galicia, Asturias, Brittany, United States, Acadia in Canada and Australia. Each year has a different theme. In 2022 it was the 'Year of Asturias' and in 2023 it was the 'Year of Youth'. The activities are spread across multiple sites and incorporate seated and standing concerts of varying sizes Spaces are designated specifically for folk dance, the most popular being for Breton dance. Most of the Celtic nations have representative stands and performance spaces. Asturias had a pavilion for many years but due to economic difficulties, this has been reduced to a small stand selling cider. In 2022, The Year of Asturies, the Asturian Government provided a pavilion again. The Grand Parade of Celtic nations is a major event with the flags of the 'nation's' leading costumed folk dancers and musicians through the town attracting crowds of spectators estimated at 90,000. In the year of Asturies, the Asturian delegation led the parade, led at the front by a flag bearer holding the Asturian flag, the Spanish flag is not displayed as Spain as a whole is not part of the construct of what it is to be a Celtic 'nation'. The local football stadium hosts five nights of 'Nuit de Magique' spectaculars in front of between 10,000 and

15,000 spectators per night. Musicians, singers and dancers perform elements of their folk traditions through the medium of a narrative which changes yearly to match the overall theme of that year. The Nuit de Magique ends on the last night with a large fireworks display. Competitions are an important signifier of national pride amongst participants. The Breton bagad (bagpipe) band championships are held as part of the festival as are the Loic Raison folk band competition and MacCrimmon solo bagpipe competitions. The concept of Celtic is further stretched to include wrestling, commerce and academic seminars, food and extensive open air markets selling 'Celtic' products. The festival is televised on French Television.

The Lorient Interceltic Festival is interesting because it places Asturias as a nation amongst the Celtic nations. This is a contested inclusion as Celtic organisations such as the Pan-Celtic movement and the Celtic League, do not recognise or accept Asturias as a Celtic country. As with The Intercelticu in Avilés, Asturian critics of the Celtic construct perform at the festival.

At FIL, the boundary between performer and audience is reshaped many times by the mixture of activities, folk concerts, sessions, parade of nations and stadium spectaculars. It is interesting to note that the level of interest in the performance of Asturian bands, for example, the low turnouts for the large-scale Asturian concerts in the Espace Marine, reflects the position of Asturias in the power dynamics of the Celtic world.

Three different performances at the festival by Asturian flute players reflected different ways of constructing the place and space of Asturias. Dani Álvarez played in both the informal sessions and at the Festival and the Nuit de Magique. At the sessions he played a

mixture of repertory from Ireland, Scotland and some from Asturias. The session in this context is a Celtic place, it is the purpose of the festival. His presence reinforces the ethos of this festival, which includes Asturias as a Celtic nation. Asturias the place is constructed as Celtic. During the Nuit de Magique at the Lorient Football stadium, Álvarez performs in a traditional Asturian costume along with an Asturian gaita band. On the large screen behind images of the Asturian flag and rural Asturias are played, reinforcing the discourse of Asturias as Celtic, the rurality suggesting authenticity. His presence, his costume and the imagery construct the flute as traditional, Asturian and Celtic. He plays a newly composed piece, utilising Irish ornamentation, but there is no incongruence because this performance is Celtic and the Irish ornamentation fits into that Celtic discourse. The final flute performance is by Baragaño with Llan de Cubel in the main arena stage. In the arena, the band plays and the audience sit and listen. The place constructed by the performance depends on the habitus constructed in the mind of the audience and the musicians. Like Álvarez, in the stadium, Baragaño plays mostly Asturian repertory using ornamentation largely drawn from Irish traditional music and some innovations by notable flute virtuosi (see Chapter 4 for influences of style). As the main Asturian headline act in the year of the Asturians, this concert constructs Asturias as a country and the format of the band, and the performance of the flute within this, places the performance in an Asturian Celtic space. Stylistic familiarities to those in the audience not familiar with the intricacies of Asturian music may be constructed into a discourse that rationalises the similarities as the cultural connectedness of Celts.

2.8.4 XVI Nueche en Folk de Fitoria

The XVI Nueche en Folk de Fitoria (2016) was run by the Grupu Baile Tradicional Fitoria, The Traditional Dance Group of Asturias. It began in 2000 and took place every July for one night until 2016 in Fitoria, a small village 2 miles from the centre of Oviedo. I visited the event in 2016. The music performances started at 10 p.m. The headline act, gaita rock band Dixebra, came on stage at 3 a.m. The main performance space was a large outdoor stage in a field without seating. A marquee provided space to eat the food being barbequed. The bar served mainly uncarbonated Asturian Cider which required pouring from a height into a glass (coulín) held just below the waist. The music programme reflected a cross-section of sub genres of Asturian folk and traditional music. The evening started with an Asturian Celtic and folk revival band, Alienda (featuring a transverse wooden flute player). They were followed by Salón Bombé, replicating the style repertory of Asturian Bandina bands from the 1930s and 1940s (see Chapter 3). The headline act was an Asturian left-wing rock band Dixebra, featuring Asturian gaita player and ethnomusicologist Llorián García Flórez, and vocalist Xune Elipe, who sings in Asturian about politics and Asturian language rights.

Like the Intercelticu in Avilés, the festival is organised by a folclorica group. Unlike the Avilés group, the Fitoria group use the term ‘folk’ as a descriptor rather than Celtic music to situate the music, song and dance. By using the term ‘folk’ rather than Celtic, it suggests Asturian rather than northern and Celtic. Notably, the drinking culture focuses around the pouring and sharing of cider rather than beer, this further Asturianises the event. The billing of the types of bands reflected the interest in or the levels of esteem such types of bands are

held in this particular context (i.e. not Celtic). These elements situate Asturian 'folk' music in the wider context of Asturian, and arguably Hispanic culture, the space is Asturianised by the Asturian flags on stage and in the audience.

The physical boundary between the audience and the performer was clear in the open arena. The stage was approximately 10 metres high. However, the sound and the habitus overcame this, evidenced by the dancers dancing formal Asturian dance to the music, as opposed to jumping around in informal dance. The boundary was redrawn in the covered marquee where musicians and dancers were joined in one space.

The one flute player at the event, in the band Alienda, was placed in the Celtic and folk revival construct (see Chapter 3 for descriptions of performance aesthetics), playing along with gaita and violin (see Chapter 3 for instruments). The group were lower down on the billing, played early on and there was little attention given. The Nueches en Danza group of young dancers did not dance until later on in the evening.

2.8.4. Festival Arcu Atlanticu Gijón

The Festival Arcu Atlanticu (Atlantic Arc) is held over five days in Gijón. It is organised by The Fundación Municipal de Cultura, Educación y Universidad Popular de Gijón/Xixón, an autonomous organisation that sits under the control of the City Council of Gijón/Xixón. It was founded in 2012 and aims to celebrate the cultural connections between regions of the Atlantic Arc. The festival encompasses musical performances, theatre, art exhibitions, workshops and gastronomic activities. The Festival took a break for a few years and returned in 2024. When I visited in 2016, the headline act was Basque Trikitixa player,

Kepa Junkera. In 2024 the headline act was Galician band Tanxuguieras, an all-women band singing sones and playing pandereta. The Asturian Celtic and folk music revival groups are represented by Deira, a three-piece folk revival style trio playing high-energy Asturian instrumental repertory on fiddle, flute and guitar. Nuberu were part of the nuevu canciu (new song) protest song movement in Asturias in the early 1970s. Guieldu are folk musicians in their early 20s who clearly define themselves as Celtic, pushing against the post-Celtic current, drawing inspiration from Celtic groups from the 1970s and 1980s. La Garrapiella is a Bandina street band, drawing from the style and traditional music of early twentieth-century Asturias. The Arcu-Atlanticu contextualises Celtic and folk revival music and traditional music in both contemporary Asturian culture, as well as reframing Asturian identity as 'Atlantic' European more so than a Celtic construct. Atlantic Europe is an idea that has evolved over the last thirty years as a mechanism to promote economic and political collaboration (Espiñeira-Guirao, 2014).

2.8.5 Baselgas Fiesta. Rurality and the one man band

Baselgas is a small village in the west of Asturias. The road to Baselgas stops at Baselgas. It is remote. When I visited the annual village fiesta with musicians Leti Baselgas and Rubén Bada in August 2018 it had one permanent resident. One house is now an upmarket boutique hotel and other houses have been restored and kept as weekend and holiday houses. Since then Baselgas and Bada have moved there with their child. Leti's father left Baselgas in the early 1970s to work in Avilés. We were invited, by Leti, to the annual fiesta at Baselgas held every year in an attempt to keep the sense of community alive. The

fiesta is held under a small tarpaulin-covered structure of scaffolding with a bar down one side of the space. Chairs and tables were placed on the grass of the field. Horses belonging to visitors were tied to a pole. A solo singer accompanied himself playing an elaborate set of keyboards and reading the song lyrics from a tablet screen. The music played was copla (a popular music genre based on four verse songs, that lost popularity in the 1970s) and cumbia (a Latin American musical genre) . Leti told me this style of music was popular with her parents and their peers (people in their sixties and seventies). Leti asked the keyboard player if he could play a jota (see chapter 3 for repertory), and he joked that he could only play those from León where he was from, but which he played for us and we danced. This fiesta represents a different presentation of folk music in a setting where there was little interest in Celtic and folk revival music. The fiesta in Baselgas is a small version of Fiesta in Asturias, it demonstrates part of the reality of musicking in rural Asturias, different from the Celtic and folk revival bands and the folklórica groups.

2.9 Flags and identity in the field in Asturias.

In the field I observed artifacts, physical objects that suggested social, cultural and political allegiances and regional and national identities to varying extents. A consideration of the purpose of these flags in these places reveals some of the complexities of Asturian identity in relation to the folk scene and wider Asturian society. In contexts of indigenous resistance or regional autonomy movements, such as Catalonia or Asturies, flags may be wielded not to affirm the aspiration for a nation-state, but to contest its cultural hegemony. Flags are statements of hegemonic affirmation and anti-hegemonic resistance. While flags are often

associated with state power and nationalist spectacle, their presence in musical contexts can also serve to subvert dominant narratives, assert minoritised identities, and reconfigure the politics of visibility. Their presence with the band, placed there by the concert or festival organisers or their presence in the audience state a connection with Asturias and Asturianess but what they mean to the owner is subject to speculation unless directly asked. I can assume that a person with a left wing version of the Asturian flag has left leaning and independentist leanings and supports oficialidá. I can deduce from the absence of the Spanish flag that Asturianess is the primary identity in this location at this moment.

In Asturias, the Asturian flag is displayed prominently and I also observed its display in the background, in a 'banal' sense (see Billig's work on banal nationalism: Billig, 1995). Billig (1995) noted that representations of the nation in everyday life contribute to a communal sense of belonging to the nation. In my fieldwork, covadonguismo was not a prominent or recurring theme in discussions about and expressions of Asturianidad, however, the flag and the legacy of Covadonga, the cross imprinted on it, were omnipresent and in a 'banal' sense was the legacy of the Covadongan myth, depending the individuals construction of their Asturianess. When discussing a possible concert in England for an Asturian folk group, an Asturian musician, who described himself as an Asturian 'cultural nationalist', Asturian and Spanish at the same time commented to me: "Our flags come with us"; demonstrating the importance of the flag (with the Covadongan cross) in his performance of Asturianes. Prominent examples of use of this version of the Asturian flag I observed included its use to lead Asturian delegation in the parade of nations at FIL (see section on Festivals) and behind bands when they perform on stage in Asturias. However, my research

experience amongst Asturian folk musicians informed me that people marching behind the flag in Lorient hold different ideas of what the flag means and what it is to be Asturian, where Españolidad, Asturianidad and Celtismu, in its various forms and language politics play a part. Notably, in most cases, the Spanish flag was not displayed at the same time and the Asturian flag as is the case on public buildings, along with the European flag. The left has a flag with a red star on it and this was less prominent in use. I observed it being displayed by the audience in concerts by left wing Asturian nationalist group Dixebra, who mix punk sounds with the performance on the Asturian gaita by Llorián Garciá Floréz as sonic marker of Asturianidad. I did realise that in the context of Celtic and folk revival music there were no displays of the Spanish flag, but I know that some of those involved would support Spain, wave a Spanish flag and wear a team jersey in the football context. I can suggest some reasons but ultimately point it as a piece of research to be followed up on. Just say that within a symbol there can be multiple meanings.

2.10 Making a living in the music scene.

Musicians in the scene tend to have a portfolio career within the music industry in Asturias or related music pedagogy. Guillermo Peréz for example, teaches gaita, performs with bands and as a solo performer, and some large transnational groups. He organises infrastructure (food) for festivals, such as FIL, Llar Fest (see Chapter 5). He also acts as a concert promoter and agent and has a number of other enterprises. He explained the status he has to have to get support from the state and operate the business as a self employed person, this is called autónimo.

2.11 Musical Pedagogy

Pedagogy in the scene is a 'disorganisation' from the perspective of Llorian García Flórez (2015). Formal state music education opportunities are limited to playing classical music on the gaita for grade exams in the extra curricular conservatories, García Flórez describes as 'dignification' (García Flórez. Interview with author 2015). The development of the pipe band culture in Asturias in the 1990s, known as the gaita boom, led to learning opportunities within these bands for gaita and percussion. Some of the bands have set up schools of traditional music. Learning opportunities came through individual teachers and some of the ethnographic research groups that were established in Asturias post-Franco. The earlier musicians of the revival in the 1980s and 1990s, in particular the flute, had to teach themselves by listening to recordings. Elipe (2020) points to two or three pipers as prominent in the revival of the gaita and gaita teaching. Hevia was a critical figure in gaita band culture.

Learning in sessions and by listening is an important feature of this flute culture. Much of the learning work goes on away from the physical space of the session, but is an extension of the life and culture of the session. Learning resources for learning Asturian repertory, particularly on the transverse wooden flute, have been limited. Repertory books have been produced based on tune type and related to instruments (gaita, flute) for example Xuacu Amieva's (1998) '*Método de Gaita Asturiana*'. One example of pedagogical resources focused on session culture i.e. instrumental dance music with a focus on performance in session is by German based Asturian gaita and transverse wooden flute player Borja Barragaños 'My 30 Favourite Asturian Tunes for Sessions, Volume 1.' (2021). A limited number of Asturian

dance tunes appear on transnational sites such as www.session.org. In the last year a recent pedagogical innovation related to sessions has been the “Slow Session” at L’Esperteyu and from this initiative a specific online tune portal www.asturtrad.eu, was developed by transverse wooden flute player David Fernández in 2025.

David Fernandez started his learning in Scotland, while living there, through the Glasgow Community Music Project and from private on-line lessons from me. On returning to Asturias he has connected with the Asturian folk scene and has learned Asturian repertory, language. He works in IT and developed the Asturtrad.eu site. It currently has different types of repertory, transcribed in staff notation and midi, based on how he plays them in a session and from recordings of folk revival groups and individuals.

2.12 Radio and Television: Asturian folk and Celtic music and its use in broadcast media.

The regional state broadcaster Radiotelevisión de Principáu d'Asturies (RTPA) (Radiotelevisión del Principado de Asturias in Castilian) has been broadcasting television since 2005. Autonomous regional broadcasters, televisiones autonómicas, were part of the post Franco transition era initiatives to decentralise television, from 1982, to the newly established autonomous communities in Spain (Cañedo Ramos, 2019). RTPA is owned by the Principality of Asturias and its directors are elected from the Asturian regional parliament, the General Assembly. Radio del Principáu d'Asturies (RPA) (Radio del Principado de Asturias in Castilian) is RTPA’s main radio station, began broadcasting at the end of 2007. The radio and television service provide a mix of news, sports, magazine style and music

specialist problems in a mixture of Castilian and Asturian. In 2025 RTPA has a budget of €31.7 million and its editorial independence is managed by committees from RTPA staff and elected representatives from the regional government (State Media Monitor, 2025). It is beyond the scope of this thesis to carry a full analysis of programming on RTPA.

RPA has a number of specialist programmes featuring the varieties of genres related to Asturian made music. Al Son, a weekly one hour radio programme produced and presented by the leader singer of Asturian language rock band Dixebra, Xune Elipe in the Asturian language broadcast in the Asturian language, plays what Elipe calls “music of the country (Asturias)” (Elipe, X. 2025). Other programmes such as Sentir Asturies, Especiales RPA and daytime magazine programmes play Asturian Celtic and folk revival music related repertory. A number of the jingles used during programmes feature music that could be categorised as contemporary Asturian Celtic and folk revival music.

RTPA television broadcasts a number of programmes, in Asturian and Castilian, that feature the various genres of Asturian music, some relevant to this thesis, ethnographic documentaries, concerts, magazine style shows, competitions and specials of the various sub genres of folk music. Most of the folk music, song and dance programming is broadcast in the Asturian language. A sample of these include Camín (Road or Journey) features the rural ethnographic work of Asturian nurse, folklorist and performer Ambás and his partner Ramsés Ilesies Fernández, an historian, folklorist and performer. The Camín is based on the work they have developed through el archivo de la tradición oral de Ambás (ATOAM, the archive of the oral tradition of Ambás). In the programmes they interview and perform with mainly older Asturian people, and in particular women, who share their songs, dances, and stories.

Interviews take place in people's domestic spaces and in the public spaces of the village. An earlier programme, developed by Ambás in the early 2000s, Camín de Cantares (The Journey of the Song), included the use of fieldwork sources developed in the same format as Camín, but with arrangement and performance by contemporary Asturian folk musicians (for discussion on repertory arrangements see Chapter 3, for the implications of components of this programme on the construction of musical Asturianidad and the relationship between rural music and urban Celtic and folk revival music performance see Chapter 5). Other programmes include Xuntanza, programmes featuring Tonada competitions, bagpiping and folclórica performances (see Chapter 3 repertory and genre). Alberto Ablanedo, member of the Asturian folk group Felpeyu and regular at Asturian pub sessions, hosts a weekly radio programme in Castilian, Sonidos del Arco Atlántico, broadcast online via 40 Classic Asturias and Ivoox. SER Asturias is a private station that does not have a specific Celtic and folk revival or traditional music programmes or remit to broadcast this type of music.

2.13 Conclusions on Asturias as a place and space.

This chapter highlights the complex interplay of Asturian, Spanish, and Celtic identities, and the legacy of Franco intersecting with gender and social class, urbanity and rurality and expressed to varying degrees depending on the individual. These dynamics evidence syncretic conceptualisations of Asturian identity among actors in the field. This is a similar process to Turino's original application of syncretism in the case of music making as part of nation building in Zimbabwe (Turino, 2000). In the field I observed that performance formats and the environments in which they occurred revealed a direct connection to cosmopolitan

Celtic and folk revival cultures emanating from centres of power such as Ireland, Scotland, and Brittany, situating Asturias within a wider Celtic music habitus where its presence is distinctly liminal. At the same time, the Asturian rootedness of these cosmopolitan forms was evident in the evolution of sessions to incorporate Asturian repertory. A site of tension lay in the introduction of pandereta and sones into session formats, which challenged established practices and provoked negotiation over the boundaries of revivalist aesthetics. Moreover, the presence of dancers performing at concerts and sessions designed primarily for listening further demonstrated Asturian rootedness, challenged Celtic and folk music revivalist aesthetics, and was an indication of a broader cultural shift towards rootedness.

3. Repertorial and Stylistic Aesthetics of Contemporary Asturian Folk and Celtic Music

In this chapter I describe the aesthetic components of the contemporary Asturian folk revival and Celtic music scene. I focus on repertory and instruments and their use in performance, and I consider the development of the types of genres and sub genre labels used within the scene. I describe how these contribute to the musical identity construction of the actors in the scene and drawing on the theoretical frameworks of Celticity identified in the literature review, Hagmann's (2021) concept of Celtification and I demonstrate how rooted Celtic cosmopolitanism provides an appropriate framework to explain the phenomenology of the scene and the construction of Asturian identities in relation to musical performance.

The analysis of musical repertory and musical instruments and their use in the contemporary Asturian folk scene provides a useful lens through which to examine the role of Celtic and folk revival music in Asturian identity construction in the contemporary Asturian folk and Celtic music scene and considering the use of repertory and instruments in this scene as an example of rooted cosmopolitanism. Repertory and instrumentation are two of the key common denominators for the broad church of Celtic and folk revival music, and the multiple sub-genres within and genres connected to it.

3.1 Folk Music Genres and Sub-Genres in Asturias

The labels of folk, folk music, música popular, Celtic music, tradicional (traditional) and interrelated genres in Asturias are used both very specifically by some and interchangeably

by others and used in diverse ways, indicating these labels have multiple meanings depending on the construction of this meaning by the individual, group of people or organisation (whether not-for-profit or commercial). From my observations in the field in Asturias, conceptualisation or understanding of the term ‘folk music’ in the wider population appears to be related to music formats and aesthetics that drew on the Asturian folk music, song and dance canon, shaped as such from the early twentieth century (see below) but influenced by folk revivals and Celtic music trends and identity constructions in other ‘Celtic countries’, in particular Ireland, Scotland and Brittany. These revivals in turn have their roots in nationalist revival movements in these ‘Celtic’ countries and the post World War 2 folk revival movement from the USA, characterised by its use of acoustic guitar to back a type of folk and protest singing.

3.2 The development of the use of Folk in the 19th and Early 20th Century in Asturias

The term ‘folk’ has been used in Asturias and Spain since the 19th Century, coterminously or slightly later than its use in other parts of Europe. ‘Folklore’ became ‘Folclore’ in Spain, using the ‘C’ instead of the ‘K’ (González Arias. Interview with author 2016). There was small amount of folclore collecting in Asturias prior to the Spanish civil war of 1936, including the notable collection of Asturian Eduardo Martínez Torner (1888-1955), exiled to London, England after the Spanish Civil War (Rodríguez Moreda 2024). Katz (1974), while examining Cancioneros (Spanish ballads), attempted a proscriptive definition of ‘folk’ in the wider Spanish context. He referred to folk music publications and their; “indiscriminate use

of the terms popular and folklórico, in such titles as cancionero popular, folklore músical, colección de cantos populares, etc" (Katz, 1974: 73). Katz further states that the term popular should indicate contemporary, new and temporary in use. Folclórica should be used to identify songs that have been a long-term, integral use in a group's culture (Katz, 1974: 73). Susana Asencio states that in contemporary Asturias, popular and tradicional are used interchangeably, meaning the same thing (Asencio, 2010).

After the Spanish Civil War the Sección Femenina (S.F.), the women's section of Franco's Falange party were tasked with shaping and using folclore to re-emphasise Franco's Spanish National Catholicism (Jordan 2020). The S.F. operated in Asturias. Their focus was on choral music and folcloric displays of dance in a highly stylised and regimented form. The organisation particularly suppressed forms of overt nationalism and regionalism other than that of Spanish nationalism (Jordan 2020). The consensus I experienced in the largely left leaning Celtic and folk revival scene was that the S.F. had a negative and damaging impact on folk music song dance in Asturias, although there was some consideration that without their collecting, particular examples of work would not have survived, for example the choral tradition in Cudillero (Llope, M. Interview with author 2015).

Coterminous to the S.F. era, traditional music, song and dance performance continued in rural village life, and escaped the balletic and choral stylisations of the S.F.. Ambás succinctly summarised it:

> "Traditional music in Galicia and Asturias, voice and tambourine, a bagpipe with

drum, or two bagpipes". (Ambás, Interview with author, 2016)

In the current Asturian contemporary Celtic and folk revival music scene, music played in rural areas by the rural working class before the civil war is constructed and described as 'tradicional' (traditional), Pepín de Munalén suggests that in his village of Munalén, the labels such as tradicional, folk or Celtic were not used, music was just described as music (Pepín de Munalén. Interview with author 2016). I consider the tension related to how musicians in the contemporary Asturian folk scene construct connections with this older music in relation to identity, authenticity and (un)broken traditions in more detail in Chapters 4 and 5.

During the late 1960s and early 1970s there was a small folk revival music scene developing in Asturias. In this era of desarrollismo (opening up) in Spain, Asturian musicians engaged with a more modern construct of folk music related to American folk revival music (González Arias. Interview with author 2016). Spanish singer Juaquín Díaz ,who popularised the format of Spanish romancero accompanied by the six string acoustic guitar was a significant influence at this point (González Arias. Interview with author 2016). The first use of the word 'folk'in the contemporary folk revival context was in the late 1960s and early 1970s. González Arias (2016) suggests it was used by the Asturian group Madreselva from 1968 or 1969. They released the first Asturan record release to feature the word 'Folk', Folk Asturiano" in 1970 (Elipe, 2020:127; González Arias Interview, 2016). Along with fellow Asturian folk group Neocantes and a small coterie of other groups, influenced by left and pacifist leaning catholic groups such as la Juventad Obrera Cristiana (The Young Christian Workers), produced what Neocantes described as Canción Folk y Testimonio (folk songs

telling the stories of everyday lives in Asturias) (Elipe X. 2020). The songs, sung in Castilian, used an American folk style of unornamented harmony singing, accompanied by guitars, as opposed to the highly ornate and melismatic style associated with traditional singing in Asturias (González Arias Interview, 2016) . Xune Elipe (2020) describes this scene or sub-genre as Folk Testimoniu. In the 1970s, protest for democracy in Asturias and Spain was mixed with folk music in the form of Nuevu Canciu Astur, the Asturian version of Nuevo Canción (New song). This protest song movement was spread across the Iberian peninsula and South America, echoing the protest song of the American folk revival of artists such as Bob Dylan, with largely unornamented songs backed by six string acoustic guitar (Giner Borrull 2018; González Arias 2016) . A leading exponent of this movement in Asturias was the band Nuberu. Nuberu featured songs of left-wing and working class struggle, using acoustic guitar, keyboards and boehm system flute. Vocalist Chus Pedro, sang in a highly ornamented and melismatic style associated with Asturian traditional singing, taught to him by his father (González Arias 2016). This was a different vocal aesthetic to the American tinged Folk Testimoniu. In the 1970s folk themes were being mixed with a pop music aesthetic, what Elipe (2020) calls Pop Llariegu (Llariegu means someone who likes to stay at home or is homely). The songs used traditional melodies and motifs and the lyrics were nostalgic for the life in the countryside and the sadness of the Asturian emigrant. González Arias (2016) argues that this form of folk was more popular and mainstream than the Nuevu Canciu Astur. Important Llariegu artists who had significant economic success, such as Vincente Díaz and La Pastorina, still have a musical presence in the soundscape of Asturias. During my fieldwork, Vincente Díaz t-shirts were being worn by the young people as a

statement of Asturian identity, but with a tinge of irony and La Pastorina was being sampled by left-field artists such as Fruela 757.

3.4 Folclorica and Ethnographic Groups

In the immediate post-Franco transition era, and the end of the S.F. in 1977 , some parallel approaches were taken to the performance of Asturian folk culture in the form of folclorica. These groups developed to perform traditional music, song and dance and carry out an ethnographic collection of material to perform. Some ethnographic groups, such as Andecha Folclor d'Uviéu were from the left-wing of politics and aimed to collect and perform Asturian folclore that existed before and aside of the manifestations of the S.F. The folk revival groups developing at this time used the music found by these ethnographic groups as a resource for their musical arrangements. Many of the musicians in folclórica groups also performed and some still perform in Celtic and folk revival music bands. Some folclórica groups were more conservative and continued on with a format not dissimilar to that of the S.F. groups. I observed discussions amongst folk musicians and dancers where they suggested that the dances of some groups were too balletic and were the legacy of S.F. This form of folclórica and ethnographic work became important in the development of a new rural current in Asturian folk and traditional music in the early 21st Century in rethinking what Asturian folk music should and could be (see Chapter 5). Folklórica groups drew on tropes of Celtismu and intercelticism, for example, participating in FIL, but for many, Celtismu was not the primary means through which they projected their Asturianness.

Instead, Celtic references were one strand within a broader negotiation of identity, in which Asturian repertory, language, and imagery remained central.

3.3 Celtismu and Celtic Music

In the late 1970s, as in other regions or countries with a perceived Celtic connection, the association of the word ‘Celtic’ began to be associated with Asturian musical performance aesthetics and became a significant component in processes of national and cultural identity construction. In the post-Franco period, engagement with Celtic music formed part of an anti-hegemonic Asturian identity project. Constructs of Celticity assisted in reconceptualising the dialectic between folk and traditional music and Asturian identity, as Lorián García Flórez (2022) has explored. It marked a move away from a pan-Hispanic aesthetic towards a northern European, Atlantic paradigm, conceived as a reaction against the Francoist ideology of “One Spain.” Informants frequently described how they understood the development of the folk revival and the emergence of Celtic music in Asturias from the 1960s onwards, and especially after 1975, as a response to the regime’s treatment of folk song and dance. More broadly, they connected this musical shift to the suppression of left-wing politics and of Asturian nationalist and regionalist sentiment under the dictatorship. Some were interested in the idea of an Asturian Celtic identity, while others enjoyed the music without attaching political significance to it. Celtic music also functioned as a useful catch-all marketing label for a type of music with fluid musical boundaries (Bohlman and Stokes 2003). The label also provided access to wider markets, enabling Asturian musicians to tour and to sell recorded

material beyond Asturias and Spain. The term Celtic music in Asturias became synonymous, and often interchangeable, with folk music.

Alberto Ablanedo and Llorían García Flórez (2015) also described to me how in Asturias the construct of Celtic music is also connected to a counter culture group of audience they describe as “Los Hippies”, these people live an alternative lifestyle in rural areas and are very separate to the urban Celtic and folk revival music scene (Ablanedo, A. 2015; García Flórez L. 2015). Ablanedo described how when Breton Celtic group Gwendal (one of the early Celtic music groups in the 1970s) played an open air concert in Oviedo, ‘Los Hippies’ appeared in the audience, Ablanedo had not seen any of these people at the concerts he attended or played (Ablanedo A. 2015). See Chapter 5 for more information on the relationship with rural areas.

One of the earliest bands in this scene in Asturias were Trasgu, founded in 1979. (González Arias, 2016). This era of the 1980s and 1990s produced iconic bands in Asturias that described themselves as folk revival music, folk music or Celtic music or used a mixture of the associated musical, cultural and political aesthetics as well as the economic systems that supported performance and sales of recorded music.

The choices of instrumentation for Celtic and folk music revival band lineups and the arrangements of the repertory were influenced to a great extent by folk revival music coming from outside of Asturias. The flute player from Llan de Cubel, Marcos Llope, described to me the influences on his peer group before and during the formation of Llan de Cubel. In his

opinion; “ there was no empathy” in Asturias , with the folk music happening in the rest of Spain. Llope points to the following key moments;

> “The Irish and Scottish revival came to us. First came the Scots. Through a music company called Guimbarda, from a music producer called Manuel Domínguez. And that man simply started to produce in Spain records of Tannahill Weavers , Na Filí, which was an Irish group, Alan Stivell. So, when they arrived in 1977 it was a shock in Asturias” (Llope, M., 2015).

Tannahill Weavers are still popular in Asturias and were cited by many musicians and audience members I spoke to as a significant influence on Asturian folk revival music. Their lineup and music aesthetics reflect that found in the complexity of Celtic and folk revival music in Asturias. Tannahill Weavers on their website describe themselves as a

> “Special brand of Celtic music, blending the beauty of traditional melodies with the power of modern rhythms” (Tannahill Weavers, 2024).

Their singer Roy Guillane cites Scottish left-wing guitar playing folk singer Matt McGinn, a contemporary of Bob Dylan, as his major influence and mentor. The flute player, Phil Smilie, was one of the first transverse wooden flute players to come and play folk concerts in Asturias during the 1980s folk revival and was cited by Llope as an influence. In an electronic message to the author on the 24 April 2021, Phil Smilie explained that he played Boehm system flute on the first Tannahill Weavers album and taught himself how to play the transverse wooden flute and apply it to Scottish traditional music and playing alongside highland pipes. He notes that there was no tradition of playing traditional and folk music on

the transverse wooden flute playing that he was aware of in Scotland at the time. Smilie was also self taught on the bodhrán and played this in the group. In contrast the band's highland piper Alan MacLeod had received formal piping tutoring and was former Juvenile World Champion. This variety of influences of folk revival and trained and informal self taught approach to traditional instrumental performance was reflected in the construction of folk and Celtic music in Asturias.

3.5 Repertory in The Contemporary Asturian Celtic and Folk Revival Music Scene.

In this section, fieldwork and secondary sources are drawn upon to describe the repertory used in the contemporary Celtic and folk revival music scene and interconnected genres. I identify issues and themes related to the use of repertory in this scene and how the related discourse contributes to Asturian identity construction. In Asturias, folk music and dances can be categorised in several ways and categorisation is subjective. Describing what is played in Asturias by Asturian Celtic and folk revival and traditional musicians and is identified by Asturians as Asturian gives a starting point. Folk and traditional music repertory in Asturias takes several forms**.** It can be divided into music (sung and unsung) that can be danced or moved to in a recognisable time signature and unmetered songs in the style of romanceros and cancioneros. Some cancioneros have time signatures and are sung dances (Katz, 1974).

3.5.1 Songs

Cancionero, in poetry form without musical notation, dates from the thirteenth century (Arias Caño 2010). The monophonic Cantigas de Santa María, written in Galician-Portuguese and predating modern Spain, are attributed to Alfonso X the Wise (1221-1284) and are described by Katz (1974) as possibly the earliest source for cancionero. The great cancionero of Spain were compiled during the unification of Spain from 1474 to 1516 and documented the poems and music of the Royal Chapels and Spanish Courts (Katz 1974). The most high-profile of these collections is the Cancionero Musical de Palacio, Madrid, with 485 musical items. (Katz 1974). Cancionero also includes collections of polyphonic arts songs dating from the fifteenth century onwards and those collected in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries during the development of folklore studies in Spain and Portugal (Katz 1974). Cancionero can include romancero and ballads (see Asencio, 2010 for an analysis of romancero with time signatures). The term Cancionero began to appear in songbooks in the nineteenth century and some Spanish scholars refer to songbooks with music as 'Cancionero musical' (Sage & Friedmann S. 2001).

Canción Asturiana (Asturian song) is a broad term that refers to any traditional song from Asturias. This term also describes the Asturian song forms of Tonada and Asturianada. The three terms are used interchangeably. Tonada is a traditional form of singing in Asturias. Braga locates related texts from as far back as 1795 (Braga, 2021). The literal translation of the word tonada is 'tune' and its performance is characterised by a slow, monophonic, highly melismatic singing style which became synonymous with the Asturian traditional singing style (González Arias 2016). A more traditional approach to Tonada performance is voice

accompanied by gaita (Minden et al. 2001). Lyrics for the songs, sung mainly in Asturian, describe a mixture of old themes of rurality and the mining industry. The Asturianada is a modernised version of the Tonada, developed in the early twentieth century by composers, such as Baldomero Fernández, who were influenced by Romantic nationalism and Regionalist sentiment in Asturias at the time. They are typically arranged with a guitar or piano accompaniment. It**s** longevity in the context of Asturias and Asturian identity construction gives it, and Tonada, a more central and rooted place in Asturias and Asturian identity than other genres connected to traditional and folk music.

3.5.2 Dance Repertory

There are several different ways to approach categorising dances. From a choreographic perspective, they can be divided into danza and baile (Cohen J. 2010). Both baile and danza translate to English as "The dances". Examples include the Corri Corri circle dance of Cabrales, Lluita de Bual, La danza Pelegrina and La Danza Prima. Baile refers to recreational dance, most of which contains sung words. To categorise from the perspective of song as the primary consideration, the Asturian folk dance repertory is also described as 'las canciones para el baile' 'the songs for dance' (Asencio S. 2010). To add to the complexity, Asencio's 2010 analysis of Torner's seminal collection, Cancionero Musical Lírica Popular Asturiana, uses the term 'sones' to describe a particular group of sung dances accompanied by tambourines, romances with time signatures and the Jota. She identified the Jota as more modern than the romancero and sones, and with a different function, for weddings and el

ramu (a religious parade and celebration connected to the fertility of the land) (Asencio, 2010).

In the field, Ramsés Ilesies and Rubén Bada proposed there are two types of dance: the older "sueltos, sin tocarse y agarráu" (loose, untouched and grabbed) (Rubén Bada, Ramsés Ilsesies, Interview with authors 2016). Loose dances are danced in group form, a line or solo (Bada 2016). The second type, agarráú, which can also be translated as held, are couple-dances originating in France, other parts of Spain (agarrado) and Spanish colonies in the late nineteenth century and early twentieth century and mark the dances as more recent than les bailes or lo suelto. These include pasodoble, vals, polka and rumba from Cuba. Folk music collector Ramsés Ilesies said that they had interviewed people who had never danced an agarráu (Ilesies. Interview with author 2016). Appendix A details a fuller list of repertory types I encountered in Asturias (see Appendix A. Repertory Types)

I will focus on three types of dance, la jota, la muñeira and el saltón as they are a central component of Asturian folk dance culture but their use in the arrangements of instrumental Asturian folk revival and Celtic music is a place of tension that reveals important aspects of the discourse of authenticity, tradition and Asturian identity in the contemporary Asturian folk scene. All three dances are 'lo suelto' danced loose and with partners facing each other. The jota (or xota in Asturian) is a traditional courtship dance found in, but not unique to, Asturias and is very much associated with the Aragon region of Spain. Variations of the jota can be found all over the Iberian peninsula and places colonised by Spain. In Asturias, the jota is called by other names including 'el paseo (the walk), 'mudances' ('changes'), 'lo suelto' (loose) and 'giraldilla' (turning) (see Appendix B for

types of repertory and variations in the name of the same dance). The jota is performed as sung or instrumental music for dance and as instrumental music (see figure 9 for a Jota transcription). The saltón dance, also known as xiringüelu, lo lixero, lo ligero or saltiquera, originates from central Asturias. Saltón comes from the Spanish 'Saltar', 'to jump'. The root of the name is variably connected to the exaggerated steps and with the musician (usually a gaiteru) improvising parts and borrowing parts (see the section on 'Parts' below; see figures 4, 5 and 6 for Saltón transcriptions)**.** La Muñeira is a dance largely found in Asturias and Galicia. The name derives from the Castilian 'La molinera', the miller. The dance was possibly developed for recreational purposes by women who spent their days milling wheat. It is also known as molinera, muiñiera, muliñiera and muiñere. The number of different spellings demonstrates the linguistic complexities spread across Asturias, Galicia and the border areas between the two places (see Chapter 2 on language). I will use the spelling 'Muñeira' unless specified in a transcription. Some Muñeira have sections of sung words (see figures 7 & 8 for Muñeira transcriptions). There are many versions of jota, saltón and muñeira within Asturias. They vary by location, the group and individual performance of dancers, the method of transcription or dissemination, affordances of the instrument it is performed on and the individual musician and band arrangements.

3.5.3 Dance metre

Different approaches are taken to metre in each type of dance, though themes common to all three remain. The jota can be transcribed in triple or compound duple metre. Published staff notation of instrumental versions of Asturian jotas by traditional musicians demonstrates

differing approaches to metre and its transcription. Xuacu Amieva (1998) and Diego and Pedro Pangua (2015) use 3/8; Caldo y os Rabizos (2019) employ 6/8 with the occasional bar of 3/8 to represent phrasing variation; others use 3/4 and 3/8. Ambás, demonstrating a jota to me, stated that a jota is in 3/8 (Ambás.Interview with author 2016). The mixed use of 3/8 and 6/8 suggests that some transcribers perceive the first beat of the bar to be accented, while in cases where 6/8 is used, emphasis may also fall on the fourth beat, albeit to a lesser extent.

Saltóns are variously notated in 2/4, 4/4, and occasionally 2/8. Baragaño uses 2/4 and 4/4 in his book of transcriptions (Baragaño 2023). Amieva (1998) employs 2/4 and 2/8, while the Panguas use 2/4 (Pangua Cuesta and Pangua Rivas 2014). Here, there is agreement on a strong first note, with some recognition of the fourth beat indicated by the use of 4/4.

The muñeira is generally conceptualised or described by musicians as being in 6/8, though other versions are transcribed in 2/4 (Amieva 1998). The main consensus is that the first beat of the bar must be emphasised.

3.5.4 The Anacrusis

One of the features of these types of dance music that creates a space of tension in the construction of authenticity and Asturianess is the inclusion, or exclusion of an anacrusis. An anacrusis is a note or series of notes that precede the first downbeat in a musical phrase (see Bar 1 on Figure 7). In the Asturian Celtic and folk revival music scene the anacrusis is constructed as a marker of authenticity by some Asturian folk musicians as it connects the music back with its Asturian dance origins, as music to dance to, and shifts it away from the Celtic and folk revival hegemony of instrumental music for listening to, shaped by Irish and

Scottish aesthetics (see Chapters 2 and 5). The function of the anacrusis is to create anticipation, warning the dancer to move to ensure the foot is placed on the ground for the first beat of the bar. Whether or not the dancers know this is called an anacrusis or what it looks like on a notated staff, they will know what the group of sounds means concerning the dance. However, a further complication to essentialising the anacrusis' presence is that some versions of the dances do not have anacruses (see Figures 5 and 6: Saltón de Urbíes). One reason could be that versions were composed for virtuosic and instrumental listening purposes rather than for dancing. The criticism that informs the construction of the importance of the anacrusis has several dimensions. Asturian musicians performing in a Celtic and folk revival aesthetic are criticised for not emphasising or completely missing out the anacruses. In the performance of folk and traditional music on the transverse wooden flute, the space for the anacrusis at the end of a measure would be where a breath is often taken (see Chapter 4 for flute performance). Pepín de Muñalén described to me how: "the anacruses are usually eaten" (Pepín de Muñalén. Interview with author 2016), he notes the players play too fast to give time for the anacruses to be articulated correctly or played at all. The other criticism I observed was that of outside musicians emphasising the first note, or the only note, of the anacrusis instead of the first note of the next bar. Borja Baragaño describes this issue with the anacrusis: "For example, Lúnasa play it bad, Flook play it bad, Mike McGoldrick plays it bad. When they play muñeiras they go the reverse" (Baragaño, B. Interview with author 2016). He explains that he believes the emphasis should be on the fourth beat in the bar, and Irish musicians emphasise the first beat in the bar.

In the case of the Muñeira, this problem is created by the perception of the muñeira through the lens of musicians used to the double jig structure in Irish and Scottish music which, like the Muñeira, has a 6/8 time signature. In the Irish and Scottish traditional music context, the emphasis is on the first and fourth quaver of the bar. However, to give the jig lift a bar might be phrased with emphasis on 1, 3, 4, and 6 or occasional variations of this to add texture to the performance. In encountering and listening to a Muñeira, hearing the 6/8 metre, two clusters of three quavers in the bar and not understanding the requirement for an anacrusis, the emphasis is placed on the first note of the anacrusis and thus shifts the phrasing of the piece to the right by three quavers. In listening to the Lúnasa version of Muñeira de Casu, the criticism from Baragaño and other musicians can be evidenced in the emphasis, sonically marked by the downbeat of the guitar, on the first beat of the anacrusis. This changes the phrasing of the piece. It is more difficult to ascertain whether individual melody instruments play an emphasised downbeat. My experience in sessions in Asturias reflected an inconsistent approach to the anacrusis. Watching body movements gave an indication of the individual musician's approach to the anacrusis and the first beat of the bar. A strong downward bowing movement was used on occasions. Some musicians did not appear sonically or physically to place emphasis on the down-beat or the anacrusis. In analysis of some recordings of Asturian bands, the downbeat appeared to be placed in the anacrusis . This is a space for future research.

There is a movement within the cultural dynamics of Celtic and folk revival music and Asturian identity, through the connection of the music to dance and rurality, moving away from Celticness and associated identities (I address this further in Chapter 5). The

anacrusis and the following emphasis on the first beat of the bar is constructed as being important but is not, in my experience, consistently applied. The importance of the anacrusis and related downbeat in the Asturian folk scene, is culturally constructed. It is applied in some cases, ignored in others and in some recordings a mixture of anacrusis and down and a downbeat on the anacrusis is used.

In the session, the place where the anacrucis is in the performance, is a place of tension in the session heterophony, a place where people, from different cultural loci, Celtic, Irish, Asturian, decide in different ways how to resolve the part of create musical tension by playing across the bar.

This thesis is focused on instrumental performance. The impact of the relationship between sung pieces and the instrumentalist is a piece of future research. However, Jota lyrics have an impact on instrumental versions. However, jota lyrics have an impact on instrumental versions. Jota lyrics are in strophic form, organised into quatrains but vary in that lines can consist of eight syllables or alternate between lines of seven and five syllables. The impact of the odd number of syllables on the length of the lines can be seen in the Jota in Figure 9. Muñeiras and Saltónes both have versions that include lyrics but whose shape results in an even phrase length. The exclusion of the lyrics in these dances in performances by some Folk revival and Celtic bands, is part of the critique by some Asturian folk and traditional music activists of the Celtic and folk revival hegemony in the Asturian folk music. The words made it less like the arrangements of jig and reels in Celtic, Irish and Scottish traditional music.

In these three dance types, and others, the length and number of musical parts of the piece vary from piece to piece and between different versions of the same piece. All three

types of dances contain at least two parts. Musician Borja Baragaño (2016) notes that some Muñeiras can have as many as ten different parts. A ‘part’, in the musical sense, may be different from a dance part which refers to a sequence of dance moves. The two are sometimes coterminous depending on context of use and development of the piece.Virtuosic versions of pieces, without the constructs of playing for dancers, have been composed by gaiteru for performance, for concerts, competitions and recordings resulting in variations of number of parts and part length.Their tradition of mudanzas, where gaiteru swap parts between different pieces and add extra newly composed parts, contribute to the variations. Ambás informed me that a particular part of a piece is sometimes named after a musician that wrote it or had become synonymous with its performance. From a musician’s perspective, variations in the number of pieces may be simply that, as it has been until the 1990s a largely aural tradition, people forget or mishear parts and the resulting versions become standard. The requirements of dancers can shape the number of parts. These requirements vary from village to village, there is no standardisation of dance lengths through an overarching cultural organisation (some of this was attempted by the Sección *Femiína*), although there is a general agreement of what dance figures are called and how many bars each require requires (see Appendix B). I asked gaiteru and ethnomusicologist Llorián García Floréz (2015) about if there was an overall musical or cultural organisation in Asturias, he told me no, he described it as a “disorganisation”.

In the Celtic and folk revival setting the number of parts of Saltón and Muñeira is sometimes shaped by the Celtic and folk revival hegemony of tune format, eight bars with two phrases of four bars template within a set of three tunes, unless it is set up as a stand

alone virtuosic piece. Equivalences between the saltón and reel and muñeira and jig are made as they share time signatures. The Jota less so because of its uneven phrase structure (see Figure 9, Jota) and its time signature. Muñeiras in 6/8 (see Figures 7 & 8) tend to have two phrases of four bars per part, sometimes four bars per part but if the latter is repeated then both fit the folk setting of the double jig that generally has two phrases of four bars per part. The **S**altón phrases (in 4/4) vary, as can be seen in Figure 4. In Figure 5**,** Saltón d'Urbíes, Part A has two phrases of four bars repeated. Parts B and C both have one phrase of four bars repeated. In Saltón de Uviéu Figure 6, the pattern is two phrases of four bars repeated, one phrase of four bars repeated in Part B and two phrases of four bars repeated in Part C. In the saltóne's repertory, further variations in part length can further vary to include six, ten and eleven bars. The Jota de Avelino, in Figure 9 , has part lengths of two nine bar phrases followed five bars in part B and two phrases of five and four bars in Part C. Other variations of part length of Jota in 6/8 includes; an A part of two phrases of four bars followed by a 5 bar Part B (Jota de Ramón O Chiculateriro: Caldos y os Rabizos) and a further variant of a jota with an A part of four bars and a B part of 8 Bars (Jota del Cego de Vinxoi: Caldos y os Rabizos). I discuss the incongruence of the jota in the Celtic and folk revival hegemony later in Chapter 5.

3.5.5 Modes and Keys

The keys and modes in which Asturian folk and traditional music repertory is performed is largely shaped by the gaita and its affordances. The pitch of the pipes are usually in B ♭ and occasionally in C and B (see the section on gaita above). Pepín de

Muñalén (2016) explained to me that he believes the one and a half octave range of the gaita has also shaped the form and range of Asturian folk melodies (see Chapter 4 on the reasons for using the third octave and harmonics in Asturian transverse wooden flute playing). The gaita is not used to such a great extent in sessions. (In the Asturian folk session context, tunes are often transposed into keys and modes that are more amenable to flute players playing a D flute (see Chapter 4) and musicians used to playing Scottish and Irish traditional music which tends to be focused around D and G major and A mixolydian. For example *Saltón d'Urbíes* (Figure 4) is played in B ♭ Minor by Llan de Cubel (see section on folk bands) and in the sessions in Asturias, transposed into E Minor (see Figure 5) and E minor (preferred by those playing D flutes). The E minor version was also used by Borja Baragaño in his transcription of this tune in his book "30 Favourite Asturian Session Tunes", suggesting it is the mode more usually played in sessions in Asturias (Baragaño 2022) .

3.5.6 Structural Analysis

A common feature of Asturian folk music, but not unique to it, is the repetition and sequencing of motifs. The function of this originates in the aural transmission of the music. Repetition of simple motifs and then phrases of these motifs are easy to remember and improvise.

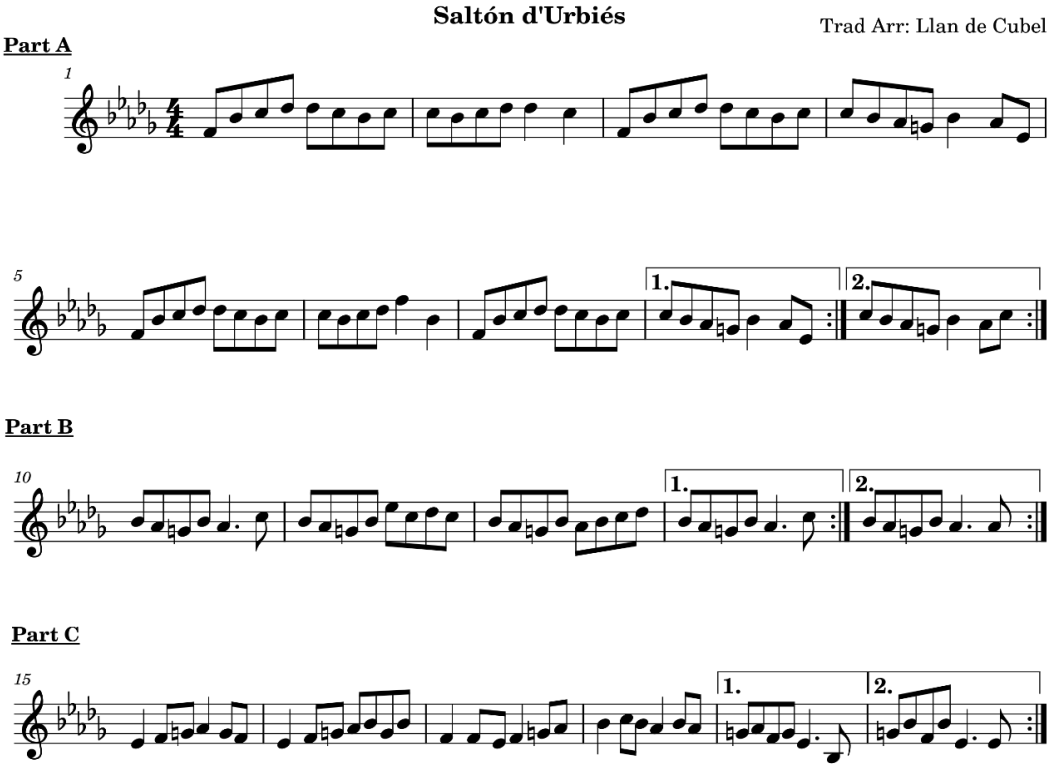


Figure 4. Saltón d'Urbíes, Llan de Cubel version.

This saltón is from Urbiés in the county of Mieres in central Asturias. Llan de Cubel sourced this from the archives of the L'Anciu ethnographic group. In this piece in (Figure 4) a motif of two four-quavers units in Bar 1 of the A part is repeated every other bar of this part. The second four quaver is sequenced a semitone lower in Bar 2 and Bar 6. In the B Part, the four-quaver motif at the start of bar 10 is repeated in the following three bars. In Part C the motif in the first bar, crotchet-quaver-quaver-crotchet is carried on in the following 3 bars. Note there is no anacrusis.

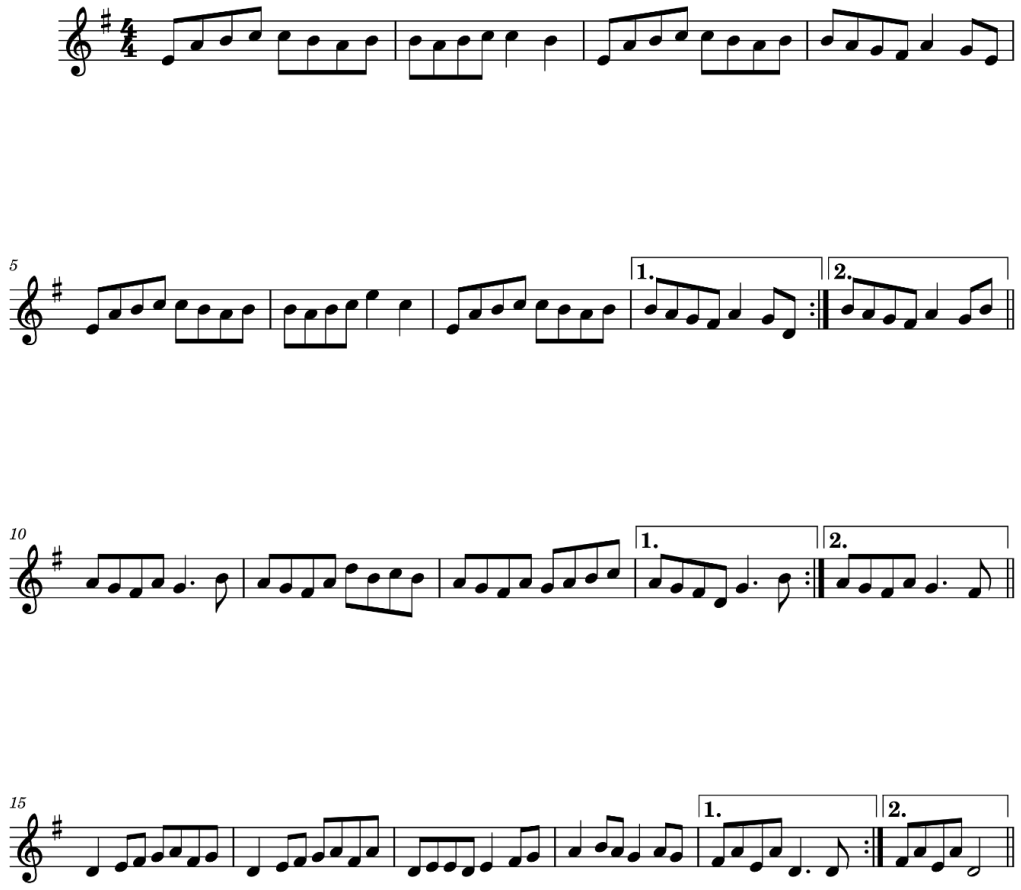


Figure 5. Saltón d'Urbíes, L'Esperteyu session version in E minor.

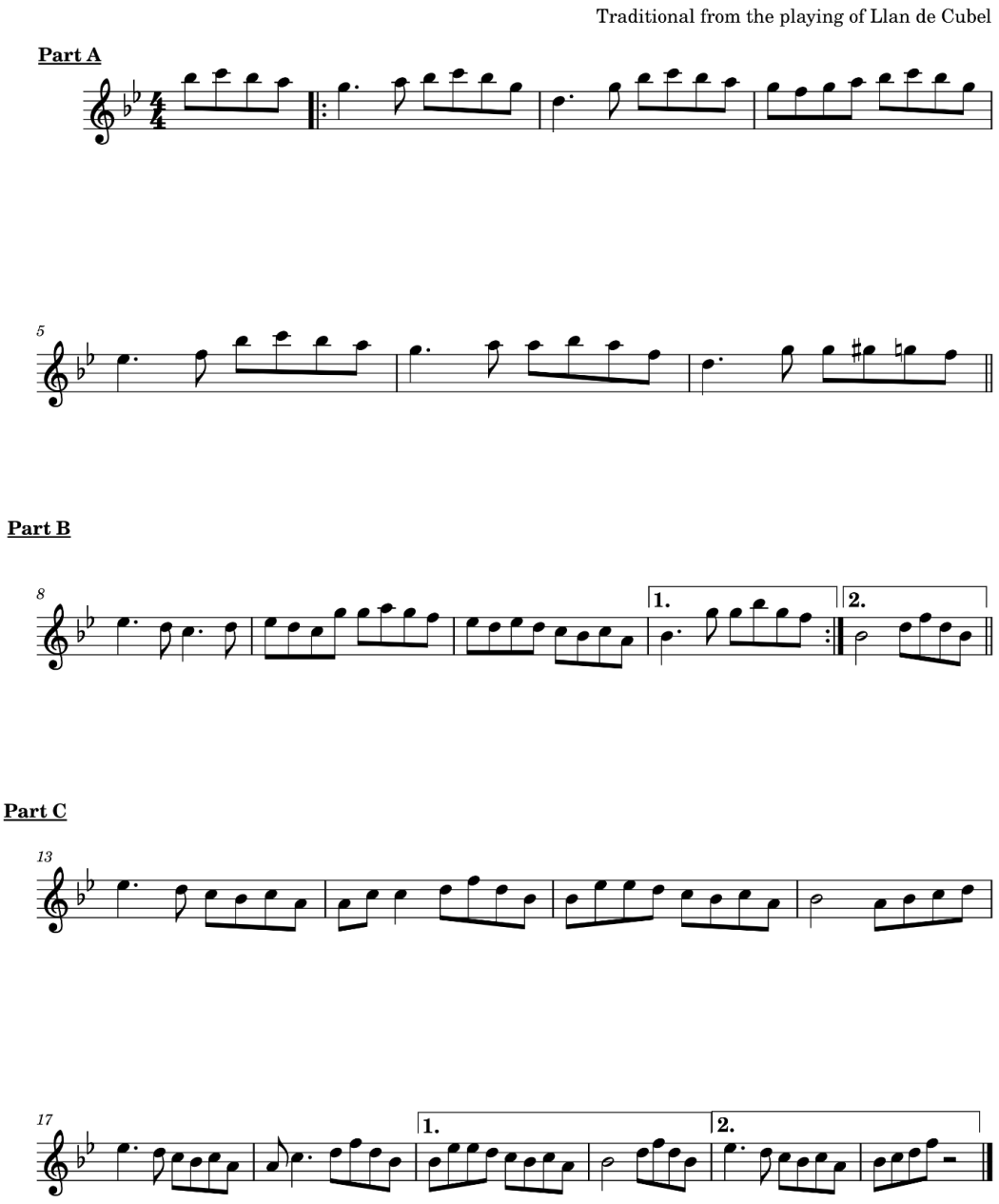


Figure 6. Saltón d'Uviéu.

This Saltón was regularly played at the sessions in Cá Beleño and L'Esperteyu. It was popularised by Llan de Cubel who sourced it from the late Igor Medio from the Asturian folk group Felpeyu. They also cite its presence in Torner's collection (often cited as one of the most important sources of repertory by those involved in the scene). The Torner collection has two versions number 335 and 336, set in the key of G Major. The phrase pattern in the first anacrusis of four quavers, B ♭ -C-B ♭ -A is repeated in Bars 1 to 4 The motif of dotted crotchet followed by five quavers in Bar 1 is repeated in Bar 2, 4, 6 and 7. In Part C, Bars 12 and 14 are repeated in the second phrase in Bars 16 and 18. The semibreve and four quaver organisation in Bar 15 is repeated in Bar 19 but with a variation on the quavers in Bar 19.

Figure 7. Muñeira de Rengos.

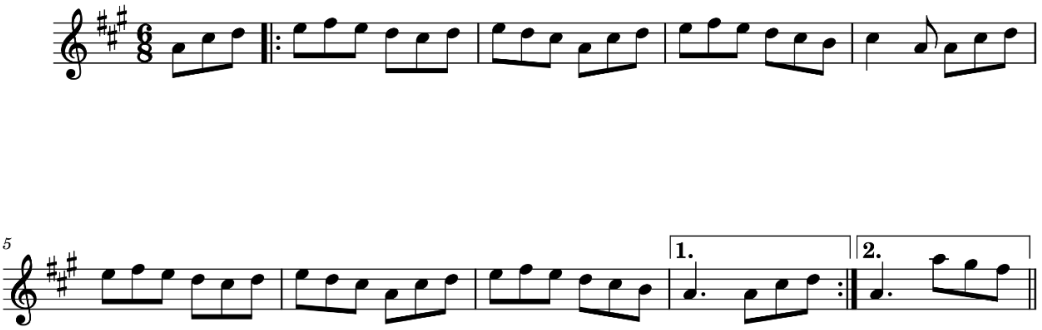
I learned this Muñeira from Pepín de Muñalén at sessions in Cá Beleño, Oviedo and An Deangean, Ireland. It is regularly played at all the sessions I visited in Asturias. It was popularised by Llan de Cubel who recorded it on their 1987 album 'Deva', on which it is played in C Major. The piece comes from the repertory of gaiteru Angelín de Rengos (Little Angel of Rengos) in Cangas County, Asturias.

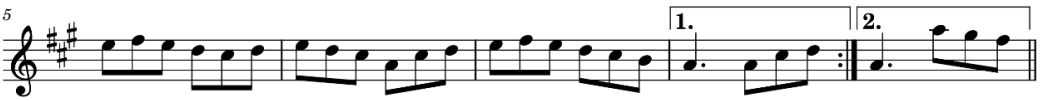
The first four bar phrase is repeated in the first three bars of the second phrase but with a change of a perfect fourth. The motif of two groups of three quavers in Bar 1 is repeated in Bar 3 and in a perfect fourth lower in Bars 5 and 7. The motif in Bar 4 is repeated in Bar 8 but lowered by a tone. The anacrusis that leads into part B in bar 9 is sometimes varied as a 3 quaver motif instead of the crotchet-quaver motif. In the B part, bars 10 and 11 are repeated

in bars 14 and 15 with variation from Bar 12 in Bar 16, switching a crotchet-quaver with 3 quaver motif. In bar 19 if the piece is being repeated from the start or moving straight into another muñeira an anacrusis would be played instead of the dotted semibreve.

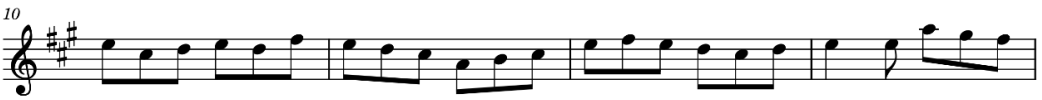
Traditional

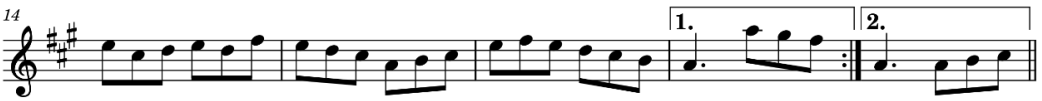
Part A



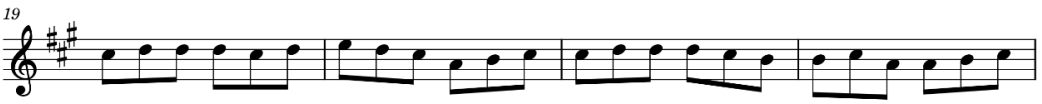


Part B





Part C



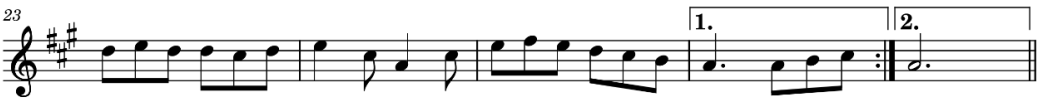


Figure 8. Muñera de Casu.

This version was made popular by Llan de Cubel on their 1995 album IV. They sourced the tune from fiddler Cefero Traviesas from Casu County in the eastern mountains of Asturias. (They play it in F Major). I learned this version above in 6/8 at the sessions in L'Esperteyu, where it is played in A Major (as above) or in D. It starts with the 3 quaver anacrusis, the emphasis falling on the dominant (E) at the beginning of Bars 1 and 3. The first three bars of the four bar phrase are repeated in the second phrase. This pattern is followed in part B and C. The fourth bar of the first phrase in each section is where variations were made. The A-B-C♯ quaver anacrusis is sometimes changed to an A-G#-F. The dotted semibreve would only be played if the melody had finished and was not transitioning into another muñeira.

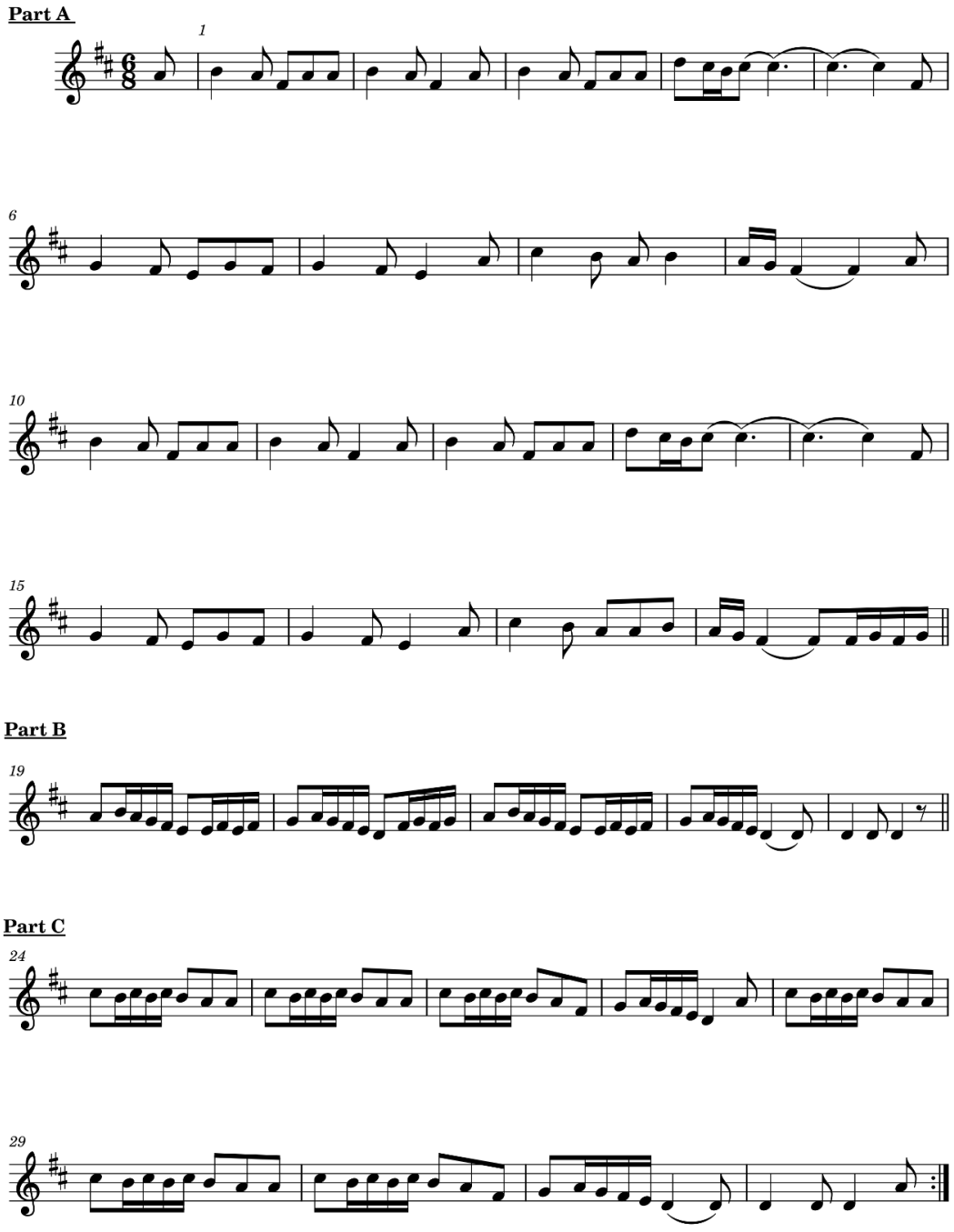


Figure 9. La Jota de Avelino.

The Jota de Avelino transcribed in Figure 9 is from the workshop and after session at Llar Fest 2024, taught by Pepín de Muñalén and later reperformed by Josefina Moragues, an

Argentinian of Asturian descent living in Asturias. Muñalén informed us that it was originally performed on clarinet, likely B ♭ or A pitched. In the workshop it was played in B minor/ D Major. Keys with one or two sharps do not require the use of mechanical keys that play accidentals (see Chapter 4). Most of the participants were from outside of Asturias and used to structures of Irish and Scottish traditional music. In Part A the phrase from Bars 1 to 4 is repeated in Bars 10 to 14. The second phrase is repeated in phrase 4 with a variation in Bar 17. The motif pattern changed in part B with the introduction of two groups of 1 quaver-4 semiquavers from Bar 19 and repeated in the following two bars and the first part of Bar 22.

In Part C the single 1 quaver-4 semiquavers is used in all the bars except the last. The first four bars each contain the 1 quaver-4 semiquavers motif followed by a unit of three quavers; this phrase is repeated in the following four bars.

The jota has a structural feature that separates it from the saltón and muñeira. In Figure 9, Bar 4 starting at point V there is a series of conjoined C♯'s. This is repeated in the third phrase at point W and X at the end of Part B on D note and without slightly less connection between the notes and similarly on the D at Y at the end of Part C. The function of this is to hold the rhythm for the dancer while they turn out of a dance and get ready for a new figure usually with the exagerated move (los remates) and then turn 360 degrees on the spot ready to lean into the dance again through the anacrusis. Normally this space would be sounded by a percussionist and thus there is no melody. The instrumentalist plays the same tone but continues the rhythm to mark out the value of notes left until the anacrusis. This feature only becomes a point of tension when it is placed in the Celtic and folk music revival paradigm of mostly even number of bars per part, with a continuous melody and fitting this in with similar

dance types of similar time signature from outside of Asturias. Along with the sung components this incongruity made jotas unattractive to a lot of Celtic and folk revival bands in comparison to the use of saltónes and muñeiras (see section 3.5 on Use of Repertory).

3.5.7 Tempo and Speed

A further area of discursive tension connected to Asturian repertory, identity and authenticity is the tempo of the performance of the repertory. I refer to tempo as speed as that is the term that interlocutors used. There was no absolute consensus on exact speed pieces should be played at . There was consensus amongst those playing for dances that the speed should be even throughout the dance. Speeding up was acceptable at certain points if there was part of a set arrangement to add drama or liveliness to a performance. In the session the ability to keep to an even speed throughout was valued, although there were times when the speed increased This was acceptable if this was a conscious decision, rather than a lack of ability to keep time. Acceleration of speed was acceptable if the session mood dictated, for example at the end of a long set of tunes or towards the end of the night. This would be controlled to a great extent by session leaders (see Chapter 2 Defining a Session in the Asturian Context). The debate about speed and tempo of music is not unique to Asturias. Keegan (2010) states that in the case of Irish traditional music; “Speed is also a highly politicised parameter of style” (Keegan, 2010: 88) and in the culture of the Shona Mbira concerns about speed are described by Berliner and Magaya (2020). In the Asturian Celtic and folk revival and connected genres of folk and traditional music and dance scenes there is no exact agreement as to the speed that pieces should be played at and concepts of speed and authenticity are influenced by the lived

experience of the musician and the constructs of authenticity they create. In the case of Ambás, he critiques the increase in speed of performance of Asturian music and connects faster speeds in some Asturian folk music performance with the Celtic and folk revival influence (Ambás. Interview with Author 2016). Too fast for Ambás equates to Irish or Celtic music and playing too fast is not Asturian, pan-hispanic or traditional. From spending time with Llan de Cubel in the field, I understood that speed of repertory was a band decision and mixed personal taste and whether people could dance to it. The dance reference is related to informal non-structured dancing that people attending their concerts may decide to do. Borja Baragaño, the current flute player with Llan de Cubel, suggested that the speeds of the dances are "standardised" (Baragaño. Interview with Author 2015). In some contexts I observed that dancers would tell the musicians if the music was too fast or slow and therefore the dancers decided the tempo. Dance speeds changed depending on the capacity of the dancer, for example if they were older they might dance a little slower and suggested that dance speeds might vary either side by ten points on the meter. Another perspective was that musicians dictated the tempo. In most cases the mutual essentiality of both dancer and musician is understood to be critical. One source suggested that the decision on speed lies between the egos of the musicians and the dancers and that the best dancers wanted more speed. I observed that some musicians conceptualise the speed as beats per minute and suggested speed was variable depending on context.

An examination of speed as a parameter of Asturianess and authenticity in the Asturian folk scene reveals a complexity of responses and constructions of discourses around speed. The key influence on speed appears to be what the dancers want and need but what they need

clearly varies. There is no absolute agreement on speed and going fast or too fast can be Asturian and Celtic, authentic, rural (see Chapter 5) or urban depending on the interlocutor. The common denominator on influencing speed appears to be what the dancers want and need, but I have shown what they need clearly varies.

3.6 Instrumentation

Most of the instruments used in the contemporary Asturian folk scene are not unique to Asturias. They have come from outside at various points and have been adapted for use in performing the various forms of folk music in Asturias for different reasons. Chapter 4 describes in detail the use of the transverse wooden flute in the performance of Celtic and folk revival music in Asturias.

3.6.1 Melody Instruments

The Asturian gaita (Asturian bagpipes), along with Asturianada and Tonada songs, are at the top of a hierarchy of musical Asturianess. The gaita is important in consideration of transverse wooden flute performance in Asturias as gaiteros (gaita players) often played flutes as an instrument of the house. The Asturian gaita is sounded by blowing the soppillo (blowpipe), which fills the fuelle (bag) with air, pressure is applied to the fuelle which directs air through a palleta (reed) at the top of the punteru (chanter) and through the roncones (drones). The melody is played on the chanter. Asturian gaita are closed-fingered (one specific finger on and off for a specific note). The traditional Asturian chanter is diatonic with a range of an octave and a half. The pitch and range of the gaita have shaped the repetitive and cyclical patterns of Asturian traditional and folk music. Gaiteros use a half-closed

fingering technique to play half notes, enabling a chromatic scale. The more modern Asturian gaita has two roncones. The first pitched to the tonic of the gaita and the second an octave below the tonic. Traditionally gaita were pitched in the key of C or D. The C of the gaita, C brilliante, was between concert C and C. Gaita, in the pitch of B, accompanied Tonada singers.

In the folk revival and Celtic music performance context, Asturian gaita are tuned to B ♭ , C or D. Tunings can range from A to high E ♭ and can now be fully chromatic with the addition of extra holes and keys. Xuan Muñez from prominent Asturian folk revival group Llan De Cubel notes that they wanted to revive the B ♭ gaita which had been overtaken by gaita in C and D over the previous century (Paterson M. 2013). B ♭ is popular as it is the pitch used by gaita bands, modelled on Scottish pipe bands and developed in the 1990s in Asturias. This surge of gaita bands is known as the "El boom de gaita" (see García Floréz, 2022). The modes and keys dominant in Asturian repertory were shaped by the affordances of the gaita, and its related pitches, both traditionally and in a contemporary performance context. The construction and development of a distinct Asturian gaita has evolved over the last century and moved it away from the construction and sound of the neighbouring Galician pipes. In border areas, such as the one with Galicia, the definition of what is culturally Galician or Asturian becomes more blurred as does the issue of what is an Asturian or Galician gaita. Gaita can be studied at state-run conservatories but examination repertory is drawn only from Western Art Music (García-Floréz, Interview with author 2015). Ornamentation is an essential part of gaita performance. There has been some standardisation and naming of techniques particularly since the introduction of Bandas de Gaita (bagpipe

bands). The trill is an ornament characterised by Asturian gaiteros and some transverse wooden flute players as a marker of Asturianess. However, playing a trill en masse in a gaita band context would be difficult. To alleviate this, trills were replaced by mordents. Contemporary performers use a mixture of techniques from Asturias that were practised before the pipe band boom and that have been introduced such as the Compound Trill invented by José Angel Hevia, that emulates the sound of a roll ornament used in Irish and Scottish traditional music (see Chapter 4 on flute ornamentation). As is common with aural traditions, there is no complete consensus about what constitutes traditional playing. An example of the range of ideas of how to describe an ornament in Asturian gaita music can be observed in the notation of an apoyatura de repetición (repeated appoggiatura). Menéndez Suárez observes this ornament is described by other teachers as a Mordente d'una nota or one note Mordent or Picáu or Staccato (Menéndez Suárez, 2010). (For more information on piping ornamentation see Menéndez Suárez, 2010)

Bandas de Gaitas were developed in Asturias during the 1990s. After connecting with the Pan-Celtic movement through the Lorient Interceltic Festival in 1986, Asturians were inspired to create bands based on the pipe bands from Scotland, Ireland and Brittany. In the field, there were varying discourses describing the state of gaita playing before the 1990s gaita 'boom' and the post-Franco folk revival. Flute player Marcos Llope described his experience of gaiteru in the 1980s, that there were; "20-25 maybe, in my area they were 4, I met 4" (Llope, M. Interview with author 2015). Guillermo Peréz reaffirms this: "When I was born I think there were around 25 or 30 pipers in all of Asturias and nowadays we have more than 10,000" (Peréz Iglesias. Interview with author 2016). Others proposed that those

claiming these low numbers were urban-based musicians unconnected with the places where gaiteru were. The gaita has become a status symbol of power, respectability and resistance. It was used by the Prince of Asturias (the heir to the Spanish throne) in ceremonies and played by anti-royalist Republicans in protest when the Prince of Asturias appeared in Asturias and as a central sonic feature of Asturias radical rock group Dixebra. The eighteenth century 'Misa Gaita' (Gaita Mass) has been revived and has Intangible Cultural Heritage Status in Spain. The gaita was traditionally played by men but increasingly women are learning, particularly in the Bandas de Gaita context.

The four stringed violin, also referred to in the scene as the fiddle, has been used in folk and traditional music in Asturias since at least the nineteenth century. Blind street beggars played romancero and coplas (a four versed poetic popular song genre originating in Spain) but the violin was more generally an instrument of the house due to its lack of volume in comparison to the gaita and pandereta. The violins used in the Asturian folk scene are the standard type played in Western Art music, tuned from low to high, G-D-A-E. The instrument can comfortably facilitate the one-and-a-half to two octaves normally covered in the repertory played in the scene. Most Asturian violin players I encountered in the Asturian folk scene modelled their playing style on Irish and Scottish traditional music players. They had little or no contact with or access to recordings of violin players playing Asturian traditional and folk music previous to the 1980s. Rubén Bada told me that a feature of traditional Asturian violin playing was long phrasing on the bow and a lot of double stops, and supporting the melody was playing a drone on another string. Like the transverse wooden flute players (see Chapter 4), initially, the contemporary players had to find a way of playing the Asturian repertory.

Bada explained to me how in the 1990s the first traditional musicians he got to play with played a mixture of Asturian and Irish music but were more interested in Irish music. He had no one to teach him and so he applied Irish technique to Asturian music in the best way he could. Another example of this way of developing a place for the violin in Asturian folk and traditional music was that of Simon Bradley. Simon is the fiddle player in Llan de Cubel. He originated from Rochdale near Manchester, England. He learned traditional music from a teacher originally from the west of Ireland and was influenced by fiddle playing relative from the north of Ireland and honed his adult playing on the Edinburgh folk scene. He described to me how he had to apply his technique to the repertory in a band context and by a process of negotiation with other band members worked out a way to best perform the music on the violin. Increasingly there is a move to examine the violin tradition in Asturian traditional and folk music, repertory and style. In 2021 ‘Xornaes de vigulín’ was founded by the radical folklore collection group Asociación LaKadarma and the Ayuntamiento de Piloña (the local authority in the town of Piloña). The event involved traditional and folk violin players, academics and folklore collection activists in a weekend of activities.

The main types of curdian (Accordion or Alcordion) I observed in Asturias were the diatonic button accordion and the chromatic four-row button accordion. The diatonic button accordion generally has twenty-one buttons across two rows, each button can sound two notes, one when the hand-operated bellows are pushed inwards and another when the bellows are moved outwards. Button accordions first arrived in Asturias during the mid to late nineteenth century along with the violin and clarinet, the polka craze and the grabbed dances such as the polka and mazurka. It was loud and therefore ideal for street fiesta and parade performances and

could compete with the gaita for noise without amplification. In sessions, the curdian is a lesser-played instrument in the scene but does feature as an important instrument in bands performing in the various sub genres of Celtic and folk revival music. These included the 'folk' of Felpeyu, Llan de Cubel, Asturian folk and roots group Asturian Mining Company, and Bandín/ Bandina style bands such as Caldo y Os Rabizos, La Bandina, Los Gascones and Salón Bombé (see below for Bandínas). Piano accordions were present in some folclórica groups and Jose Manuel Sabugo from the group D'Urria accompanied his singing with a piano accordion.

Low and high or tin whistles are end-blown fipple instruments. Both metal and wood whistles were used in the scene. Pitches range from a Bass G up to a Soprano high G. The tube of the whistle has six finger holes enabling the playing of two octaves from the tonic note of the whistle's tuning. More skilled players use the third octave but this is rare. These whistles are used particularly by folk revival groups who identify with a Celtic sound. Uilleann pipes (Irish elbow bellows blown pipes) are played to a high standard by two prominent musicians, Borja Baragaño and Dani Álvarez. Non-Asturian Uilleann pipers have guested on some recordings, for example, Manchester Irish instrumentalist Michael McGoldrick on Tejedor: Texedores De Suaños.(1999).

3.6.2 Percussion

Most of the percussion instruments used in the various forms of Asturian folk, traditional or Celtic music can be found outside Asturias. They are either found across Spain and connected diasporic spaces or, as is the case with the bodhrán, have come into use influenced by their

use in Irish traditional music. There are two main types of handheld drum used in Asturian folk and traditional music since and before the 1980s folk revival, the cuadrado pandero (tambourine, or panderu in Asturian) and the pandereta. The panderu in is a square-framed drum with goat skin stretched across the frame covering both sides. Transverse internal gut strings are tied to provide a snare sound and dried chickpeas collide with each other and the frame. It is held in both hands and is hit by the players' hands alternately. The drum is held loosely and the weight of the drum switches from hand to hand with the flick of the wrists. The pandereta is a round wood-framed drum with goat skin stretched across one side. They have symbol-like rattles placed in pairs around the wooden rim. The drums vary in size. They can be played in two ways. The first, holding loosely in two hands, tapping rhythms with alternate hands, shifting one hand to the other forces the rattles on the edges to sound with the rhythm. They can also be held at the bottom of the frame with one hand while the vertical skin is played with the other hand. The hand taps a rhythm on the skin and occasionally a finger is drawn across and vibrating against the skin, causing the rattles and impact with the skin to create a sound. The pandereta and panderu are traditionally played by women to accompany dances. They are a key feature of folclórica groups (more traditional style dance folk groups that wear traditional dress) and their use has increased in alternative settings, such as Asturian language marches and as lead instruments in folk and traditional performances by all-women group Muyeres, singer and pandereteras Eva Tejedor and Leti Balselgas. Since the late 2010s, the presence of male pandereta performers has grown (see Chapter 5). Bomba (bass drum) and caja o redoblante (snare drum) are used particularly in folclorica dance displays, but are used by some of the Celtic and folk revival groups such as

Llan de Cubel. Drums without snares, large and small, and those used in Scottish pipe bands, are used in folclorica groups. Castañuelas (castanets), small and large, were played by the dancers in some loose (lo Suelto) dances. The castanets are slightly larger than those used in Flamenco for example. Musicians and singers beat out rhythms on olive cans, particularly in Nueches en Danza settings (see Chapter 5).

The bodhrán (Irish tambourine) is a round frame drum with a single goatskin stretched over and secured onto one side of a wooden frame. It is beaten with the hand or a stick called a tipper. The tone is adjusted by the other hand placed, to varying amounts of pressure, on the drum skin. The function of the instrument is to provide a steady rhythm, finding a balance between being heard and supporting the melody instruments, although occasionally used for virtuosic solos. The bodhrán was introduced into the Asturian Celtic and folk music revival scene in Asturias in the 1980s, emulating its use in Irish and Scottish folk music. The bodhrán was present in most of the sessions I participated in and is a feature of some of the most popular Asturian folk revival groups, such as Llan de Cubel, Felpeyu and one of the first folk revival bands, Beleño, in the 1980s. The presence of the bodhrán and the absence of the pandereta and its characteristic rattle sound is, in part, related to the pandereta being played by women and most of the band members and certainly all the percussionists being men.

The Ixuxú caxón was an example of an attempt to incorporate a percussion instrument into common use in Asturian folk and Celtic music. The *caxón* is the Asturianised spelling of the *cajón*, a boxed-shaped instrument, sat on by the player and sounded by beating the front or back panels of the box. The cajón originates in Peru and has become an integral part of Flamenco music. A percussionist and bar owner, Kalros Ixixú, developed the *Ixuxú caxón*. As

with his short lived bar, it featured symbols painted on that some connect with a Celtic Asturian identity. The word Ixuxú describes a type of high-pitched shout associated with being Asturian. Apart from in his bar, I did not see cajóns being used in sessions. Occasionally they were used in folk bands but are not a particular feature found across folk music performances here in Asturias. This manufacture of this *caxón* and the use of the *cajón* is an example of rooted cosmopolitanism.

3.6.3 Plucked and Strummed String Instruments

The guitar in various shapes and forms has had a presence in Spain since the time of Islamic rule. Spain has become internationally synonymous with Flamenco music and the guitar's sound. Its use in backing instrumental folk and traditional dance repertory comes from traditional Irish, Scottish and Celtic music, where it has been used since the early twentieth century. Its use in accompanying singers derives from the American folk revival of the 1950s and became an integral part of shaping the sound of contemporary folk music in Asturias from the late 1960s onwards. There are a variety of tunings for backing singers. The D-A-D-G-A-D tuning (of string from lowest to highest) is the most popular tuning amongst guitar players for playing with instrumental music. It is a flexible alternative to Major and Minor chordal accompaniment. The D-A-D strings provide a drone sound and the overall tuning makes the fingerings of and transitions between chords more fluid and easier for modal playing than the standard A-A-D-G-B-E tuning. The drone fills the sound between the instrumental melody players. In conversation, Asturian musician and ethnomusicologist Llorián García Floréz said that the introduction of the open tuning was a pivotal sonic moment that shifted the sound from a more hippy Celtic sound to a folk sound (García

Flórez. Interview with author 2015). The bouzouki played in the Asturian folk scene is an adaptation of the Greek bouzouki. It was introduced into Asturian folk music in the 1980s, inspired by its adaptation to Irish folk and traditional music by Johnny Moynihan and Donal Lunny. This form of flat-backed bouzouki has four sets of paired strings. The most common tuning is G-D-A-D similar to DADGAD on the guitar. This open tuning makes it easier to accompany modal tunes. The bouzouki is played by striking the strings with a plectrum and placing fingers on the fretboard to create chords to complement the tune, as well as sounding counter melodies and a voicing or drone effect by placing the fingers on the fretboard to sound the same note but on 3 or 4 of the courses. It is rarely used as a lead melody instrument and is used to back or provide background rhythm and sound (a drone effect) to fill out the space around and behind the melody instruments. The drone assists in tonal centering for the improvisations of the melody instruments.The bouzouki has become a prominent sound of Asturian folk music, particularly through the presence of the late Elías García, a member of some seminal folk groups such as Llan de Cubel and Tuenda (see cast study below for their significance). Other prominent bouzouki players include Alberto Ablanedo (Tejedor, Felpeyu) and Rubén Bada (DRD, Corquiéu). The four-string banjo is played occasionally in sessions by Alberto Ablanedo, tuned similarly to the violin, G-D-A-E.

The Celtic harp, played by Fernando Largo, was a central sound of Beleño, one of the first and the most iconic groups of the early Asturian folk rival and Celtic music of the 1980s. It has also featured in the music of Asturian Hector Braga. Despite its iconic status in Celtic music, it is not used widely in the Asturian folk music revival. The Celtic harp has between

twenty-two and thirty-eight strings and a range of between four and five octaves. The left hand plays bass lines and the right the melody.

3.7 Llan de Cubel and Beleño - a case study

Two of the most popular bands associated with Celtic and folk revival music coming from the largely urban Asturian folk revival era of the 1980s and 1990s are Llan de Cubel and Beleño. Both groups were founded in Oviedo in 1984. Llan de Cubel were students in Oviedo and came about when some of the members met while busking. They have continuously performed and released albums since then. Beleño released 2 albums by 1987, ceased performing and recently reformed to release an album in 2024 and perform concerts. Beleño describe themselves as 'Celtic Music'. Llan de Cubel describe themselves as "Folk music from Asturias". Their self-description provides some clarity. However, the first concert performed by Llan de Cubel was at a Celtic event in December 1984, El II Certamen de Arpa Céltica de Uviéu and they are frequent performers at Noche Celta (Celtic Nights) and festivals in Asturias, and Celtic Festivals across Europe. In 2022, the year of Asturias at Lorient Interceltic Festival (see Chapter 2), Llan de Cubel were one of the main acts featured in the largest arena at the festival (notably Asturian acts tend to get smaller crowds than Breton, Irish and Scottish bands), reflecting their high status in the Asturian folk scene and wider recognition in the Celtic music world. In 2025 they played at Celtic Connections Festival in Glasgow. Although Llan de Cubel describe themselves as folk music from Asturias, they are signed to the Fono Astur label which is connected to organised Asturian Celticity. The owner of and producer for Fono Astur is Lisardo Lombardia, a founding

member of Fundación Belenos and for many years director of FIL. On the Fono Astur website, their record label did not mention ‘Celtic’, it used the terms ‘folk’ and ‘traditional’ but used Celtic imagery. Their record designer was Astur Paredes, an important figure in the Asturian Celtic movement and the Fundación Belenos. Celtic iconography and lettering style is used as part of the Llan de Cubel design aesthetic on their album artwork. The construct of folk here is intertwined with Celtic. Beleño demonstrate an equally pragmatic approach to the interconnection between Celtic and folk music and performance opportunities. Their album designs feature Celtic lettering and Celtic knot artwork to emphasise their Celtismu. On their 2024 album Daón, they make clear their claim for the Celtic roots of Asturias and connect their music to the land and the construct of the ancientness of Asturian Celtismu;

> “Daón is the name of one of the sheepfolds of the Tarañes pass, in the municipality of Ponga. It is a toponym with Celtic roots that means "place by the water" and that joins others in the area such as San Xuan de Beleño, related to the Celtic divinity Belenos, or Tarañes himself, to the celestial god Taranus, divinity of lightning and storm. It is not at all strange that our ancestors gave this name to the great limestone mass where, to this day, thunder and lightning among the hills continue to "instil fear" (Beleño, 2024).

The photography on Daón features standing stones which is a common image used on albums using the label ‘Celtic music’. However, in their most recent concert in Madrid, in October 2024, they appeared at an event with Spanish Folk Group Brïme de Ürz in a concert entitled “A night of folk music full of stars”. In an interview on the news programme on Asturian television station RTPA on October 19th, 2024, promoting the 2024 album, Frankie Delgado

describes their music as essentially folk in the beginning but having developed further during their two 1980s recordings and the 2024 recording. Beleño in their latest formation include new members, gaitero Hevia, who markets himself in a world music construct, and transverse wooden flute player Pepín de Muñalén, changing the flute sound from metal Boehm system to transverse wooden flute.

3.7.1 Instrumentation used by Beleño and Llan de Cubel

The instrumentation of both Llan de Cubel and Beleño are similar but with a couple of notable differences that indicate some difference between the musical construct of Celtic and folk music. Both groups include guitar, violin, gaita Asturiana, transverse flutes, end blown wooden fipple whistles, tin whistles, bouzouki, keyboards, percussion including pandeiru, Asturian snare drum, bodhrán and bouzouki. Llan de Cubel have always had a male vocalist singing in a folk revival style, Beleño have female lead vocalists. The distinguishing instrumental feature was the central role of harp in the sound of Beleño, as well as their use of early music instruments such as the rabel and a greater use of drone synthesiser effects often associated with Celtic music. Llan de Cubel used the harp as part of their sound in their earlier iterations. The use of the Celtic harp and synthesiser sound connects the group strongly to the Celtic music aesthetic pioneered by Alan Stivell in the 1960s and 1970s and through the harp in particular the Irish group The Chieftains. Alan Stivell, a Breton musician, constructed a style of music incorporating Breton language songs, Breton and Irish traditional music played on the Breton Celtic harp (which Stivell his father had constructed), bombarde, acoustic guitars,violin and tin whistle. He later added synthesisers and electric guitars. The

presence of the harp and the synthesiser became a particular sonic marker of Celtic music. The Chieftains are cited as a critical influence on Asturian folk and Celtic music by musicians in the field. A key feature of their largely instrumental music was the combination of the harp and the uilleann pipes set with other acoustic instruments in a highly arranged Western art music setting. The Chieftains used the Celtic imagery and design and pan-Celtic themes in their music and for marketing their music, although as a long time fan and a practitioner of Irish traditional music I would describe the music as Irish traditional music rather than Celtic music.

The arrangements and performances of repertory by Asturian Celtic and folk revival bands are arranged for listening either in concert or on record, rather than for formally structured Asturian folk dancing. The repertory is placed together in sets echoing the format used in Celtic and folk revival bands from the above mentioned influences. Sets are sometimes arranged in sets of two or three types of dance tune e.g. Muñeres de Tornaleo y d'Os Ozcos on the album IV by Llan de Cubel. (Llan de Cubel.1995). https://youtu.be/ptgTCrNbhEk?si=MyRSJZAzmEPvrHVw)

This set lasts just over four minutes and was about the standard time for most of the sets from the IV album. This time length is more focused on radio play and fitting the format paradigm that had become standard in folk revival performances from Irish and Scottish folk revival bands, although this is sufficient length to dance a muñeira to. The Celtic and folk revival music aesthetic tends to be two or three sets of the same types of dance tunes, each repeated two or three times. As mentioned earlier there is no fixed length of time a muneira should be danced for, there can be many repetitions. Other sets are more clearly set out for

presentational purposes, for example, the Llan de Cubel track Pasucais d'Amieva/ Pasucáis de Xuan Martín/ Muñera de Casu (Llan de Cubel, 1995).

https://youtu.be/ZDRAa3sxUBI?si=uIiyS0oplMgo6Jt2).

A pasucáis is a street march and the muñera or muñeira is, as detailed earlier, a couples lo suelto (loose and unheld) dance. The first tune is in 6/8 and is a variation on traditional tune, the second tune in 9/8 was composed by the band's bouzouki player, the late Elías García, and named after a Scottish musician John Martin and the third called Muñera de Casu, a different spelling of the same tune analysed in the anacrusis section earlier, is in 6/8. The two types of dance are put together in one set, and not related to the requirements of Asturian traditional dance.

Another example of the arrangement of repertory by Asturian Celtic and folk revival bands is mixing repertory from different countries. For example Llan de Cubel's encore set is a set of three pieces: The March Xuan de Mieres played twice, followed by a Scottish Puirt-a-beul (mouth music piece) S iomadh rud a chunna mi played twice. The set finishes off with another March San Roque played three times. (https://youtu.be/osR0AhP9Kzw?si=8EOKFidKWX-X6pAc).

All three pieces are played at high speed and in 4/4 time. This format of playing tunes from different countries that have a similar time signature is another feature of the arrangements by Asturian Celtic and folk revival bands. A further example of this is the 6/8 of muñeiras and double jigs that creates the tension I describe later about the exclusion or inclusion of an anacrusis and the subsequent change in phrasing. In some sets, tunes in different times

signatures are arranged together. The repetition of this format has led to, it has been argued by Ambás, has led in part to the incongruous jota being less favoured by Celtic and folk revival groups (Ambás.Interview with author 2016). The group arrangements, inspired by folk revival groups from outside of Asturias, use arrangements that introduce the pieces with guitar or bouzouki rhythm connected to the rhythm of the pieces that are played in, rather than a percussive introduction as in a traditional dance setting or the use of the floreo (highly ornate scales played on the gaita to introduce a dance and demonstrate virtuosity) in a folclorica dance setting.

3.7.2 A Pragmatic Celtismu

The pragmatism of both bands appearing at events with different labels for the genre of music performed suggests, as I experienced, that the audiences for both Celtic and Folk revival music in Asturias were largely similar, apart from '*Los Hippies.*'

The concept of Celtic and folk revival music in Asturias is a construct that combines political, economic, social and cultural and gender factors. It is shaped by how someone describes themselves, what labels they then identify with and the label they use is a social construct. The use and arrangement of repertory by folk revival and Celtic bands in Asturias is an example of rooted cosmopolitanism as the format of the band, instrumentation, arrangement format is partly taken from outside, rooted by the use of Asturian repertory, instrumentation and language

3.8 Summary

The folk revival in Asturias experienced a hegemonic shift towards an Atlantic Celtic aesthetic, which draws parallels to Hagmann's concepts of what she termed the "Celtification" of Cornish traditional repertory during the the Cornish folk revival from the 1970s (Hagmann L. 2021: 105) Celtic music what she describes as "romantic 'orientalism'" (Hagmann L. 2021: 105). This transformation was marked by several important changes. There was an abstraction from dance traditions, as the repertory became detached from its interconnection with dancers and the customary ordering of tunes linked to dance practice. Sung components of dance were removed, which altered the aesthetic possibilities of voice and melismatic ornamentation and lessened the use of the Asturian language. Ornamentation increasingly derived from instruments rather than voice, incorporating both invented techniques and borrowings from other cultures. These changes arguably made the music less Hispanic in character and less associated with the legacy of Sección Femenina and Franco, contributing to the perception of Asturian music as Celticised. To the casual listener this might sound distinctly Asturian, although to purists such as Ambás it could appear quite different.

The role of women as dancers and as percussionists was removed to a large extent, masculising the musical performance further. The revival also embraced a performance-oriented aesthetic, supported by new instrumentation and improvements in instrument quality.

Alongside this hegemonic Celtic framing, Asturian musicians demonstrated agency through what can be described as rooted cosmopolitanism. They grounded their work in Asturian repertory, language, and imagery, evident in live performance and recording outputs such as sleeve notes and tune titles. They established their own record labels, participated in language rights movements, and sang in Asturian, drawing both on older repertory and newly composed material and for most singers in a revivalist rather than melismatic Asturian vocal traditional style. Their identification as Asturian was expressed not only in the places they performed but also in the image they projected to the wider music industry. In some cases, arrangements followed the order of Asturian dance traditions, thereby re-Asturianising the music, although this depended on the discursive understanding of the performer.

Instrumentation played a crucial role in shaping ethnicised constructs. The gaita and pandereta are unequivocally markers of Asturian identity, although they are not always welcomed in session context. However, the pandereta was erased in this scene from the Asturian sonic landscape by omission from performance lineups. Conversely, instruments such as the uilleann pipes or low whistle may signify Celtic associations, which in turn are filtered into the broader sonic palette of Asturianess. Even the Irish ornamentation, detailed in Chapter 4, when recontextualised, can become part of this palette, contributing to the hybridised soundscape.

Ultimately, the concept of Celtic and folk revival music in Asturias is not fixed but socially constructed, shaped by political, economic, social, cultural, and gendered factors. It depends on how individuals describe themselves, the labels they adopt, and the identities they project. The use and arrangement of repertory by folk revival and Celtic bands in Asturias

exemplifies rooted cosmopolitanism. While the format of the band, its instrumentation, and arrangement practices are partly borrowed from external traditions, they are simultaneously rooted in Asturian repertory, instruments, and language. In this way, Asturian Celtic and folk revival music emerges as a dynamic construct, negotiating between external influences and local identity.

4. Transverse Wooden Flute Performance in the Contemporary Asturian Folk Scene

Understanding the role of flute playing in the contemporary Asturian folk and Celtic music scene requires an understanding of the stylistic and organological aesthetics of transverse wooden flute performance exemplified by performers in places and spaces outlined above (Chapter 2). This chapter aims to articulate these properties of transverse wooden flute performance before addressing how and to what extent are these examples of rooted cosmopolitanism.

The transverse wooden flute is an intrinsic part of the contemporary Asturian folk scene. I describe in this chapter the types of transverse wooden flutes used in the contemporary Asturian folk scene. I contextualise their presence, explaining how they came to be used in the contemporary Asturian folk scene as part of the engagement by musicians with a Celtic Asturian identity. I show how the flutes are used, particularly focusing on ornamentation and how it came to be applied to the Asturian repertory played on the transverse wooden flute. The connection with transnational flute culture that embraces transverse wooden flute performance and discourse connected to the use of this type of flute in music that intersects Celtic music, folk revival and traditional music with roots in countries nominally described as Celtic and folk and further with other European folk revival traditions. I consider if performance on the transverse wooden flute shapes repertorial choice and canonisation and

conversely, whether repertory shapes performance on the transverse wooden flute. I show how contemporary Asturian folk flute performance is a product of what Turino describes as Cosmopolitan loops and is an example of rooted cosmopolitanism. A Celtic paradigm was constructed with music as a vehicle for expression of this identity, the use of the transverse wooden flute in the Asturian context is one example of this. As part of the initial engagement with a Celtic habitus, the way the flute was performed was shaped by elements of Irish traditional music and related flute cultures, this included Irish ornamentation. By engaging with the Celtic paradigm from the north, some musicians were performing and expressing an identity that was not Spanish or Spanish in the sense of what it meant during the Franco era.

4.1 What is understood to be a flute in Asturias?

The instrument this thesis is focused on has several names, forms and conceptualisations in the contemporary Asturian folk scene. The transverse wooden flute I describe below is referred to in Asturian as flauta or flautes (Asturian plural for flute). Sometimes it is described as flauta travesu (Asturian for transverse flute), flauta madera travesera (transverse wooden flute) and flauta madera (wooden flute). In Castilian and Asturian, flauta can also refer to end-blown instruments such as recorders. Flauta travesera differentiates between the transverse and the end-blown flute. In the Asturian language context musicians sometimes differentiate the end-blown fipple flute by using the Asturian terms xiblata (singular) or xiblates (plural). Sometimes the English words ‘whistle’, ‘tin whistle’ and ‘low whistle’ are used to describe certain types of end-blown flutes. In the wider Celtic flute culture, to which this type of flute is connected, it is called an ‘Irish flute’, in Ireland a ‘concert flute’, ‘wooden

flute' and, in the Irish language, feadóg mór, which means big flute (as opposed to a feadóg, which is an end-blown fipple instrument known as a 'tin whistle' or 'whistle').

Various forms of transverse flutes have been present in Asturias and northern Spain for centuries (Arias Caño 2010; Trilla and López Rodríguez 2001). A picture of a type of transverse wooden flute being played can be found in the thirteenth Century Cantigas de Santa Maria in the Roman Catholic Cathedral in Oviedo, Asturias (Arias Caño 2010).

In rural pre-industrial Asturias, there was a wider concept of what a flute was than that of the current construct used in Asturias of the flute as a transverse wooden flute or Boehm flute (wood and metal). A variety of instruments were conceived as flutes. These included el xiblu (a blade of grass held between two fingers and blown to vibrate), la xibla (a leaf used in the same way as the blade of grass) and a variety of end-blown fipple flutes with between three to six tone holes and transverse flutes with six holes (see Arias Caño 2010 for a detailed study of these types of flutes in Asturias). The names of these instruments varied across Asturias. These instruments were either made by the players themselves or by local craftsmen and were used for personal entertainment of filándon, and agricultural housework such as processing corn, in romerías (religious processions and celebrations) and by vaqueros (cattle and sheep drovers) such as those working in the high plains of the Alzada (Bada and Ambás. Interviews with author 2015). By the end of the 19th Century, French-manufactured flutes with keyed systems were being sold in department stores in the main Asturian towns (Arias Caño 2010). These were instruments of good quality and likely to have been accessible only to professional musicians, men from the emerging middle classes and returning migrants. In the 20th century, factory production of transverse wooden flutes with a

variety of keyed systems resulted in increased availability and use of these more sophisticated flutes in Asturias. Pepín de Muñalén informed me that there were eight flute players in his small village (Muñalén) in the Twentieth Century.

4.2 A short history of flutes in Europe

The flutes used now in the scene are based on, similar to, or are, some of the transverse wooden flutes used in the 19th and 20th centuries in Asturias. It is beyond the remit of this study to document the various styles and systems developed in the 19th and 20th centuries. I will, however, provide some background context to assist in explaining and clarifying the flutes currently in use and features that have historical meaning in the contemporary context of the transverse wooden flute, the focus of this thesis. Although there is no one single design of transverse wooden flute used in the contemporary Asturian folk scene there are common elements in each design that identify the instrument as a transverse wooden flute for the transverse wooden flute players in contemporary Asturias and the cultures it connects the players to. The transverse wooden flute that I focus on is sometimes referred to as the simple system flute. In common parlance ‘simple system flute’ tends to refer to a transverse wooden flute, with a conical bore that is sounded by blowing across the edge of the flute embouchure (hole). The instrument has six tone holes that when uncovered one after the other in sequence sound the key of D major (see Appendix C). In some designs, and with good technique, it is possible to play across five octaves. This requires a variety of fingering systems alternative to the first two octaves and a developed lip technique. Up to eight mechanical keys can be added to sound accidentals. The addition of a key mechanism on the foot joint of the flute

makes it possible to play fully chromatic scales from middle C upwards. The flute is played transversely with the end pointing rightwards or leftwards.

During the nineteenth century a range of systems were developed for the flute to improve performance (Trilla and López Rodríguez 2001; Powell 2009). At this point the number of keys placed on the flute to sound accidentals ranged from one key, the vent key, drawing on Baroque flute design, through to eight keys. Nineteenth-century 'simple system' flutes had performance limitations caused by their design, particularly for playing fast and more complicated pieces (one of the main reasons behind the development of the Boehm system). One reason for the limitations was the relatively slow response of key mechanisms in sounding the note quickly and precisely. Systems of cross-fingerings were developed enabling flautists to sound notes without using key-work and play in the third and fourth octaves above middle C (Powell, 2002). Cross-fingering is dependent on the flute design and some aspects of cross-fingering are used by more advanced players. The ease of the Boehm system, in part, led to it becoming the standard system used in Western Art music performance and pedagogy. The transverse wooden flute became the preserve of specialist musicians and folk music performers. Hamilton et al (1990) argue that cross-fingering in the third and fourth octaves in these flutes may not be effective in those made with the Celtic and folk revival market in mind due to the changes in design to accommodate the sonic tastes of the modern transverse wooden flute player in this particular scene.

By the end of the nineteenth century, French-manufactured flutes with keyed systems were being imported into Madrid, distributed across Spain and sold in department stores in the main Asturian towns (Arias Caño 2010). These high quality instruments are likely to have

been accessible only to professional musicians, returning migrants from urban centres and Cuba (a Spanish Colony until 1898) and men from the emerging middle classes (see Trilla and López Rodríguez 2001 for the history of the flute in nineteenth century Spain; Powell 2009 on the 'Flute mania' in nineteenth century Northern Europe). In Asturias at this time most travelling musicians hired for events played the gaita, violin and usually the flute as well (Ambás. Interview with author 2015). The gaita took prominence, pre-amplification due to the utility of its volume in crowded public events in comparison to the transverse wooden flute with its limited volume (Ambás 2015).

In the 20th century, factory production of transverse wooden flutes with a variety of keyed systems resulted in increased availability and use of these more sophisticated flutes in Asturias. American manufacturers were beginning to produce lower quality and lower cost 'simple system' (as opposed to Boehm system) keyed flutes based on German designed flutes. These became known as 'German flutes' in Spain and countries experiencing forms of folk revival at this point.

In 1847 the Bavarian Theobald Boehm (1794-1881) developed an improved model of his 1832 flute design, replaced the wood of the tube with metal and changed its bore from a conical to cylindrical design (Powell, 2002). The ease of performance on the Boehm system and manufacture with the new material led to it becoming the standard system used in Western Art music performance and pedagogy. A wide variety of designs evolved from the simple system flute and continued to be manufactured at the same time as the development of the revolutionary Boehm system flute (Powell, 2002).

4.3 The adoption of the flute in Asturias

In Spain and Asturias, the Boehm system flute was popularised and institutionalised through military and civic bands and through the Conservatory system (Trilla and López Rodríguez 2001). It was preferred due to its availability through mass production and its responsive mechanics which made playing repertory easier (Trilla and López Rodríguez 2001; Powell 2002).

The Asturian revolution (1934), the Spanish civil war (1936-39) and the year of hunger (1941) had a devastating effect on life in Asturias (Arias Caño 2010; Llope, M. 2015; Preston 2012) and I came across varying accounts of the impact of this and on Asturian flute performance of traditional repertory and culture in general. Marco Llope argues that flute playing largely died as result of the Spanish Civil War and the resulting poverty (Llope M. 2015), while others such as Arias Caño (2010) suggests that the transverse wooden flute is part of an unbroken tradition that continued on through the civil war, Franco and post Franco era. I will address this further in Chapter 5 in considering the reconceptualising of the transverse wooden flute by actors in the contemporary Asturian as Asturian and authentic. The transverse wooden flute used for Celtic and folk revival music in Asturias was largely absent from official and public performance for the thirty-five years of the Franco regime. It did not feature in folclorica ensembles of the S.F. for example.

The flute sound in Asturian folk song recorded for mass consumption from the 1960s onwards was that of the Boehm system flute. Boehm flutes were used in the Asturian and folk related recordings from the 1960s onwards. The flute sound in the music for mainstream

singer Victor Manuel, the Neuvu Canciu (new song) of Nuberu and the early Asturian folk revival and Celtic music performances and recordings of Trasgu (1983), Beleño (1985, 1987) and the early performances of Llan de Cubel featured the sound of the Boehm system flute. Marcos Llope (Llan de Cubel) told me Boehm system flutes were played because they were the only flutes easily available to the musicians of the 1980s folk revival (Llope, M. Interview with author 2015).

Since the introduction of the transverse wooden flute into the performance of Llan de Cubel by Marcos Llope in the late 1980s, there has been a preference by most flute players in the Asturias to use the more expensive, antiquated and ergonomically more limited transverse wooden flutes rather than metal Boehm system. A few notable flute players in the contemporary Asturian folk revival and Celtic music scene continued to use the Boehm system; Xuacu Amieva uses a metal Boehm system flute and Hevia uses a wooden Boehm system.

4.4 Flutes in contemporary Asturias

The use of the transverse wooden flute in the post Franco folk revival and Celtic music scene is, as Wilkinson observes about its use from the early 1970s in the scene in Brittany, "a straight borrowing from Irish practice" (Wilkinson, 2016:99). However, as I demonstrate later, in the Breton context there was no tradition of playing traditional repertory on the transverse wooden flute, whereas, as I have shown earlier in this chapter, the instrument in various forms was used, in Asturias previous to the the folk and Celtic music revival that came slightly later in Asturias than in Brittany due to the social, cultural and political

limitations enforced by the Franco regime. Informants in the scene identify Marcos Llope as the first to play transverse wooden flute in the Asturian folk revival and Celtic music scene of the 1980s and 1990s. Llope also states that he was the first in this context (Llope, M. Interview with author 2015). At the time of the Asturian folk revival, Llope describes how, from his perspective, the urban Asturian folk musicians and enthusiasts had no connection or contact with musicians who played the Asturian traditional repertory on the transverse wooden flute. Marcos Llope confirmed this: "In my case, for example, for 30 or 40 years, I didn't hear traditional flute players" (Llope M. 2015).

Marcos chose to play the transverse wooden flute for several reasons. He preferred how the instrument sounded compared to the Boehm system flute and was inspired by performers outside Asturias who used this type of flute, particularly Matt Molloy. In describing part of his choice Llope locates the flute in the context of Asturian tradition and the central place of the gaita:

> "It's an instrument that fits with the Asturian bagpipe and with the traditional instruments. For Asturian music it (the flute) goes perfectly, as Asturian music revolves around the bagpipes, or went around bagpipes". (Llope M. 2015)

He then describes how the transverse wooden flute fits:

> "Because you can use the fingering, the bagpipe techniques, on the flute. So, the wooden flute is a natural instrument for Asturian music, because it looks a lot like the bagpipes, that is, first there are no plates". (Llope M. 2015)

Llope equates the appropriateness and Asturianess of the flute to its visual similarities to the gaita and therefore has a more natural and authentic place in this musical context than the Boehm system flute. More so, he connected with the affordances of both instruments. They have open holes and the finger is connected to the hole rather than via a key or plate. He also observes that, on both instruments, a quick movement of a finger off and then back on to a hole has the same sonic impact, what he described as "a cut" (a term from Irish traditional music, see below). Llope is aware that the gaita is a closed-fingered instrument and that more complicated ornamentation requires a different approach on each instrument.

After moving from the Boehm system to the transverse wooden flute, Llope settled on playing Gilles Léhart flutes. They were easily available and affordable in comparison with 18th to 19th-century flutes. Léhart flutes were available in pitches suitable for playing Asturian repertory and performance in bands alongside the Asturian gaita and their pitches. The flutes used now in the scene are based on, similar to, or are, some of the transverse wooden flutes used in the 19th and 20th centuries in Asturias. Although there is no one single design of transverse wooden flute used in the contemporary Asturian folk scene there are common elements in each design that identify the instrument as a transverse wooden flute for the transverse wooden flute players in contemporary Asturias and the cultures it connects the players to. The transverse wooden flute that I focus on refers to a transverse wooden flute, with a conical bore that is sounded by blowing across the edge of the flute embouchure (hole). The instrument has six tone holes that when uncovered one after the other, in sequence, sound the key of D major (see Appendix C). In some designs, and with good technique, it is possible to play across five octaves (see Miller, 2014, 2021 on five octave use

of transverse wooden flutes in Cuban Charanga music). Playing in the third octave above middle C is a feature of some transverse wooden flute players in the contemporary Asturian folk revival and Celtic music scene, but engaging in the fourth and fifth octaves is not a feature of this scene. Playing in the third octave and above requires a variety of fingering systems alternative to the first two octaves and a developed lip technique. Up to eight mechanical keys can be added with the function of sounding accidentals. The addition of a key mechanism on the foot joint of the flute makes it possible to play fully chromatic scales from middle C upwards, or the equivalent range on the E ♭ , B ♭ and F pitched flutes. The flute is played transversely with the end pointing rightwards or leftwards. Right handed flute playing is the norm in this scene.

Of the twenty-seven flute players I identified as being active in different ways in the identified scene (see Appendix D), the flute most commonly owned by flute players is made by Breton luthier Gilles Léhart. Thirteen flute players owned and regularly performed on a Léhart flute. Léhart makes a variety of instruments but in the music world beyond Brittany, he is best known for his transverse wooden flutes. His flute making began in the 1987 and his flutes were popularised internationally by the use of two high profile transverse wooden flute players playing traditional or folk music, Jean Michel Veillon from Brittany, France and Michael McGoldrick from Manchester, England (both cited as major influences by many of the flute players I interviewed). In Asturias, the choice of Marcos Llope, a foundational figure amongst transverse wooden flute players in the Asturian folk revival and Celtic music scene began, to play Léhart flutes influenced other players to buy this make of flute. Further reasons for the popularity of Léhart flutes are his use of good quality materials but relatively

inexpensive pricing. His use of nickel silver rather than sterling silver key-work and brass ferrules reduces the cost of his flutes. He also has a relatively short waiting list. In the world of transverse wooden flutes, a long waiting list is taken as a sign of popularity and quality. Léhart flutes can be bought with or without keys, and are made in three or four pieces using African Blackwood (see Figure 10 below). His flutes do not have a lip plate around the embouchure hole. The absence of a lip plate is a common feature of the transverse wooden flutes played on the scene and the wider transnational transverse Celtic and folk revival wooden flute culture. In my experience, and talking to flute makers, a lip plate, although useful, would somehow be considered less authentic and outside of this transverse wooden flute culture, associating it with the Boehm system which as Williams (2020) observes in Irish traditional music is considered as "foreign-seeming" (Williams, 2020:138-139). Léhart makes flutes in the keys of D, E ♭ , E, B ♭ , C, F and G with a maximum of six keys. The nineteenth-century flutes, on which these flutes are based on, have the a foot mechanism enabling the sound of C and C♯ in the case of the D flute.

Marcos Llope is now a full time flute luthier and is no longer able to play the flute to the standard he played with Llan de Cubel, due to hand problems. In his flute design, the E ♭ or venting key is incorporated into the bottom section of the flute, enabling the sounding of E ♭ on a D flute. Whether the vent key is still used for its vent function, for tone and pitch accuracy, is something for subjecture. There were limits to what Llope was prepared to talk about regarding design and sonic qualities, which is understandable as his work is a business. In his standard design, there is no foot joint to enable the playing of C/C♯ or sounding holes apart from the end of the flute. Llope has also responded to the requirements of players

performing in Celtic and Asturian music. On the request of a flute player, David Fernández, Llope has developed removable foot joints that enable the flute player to change the flute pitch from a D flute to an E ♭ and vice versa. This negates the need for separate E ♭ and D flute for sessions with mixed repertory. The foot joint mechanism feature, based on the eighteenth and nineteenth century designs, has been replicated by some modern flute makers but adds considerable expense to the whole flute cost and is often not added. This is also because most players in this flute culture play the flute as a leisure pursuit in sessions (see Chapter 2). In this context, these notes are unlikely to be heard in the heterophony of the session and it is not a particular aesthetical component to warrant paying 'extra' for these keys. The use of and the ability to sound the bottom C♮ and C♯ on a 'D' or 'Re' flute or its equivalent notes on other pitches is usually reserved for amplified or professional performance. If a melody has a middle C♮ or the C♯ above the middle C♮ the usual practice on the flute is to play the C♮ or C♯ in the next octave. Williams observes in Irish traditional music, flute players have preference for some tunes, in particular those that do not include notes below the bottom note of the instrument (Williams, 2020:16). Flute players have to jump up an octave, resulting in some "awkward melodic lines" and a sign of virtuosity is being able to negotiate the octaval transitions with apparent ease (Williams, 2020:16). A foot joint without C♮ and C♯ keys sometimes has the sounding holes left in place where the C♮ and C♯ key pads would have operated (see Figure 10). As Léhart is the most widely used flute in Asturias, the sound of middle C/C♯ on a 'D' flute is not widely present. This sound change, the C and C♯ is sounded an octave higher, is partly shaped by the construction of the flute, the economic restrictions of the affordances of the flute, the affordances perceived by

the performer, the aesthetic priorities of performers and norms of this musical culture shaped by the above and the processes within cosmopolitan flows from and between centres of power.

In the flute culture in this scene and connected 'Celtic' and folk revival scenes, the pitch of the flutes is denoted by the note sounded with all six finger tone holes covered and the scale that can be played from that note upwards without the need for keys to sound accidentals (see Figure 10 for the D flute). In the case of the D (Re) flute, the D is D above middle C. The most common transverse wooden flute pitch types played in the scene I observed in Asturias, would be described as Re (D), Mi Bemol (E ♭), Fa (F) and Si Bemol (B ♭).

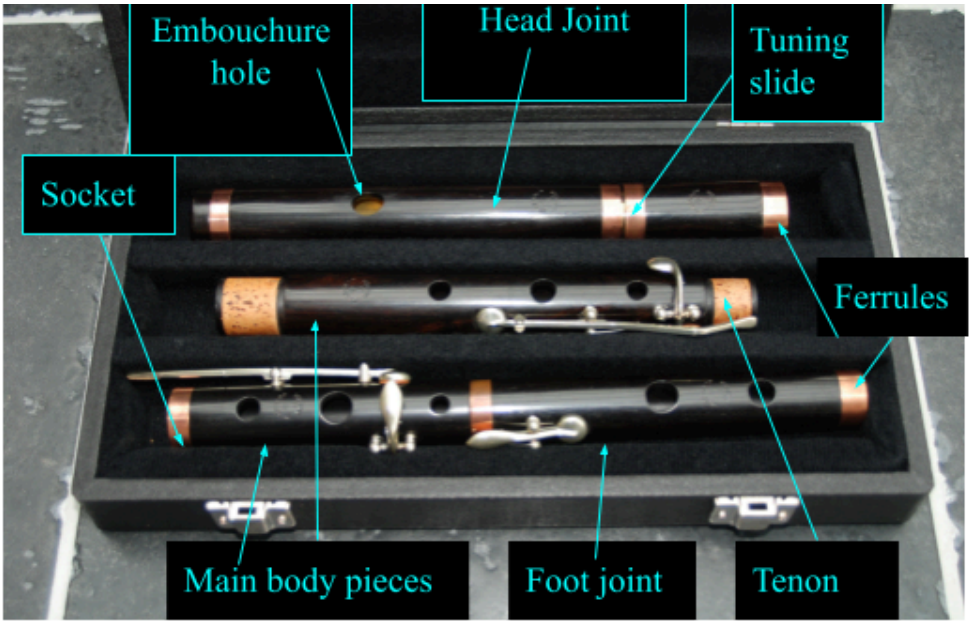


Figure 10. Giles Léhart 6 keyed transverse wooden flute in D.

The type and pitch of the flutes used in the scene are shaped to some extent by the dominant presence of the gaita. The gaita pitch and range dictated the original repertory range

(an octave and a half on a B ♭ gaita) and in the folk band performance context, the flute player adapts to the pitch of the gaita. There are several challenges to being able to play the Asturian repertory on a D flute in a style drawn from and developed around the playing of Irish traditional music repertory on this flute. From my autoethnographical perspective, when playing Irish traditional music repertory on a D flute, the keys and modes characteristic of this repertory tend to be in D, G, A Major and E minor and the only key work needed to be engaged would be G♯. Important aspects of and options for playing in this style (or styles) at speed are slurring from one note to the next and playing 'rolls' and 'crans' (types of ornamentation). The use of the instrument keys is less than desirable and in some cases impossible to achieve due to the slow responsiveness of the key mechanisms and that the sound of these techniques are reliant on the affordances of a keyless transverse wooden flute. It would also take a pedagogical approach of practising scales involving the engagement of mechanical keys, which from my experience is not part of this flute culture. The early adopters of the transverse wooden flute in the Asturian folk revival scene were self-taught and those that followed were largely self-taught or taught by those with little or no pedagogical training. There were no wooden flute players to teach fingering and optimum engagement with all aspects of the instrument. The only flutes taught in conservatories and schools were the Boehm system. It is easier to play different-pitched flutes than having a flute with keys on or developing the skill of cross-fingering technique. The quickest route to playing Asturian repertory in B ♭ for example, at speed, with necessary fluidity would be to choose a flute in a pitch that requires little or no engagement with the flute's key work. By choosing an E ♭ pitched flute, the notes E ♭ , F, and B ♭ can be sounded without the need to

engage with the flute's keys and the restrictions that this places on performance flow. The E♭, B♭ and F pitched flutes work in the same way as the D flute except they are pitched so that six fingers covered sounds the fundamental resonant pitch of the instrument. Contemporary Asturian folk flute players use flutes in the pitches of E♭, F and B♭ as well as D. The F and B♭ flutes are less commonly used. The F flute is suitable for playing with a gaita in C, with just the B♮ accidental key required.

The foot joint on a Léhart flute has one key, which sounds D# or E♭ and is closed. This key has another function as a vent to enable a clearer sound for the notes above D♮. In the international market connected to Irish traditional and Celtic music the E♭/D# key is often considered additional because of the rarity of dance tunes requiring the use of an E♭/D# key and in practice most flute players do not use the key for its venting function. However, in Asturian folk repertory the E♭/D# key becomes more significant and is considered essential rather than additional. In Asturian traditional music, the E♭/D# key was also used to add ornamentation to the music. Pepín de Muñalén links this key to Asturianess and authenticity by describing that when flutes only had one key (a Baroque flute), to trill on the E♭ key was a symbol of virtuosity when playing Asturian folk and traditional music. The use of this key in this way is not unique to Asturias but his understanding of its use in Asturian folk and traditional music constructs it as rooted and Asturian and authentic for Muñalén.

Léhart uses what he describes as a ‘Rudall and Rose” style (see Figure 10) of design. There is some discourse considering whether smaller tone and embouchure holes of this type of design, as compared with the large holes of what gets described as ‘Pratten’ style flutes, results in a quieter sound. However, this is difficult to prove and beyond the scope of this

research. The volume depends on the perception of the listener or player, the flute maker and the skills of the performer and is perhaps only pertinent in the context of being heard in an un-amplified session (see Hamilton et al 1990 and Tullberg, 2016 for more consideration of affordances and aesthetic taste).

A strong or booming Tonic note with six holes covered is a sign of virtuosity in the culture of transverse wooden flute playing in Celtic, Irish, Scottish, Breton and now Asturian transverse wooden flute playing. It demonstrates full control of the instrument. The threat to a clear bottom D comes from leaking pads on keys and lack of embouchure control. This idea of a strong D has transferred to transverse wooden flute players in the contemporary Asturian folk scene using Asturian gaita-centred pitches. If the repertory has large numbers of pieces where the Tonic or Dominant notes are E ♭ then playing a D flute results in a less than satisfactory note. Flute maker Hamilton (1990) argues that the E tone on the modern D flute is weaker than the D tone, this is a result of design compromises. If one adds in the use of an accidental key to achieve E ♭ then a strong tonic would be less likely to be sounded. Asturian flute players can achieve a stronger tonic or bottom note by using E ♭ , B ♭ and F flutes where required. This particular weakness in the design is transferred from one pitch to another. Practically, having a selection of pitches means that the owner is more likely to get the gigs (bolos) and join in on certain Jam sessions where Asturian repertory is included or is the primary purpose. However, in the L'Esperteyu session most of the flute players are playing the Asturian repertory on D flutes that have accidental keys as part of the design. This may be a reflection of the impact of the heterophony of the sound in the session context and the

community and participatory ethos of the session shaping the values and priorities attached to flute aesthetics in this context.

There are other makes of transverse wooden flute used in the Asturian context. Pepín de Muñalén (see below) plays a wide selection of flutes including a 19th-century French simple system flute made by Jean-Louis Tulou (1786–1865) and one by 19th-century English maker Richard Potter (1728-1896). I understand that the Tulou flute was the first transverse wooden flute Muñalén bought. This flute has no tuning slide, the tuning is controlled by his embouchure technique and is played in concert pitch (six holes covered sounding D but with the addition of a foot mechanism and key, the flute can be played chromatically from Middle C). Muñalén also plays an E ♭ and F flute, made by Léhart and has recently acquired a Marcos Llope flute. Llope, the former flute player with Llan de Cubel, is now a full-time transverse wooden flute luthier. I noted eight players in Asturias use his flutes. The current Llan de Cubel flute player, Borja Baragaño, has moved from playing a Llope flute to a Stephan Morvane flute made in Brittany but in his online and live performances still uses Llope flutes occasionally. It is not unusual for professional transverse wooden flute players to own a variety of makes and flute designs and for them to describe how each flute has its characteristics that are useful in different performance and recording contexts.

Performance on the transverse wooden flute in the scene is dominated by men. As described in the section on Sessions in Chapter 2, this is related to the gender division of labour in the traditions and pedagogical processes in schools of traditional music that replicate these divisions. In the last couple of years there has been a perceived increase in the number of women playing transverse wooden flutes in Asturian sessions. Andrea Joglar is a notable

exception of a woman playing this kind of flute in professional bands on the scene. Gender division in flute playing is a topic for further research

Flute players on the scene are composed of a mix of leisure players with other careers or those with a portfolio career, mixing performance, sessions and teaching with other work outside of the music related economy.

In developing a flute style, Asturian flute players, with no references to players of traditional and folk music from previous eras, had to construct a style that borrowed from other 'Celtic' traditions. Marcos Llope and his contemporaries in the scene in the 1980s and 1990s, had to settle on or develop styles for playing Asturian repertory on their respective instruments. Llope was in particular influenced by the performance style and technique of Matt Molloy, a transverse wooden flute player from performing Irish traditional music repertory. Molloy played with foundational Irish folk and traditional music bands The Chieftains, The Bothy Band and Planxty and released solo albums. He played a highly ornate style associated with the Sligo/Roscommon area (two Irish counties) or Connaught (the western province of Ireland incorporating Sligo and Roscommon) style taking elements from uilleann piping (Irish bellows blown pipes) and fiddling, and is notable for emphasising a strong bottom D and cranning (a piping ornament on the D note, see ornamentation below). Molloy notably used an E ♭ flute in his first solo commercial release, Matt Molloy (1976) but generally plays repertory on a D flute. Marcos Llope learned ornamentation by listening to recordings and working out how ornaments, phrasing and breath were executed (Llope M. Interview with author 2015). The ornamentation used by Marcos, and those who learned this from his playing, is drawn largely from Irish traditional music and the aforementioned Matt

Molloy. The origins and evolution of Irish traditional music ornamentation are complex and there is no agreement to exact definitions. Academics such as Kearney (2012) acknowledge the role of the migration experience of Irish traditional musicians in the U.S.A., the early recording industry in New York and the recordings of New York based Sligo fiddle player Michael Coleman in the 1920s as contributing to music aesthetics that go beyond the specificities or geographical location, whether region, county, town or country. In the Asturian case, recorded music from the early years of recording technology, was dominated by the gaita and Asturianda/ Tonada, driven by commercial concerns such as public taste and the export of Cider to the Asturian diaspora in the Americas (González Arias. Interview with author 2015). There were no commercial recordings or fieldwork recordings of transverse wooden flute players from previous generations.

While the next generation of Asturian transverse wooden flute players acknowledge the importance of Llope in introducing the flute into the urban folk scene in Asturias, some indicate influences outside of Asturias, but within the wider Celtic habitus, as a further inspiration. Pepín de Muñalén and Borja Baragaño (the current flute player with Llan de Cubel) cite, as well as Matt Molloy and Llope, their major influence on their flute performance as Breton flute players Jean Michel Veillon (Pepín de Muñalén, Interview with author 2016; Borja Baragaño interview with author, 2015). Baragaño in particular cites Manchester-Irish flute player Michael McGoldrick (Baragaño, Interview with author 2015). Jean Michel Veillon is a transverse wooden flute player from the Brittany region of France. He became well known on the international folk revival and Celtic music circuit through the groups Kornog and Den. In the early 1970s Patrick Molard and Alain Kloat'r were the first to

use this instrument in the Breton revival (Wilkinson, 2016:99). Jean Michel Veillon, originally a bombarde player, popularised the concept of playing Breton repertory on this type of flute. When Veillon, originally began to teach himself the flute there was no tradition of transverse wooden flute playing in traditional music in Brittany to draw upon (Veillon, J.M. 2024). He was influenced by Matt Molloy from the Chieftains and also spent time in Ireland listening to flute players around the country (Veillon, J.M. 2024). He adopted ornamentation from Irish traditional music, in particular Matt Molloy (Veillon, J.M. 2024). Veillon described how at the start of his playing journey he considered what the possibilities of this instrument were beyond the music of Matt Molloy and the other flute players he came across from Ireland (Veillon J.M. 2024). He also questioned how he could shape Breton repertory to the affordances and possibilities of this flute (Veillon J.M. 2024). Breton repertory is mainly played over one and a half octaves and this is shaped by the affordances of the binou and bombarde instruments (Veillon, J.M. 2024). Veillon experimented with harmonics and playing the flute in its third octave through a mixture of harmonics and cross-fingering. The third octave is used very much in Irish or Scottish traditional music flute performance. He used extended flute technique from jazz music, such as glissando, breathing techniques and use of air such as retaining air through extended cheeks and letting it out to vary volume. He also notably uses trills in his playing. These particular techniques have been incorporated into the playing of Muñalén and Baragaño, particularly more so in an amplified concert performance than a session context.

Phil Smilie, the flute player with the influential Tannahill Weavers, is not cited in particular but his band the Tannahill Weavers were and are by numerous field sources. Smilie is an

interesting example of a transverse wooden flute player starting to play folk music, in his case, on the transverse wooden flute in the folk revivals connected to Celtic identity. He recorded his first album with Tannahill Weavers on the Boehm flute in 1976 and then moved onto the wooden flute. Like Llope and Veillon, Smilie had no flute tradition that he was aware of to connect with and learn from and drew his style from Irish traditional music players. The influence of Jean Michel Veillon challenges the construct I often came across in Asturias of complete influential hegemony of Irish traditional music on this culture and suggests influences are complex and nonlinear. Turino's idea of Cosmopolitan loops goes some way to describing the movement of culture and influence connected to Celtic transverse wooden flute culture. It starts in Ireland with Matt Molloy playing a style that is in many ways cosmopolitan. For example Irish traditional music is shaped and influenced by gramophone recordings of Irish musicians in the USA. Jean Michel Veillon is influenced by Matt Molloy through the prism of modern commercialised Celtic music marketed as Celtic and traditional. Veillon invents Breton flute style which influences the players going through a similar process of invention. Growing up with Michael McGoldrick I have often heard him cite his transverse wooden flute influences as Matt Molloy and Jean Michel Veillon. The influence of Veillon is felt in the north of Ireland as flute players there conceptualised a 'northern style' in the 1970s onwards. Northern flute player Davey McGuire suggests that Veillon had a big influence in the development of a 'northern' flute style In Ireland in the 1980s (McGuire D. 2022). In each place the players add their rootedness to the innovation through use of local repertory and searching for remnants of old flute styles, challenging hegemonic centres of power.

Further to the descriptions in Chapter 3, flute pedagogy has developed from the self taught process of Marcos Llope to private teaching and through the Schools of Traditional Music attached to gaita bands Ethnographic research and performance groups. There is no formal state related structure in Asturias for learning transverse wooden flute and in particular traditional repertory. According to Borja, Pepín was self taught as was he to a certain extent. Diego Pangua was taught on Boehm system by Baldomero Gutierrez Huerta, as well as learning gaita from his own father Pedro Pangua.

The application of techniques from outside of Asturias by Asturian flute players to Asturian repertory is an example of rooted cosmopolitanism. Asturian flute players from Marcos Llope onwards use ornamentation largely from Irish traditional music flute performance in the absence of any role models to learn from. The following are basic descriptions of the types of ornamentation used by Asturian folk flute players. A 'cut' is sounded by disturbing a tone, quickly lifting and replacing one finger from a hole above the last hole covered necessary to sound the tone. For example, playing the note E on a D flute, requires 5 fingers placed on consecutive tone holes from the head-end downwards. To cut, any one of the fingers can be lifted and replaced to achieve the effect. The purpose of the cut can be decorative, rhythmic, to emphasise an accented note or to distinguish two notes of equal pitch (see Hamilton et al, 1990: Keegan, 2010). The term used by Asturian flute players for the ornament, corte, is the same in both Castilian and Asturian. The description of the ornament varies from player to player and the influence level of formal musical training on the flute and other instruments. Cuts were variously described as cortes por arriba (above cuts) or *corte purriba* in Asturian , these can be played once or repeated in a single moment of ornamentation of a note, cortes

por abaxu (cuts below) or mordentes (mordents) and ulsación was also used. The ‘tap’ or ‘pat’ ornament is sounded by quickly covering and uncovering the tone hole below the last covered hole. For example, when playing a G, three fingers on, you would pat or tap on the fourth hole. As with other elements of ornamentation, in this context, there is no absolute agreement on terminology. el golpe and corte por abajo were used in the field. In Irish traditional music, it is also called a lower cut, pat, strike or tip (Hamilton et al, 1990: Münevver, Ali-MacLachlan, Kearney, and Jančovič, 2019). However, a pat can describe a double tap (Keegan, 2010: Münevver, Ali-MacLachlan, Kearney, and Jančovič, 2019).

A roll is an ornament used by the players taken from Irish traditional music. The Asturian musicians use the English language term ‘roll’. The name of the ornament has not been Asturianised in the flute context. This is probably because, unlike the pat and cut, there was no equivalent in gaita culture. A roll usually lasts for a dotted crotchet or crotchet, although shorter rolls are used to. The diagram below demonstrates the fingering pattern of an E roll on a D flute. To sound an E roll the player must first cover the top five finger holes to sound a clear F# (i). The second finger down from the mouth end is lifted and replaced (a cut) (ii & iii). A tap is then played at speed (iv &v) on the tone hole furthest from the head. The purpose of the roll is mainly rhythmic. The speed at which the finger opens and closes the whole and reverting to the main note means the sonic focus will be on the main or original note played. The tapped note is executed at such speed that it could be argued that it is not a true tone or semitone, but as with the cut, its purpose is rhythmical and the focus is on the

main tone or semitone of the roll.

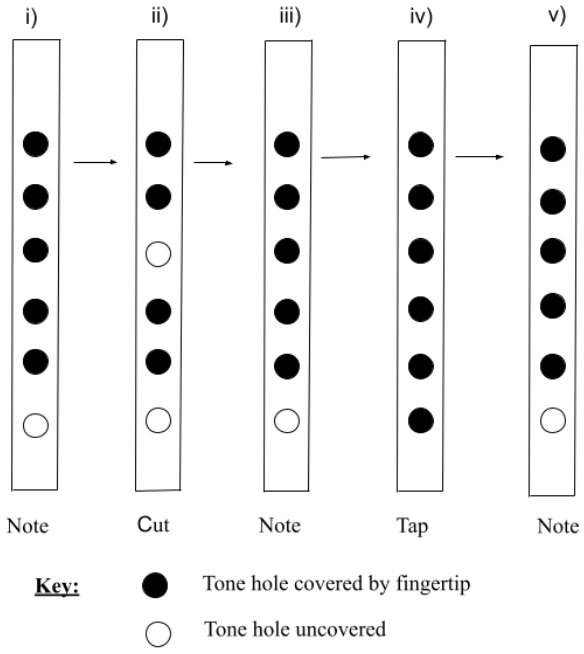


Figure 11. Fingering for an 'E' roll ornament on a 'D' transverse wooden flute.

The cut and pat component of the roll can be placed towards the beginning of the roll with a slightly longer tone at the end or vice versa. I was not aware of or did not come across discourse of the minutiae of the different types of roll in my discussions with flute players in Asturias. This would be an area for future research. The roll is used similarly by Asturian and Irish traditional music flute players when playing Irish or Asturian repertory. I noted they were used across the different forms of dance repertory when played in folk revival bands and session contexts. Slurs or bends are achieved by moving the finger across the bottom tone hole being sounded and slurred from. The Castilian term for this is la ligadura, the Asturian is

la lligadura. The cran, is an ornament played on the note sounded with all six fingers covered, for example, a D on a D flute, where a roll is impossible to play due to no further notes available to tap on. It is a roll with a cut replacing the tap. There are different approaches to this ornament. Some players cut with the same finger e.g. the fifth hole down, some people vary this with a cut on the third followed and then the fifth hole. There are no exact rules to how this should be achieved, if it sounds correct the technique does not matter so much. The musicians in Asturias use the Irish term ‘cran’.

Tonguing technique is used to articulate notes and ornaments by Asturian folk flute players in several ways. Generally, it is achieved by moving the tip of the tongue to the roof of the mouth just behind the front teeth. The quick repetition of this movement is called triple tonguing. Tonguing can be placed at the beginning of cuts and rolls to accentuate the ornament. They are also used to create a staccato effect, reflecting or echoing the staccato sound of the closed finger system of the Asturian gaita. Tonguing is particularly useful when playing in the second or third register. Triple tonguing creates a roll- type rhythmic sound. Glottals are also used to accentuate the note, this is used to provide a softer sound than a tongued accentuation. It is achieved by restricting the airflow in the throat, similar to a light cough. It was not always possible to define whether the flute player was using tonguing or glottal technique.

Pepín de Muñalén uses trills in his performance; some sources in the field identified it as a marker of authenticity, linking to older flute player styles (Suárez, R. and Luaces, S.

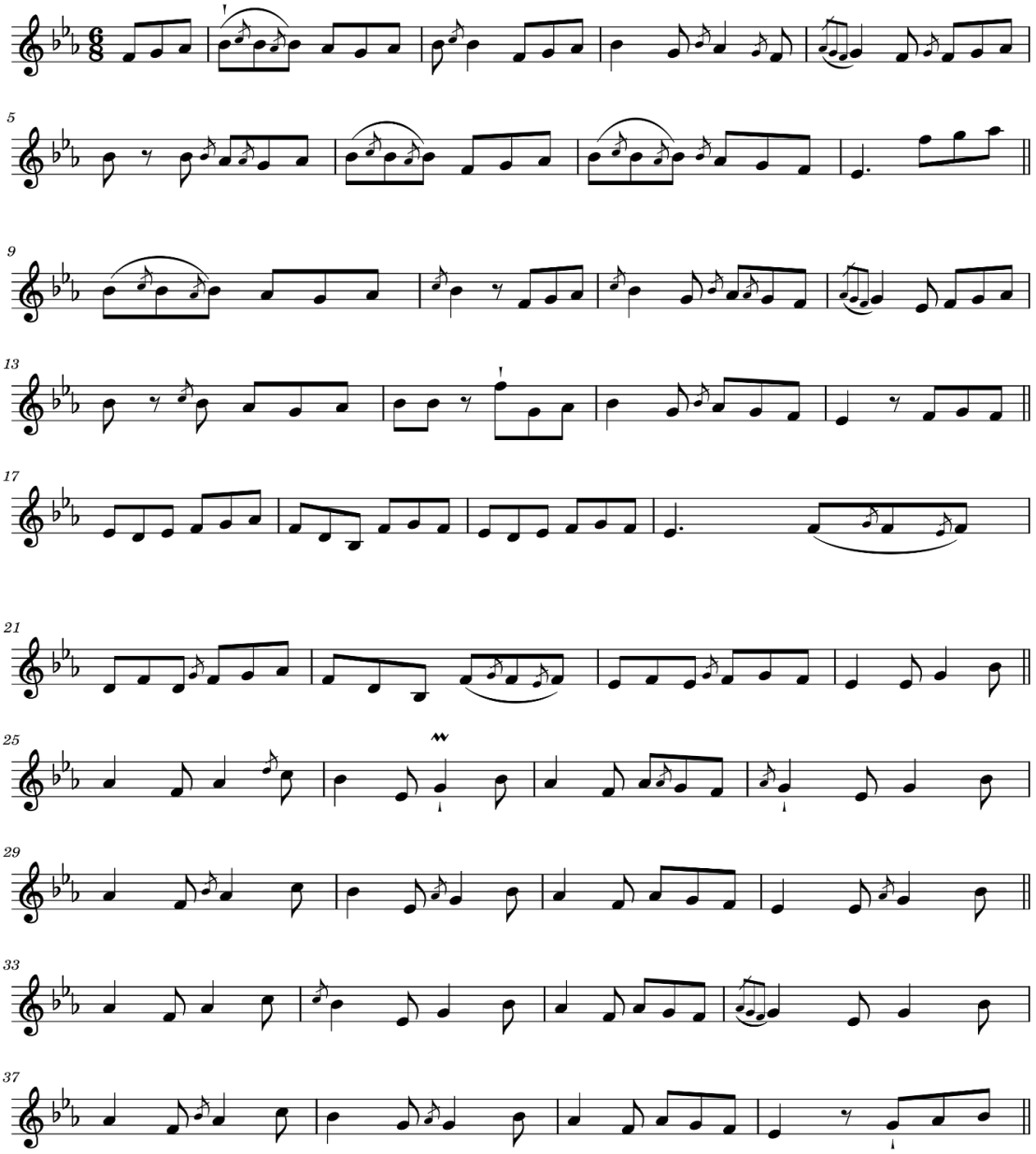
Interviews with author 2016). The trill is not unique to Asturian music and is used in the music of the groups that influenced the musicians in the scene, in particular the Chieftains.

Harmonics are used by some flute players in the scene, in particular by Pepín de Muñalén (see section on the influence of Jean Michel Veillon). These are achieved by adjusting the embouchure to sound the note. A range of up to seven octaves above the note being shaped by the fingering arrangement is theoretically possible, although, in the Asturian context, the third octave is usually the limit. It is used normally when playing with a vocalist to provide contrast and play about the vocal line. The third register notes can also be achieved with cross-fingering configurations but have a different sound quality. These are used by some flute players in concert settings but rarely in session settings, Pepín de Muñalén being an exception in session settings.

The affordances of the flute mean that how the music is phrased must be approached differently to performance on the gaita. The flute requires taking breaths and where these are taken impacts on flow and phrasing of the music. The repertory shaped by gaita does not have this consideration, wind can be pumped continuously and that gaita can continue to sound when the player has stopped blowing. The tunes can be played continuously on the gaita whereas the flute is not an option. In Irish traditional flute playing, from where flute players in this scene take their understanding of phrasing, phrasing and placing breaths are an important part of style (see Keegan 2010). Players vary the placing of breaths, in particular away from the end of phrases or parts to create a flowing sound that provides the illusion that the flute player is not taking breaths, this is referred to as ‘playing across the bar’. If the breath is taken at the end of the phrase or part when playing Asturian music, this creates

tension as the anacrusis is placed where what would be conceptualised as the end of the part in Irish traditional music.

Figure 12 is a transcription of a performance on the transverse wooden flute by Diego Pangua with his band Felpeyu. This demonstrates how one player approaches the use of some of these techniques. The piece is an Asturian dance Muñere de Pepe de Güele. It was performed in Gijón as part of the n'Alcordanza memorial concerts in 2016. In bar 1 Pangua uses a roll immediately after the anacrusis. He emphasises the downbeat by hardening the roll with a single-tongued accent. A roll is placed similarly in Bar 47. He uses shorter rolls at the start of bars 4, 12, 36, 44 and 76. Cuts are used liberally throughout the piece with a highly ornate series of three cut quavers in bar 79. He uses a double tap or pat in bar 75. A glissando bend upwards is employed in bars 48 to 49 from E ♭ to F and in bar 52 in a downwards motion from Ab to G. An accented mordent is played in bar 26. At points in the performance he pushes the note to break up towards the next octave, bars 8 on the F#GA and 14 on the F#.



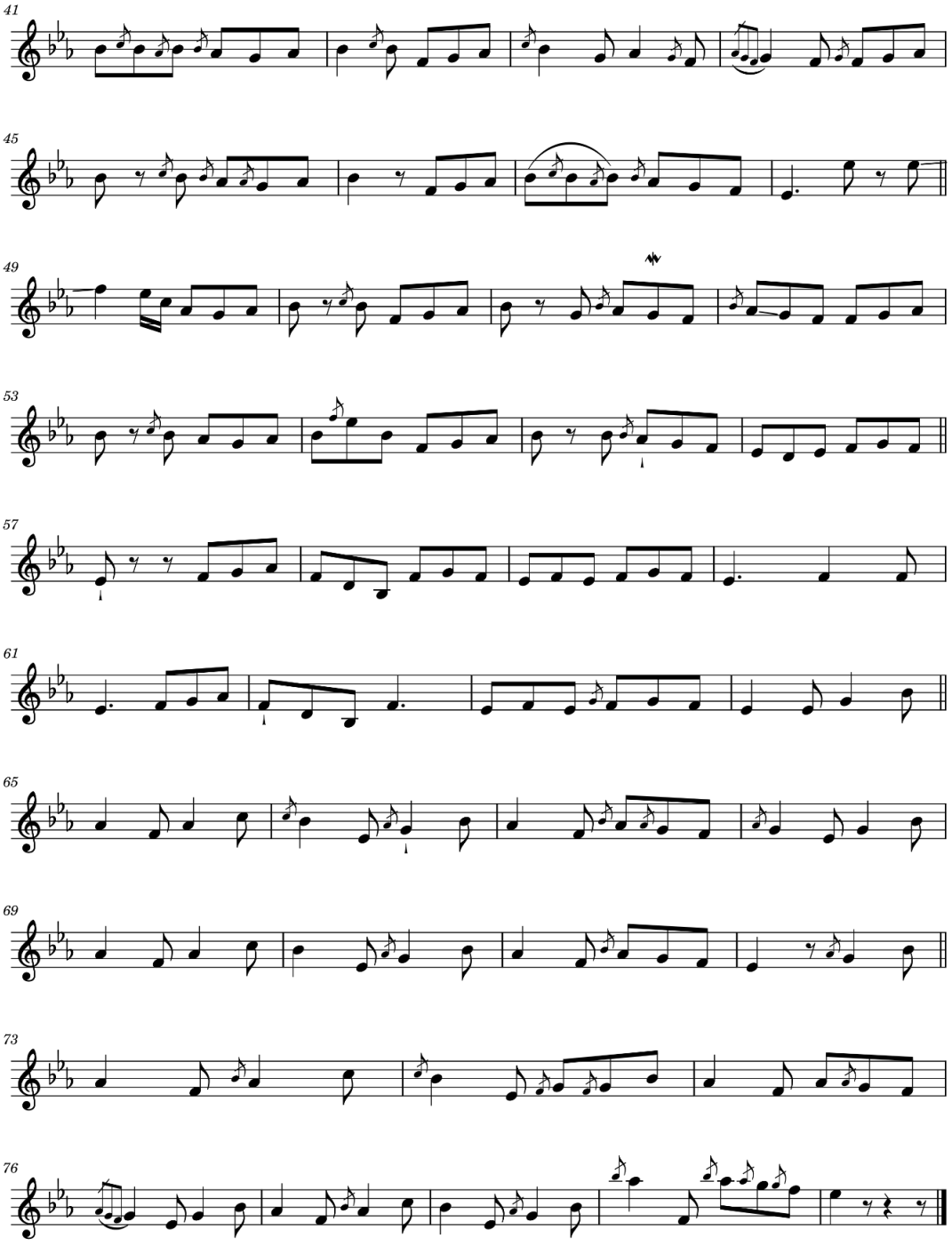


Figure 12. Muñere de Pepe de Güele performance by Diego Pangua, 26th June 2016.

The use of Irish traditional music ornamentation is an example of how Asturian folk and traditional music repertory has been adapted for performance on the transverse wooden flute. The repertory is sometimes transposed into keys suitable for playing on the D flute and the need to engage keywork. This happens in sessions, particularly if flute players who play mainly on a D flute have a dominant presence in the session. As the session has a community function and is in essence participatory, transposition into keys that will include more participants is another incentive. This encourages the inclusion of less advanced musicians, more familiar with keys more suitable for the D flute or tin whistle and other instrumentalists used to the Celtic hegemonic paradigm of D, G A and E minor. As with the use of D flutes without foot mechanism mentioned earlier, this tonal shift up from keys suited for B, B ♭ and C gaita results in notes that would have been sounded, B and B ♭ below middle C and the note middle C are no longer sounded on the flute. Flute players play these notes in the octave above. This tonal shift upwards and range extension is further shaped by the conceptualisation from a Celtic flute player's perspective that the music range starts at D above middle C and works across two octaves as opposed to the octave and half range shaped by the gaita. By moving into the third octave, Muñalén and Baragaño further shape and stretch the sonic possibilities of what Asturian Celtic and folk revival music can sound like.

The repertory and overall musical aesthetic of Asturian folk and traditional music are further changed or shaped by the affordances of the flute. The legato and staccato possibilities of the transverse wooden flute open up the option of playing legato and the staccato dictated by the closed-fingered Asturian gaita. The affordance of the ability to control the flow of breath almost immediately allows opportunities for phrasing music differently, breaths can be taken

in different places and used to create a flowing style or placed as a rhythmic device. In a folk revival band context, the gaita tends to take primacy in the arrangements for the reasons mentioned previously. The repertory is shaped by the gaita therefore more so than the flute. Flutes are not usually the lead instrument.

From the 2000s onwards smaller band units gave more space to demonstrate virtuosity of instrumentalists and reconceptualise, in the case of Tuenda trio, how Asturian traditional song could be represented (see Chapter 5 on the move away from the Celtic aesthetic). Two of the bands that came from this current, DRD featuring Baragaño, and Tuenda featuring Muñalén, provided arrangements that gave more prominence to the flute and its possibilities as a virtuosic instrument. In the arrangements for these two bands, the flute players engaged the ornamentation learned from Irish traditional music but added the use of the third octave above middle C, glissando, triple tonguing and harmonics. This sound being made by these groups and the treatment of the repertory was to a greater extent being shaped by the transverse wooden flute.

Performance on the transverse wooden flute shapes repertorial choice and repertory canonisation performed by other flute players and by extension players of other instruments in the scene. In the case of Llan de Cubel, the performance of Llope and Baragaño have inspired other flute players into performing these tunes and sets. This evidenced in sessions I participated in when the flute players played Llan de Cubel sets of tunes. Flute players in the scene state that the presence of flute players in bands are inspirational for other flute players. They associate with the band and repertory more because the flute is in the line-up. The affordances of the flute do not affect repertorial choice so much as the flute can handle the

repertory by engaging with accidentals or by owning a different pitch of flute. The repertorial choice of flute players is shaped more so by the treatment of repertory associated with the Celtic flute culture that came with the instrument and the folk revival aesthetic. Critically how sets of pieces were arranged in this culture influence how and what flute players choose. As mentioned previously, the arrangement of sets of jigs and reels was reflected in the arrangements of muñeiras and saltones rather and less familiar genres incongruous to this format, such as the jota, were left out.

4.5 Analysis

Drawing on fieldwork interviews, observations, participant observation as a flute player, and literature on revival organology and Celticity, this analysis explores how flute players, other musicians, audiences and commentators construct meaning around flute performance. The transverse wooden flute is examined in relation to Asturian folk and Celtic music, and its role in constructing Asturian identity. Flute performance in this scene exemplifies rooted cosmopolitanism, situated within what Turino describes as cosmopolitan loops. A Celtic paradigm was constructed around Asturian folk music, and the flute became a key instrument through which musicians engaged with this paradigm. Performance practices were shaped by Irish traditional music and related flute cultures, including ornamentation techniques. In engaging with Celticity from the north, musicians expressed identities distinct from Spanishness, particularly as defined during the Franco era.

The transverse wooden flute is also being recontextualised as indigenous and authentic within Asturian folk traditions. Organological features such as foot joints and trills reflect both the

material affordances of the instrument and the aesthetic priorities of performers, shaped by cosmopolitan flows and localised understandings of authenticity. Marcos Llope's adaptation of the flute illustrates rooted cosmopolitanism. By incorporating the entire foot joint into one piece with the bottom three finger holes, he Asturianised the transverse wooden flute. This modification aligned the instrument with the requirements of Asturian folk repertory, embedding cosmopolitan borrowings within localised practice.

The choice of flute types and pitches reflects both rooted and cosmopolitan influences. The dominant presence of the gaita shaped flute pitch preferences, while Irish flute pedagogy and modal structures influenced practice, where scales and accidentals were less emphasised. Playing flutes pitched outside of D could signify seriousness about Asturian repertory and distinguish Asturian practice from Celtic flute culture. The design limitations of simple system flutes, combined with aurally learned practice, reinforced these tendencies. Playing an E flat flute, for example, could be read as moving away from the hegemony of Irish tradition.

A significant development in the Asturian folk scene was the move from Boehm system flutes to transverse wooden flutes in the late 1980s and 1990s. Llan de Cubel's flute player Llope switched to the wooden flute early in the band's trajectory, motivated by its timbre. In Beleño's 2024 reconfigured lineup, Muñalén was chosen to play transverse wooden flute, signalling its growing association with Asturian authenticity. The re-recording of Na Ca'l Fuau replaced highland pipes with Asturian gaita, reflecting a deliberate move towards a more Asturian aesthetic. This transition highlights how instrument choice became a marker of identity and authenticity within revival contexts.

Asturian flute players applied external techniques to local repertory, another example of rooted cosmopolitanism. In Ireland, style is often linked to individuals, with mass media shaping perceptions of tradition. In Brittany, flute players initially adopted a generic Irish style before developing a distinct Breton aesthetic focused on phrasing and timbre. In Asturias, similar processes unfolded, with ornamentation and stylistic borrowings adapted to local repertory, sustaining dance momentum and shaping ensemble dialogue. Instrumental hierarchies within Asturian folk ensembles reflect broader identity negotiations. The flute's position relative to the gaita and other instruments demonstrates how cosmopolitan borrowings are re-embedded within local frameworks of authenticity and Asturianidad.

4.6 Conclusion

The transverse wooden flute has become integral to the contemporary Asturian folk revival. Its performance influences repertory treatment through pitch, ornamentation and stylistic shifts, transforming musical textures from staccato to legato. Ornamentation practices combine the affordances of the flute with stylistic transfers from outside Asturias, producing hybridised yet locally grounded aesthetics and becoming part of the Asturian Celtic and folk music revival palette.

The trajectory of flute style in Asturias cannot be understood as a linear Celtic arc, moving from Matt Molloy in Ireland, via Marcos Llope in Asturias, to subsequent generations. Instead, it reflects a complex web of international circulations shaped by political identity, cultural paradigms and market forces. Asturian flute practice exemplifies both Turino's cosmopolitan loops (Turino 2000) and Appiah's rooted cosmopolitanism (Appiah 1997) .

Transnational or ‘global’ borrowings are re-embedded within local contexts, producing a distinctive Asturian musical identity that is simultaneously cosmopolitan and rooted.

5. Recontextualising the Transverse Wooden Flute in Twenty-First Century Musical Asturianidad

This chapter asks how, and if, performance on the transverse wooden flute within the contemporary Asturian Celtic and folk revival scene reflects the development and evolution of constructs of musical Asturianidad in the twenty-first century. Its purpose is to chart the significant cultural shifts that have shaped musical Asturianidad during this period, focusing on the interconnected folk and traditional subgenres in which I was immersed, and to consider whether the flute has been recontextualised within these changes.

In many contexts the flute's role has remained stable, continuing to function within established revival aesthetics. Yet for some performers there has been a reconsideration, and at times a movement away from Celtic and folk revival frameworks. These shifts were influenced by the liminal position of Asturias within the Celtic world and by the impact of cultural infrastructure following the 2008 financial crisis. At the same time, uses of Asturian traditional repertory within a new rural current intertwining Asturianidad and translocal connections (García Flórez and Martínez 2020) aesthetic emerged as part of the *culture of everyone* (*cultura de cualquiera*) that developed in response to the crisis (Álvarez Sancho 2022). This ethos emphasised inclusivity and collective participation, and it intersected with feminist movements in Asturias.

Through the lens of the work of Ambás, and drawing on ethnographic experiences at relevant events, I show how the flute has been recontextualised in particular ways that illuminate the ongoing evolution of musical Asturianidad. Building on Turino's work on cosmopolitanism (2000) and Appiah's notion of rooted cosmopolitanism (1997), I argue that flute performance in this context exemplifies a form of rooted Celtic cosmopolitanism. The sedimented layers of past musical expressions of Asturianidad (San Martín 1998) are performed through a pragmatic yet often contradictory musical bricolage (Bohlman 1988), from which musical Asturianidad continues to be constructed.

Focusing more closely on Ambás and Pepín de Muñalén, who perform together in the Asturian band Tuenda, I show that the flute is recontextualised as an Asturian instrument through Pepín's performance. This is evident both in Tuenda's repertory and in the theme music for Ambás's television programme El Camín. By contrast, the flute is absent and marginal in the Nueche en danza scene, where voice and pandereta are prominent and the music is reconnected with its dance function. These differences highlight how the instrument's role varies across contexts. I then show how the concurrent scenes interconnect at two events, the Intercélticu in Avilés and Llar Fest, where Ambás places the flute within the habitus he constructs. In these settings, the flute becomes a marker of Asturianidad, revealing how selective recontextualisations illuminate the ongoing evolution of musical identity.

5.1 The perceived continuity of the flute in Asturias

This tension between continuity and recontextualisation is echoed in local understandings of authenticity. Asturian flute player and gaiteru Diego Pangua captured this in a saying used to request a highly traditional performance from a gaita player: “Tocas una algo que güel a cuchu,” meaning “play something that reeks of manure” (interview with author, 19 June 2016). This request equates authenticity with rurality. Rurality has long been constructed as the locus of authenticity in national identity, a principle rooted in Herder’s articulation of the volk (Boyes G. 1993) and within this paradigm, the construction of authentic culture and essence of the nation are located among rural people (Harker D. 1985). The invocation of “güel a cuchu” is complex, depending on how authenticity is understood in relation to Asturian identity and wider transnational notions of folk tradition. It may signify virtuosity and innovation, or the skilled delivery of “parameters of style” (Keegan 2010). It may also refer to performance as dance music, a simple and natural style, or content that is familiar and comforting. Alternatively, it might denote repertory recognisable as belonging, and lacking the sterility of urban space and the Celtic influence of Scottish and Irish bagpipes and pipe band culture.

This complexity underpins a cultural moment in Asturias since the turn of the twenty first century, in which traditional repertory has been relocated both literally and metaphorically in rurality. At this moment, Asturianidad is being renegotiated through cultural and political expression and through the location of performance. Cosmopolitan aesthetics are mixed with rooted expressions of rural power and Asturian identity that, as San Martín proposed,

articulate new sediments of previous nodes of Asturianidad (San Martín 1998). These sedimentary layers include the Celtic and folk revival of the 1980s, the wider Anglo American influenced post war folk revival, Franco's folclórica and the Sección Femenina, and earlier revivals inspired by Romantic nationalism and Herderian constructions of the volk, rurality, purity, and authenticity. The culture of everyone provides the framework through which these sediments are re-articulated, emphasising inclusivity and collective ownership of tradition in the twenty-first century.

The recontextualisations of the flute and the broader negotiations of Asturianidad unfolded within a shifting socio-economic landscape. Musical and cultural developments did not occur in isolation but were deeply entangled with wider structural changes in Asturias and Spain. One of the most significant influences on societal change in Asturias during the early twenty first century was the global economic crisis of 2008–2014, which led to a severe recession in Spain (Elipe X. 2020 205; Álvarez-Sáncho 2022). The decade preceding the recession is described by Elipe (2021, 205) as the "gran época de la música asturiana nel momento actual" ("the great era of Asturian music in the current moment"), a period of innovation and development that, from some perspectives I encountered in the field, was prematurely curtailed by the recession and the dismantling of economic and cultural infrastructure (Álvarez-Sáncho 2022; Elipe 2021 205; González Arias. Interview with author 2015). The aftermath of this grand epoch and the collapse of infrastructure formed the context in which I carried out my fieldwork from 2015 onwards, shaping the discursive themes surrounding folk and traditional musics and Asturianidad that I encountered during the research process.

5.2 Turning points and looking back

Until the economic crisis, most folk and Celtic performances in Asturias were free and staged in public spaces as part of Fiesta or Noche Celta. Musicians recalled that paid work was plentiful in this period, though quantity did not always equate to quality. By the 2000s, however, Celtismu had begun to lose currency: the Celtic label became unfashionable, and opportunities to perform diminished. This contraction gave musicians space to reflect on their practice, its purpose, and its connection to Asturian identity.

Several expressed dissatisfaction with aspects of Celtic and folk revival music, questioning its place as an integral marker of identity. As explored in the case study on Ambás below, some came to view Celtic music less as a living tradition than as a formative stage in the broader development of Asturian folk. Others remained comfortable with the aesthetics of Celtismu and the cultural and economic connections it continued to provide, adopting a pragmatic stance.

This shift away from Celtic identity mirrors developments in other regions: Wilkinson (2016) notes a similar decline in Breton music and dance. Yet Celtic identity retains resonance in diasporic contexts, particularly in the United States, where it continues to serve as a popular cultural construct.

In response to the economic crisis, a mass grassroots protest movement emerged in Spain on 15 May 2011: the 15M movement, also known as Indignados (the Indignant). It channelled widespread disillusionment with politics and frustration at high unemployment (Flesher Fominaya 2020). Austerity measures deepened inequality, exacerbated by cuts to public

services, and these effects were felt in the Asturian cultural industries. The movement demanded an end to corruption and austerity, campaigning for social justice and greater grassroots democracy. It inspired a wave of activism and led to the formation of the left-wing political party Podemos (Flesher Fominaya 2020).

15M reshaped civic discourse, encouraging a "climate" of conversation and listening (Fernández-Savater 2012), and introduced terms such as horizontalism, networked activism, and precariat into wider societal awareness (Barbas and Postill 2017; Flesher Fominaya 2020). Moreno-Caballud (2015) argued that the movement exemplified a shift towards collaborative, non-hierarchical forms of cultural production that challenged the elitism of Spain's intellectual neoliberalism, what he termed the "cultures of everyone", a form of radical inclusivity. He viewed 15M as a democratising process rooted in everyday practices and peer-to-peer networks.

Feminist and queer organisations were a critical part of 15M's organising and protest camps (see Gómez Nicolau 2023 on feminist camps; Trujillo Barbadillo 2018 on queer assemblies), although members of these groups faced homophobia and sexism within the movement (Gómez Nicolau 2023; Trujillo Barbadillo 2018). In 2019, the 8M feminist strikes employed digital activism and networking characteristic of 15M (Reverter and Medina Vicent 2022), although the genealogy of feminist and queer organising predates 15M (Trujillo Barbadillo 2019), with milestones such as the decriminalisation of homosexuality in 1979 and the legalisation of same-sex marriage in 2005.

Feeding into the current of rural organising and action, the construct of a new rural tendency had been developing in the late twentieth century. Going against the pattern of rural emptying, this new rural tendency in Spain had some impact on Asturian culture and rural living. This rural counter culture, with its emphasis on self help and local organising, figures prominently in the development of folk and traditional related music genres in Asturias after 2008, exemplified by folk agitator Rodrigo Cuevas and earlier subcultures such as Los Hippies of the 1980s (Ablanedo, interview with author, 2015). The European back to the land movement of the 1960s and 1970s reached Spain later, exemplified in literary subgenres and migration movements (Álvarez Sancho 2022, 68). Earlier waves of neo ruralist urban migrants balanced idealised visions of rurality with practical innovation (Fernández Álvarez et al. 2025; Vizuete et al. 2024). What Holleran (1994) describes as Spain's lost generation turned to rural living as a response to economic instability as well as idealism.

While not the central focus of this thesis, gender remains an important consideration, reflecting recent shifts in the scene that intersect with feminist activism and changing patterns of participation. These developments include increased visibility of women in leadership roles, evolving repertory choices, and broader challenges to patriarchal norms within revivalist discourse. Although this thesis does not offer a sustained gender analysis, it acknowledges the significance of these changes and their implications for musical agency and symbolic authority in Asturian folk revival and traditional music. Women increasingly challenged male hegemony in Celtic and folk revival contexts, particularly in relation to roles traditionally assigned to them. Within many revival settings, women were often positioned as singers or percussionists, with instruments such as the pandereta dismissed as not proper

instruments (Baselgas L. Interview with author 2016) and therefore marginalised within hierarchies of musical value. By asserting themselves as performers in their own right, women contested these gendered constraints and reframed the symbolic significance of their contributions. Their presence as singers, percussionists, and instrumentalists destabilised the assumption that authority in Celtic, folk revival and traditional music was inherently male, opening up space for new interpretations of authenticity and tradition.

Leticia Baselgas, panderetera, singer and scholar, coined the term post‑folk to articulate her artistic and intellectual journey through Asturian musical tradition. Rather than rejecting folclórica, she reimagines it not as a fixed canon but as a living and malleable language. Post‑folk becomes a feminist and decolonial gesture, reclaiming the pandereta from its symbolic marginalisation and re‑situating it as a vehicle for both personal and collective expression (Quintanal 2024). Baselgas emphasises that she does not abandon tradition; instead, she reclaims it on her own terms, stripping away institutionalised expectations and gendered constraints (Quintanal 2024). Her practice resonates with wider disciplinary calls to decolonise ethnomusicology (Mackinlay 2016) and with feminist ethnographic approaches that emphasise collaborative knowledge production (Babb and Jeranko 2024).

Within Asturias, these gestures align with what Álvarez‑Sancho (2022) identifies as part of the *culture of everyone*, a democratisation of cultural authority that echoes Moreno‑Caballud's (2015) cultures of anyone. García‑Flórez and Martínez (2021) similarly highlight how Asturian rural musical practices negotiate locality and transnationality, situating Baselgas and her contemporaries within broader cultural currents. In this light, the post‑folk generation recontextualises the revival of a lived past while simultaneously

interrogating the assumptions of earlier revivals and the authority of experts. My own fieldwork revealed how musicians often deferred to "experts," suggesting that the construct of expertise continues to shape participation even as post‑folk practices destabilise it.

This generational shift involves a conscious distancing, by some, from the "modern" groups of the previous era (Barreiro 2019). It also reflects dissatisfaction with aspects of Celtic and folk revival music, whose work is rejected by some and critically reinterpreted by others (Álvarez‑Sancho 2022). At the same time, the post‑folk generation continues to implement what Barreiro (2019) described as the "third revolution of Asturian folk," co‑opting tradition in new ways and blending purism with innovation. In doing so, they embody both Baselgas's feminist reclamation of the *pandereta* (Quintanal 2024) and the wider ethos of "cultures of anyone" (Moreno‑Caballud 2015), asserting a distinctive identity that is rooted in Asturian tradition yet critically engaged with its historical trajectories.

5.3 Blended purism

The notion of "blended purism" is articulated by Asturian singer Un de Grao, who considers how traditional repertory should be treated in contemporary practice (Álvarez‑Sancho 2022). He explains that post‑folk groups often use entire traditional songs, preserving their melodic integrity while blending them with rhythm or harmony from genres outside folk and traditional musics. For him, this respect for the whole song constitutes a purist perspective. By contrast, he critiques Celtic and folk revival groups for fragmenting songs, taking only parts of the melody and "adding that traditional element as a bridge between phrases" (Álvarez‑Sancho 2022, 71). From his standpoint, additions such as harmony can be

accommodated within tradition precisely because they emerge from a purist respect for the song, allowing him to describe his music as twenty-first-century traditional.

The conceptualisation of blended purism and the problematisation of Celtic and folk revival music encapsulate some of the tensions and paradoxes in the work of Ambás, one of the most high-profile advocates for reconsidering traditional repertory and recontextualising it as rural, Asturian, and yet pan-Hispanic. A musician, broadcaster, and folklore collector, Ambás develops a discourse of Asturianidad that invokes concepts of purity, critiquing Celtic and revival bands while simultaneously drawing on and accommodating some of the very aesthetics he critiques. As Bohlman (1988) has argued, this process of borrowing and remaking exemplifies the complexity of constructing folk music as bricolage, a theme I return to later in the chapter.

Central to this recontextualisation is the transverse wooden flute, which plays a key role in the performance of Tuenda, the ensemble in which Ambás was a prominent member, and features prominently in the theme music of his broadcasting output. Ambás has been one of the driving forces in reevaluating Asturian traditional repertory in the twenty first century, shaping a cultural turn away from northern Celtismu and folk revival aesthetics. Although his primary occupation is nursing, he has been an activist and performer in the Asturian folk and traditional music scene since the 1990s, engaging with, rejecting, and reworking elements of Celtic and folk revival culture within his current habitus. His life experience straddles the tension between growing up in a rural space and living in an urban environment, being openly gay, and campaigning for recognition of the language he grew up speaking.

In the 1990s he performed as a singer and instrumentalist, playing Highland pipes, Asturian *gaita*, and low whistles with the folk revival band N'Arba. He was also a founding member of Tuenda, alongside flute player Pepín de Muñalén and bouzouki player Elías García (1968–2019). Beyond ensemble work, Ambás has been a leading figure behind *Les Nueches en Danza*, rural-based folk dance events. He is widely recognised in Asturias for his television programmes, most notably El Camín ("The Way" or "The Road"), broadcast on the Asturian public television station Radiotelevisión de Principáu d'Asturies (RTPA) since 2010. In this programme he travels to rural areas of Asturias to speak with older people about rural life, folklore, traditional music and dance, and crafts. His television work, like his performances with Tuenda and *Nueches en Danza*, extends his project with El Archivo de la Tradición Oral de Ambás (The Oral Tradition Archive of Ambás, ATOAM), which he runs with his partner Ramsés Iglesias.

Ambás is significant both as an influence on the wider scene and to this thesis on the transverse wooden flute, because of the ways he incorporates the instrument into group performance and constructs a discourse that recontextualises its stylistic idiosyncrasies as an "authentic" presence in Asturian rurality, and therefore in Asturian identity as a whole. He described this new current in Asturian performance as a process in which "groups are increasingly looking for that real identity. Escaping from a possible acculturation. Identity loss" (Ambás, interview with author, 23 June 2016). For him, traditional dance groups are central to this search: "They're going to use that traditional music without evolution" (Ambás. Interview with author 2016). He defines the traditional aesthetic as "Voice with tambourine, bagpipe (Asturian gaita), drum," emphasising the construct of purity:

> "So I'm talking about those people who make purist music. Today in Asturias, many people make pure music, pure. Purist, respecting the tradition that is collected. And we are in a moment. Every moment is different." (Ambás. Interview with author 2016)

Within this framework, Ambás weaves the transverse wooden flute into rural purity:

> "We could play a transverse wooden flute. No ethnographic dance group does. Why? Because the flute was one of the most forgotten instruments in the tradition." (Ambás 2016)

Ambás locates Asturianidad in music as a comprehension of mixed aesthetics:

> "There are some melodies typical of the Asturian tradition, some traditional rhythms of the dance, some popular songs we know from our repertories, the ways to sing, some ways of ornamentation, some typical instruments that they are going to say when they hear that music… I recognise those instruments, those rhythms and those melodies and that way of interpreting that music." (Ambás 2016)

For Ambás, what makes traditional music Asturian is a combination of aesthetic elements, some found only in Asturias (such as melodies specific to the region and words sung in the Asturian language) and others shared transnationally (such as instrumentation). He situates the geographical specificity of central components of the tradition as "pan-Hispanic" rather than Celtic, despite tensions between Asturianidad and Españolidad:

> "The oldest essence of that music and all that music from the peninsula at the same time, with its own nuances… different… They also have things in common… Why? Because there's a pan-Hispanic tradition. Pan-Hispanic. There are very old repertoires from the old ballad, the ancient medieval ballad… The songs of the old ballads, the themes, the lyrics, the lyrics to those songs are all over the peninsula. That same song in Andalusia, they are going to sing in an Andalusian style or with Andalusian melodies or a guitar accompaniment and in Asturias, it will be sung to other melodies." (Ambás 2016)

When asked to describe his national identity, Ambás replied, "Yo soy Ambás" ("I am Ambás") (Ambás 2016). By invoking the name of his village rather than his given name, he signalled both rural belonging and Asturian identity. This locates him within Ambás the village itself and situates him in the wider rural space, culture, and community. The practice of adopting the name of one's village or family origin is common among musicians in the scene, as seen in figures such as Pepín de Muñalén (Pepín from the village of Muñalén) and Letí Baselgas, whose father came from the small isolated village of Baselgas. Such nomenclature became a key means of retaining rural identity for those who migrated to towns and cities, particularly during the large-scale shift from countryside to urban living in the period of desarrollismo (development). For Letí, it affirms her connection to rural identity and may also be read as an expression of rural pride, reclaiming identity from stereotypes that cast Asturian-speaking villagers as backward, wild, or unintelligent, and the construct of the Asturian language as something to be left behind in the village, with no place in the urban spaces of desarrollismo in Franco's Castilian-speaking Spain.

Ambás's reflections on rural belonging and the symbolic weight of naming practices lead directly into his broader articulation of identity. For him, musical aesthetics are inseparable from questions of national and cultural positioning. Extending this reflection, he asserts "Soy Asturiano" ("I am Asturian") (Ambás 2016), situating his identity within a pan-Hispanic Iberian frame while simultaneously distinguishing it from Celtic affiliations. His partner Ramsés observes that Ambás is considerably more nationalist than he is (Iglesias. Interview with author 2016), underscoring the personal dimension of these debates. Although Ambás identifies as Asturian and emphasised that speaking Castilian with me was neither his everyday language nor part of his identity, he nonetheless acknowledges the pan-Hispanic roots of the repertory. For him, these roots are essential to understanding the music as Asturian rather than Celtic, even within the complex and interconnected dynamics of Asturian and Spanish identity.

Ambás described to me his move away from a Celtic Asturian identity, his "de-Celtification." I draw here on the term Celtification coined by Hagmann in her work on the Cornish folk revival, where Celtic aesthetics were constructed through dances and tunes to symbolically, culturally, and politically place Cornwall in a pan Celtic framework (Hagmann 2021). Pointing to his gaita case, decorated with FIL stickers representing various years and themes of the festival, he remarked:

> "Look at that case. Celtic, Festival Interceltique, very. I was very Celtic in the 1980s and 1990s. I played Asturian bagpipes, but also Scottish bagpipes and whistles. Me!" (Ambás 2016)

As discussed in Chapter 2 on Celticity in Asturias, the Festival Interceltique de Lorient has played, and continues to play, a significant role in European constructions of Celtic identity, offering a transnational platform for Asturian musicians to perform as part of a national delegation. Ambás performed at the festival with N'Arba, Tuenda and other ensembles, and continues to do so. His reflections on the festival reveal broader tensions surrounding the role of Celticity in identity construction among Asturian Celtic, folk revival and traditional musicians. He employs the past tense to describe his sense of Celticness and, in a mock incredulous tone, exclaims "me!" in relation to playing Scottish bagpipes and the low whistle, an activity he situated outside Asturian identity.

Ambás associates Celticness with the Celtic and folk revival groups of the 1980s and 1990s. He identifies the reasons for connecting with certain Celtic countries as partly cultural and climatic, but above all musical: "Because of certain instrumentation. Bagpipes" (Ambás 2016). Although bagpipes are found in many regions worldwide, by the 1980s Scottish piping was firmly embedded in national structures of the military, pipe bands, and solo competitions (McKerrell 2005). Folk revival groups such as the Tannahill Weavers held iconic status as national symbols, promoted through tourism marketing (Butler 2002). Crucially for Asturians, Scottish-style pipe bands were integral to pan Celtic and inter Celtic festivals (García Flórez 2022). Thus, when Ambás observes that Asturian revival groups of this era sought connections with Ireland and Scotland rather than with Asturian or neighbouring repertories, it is unsurprising that they were drawn to the bagpipes as deployed in Scotland, an instrument sounding the nation and its distinctiveness.

Reflecting on his musical trajectory, Ambás explained how he moved away from the Celtic and folk revival styles of the 1980s towards what he considered a more authentic Asturian practice:

> "But I started collecting in the '90s, to investigate my tradition. I started recording my grandmother, listening to her songs. To ask, what did you sing? What did you play? What did you dance to?" (Ambás 2016).

Through this process he reached what he described as "a different aesthetic. To a real identity, which with celticism and the folk of the '80s was manipulated. My music doesn't have to sound Irish. It has to sound like Asturias" (Ambás 2016).

His partner Ramsés acknowledged that Celtismu was nevertheless "a reality. There was another reality like this one" and recalled:

> "In the '80s, they started to be collected for real. Why? Because they really wanted to investigate what was danced. What was played. And that's where Francoism had stepped in. But they weren't equivalent worlds" (Iglesias 2016).

He emphasised the difference between concert performance and participatory practice:

> "They were the folk music groups that were in a concert and that you were watching. You couldn't dance. You couldn't participate, you could like it and good. But you couldn't participate except by moving" (Iglesias 2016).

Ambás added, “You couldn’t dance, they don’t respect dancing” (Ambás 2016). In contrast, Ramsés noted:

> “There were research groups, which they asked about the small villages, about the villages. And then they danced. And they rescued traditional music but then the groups didn’t take it for folk music” (Iglesias 2016).

Ambás clarified how repertories were treated differently:

> “In the 1980s, research groups they go to collect in the villages. They use that repertoire in dance groups. And folk groups use that repertoire to arrange their tunes. They play them very fast. They change the rhythm” (Ambás 2016).

Ramsés concluded, “But they’re parallel movements” (Iglesias 2016). For Ambás, however, this divergence was decisive:

> “They can’t play Asturian music, because [they] don’t know their traditional music very well. I know that it is not Asturian aesthetics to play Asturian melodies with Irish styles. For me that’s not Asturian. For me it’s not Asturian to listen to a group of folk and not being able to dance to the tunes of dance. Because they go fast, because it sounds Irish, because they don’t respect the rhythm, because they don’t respect the changes, the structures of the dance” (Ambás 2016).

He was particularly critical of groups who blurred boundaries between Asturian and Irish repertories:

> "Because they don't know our music, but if they play 100 Irish tunes in a jam session, and they say traditional Asturian musicians… How? No… You're not Asturian" (Ambás 2016).

These reflections highlight the contested terrain of speed, rhythm, and structure in dance music, as well as the complexity of differing ideas that feed into discursive constructions of Asturianidad. I address these aesthetic components and issues in Chapter 2. It is worth noting at this juncture that Ambás's process of re-evaluation began several years before the 2008 economic crisis and was not, in this case, a consequence of the crisis's impact on cultural infrastructure and opportunities. How, then, do the aesthetics and constructs of musical Asturianidad identified by Ambás manifest in his own work?

Ambás's account of his own "de-Celtification" highlights the shifting symbolic frameworks through which Asturian identity has been articulated. His move away from Celtic aesthetics does not erase their historical influence but repositions them within a broader pan-Hispanic frame. In this process, the transverse wooden flute becomes a crucial lens: once marginalised and "forgotten," it is reintroduced into performance as both a marker of rural authenticity and a vehicle for negotiating the tensions between Asturianidad, Españolidad, and transnational Celticity. The flute's recontextualisation thus exemplifies how instruments themselves embody the sedimented layers of identity, allowing musicians like Ambás to navigate between continuity and transformation in the construction of Asturian tradition.

Tuenda offers a compelling example of how Ambás applied his parameters of Asturianidad, drawing on ethnographic material from ATOAM while accommodating instrumentation and stylistic components that carry legacies of the Celtic and folk revival. Central to this accommodation is the transverse wooden flute, whose presence in Tuenda's rural discourse reflects both continuity with revival aesthetics and their recontextualisation within Asturian identity.

Formed in 2003, Tuenda brought together Ambás on vocals, Pepín de Muñalén on transverse wooden flutes, and the late Elías García on bouzouki. García, also a member of Llan de Cubel and formerly of Felpeyu, was closely associated with Celtic and folk revival music, underscoring the group's negotiation between revivalist and rural traditions. Tuenda released three albums between 2006 and 2011, ceasing activity after García's death in 2019.

The group's name itself situates their music in Asturian-speaking rurality. Pepín explained that *tuenda* is a word used by cowboys in the Altu Esva area to describe the cowbell hung around the neck of the lead animal, whose pitch allows the cowboy to recognise his herd. Though absent from the Asturian dictionary, Muñalén identified it as a local term, learned by his brother Luciano from a cowboy, Xuan de Gundo. The name thus evokes rural imagery and connects directly with the "reek of manure" metaphor, embedding the group's identity in Asturian language and countryside life.

Language was central to Tuenda's identity. Their repertory was sung in Asturian, and CD sleeve notes were written in Asturian with translation summaries provided in English but not Castilian. Tuenda also actively participated in the Oficialidá concerts and recordings

campaigning for official status for the Asturian language in Spain. Their presence in these line-ups located their Asturianidad more strongly than their "folkness," particularly as the events featured a mixture of pop, ska, rock, and folk groups.

Tuenda's repertory was drawn largely from the ATOAM archive, supplemented by fieldwork undertaken by Muñalén and García, with a small number of new compositions. Their arrangements notably included repertory types that Ambás criticised Celtic and folk revival bands for excluding, such as xotas (Asturian spelling of jotas). Ambás described this exclusion as "musical racism" (Ambás, interview with author 2016), arguing that revival bands preferred music "more closely related to Atlantic rhythms." The xota, typically in 3/8 time with variations in part length and repetitions, does not sit easily within the Celtic and folk revival tune-arrangement paradigm (see Chapter 3). For Ambás, the xota and wider Asturian repertory were pan-Hispanic, positioning them as distinct from Celtic or Irish traditions.

Tuenda did not include saltones (equated with reels in the Celtic paradigm), but they did perform muñeira dances, singing the lyrics in Asturian, for example La Muñeira de Perl.lunes (Tuenda 3. 2011). They also incorporated rondas, in which participants link their smallest fingers and move clockwise to a 3/4 rhythm. These rondas became synonymous with Tuenda's performances, fostering a sense of community connected with their rural aesthetic, while also echoing Breton dance culture described by Wilkinson (2016) as post-Celtic. Ambás himself referenced this Breton aesthetic as inspirational in the evolution of his folk practice.

Ambás's vocal style further distinguished Tuenda from revivalist groups. He sang with a melismatic style associated with Asturian traditional singing, though without the projection of Asturianada or Tonada singers (see Chapter 3). As González Arias observed: "They do something very traditional, in the voice, but very modern in the music that accompanies them" (Interview with author, 2015). His ballad singing drew directly on the intimate voices of women he recorded in rural homes, situating Tuenda's sound in a domestic, small-gathering aesthetic. This melismatic voice became a defining feature of the new rural aesthetic, later reflected in the "New Voice" singers of the 2000s, and more recently in the work of Rodrigo Cuevas, Muyeres, and Leti Baselgas with her post-folk duo LR.

I asked Ambás about the use of the bouzouki in a context where one might expect emphasis on authenticism and an Asturian idyll. His response was pragmatic: "It worked, and Elías understands the subtleties of the music" (Ambás, interview with author 2016). Tuenda's performance thus combined aesthetics Ambás considered central, repertory choice, Asturian language, and danceability, with elements inherited from Celtic and folk revival practice, such as the bouzouki and flute performance styles derived from Irish and Breton traditions. Muñalén acknowledged this mixture of external influences but, like Ambás, grounded his identity in his village. For Ambás, this apparent discordance was contextualised as a search rather than a fixed end product. Celtic and folk revival music provided a pathway toward the work he ultimately wanted to pursue. Tuenda's performances exemplify this pragmatism and reflect the bricolage nature of folk and traditional music in practice a continual negotiation of tradition, innovation, and identity.

Pepín de Muñalén, a musician, teacher, and multi-instrumentalist, is best known in Tuenda for his focus on the transverse wooden flute. Self-taught, he drew stylistic inspiration from Jean-Michel Veillon and Matt Molloy, adopting ornamentation from Irish traditional music while connecting the trill to older rural Asturian flute players. He acknowledged that certain features, such as mordents, are inevitable given the instrument's affordances, while his exploration of harmonics and the third octave was inspired by Veillon's innovations.

Through his own fieldwork, Muñalén sought out older Asturian flute players, most of whom played the instrument secondarily alongside the gaita or clarinet, and who were distinct from the urban Celtic and folk revival scene. He explained that a flute tradition did exist in Asturias, particularly in his home area, but that it had been broken. He identified the late Lulo'l Coloráu and his brother as the last representatives of this earlier tradition:

> "They are the last of a tradition that years ago was abundant. There were so many. But it's over. It's been too long. In the past, many, many, many. Especially the West and then Quiroz, Teverga, that area." (Muñalén, interview with author 2016)

Unlike the *gaita*, very few recordings of older flute players survive, and those that do, such as those of Lulo, were made late in life, when his abilities were impaired by ageing. As a result, access to stylistic models for contemporary flute players is limited unless they undertake such fieldwork themselves. Muñalén recognised that much of his ornamentation was not directly "from the village," though some aspects are inevitable given the instrument's

affordances. He also acknowledged that innovation has always been part of flute performance.

His reflections on dance repertory further illustrate this pragmatism. He insisted that the muñeira is only truly a dance if there is a dancer, yet he continued to play dance repertory in concerts and sessions not designed for dancing. This tension between function and performance situates his practice within broader debates about authenticity and adaptation. Other ensembles took different approaches: La Bedur adopted a purely instrumental focus, while Urso Dakoff incorporated the flute into a radical Asturian-language performance at the Lorient Interceltic Festival.

The arrangements of Tuenda pieces exemplify the bricolage of traditional and Celtic and folk revival music and demonstrate how this complexity continues into the new rural aesthetic. They combine elements that Ambás considered central, such as vocal style, repertory choice, and the improvisatory presence of the flute, with components inherited from Celtic and folk revival practice through Muñalén and García. The traditional elements are most evident in Ambás's melismatic vocal style, the repertory drawn from ATOAM, and the flute's close alignment with the voice. In arrangements featuring flute and voice, the flute often follows the melody line, its breathiness and mid-volume timbre approximating the natural sound of the human voice. Yet the flute performance also departs from this naturalness and the traditional paradigm in several ways. By playing into the third octave and employing harmonics, Muñalén moves beyond the vocal range shaped by the affordances of the gaita

and towards the Celtic flute innovations of Veillon. Ornamentation drawn from Irish traditional music is present throughout, marking another legacy of revivalist aesthetics.

Further divergence from the Asturian paradigm occurs when Muñalén plays the song melody simultaneously with the singer, where traditionally the voice would be accompanied only by percussion. At times the flute also provides a counter-melody, creating a layered texture. The phrasing of singer and flautist demonstrates two aesthetics operating simultaneously: the singer's articulation dictated by stanza structure, and the flute's phrasing shaped by Celtic stylistics, where breaths may be placed unexpectedly to create the illusion of flow. The presence of the bouzouki reinforces the Celtic and folk revival aesthetic. As the sole melody player in Tuenda, Muñalén enjoyed greater freedom and space in the arrangements than he would in a Celtic or folk revival band, where the flute would compete with gaita and violin for melodic prominence. Closer to the traditional paradigm, however, Tuenda grouped and arranged dance types together, emphasising their aesthetic focus on dance. In one arrangement, Xotas d'Urria ya Sotu'l Barcu, both traditional and revival aesthetics are juxtaposed: the first xota is sung in 3/8 time at a slow, reflective pace, while the second is played on flute with bouzouki backing only at a quicker tempo more suitable for dancing.

Ambás was one of the founders of the grassroots collective Les Nueches en Danza, created to enable musicians and dancers to play and dance together in rural spaces without the economic constraints of concert and fiesta organisation, the Celtic and folk revival performance paradigm, or the formality of folclórica presentation. The flute has played only a minor role in these events, yet the influence of this reconnection with dance and the cultural confidence of the dancers is evident in phenomena such as dancing at the edges sessions and in the

claiming of cultural spaces branded as Celtic and associated with revival aesthetics. Established in 2015, Les Nueches en Danza offered open events for anyone interested in Asturian folk and traditional dances, emphasising enjoyment without costumes, commercial motives, or the display aesthetics of folclórica groups. The focus was on how dances would have been performed in rural villages before the spectacularisation of the Sección Femenina and the post-Franco folclórica representations. Musicians played on a rota, unpaid, in rural halls and gymnasia. Here, percussion and voice were prominent, with less emphasis on instrumental music. Sones, or sung dances, featured centrally in the repertory.

Les Nueches en Danza became a form of community empowerment, allowing dancers and musicians to reclaim agency from concert promoters, government, private sector, and folclórica groups. Many participants and leaders remained members of folclórica ensembles, reflecting a cross-section of views from absolute purists to those seeking alternatives alongside their folclórica experience. Tradition was foregrounded, but some old ways were subverted: gender roles were swapped, gay men led singing and accompanied themselves on pandereta and other traditional percussion. The transverse wooden flute played only a minor role, largely because other instruments more closely connected to traditional performance such as gaita, pandereta, accordion, and olive oil drum were more prominent, and many musicians were also dancers. Melody players who earned a living from music may have been reluctant to play for free, and some flute players did not participate. Ambás suggested that musicians who do not respect the dance were less welcome. Tensions also emerged with musicians identifying with the folk revival or folkie scene, who often disliked the sones repertory and dismissed percussion instruments such as olive cans as improper musicianship.

Although Les Nueches en Danza events did not coincide with my visits to Asturias, the role of melody instruments in these gatherings remains an area for future research. I did, however, attend events where the culture of Les Nueches en Danza was transferred into an urban Celtic setting at the Avilés Intercélticu, illustrating how rural aesthetics could be re-embedded within spaces otherwise dominated by revivalist frameworks.

My fieldwork at the XXI Festival Intercélticu d'Avilés y Comarca revealed how the ethos of Les Nueches en Danza was transferred into an urban Celtic event. The festival, branded as interceltic, foregrounded connections with Ireland, Scotland, and Brittany, yet within its programme Asturian musicians and dancers re-embedded rural aesthetics into spaces otherwise dominated by revivalist frameworks. The festival's organisation and branding reflected the Celtic and folk revival paradigm, with staged concerts, amplified sound, and the presence of international Celtic acts. Yet alongside these spectacles, grassroots initiatives reclaimed space for participatory dance and traditional repertory. The phenomenon of dancing at the edges, where dancers gathered informally at the margins of official events, was particularly evident, echoing the cultural confidence fostered by Les Nueches en Danza. Here, Asturian participants asserted their own identity within a Celtic-branded environment, challenging the dominance of revivalist aesthetics and re-centering rural practice.

The transverse wooden flute played a more visible role in this context than in Les Nueches en Danza, reflecting its dual identity as both a revivalist instrument with Irish and Breton stylistic legacies and a marker of Asturian rurality. Its presence in festival sessions highlighted how instruments themselves mediate the negotiation between Celtic branding and Asturian authenticity. The Intercélticu thus demonstrates how diverse musical worlds

intersect, including revivalist aesthetics, rural authenticity, grassroots empowerment, and interceltic spectacle. It is precisely in this meeting of worlds that the flute becomes a lens for understanding Asturianidad, an instrument that carries revivalist ornamentation yet is grounded in local rurality, bridging the tensions between authenticity, innovation, and transnational frameworks.

At Llar Fest 2024 in Asturias, the ethnographic observation centred on the interplay between dance sessions and music sessions, and how participants negotiated the meanings of folk and trad. In the dancing session, the emphasis was on embodied participation, with dancers reclaiming repertories that had often been spectacularised by folclórica groups. Here, trad was understood as the intimate, communal practice of dancing together, often accompanied by percussion and voice, echoing the ethos of Les Nueches en Danza. The dancing was not framed as performance for an audience but as collective enjoyment, situating trad as lived practice rather than staged heritage. By contrast, in the music session the inversion of categories became clear. Groups identifying with the folk revival aesthetic presented newly composed songs, amplified arrangements, and instrumental virtuosity. Within this context, folk was associated with innovation, cosmopolitan borrowings, and stylistic hybridity, while trad was sometimes dismissed as static or overly local. Yet the juxtaposition of these sessions revealed how porous the boundaries were. Some musicians moved between the two, accompanying dancers in the trad session and then performing revivalist folk sets later in the evening. This inversion of meanings highlighted the fluidity of Asturian musical identity. What counted as trad in one context could be re-coded as folk in another, especially when framed through revivalist aesthetics. Conversely, revivalist folk groups were sometimes

critiqued by dancers as disconnected from the embodied tradition, their music less suited to dancing despite its stylistic sophistication. The ethnographic detail of Llar Fest thus illustrates how categories are not fixed but negotiated in practice, and how dance and music sessions provide different vantage points on the ongoing redefinition of Asturianidad.

The negotiation of Asturian identity within interceltic festival spaces and hybrid events such as Llar Fest illustrates how revivalist aesthetics and rural practices intersect in public performance. Yet Ambás's influence extended beyond grassroots and festival contexts into mass media. His television work provided another arena in which the aesthetics of Asturianidad were articulated, contested, and disseminated to wider audiences. Through programmes such as Camín de Cantares, Ambás presented traditional singers and repertories from across Asturias, situating them within everyday contexts rather than spectacularised revival frameworks. The format emphasised intimacy and locality, with Ambás travelling to villages, interviewing singers in their homes, and foregrounding the embodied practices of song and dance. This televisual work reinforced several of the parameters he had already articulated in his musical projects. The use of Asturian language was central, as was the emphasis on repertory continuity and participatory aesthetics. At the same time, the medium of television inevitably introduced new dynamics, including framing, editing, and broadcast conventions, which shaped how rural authenticity was represented. Ambás's pragmatic approach, evident in Tuenda's bricolage and in his festival participation, was also visible here. While television imposed certain structures, he used them to amplify voices and practices that might otherwise remain marginal.

The theme of shame and pride connected to Asturianidad and rurality emerged repeatedly in conversations during my fieldwork. Rubén Bada described how Asturias continues to grapple with an issue of self-esteem. As detailed in Chapter 2, under the Franco regime any language other than Castilian was constructed as degenerate and uncivilised, a violation of the national-Catholic narrative. This repression fostered a sense of shame around the use of Asturian and its presence in musical performance. One young woman recalled being teased by urban children and called "poor little Asturianina" when she spoke Asturian as a child. Among friends not connected with folk music, the term bable was often used, suggesting a dialect rather than a language, something associated with grandmothers in the village and perceived as irrelevant to modern Asturias. Yet this discourse is not static. Leti Baselgas described how her father stopped speaking Asturian when he moved to town, but later resumed the language with her and her child after she learned it as an adult. Such stories illustrate how pride can reclaim rurality from shame, re-embedding Asturian language in everyday life. This dynamic is not unique to Asturias; similar processes have been observed in other regions of Spain, as Miguélez-Carballeira (2013) notes in relation to Galicia, identity, and Celtismo (The Galician form of Celtismu).

These shifting dynamics of shame and pride around Asturian language and rurality also underpin contemporary campaigns for linguistic recognition, where music and performance play a central role. Zimmerman (2011) identifies a shift in Asturian identity politics from calls for independence to campaigning for the co-official status of the Asturian language (see Chapter 2). For musicians engaged in the rural aesthetic, language is a central component of identity. While the Celtic folk revival incorporated Asturian, it placed greater emphasis on

instrumental music and newly composed dances rather than traditional sung repertories. In contrast, language rights have become integral to the new rural musical aesthetic. Musicians play a prominent role in the Oficialidá marches. On the marches I observed, a group of women pandereta players led the procession, singing about the Asturian language and beating rhythms that carried the protest forward. Further along, pipers played in unison, and behind them urban folk musicians joined in, including a wooden flute player. Yet, as noted earlier, a concert-pitch flute in this context had more visual than sonic impact. Significantly, the folk musicians were not at the front; it was the women who led the parade, embodying both musical and political leadership.

The mobilisation of language rights through protest performance connects directly to the ways in which Asturian identity is negotiated in broadcast media. The launch of RTPA in 2006 and Radio Principáu d'Asturies in 2007 created new opportunities for presenting Asturian music in diverse formats. For traditional, Celtic, and folk revival repertories, these platforms offered a way to bring the intimacy of the llar, or hearth, to a wider public, countering the spectacle of gaita-led revival bands. The RTPA series El Camín, presented by Ambás since 2010, extended his ethnographic practice into a televisual format. Its sonic identity is shaped by Tuenda in the opening and closing sequences, particularly the flute playing of Pepín Muñalén accompanied by Elías García's bouzouki. Together they provide the musical frame for Ambás's journeys through rural Asturias. The sound embodies what Appiah terms rooted cosmopolitanism, ornamentation and stylistic aesthetics derived from the Celtic transverse wooden flute habitus, which circulates transnationally but is re-situated within Asturian repertory and consciously chosen to represent rurality. At the same time, the

performance exemplifies Bohlman's notion of bricolage, the creative incorporation of diverse influences into new musical forms and identities.

The transverse wooden flute is recontextualised as a rural object and part of the Asturian soundscape. Its wooden materiality metaphorically connects it to nature and rurality, recalling instruments made for personal use as well as those crafted by artisans. Although flute players did not explicitly describe the instrument as natural, Ambás constructs this discourse, legitimised by his authority as a fieldworker and reinforced by his RTPA work. His reputation, earned through sustained research, allows him to frame the flute as belonging to rurality, despite the incongruence of Irish ornamentation and the bouzouki's presence in the trio. In situating Tuenda within a broader current of returning to rural aesthetics, Ambás describes the music as real and traditional.

A parallel phenomenon is the incorporation of Celtic and folk revival instruments into the jingles of Radio Principáu d'Asturies. These short sonic cues often feature uilleann pipes, whistles, and low whistle ornamentation, embedding revivalist aesthetics into the unnoticed fabric of daily listening. In this sense, they operate much like Billig's (1995) banal nationalism, where everyday symbols quietly reproduce national identity. Here, banal Celtismu works through sound rather than spectacle, normalising Celtic stylistics as part of Asturian broadcast identity and reinforcing their presence in everyday life while simultaneously re-situating them within local contexts.

Taken together, these contexts demonstrate the multiple arenas in which Ambás negotiates Asturianidad. The transverse wooden flute, marginal in some settings and central in others,

becomes the sonic thread linking grassroots, festival, televisual, and broadcast practices. It embodies both continuity and innovation, mediating between rural authenticity and revivalist borrowings, between local rootedness and transnational circulation. Through these varied projects, Ambás demonstrates that Asturianidad is not a fixed essence but a dynamic negotiation continually reworked across performance, protest, media, and everyday soundscapes.

It is against this backdrop that the following conclusion draws these threads together, situating the recontextualisation of the transverse wooden flute within the broader evolution of musical Asturianidad in the twenty-first century.

5.4 Conclusion

This chapter has examined the changing constructions of musical Asturianidad in the first two decades of the twenty-first century and considered how the transverse wooden flute has been contextualised within these currents. New hegemonic discourses emerged around Asturianidad and the uses of folk and traditional repertory, shaped by significant cultural, social, economic and political shifts. The 2008 global economic crisis curtailed opportunities for Celtic and folk revival performance, dismantling infrastructures that had sustained the "great era" of Asturian music (Elipe, 2020). In its wake, grassroots organising flourished, intersecting with campaigns for gender equality, LGBTQA+ rights, and Asturian language recognition. At the same time, the liminal position of Asturias within inter-Celticism prompted a re-evaluation of Celtismu's place in musical identity.

One of the most notable outcomes of these recontextualisations was the reconnection of dance repertory with its embodied function, moving beyond Celtic and folk revival music spectacle to participatory practice. This shift altered the dynamic between musicians and audiences, as listeners became dancers and musicians themselves learned to dance. By the late 2010s, what Barreiro (2019) termed the "third revolution" of Asturian music was visible in feminist pandereta groups and new performances of Asturian song repertory. These developments layered themselves onto earlier revivals, sedimenting constructs of Asturianidad in ways that resonate with San Martín's (1998) formulation of sedimentation as a process of layering identity and practice in construction of identity in Asturias in the post-Franco era, while simultaneously relocating tradition within neo-rural community frameworks and responses to the crisis. This process of sedimentation of layered identity was not unique to Asturias. In her work on the post-Communist Bulgarian traditional music scene, Donna Buchanan (2006) describes how the Bulgarian equivalent of musical Asturianidad, "narodno-ness", points to;

"The current coexistence of multiple historical layers or degrees of cosmopolitanism linked inextricably to the changing nation namely the pre-state-socialist agrarian monarchy, modernist-state socialism, and post-state socialist modernist-democratic capitalism" (Buchanan, A. 2006, 45).

Buchanan (2006), drawing on Turino's concept of habitus, also observes and connects this sedimentation, in relation to the tension between rural and urban. She argues that although rural and urban are connected to particular types of communal spaces, they are "metaphors" for personal constructs of identity that can exist in an integrated manner together within one

person (Buchanan, A. 2006, 45). The “cuchu” statement from Diego Pangua encapsulates these tensions. It can be read as an urban based Herderian fantasy of purity and authenticity, but also as a pragmatic request for music that resonates with everyday rural experience, what García Flórez (interview with author, 2015) terms the “rural matrix.” Such discourses reveal how recontextualisation is both symbolic and material, and in some cases shifting power back into rurality.

The central argument of this chapter is that while the technical components of flute performance, such as ornamentation, phrasing, and timbre, remain relatively consistent across contexts, the meanings attached to the instrument shift. In each setting, the transverse wooden flute exemplifies rooted cosmopolitanism. Its revivalist Irish ornamentation and Celtic borrowings coexist with its re-embedding both discursively and physically in Asturian rurality. The legacy of Celtismu and the 1980s revival continues to inform new constructions of Asturianidad, even as its prominence wanes. As Turino (2000) argues, it takes a cosmopolitan to build a nation, and this is evident in the sedimented bricolage of Asturian musical practice. The unnoticed sonic cues of broadcast media further exemplify what Billig’s (1995) banal nationalism, here refracted as banal Celtismu, embedding Celtic stylistics into everyday listening and reinforcing identity through sound. The Celtic and folk music revival provided musicians, especially flute players, with tools to engage with new constructs of rurality and identity. Although the flute remains secondary to the voice, pandereta, and gaita in the new rural aesthetic, it has become a banal sonic marker of Asturianness, a modest but resonant thread in the evolving tapestry of twenty-first-century Asturianidad.

6. Conclusions

This chapter will conclude the study by summarising the key research findings in relation to the research aims and questions and discussing the value and contribution thereof. It will also review the limitations of the study and propose opportunities for future research.

The main research question for this work asks how does performance on the transverse wooden flute in the Asturian Celtic and folk scene exemplify rooted cosmopolitanism, mediating between local identity and transnational networks?

6.1 Research findings

The overall finding is that use of the transverse wooden flute in this scene is an example of rooted Celtic cosmopolitanism.

In Chapter 2 I described how Asturias is constructed both physically and discursively as a place and space, and what this reveals about the ways in which identity is articulated through musical performance in a place where national identity is liminal and contested. The analysis highlights the complex interplay of Asturian, Spanish, and Celtic identities, intersecting with gender and social class, geographical location and legacy of the Franco regime. These dynamics evidence syncretic conceptualisations of Asturian identity among actors in the field.

Performance formats and environments, on stage, in sessions, and in commercial recordings and broadcasts, were shaped as cosmopolitan habitus through the replication of Celtic and folk revival cultures emanating from centres of Celtic cosmopolitan power, specifically Ireland, Scotland, and Brittany. The construction of this Asturian habitus situated Asturias within a wider Celtic music habitus, where its presence was distinctly liminal and contested. The impact on musical performance disconnected this largely dance repertory from its original function as dance music and reproduced gendered divisions of labour.

The Asturian rootedness of these cosmopolitan forms was evident in the evolution of sessions and Celtic cosmopolitan practices to incorporate Asturian repertory, and in the site of tension created by the introduction of pandereta and sones into session formats, which challenged established practices and provoked negotiation over the boundaries of revivalist aesthetics. Moreover, the presence of dancers performing at concerts and sessions designed primarily for listening further demonstrated Asturian rootedness, challenged Celtic and folk music revivalist aesthetics, and indicated a broader cultural turn away from an urban, Atlantic-facing Celtic aesthetic towards pan-Hispanic rural rootedness. This shift reclaimed dance and its connection to dance music from the legacy of the Sección Femenina.

Chapter 3 considered the key repertorial and stylistic aesthetics of Asturian Celtic and folk revival music and their connection to the cultural turn described in Chapter 2, the development of these aesthetics draws parallels to Hagmann's concepts of "Celtification" of Cornish traditional music (Hagmann L. 2021: 105). This transformation of the Asturian traditional repertory was marked by several important changes. There was an abstraction from dance traditions where sung components of dance were removed, altering the aesthetic

possibilities of voice and melismatic ornamentation and lessened the use of the Asturian language in this context. This change arguably made the music less Hispanic in character and less associated with the legacy of Sección Femenina and Franco. The role of women as dancers and as percussionists was removed to a large extent, masculising the musical performance further. Ornamentation increasingly derived from instruments rather than voice, incorporating both invented techniques and borrowings from other cultures. The revival also embraced a performance-oriented aesthetic, supported by new instrumentation and improvements in instrument quality. Finally, the arrangement of tunes into sets, a hallmark of Celtic practice, contributed to the perception of Asturian music as Celticised. To the casual listener this might sound distinctly Asturian, although to purists such as Ambás it could appear quite different.

Alongside this hegemonic Celtic framing, Asturian musicians demonstrated agency through what can be described as rooted Celtic cosmopolitanism. They grounded their work in Asturian repertory, language, and imagery, evident in live performance and recording outputs such as sleeve notes and tune titles. They established their own record labels, participated in language rights movements, and sang in Asturian, drawing both on older repertory and newly composed material in revivalist style. Their identification as Asturian was expressed not only in the places they performed but also in the image they projected to the wider music industry.

Instrumentation played a crucial role in shaping ethnicised constructs. The gaita and pandereta are unequivocally markers of Asturian identity, although they are not always welcomed in session contexts. The pandereta was largely erased in this scene from the Asturian sonic landscape. Conversely, instruments such as the uilleann pipes or low whistle

may signify Celtic associations, which in turn are filtered into the broader sonic palette of Asturianess.

Ultimately, the concept of Celtic and folk revival music in Asturias is not fixed but socially constructed, shaped by political, economic, social, cultural, and gendered factors. It depends on how individuals describe themselves, the labels they adopt, and the identities they project. The use and arrangement of repertory by Celtic and folk revival and bands in Asturias exemplifies rooted Celtic cosmopolitanism, although in some cases, arrangements followed the order of Asturian dance traditions, thereby re-Asturianising the music, depending on the discursive understanding of the performer.

While the format of the band, its instrumentation, and arrangement practices are partly borrowed from external traditions, they are simultaneously rooted in Asturian repertory, instruments, and language. In this way, Asturian Celtic and folk revival music emerges as a dynamic construct, negotiating between external influences and local identity.

In Chapter 4 I considered the stylistic and organological aesthetics and discourses applied to transverse wooden flute performance in the contemporary Asturian folk scene. The presence of the transverse wooden flute in the contemporary Asturian Celtic and folk revival music scene is a legacy of the engagement with Celticity as part of Asturian identity construction in the social, political and cultural vacuum of post-Franco Spain.

Aesthetic aspects of Asturian flute performance in this scene, such as Irish ornamentation, reflect the urbanity of the initial connection, and disconnection with rural Asturian flute traditions and also reflects the dominance of Irish traditional music in the Celtic cosmopolitan

habitat. The use of ornamentation derived from Irish traditional music and its recirculation and development through influential performers such as Breton Jean Michel Veillon demonstrates Turino's 'cosmopolitan loops' (Turino 2000).

The introduction of the transverse wooden flute into the urban Asturian Celtic and folk revival of the late 1980s was part of a process of constructing a modern post-Franco Asturian identity construct that rejected the essentialism of Francoist Spanish Catholic Nationalism and the folkloric manifestations of its state institutions.

Transverse wooden flute performance retains key aesthetic elements, sedimentary layers, that connect with and originate from Celtic cosmopolitanism and are recontextualised and constructed as Asturian as part of an Asturian authenticity that shifts from an urban construct to a new rural aesthetic. becoming sonic markers in performance in the habitus of the sub genres, which includes concerts, dances, sessions, recorded and broadcast outputs.

In Chapter 5 I described how the recontextualisation of the transverse wooden flute within twenty-first-century Asturias exemplifies how musical Asturianidad is continually renegotiated across social, political, and cultural currents. While the flute's technical features and revivalist ornamentation remain relatively stable, its meanings shift depending on context: from marginal presence in grassroots dance to central marker in Tuenda's rural aesthetic, from sonic presence in language rights protest performance to sonic branding in broadcast media. These varied settings reveal Asturianidad as a layered process of sedimentation (San Martín, 1998; Buchanan, 2006), in line with this formulation, where

earlier revivalist legacies combine with neo-rural movements, feminist and generational interventions, and campaigns for linguistic recognition. The unnoticed sonic cues of broadcast media further exemplify Billig's (1995) notion of banal nationalism, refracted here as banal Celtismu, embedding Celtic stylistics into everyday listening. At the same time, the flute embodies Turino's (2000) idea that cosmopolitan practices are integral to nation-building, while García Flórez's (2015) "rural matrix" highlights its re-embedding in everyday rural culture. Taken together, the flute operates as a sonic thread linking continuity and innovation, constructions of rural authenticity and cosmopolitan borrowings, local rootedness and transnational circulation. In this way, its recontextualisation illuminates the broader processes through which Asturian identity is constructed as dynamic, contested, and plural in the twenty-first century.

6.2 Implications of the Study and Significant Contribution to Knowledge

A limited amount of academic research has focused on Asturian national identity and music, particularly in relation to the transverse wooden flute and its place within Celtic, European, and Anglo-American folk revival contexts. This thesis situates Asturian practices within broader debates on Celtic cosmopolitanism, revivalism, and the negotiation of regional and national identities in Spain, positioning Asturias as an example of a liminal, evolving cultural identity that is at once Asturian, Spanish, and Celtic, yet not fully recognised socially or politically by the core establishments of any. My research contributes new perspectives, corpora, and analysis to wider ethnomusicological debates on Celticness, nationalism, and the cultural politics of traditional and folk music.

This study is the first to apply cosmopolitanism theory to Asturian Celtic and folk revival music, performance, and identity, extending the concept of this musical scene beyond the nation-state to transnational cultural identities. It builds on the small but growing body of literature that applies cosmopolitan theory to identities connected with Celtic, European, and Anglo-American folk revival music, see Buchanan 2016 on post-communist era Bulgarian traditional music, and demonstrates how performance techniques and cultural practices associated with an instrument can transfer across contexts and acquire recontextualised meanings. More broadly, it makes a significant contribution to understanding Celtic cosmopolitan identity and rooted dynamics in a context where national identity is contested and liminal. The thesis illuminates the intersections of aural tradition, folk revival, Celtic music, social class, commerce, and regional and national identities, and contributes to the understanding of Celtic music as a World Music phenomenon within the contemporary commercial context in Spain. It shows how the concept and place of Celtismu and Celtic music in Asturias are continually reevaluated, evidencing that they remain contemporary and relevant issues for folk musicians in the region and therefore academic consideration.

This work also contributes to the body of knowledge on national and regional identity constructions in Spain, highlighting tensions between rural and urban folk arts practice, constructs of authenticity, and the ways musical performance on the wooden flute and other instruments can assert regional or alternative national identity within a larger nation-state.

It addresses a gap in studies of Asturian folk revival music, adding to the scholarship of Zimmerman (2011) on language politics and Asturian nationalism. in the Asturian nationalist movement , San Martín's (1998) conceptualisation of a sedimented Asturian identity

construction in the post-Franco era. This work builds on the pioneering work of Ignaciu Llope (2018) and Llorián García Flórez (2022) that focused on the role of Asturian Celtic and folk revival music in Asturian identity construction in the late twentieth and early twenty-first century and Celtic music, by adding a focus in the transverse wooden flute, from an etic perspective and partly emic perspective as a transverse wooden flute player.

The study highlights the status and significance of the transverse wooden flute in Asturian folk and traditional music, and the discourses constructed around it.

Finally, the research contributes to international understandings of Asturian Celtic and folk revival music aesthetics, particularly for non-Asturian audiences. Its translational value lies in interpreting and articulating these aesthetics for ethnomusicology and the English-speaking world, through the lens of a practitioner embedded in Celtic and folk revival musical culture yet positioned as an outsider, thereby bridging insider and outsider perspectives.

3. Limitations.

The scope of my work, transverse wooden flute performance in the contemporary urban based Asturian Celtic and folk revival scene meant that some interesting aspects of flute culture were beyond the scope of this study but would future research of which would provide a fuller understanding of the field.

Given that most iconic flute players in the tradition are men, an examination of the absence, apart from the notable exception of Andrea Hoglar (who I was unable to interview), of women playing transverse wooden flute in the Celtic and folk revival scene and the growth in

the last 5 years of more women playing the instrument in sessions may provide useful information on the gender division of labour and feminism in the sedimented layers of the evolution of the presence of the instrument and wider practices labelled as ‘folk’, ‘traditional’, ‘Celtic’ and ‘Asturian’.

As a bisexual man I noted the prominent position of Gay men in particular in the scene. A focus on sexuality and performance in contemporary Asturian Celtic, folk revival and traditional music practices would make a useful contribution to the field of Queer Studies and build on the evolving work on gender, sexuality and queer identity in folk and traditional music by Tes Slominski (2020) for example.

Applying the methods of the work of Ali-MacLachlan et al (2013), on the connection between actual sound and discoursal understanding of the timbral qualities of transverse wooden flute may provide a deeper understanding of the the relationship between sound, object and perceptions in the construction of identity. The value of a strong sounding bottom D or tonic note on the flute and transnational connections would be a good point of departure.

The contemporary and historical use of the transverse wooden flute in both urban, rural and diasporic contexts by people not connected to the urban scene, both in a professional context and through the intimacy of the home. After I left the field a couple of people sent pictures of home made transverse wooden flutes found in the homes of grandparents and relatives. The memories that this type of flute would provide wider and deeper context to the understanding of the concept of this type of flute being recontextualised. A focus on historical diasporic Asturias flute performance connecting to the places where Asturians travelled and settled

such as South America and in particular Cuba could provide wider context to the conceptualisation of the flute in relation to Asturian identity and may connect to research on the transverse wooden flute by Sue Miller in Cuba (Miller S. 2013; 2021). Towards the end of my time in the field an Argentinian musician was playing Asturian music on the transverse wooden flute and the gaita in this scene, music learned in a diasporic space. This may provide a useful study on identity construction amongst those born outside of Asturias but with Asturian heritage. This scenario invites exploration of how they relate the music to their own sense of identity.

Further work needs to be done on the pedagogical processes of the now intergenerational group of transverse wooden flute players, through individual tuition, informal session learning and group tuition in the music schools associated with Asturian gaita bands.

Further research could also involve collecting more life stories through in-depth interviews, ideally in quieter spaces that allow for individual recordings and reflection. The specific *Nueches en Danza* events in the rural space, which has not coincided with my visits to Asturias, represents another area of interest, particularly regarding the role of melody instruments such as the flute in these performances and the relationship between musician and dancer.

Audience perspectives in this scene remain underexplored. Based on observations, it would be valuable to examine how audiences construct notions of place and space in Asturias, and how they interpret the flute in terms of the intersection of Asturianidad, Españolidad, Celtismu, rurality and urbanity. Extending this inquiry to non-Asturian audiences at

interceltic festivals could provide further insight into how Asturian music is perceived and situated within broader cultural imaginaries.

Following on from the ethos of rooted cosmopolitanism addressing power imbalances I would like to carry out further work using in depth coproduction methods with academics and performers in Asturias, from the start to completion of the research.

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7.5 Public Talks.

Veillon, Jean Michel. Breton Transverse wooden flute talk and workshop. Llar Fest Asturias, Spain. 29 July 2024.

Appendices.

Appendix A. Repertory Types

ReportoryType	Other names	Other type name	Time Signature
Aguinaldo	Aguinaldu		3/4
Alborada			2/4, 4/4
Albuerne			2/4
Araña			
Añada	Añaes, Nana		¾, Without metre
Asturianada	Tonada, Cancionero Asturiana		Internal Metre
Canciones /Romances			
Tonada	Asturianada, Cancion Asturiana		Internal Metre
Vaqueiraes			
Lo Suelto			
Fandango		Lo Suelto	3/8
Gallegada	Similar to Saltón		
Jota (La)	Xota (Asturian), Mudanzas, Giraldilla, El Paseo	Lo Lixero, Lo Ligero, Light	⅜, 6/8, 3/4
Muñeira (La)	Muiñeira, Moliñeira, La molinera, La molinera, La Muliñiera, La Muiñere.	Lo Lixero,	6/8, 2/4, 5/4
Saltón (El)	Xiringüelu, Xiringoses, Girengosa a lo lixero	Lo Lixero,	2/4, 4/4

Saldiguera (La)		Lo Suelto	6/8
Son D'Arriba	Son, Baile d'Arriba	Sones, Lo Suelto	6/8
Boleros			2/4
Foxtrot			4/4
Pasodoble	Pasodoble Pasadobre Pasacorredoiras (in Galicia)		2/4
Polka			2/4
Polcamazurca	Pericois, Pericón		¾ then 4/4
Rumba			2/4, 4/4
Valse			3/4
Processional			
Marcha		3/6, 6/8	
Marcha Procesional		¾, 6/8	
Pasucais	Pasacalles, Marcha		2/4, 6/8, 4/4, 12/8
Ramu			2/4
Others			
Araña	Cowboys		
Bailes de Juego			
Caranquiños			
Carrasquina			
Careao	Cariaú, Xirandilles. Cariao Cariado (galegófona Asturiana)		3/8
Charlestón			4/4
Corri Corri (El)		Danza	4/4

		Lo Suelto	
Danza prima	Dances Primes, Giraldilla, Xirandilles/ Xirandiyes connected to Jota.	Lo Suelto/ Circle dance(Bailes de Corro)	2/4, ¾ and 4/4 in different parts of same dance
Dancitas	Cowboys		6/8
Habanera	Contradanza	Couples	2/4
Media Vuelta	Cowboy Dance	Dance and Song	3/8
Pericote (El)		Danza Lo Suelto	2/4
Ronda	Alredores		2/4, 4/4

Appendix B. Choreography

El Saltón

1. Entrado (entrance: walk on): 4 bars repeated.
2. Descanso : 4 bars repeated.
3. Figura: 10 bars.
4. Picados: 4 bars repeated.
5. Pasode Jota: 4 bars repeated.
6. Emborados:11 bars.
7. Descanso: 4 bars.
8. Figura: 9 bars.
9. Picados: 4 bars repeated.
10. Paso de Jota: 4 bars repeated.
11. Emborados: 11 bars.
12. Descanso: 4 bars repeated.
13. Figura: 8 bars.
14. Picados: 4 bars repeated.
15. Pado de Jota: 4 bars repeated.
16. Emborados: 11 bars.
17. Final: 6 bars.

    Total of 133 bars.

Source: Bandas de Gaitas Duerna (2024).

Jota

1: Entrance or change: Entrada:/ Entrada con Descanso (Rest)/ Mudanza (Move or change).

2: Paso de Jota (Pass) / Cruces (Crosses).

3. Cruces/ Remates de cruces (Cross finishes)/ Paso de Jota (Pointing Jota step) / Segundos Cruces (Second crosses).

4: Ramates (Ending in different types).

Source: Asencio (2010).

The total number of bars depends on the number of repetitions of parts.

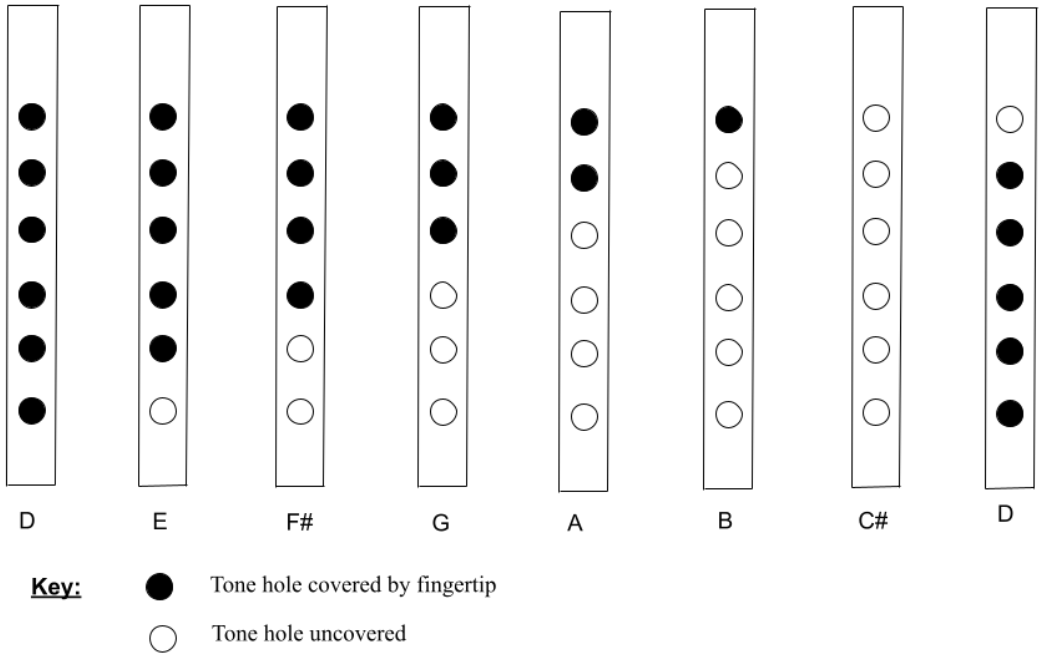
Muñeira

1. Paseo (Promenade/rest).

2. Punto (Point: Step sequence).

3. Rueda (Wheel: Turning).

Appendix C. Flute fingering chart for the scale of D major



The fingering of the scale of D Major for the transverse wooden flute in D/Re.

Appendix D. Asturian flute players

Link to spreadsheet:

https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1-mT8SQX0HtCpHqfcVnC29I-7FLgngG5XEy7y5AMenpw/edit?usp=sharing