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Heritage on stage: Music education lessons from folk musicians in Finland and Nepal

Vilma Timonen and Riju Tuladhar

We, the authors of this chapter, commenced our collaborative work in 2013 under a project entitled "Global Visions Through Mobilizing Networks: Co-Developing Music Teacher Education in Finland, Israel and Nepal" (https://sites.uniarts.fi/web/globalvisions). The project was guided by a vision in which music teacher education is developed through global interaction and by committing to collaborative knowledge building. For almost a decade, we worked intensively on developing preliminary structures for music teacher education in Nepal with the other Global Visions researchers and educators (Timonen, 2020). Because our professional lives as artists and as educators working in higher music education involve a commitment to sustaining and revitalising traditional musical heritages in contemporary educational and artistic environments, our current research interest lies in understanding the multifaceted phenomena related to these. Our professional experience and expertise form the foundations of this research. Drawing from our decade-long experience of collaborative knowledge building (Timonen, 2020), we believe that mirroring the similar phenomena we have found in Finland and Nepal can generate a "more heterogeneous and kaleidoscopic approach [that might] allow for the development of a wider ethical reflexivity and critical awareness" (Westerlund & Karlsen, 2017, p. 100). By incorporating insights from two distant locations, we hope to envision ethically and culturally sustainable educational spaces for traditional music in formal music education globally.

In recent years, the ethical and political dimensions of diversity in music education have gained increasing interest among music education scholars (Benedict et al., 2015; Kallio et al., 2021a). Creative and new ways of thinking and acting are yielded (Kertz-Welzel, 2021) when scholars, policymakers, institutional leaders, and educators critically engage in scrutinising the "ways in which difference is promoted, represented, negotiated, navigated, contained, or challenged in various music education practice" (Kallio et al., 2021b, p. 2). The study presented in this chapter discusses diversity in music education from the perspective of historical and current

traditional musics that reside, or have resided, in communities, and are orally transmitted from generation to generation. These traditions are often located in communities with diverse cultural practices. The focus of this chapter is to explore the challenges and opportunities involved in claiming a space for these culturally important musical heritages in formal music education.

In the research literature, perspectives on musical heritages can be found in several disciplines, such as Indigenous studies, anthropology, ethnomusicology, and music education. Similarly, depending on the context, these traditions are referred to by many names, such as: Traditional music, folk music, community music, Indigenous music, and musical heritage. While the term "Indigenous" connects distinctly to specific identified groups, such as the Sámi people of northern Europe, there are terms with consider- able proximity to it, as highlighted in a United Nations factsheet (United Nations, n.d.):

> In some countries, there may be preference for other terms including tribes, first peoples/nations, aboriginals, ethnic groups, adivasi, janajati. Occupational and geographical terms like hunter-gatherers, nomads, peasants, hill people, etc., also exist and for all practical purposes can be used interchangeably with "indigenous peoples."
>
> (para. 5)

In Finland, this study mainly refers to musical traditions whose origins are among peasants in the Finno-Baltic region within the last century. In Nepal, we refer to traditional musics as the music of a particular ethnic group: Tharu music, or Newari music, for example. These specific ethnic identifiers are commonly deployed in the Nepali context, and many of these groups are identified as Indigenous at the policy level (see Government of Nepal, 2018). Overall, when discussing diverse traditional musics, it is crucial to accurately describe *who*, *where*, *and when* and accurately explain the terminology chosen.

Ronström (2014) notes that although "heritage" and "tradition" may seem synonymous, they have different associations. "Tradition" is rooted in a particular time and place, belongs to a specific group, and is thus connected to the "local"; "heritage" indicates a space that is more open in terms of context and accessibility because it typically refers to larger geographical areas. We relate the concept of folk music to institutional-ised educational or (commercial) artistic environments where traditional musics form the basis for educational or artistic practices. For instance, education in traditional musics in higher music education in the European context often takes place under folk music programmes (Hill, 2009). In France, such musical phenomena fall under the term *musique traditionelle*.

Contemporary musicians who base their artistic work on traditional musics often identify themselves as folk musicians. In this study, we understand traditional musics as the root of folk music, and heritage as being located in a particular geographical area and often comprising various and diverse musical traditions that are both historical and contemporary in nature.

We approach the musical traditions of historical and current communities as intangible cultural heritages (IHC). The 2003 UNESCO International Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage defines IHC as oral traditions and expressions, performing arts, social practices, rituals, festive events, and traditional craftsmanship. The convention's article II emphasises "identification, documentation, research, preservation, protection, promotion, enhancement [and] transmission particularly through formal and non-formal education" as crucial means for safeguarding this type of heritage. Indeed, educational environments could provide a robust platform for the maintenance and revitalisation of these forms of intangible heritage. However, the processes where forms of memory-based music making are relocated into the contemporary educational environments in a pedagogical and future-oriented manner call for scrutiny because the process consists of an abundance of both pitfalls and educational opportunities.

Our educational rationale begins with an understanding that incorporating musical heritages into formal music education practices and curricula offers prodigious opportunities for transformative music teaching and learning (Bowman, 2002; Bradley, 2012). Bowman (2007) emphasises that meaningful progress in music education entails understanding the constitutive and fundamental nature of the connection between musical issues and historical and current sociocultural issues. Bradley (2012) has similarly argued that meaningful music education "requires that we approach all music, and all philosophies of music education, with an understanding of their contextually situated nature" (p. 429). We join these advocates and those who recognise music education as a thoroughly political arena (Kallio et al., 2021b) permeated by ethical dimensions and understand it as "a powerful means of mediating inclusion and exclusion" (Bowman, 2007, p. 110). Moreover, education in and of musics that originate from a particular location and historical era and are situated in social, communal practices provides exquisite educational opportunities that recognise and embrace diverse local and territorial sonic and cultural expressions and thus supports pedagogy rooted in "intercultural dialogue and respect for cultural diversity" (UNESCO, 2008).

Against this backdrop, we consider the teaching and learning of historical and current traditional musics to require understanding of the musics' connection to the sociocultural reality of their context. This approach requires attention to social justice, equality, and politics of valuations. Indeed, viewing traditional musics as separate from their sociocultural

surroundings eliminates the inherently "political nature of music and musical participation [and] complexity with regard to questions of culture, social change, and ethics" (Kallio et al., 2021b) and subsequently misses out on the educational possibilities of such traditions.

Our work here is driven by a vision where heritage stops being a mere curiosity in curricula (Hess, 2015) and becomes *centrally* located at the heart of formal music education. However, we argue that to reach this vision, the education in traditional musics requires that music education institutions, scholars, and policymakers apply a critical de-colonial lens that allows for understanding the valuations that shape and have shaped formal music education practices. Expanding the notions of diversity in music education practices demands that we exercise critical thinking and re-examine "the philosophies, motivations, and world views that underlie our consciousnesses and work" (Gorski, 2008, p. 516). Indeed, the challenging task of "reappraisal of implicit values and belief systems, as well as different approaches to the formal organisation of music education" (Schippers, 2010, p. 36) starts with uncovering our taken-for-granted assumptions and valuations.

Research questions

As Hill (2014) points out, when musical traditions are recontextualised into new sociocultural settings, the process includes making strategic and/or intuitive choices between the elements of the past while being "shaped by contemporary aesthetics and value systems" (p. 394). The work of contemporary folk musicians, who base their professional artistry on historical and contemporary musical heritages, provides an exciting field of study for understanding these choices.

Relying on our experiences as educators and artists working in the field of folk music, we have designed this study according to the following assumption: That the processes by which contemporary professional folk musicians in Finland and Nepal create contemporary artistic performances based on traditional music could offer valuable lessons for creating educational spaces for current and historical oral music traditions in contemporary and future formal music education. Indeed, we believe that by articulating how the folk musician navigates through musical and cultural meanings, their aesthetic and ethical choices could inform sustainable, ethical and creative ways to decolonise music education practices and research both locally and globally.

The study has been guided by the following research questions:

1. How do professional folk musicians navigate the aesthetic, ethical, and cultural meanings involved in their use of the traditional music(s) as sources for their contemporary artistic practices?

2. How could the processes of professional folk musicians inform locating the traditional music(s) in de-colonial and sustainable formal music education practices that support revitalisation and sustainability of intangible musical heritages in and through music education?

Mutilated diversities: Two multicultural countries amid nationalisation projects

To give some background, we will first provide an overview of the cultural topography of Finland and Nepal. Then, we will shed light on the politics that have shaped the cultural and, more specifically, the musical diversity in the two countries. In the two contexts at hand, this includes understanding the connection between the politics involved in nation-building efforts and how they have impacted on the way the diverse musical heritages have been valued, supported, or suppressed in recent decades. Indeed, in both countries, nationalisation efforts have drastically impacted (and silenced) the diversity of sounds, languages, and plurality of musical expressions.

The geographical territory of modern-day Nepal consists of more than 120 ethnic groups and over 100 languages, which is a result of the hundreds of tribal and ethnic groups that have existed historically within its current territory (Giri, 2010, p. 6). Of these, 59 *Adivasi Janajati* or Indigenous nationalities are currently recognised (Government of Nepal, 2018). The territory of Nepal is mainly divided into three geographical features: Terai (lowlands) next to the Indian border, Pahad (hills and valleys) in central Nepal, and Himal (mountains) in the northern parts bordering China. Ethnic groups such as Tharus, Maithalis, Awadhis, Bajjika, and Bhojpuris are from Terai, whereas Gurungs, Rais, Limbus, and Newars are from Pahad, and Sherpas and Tamangs originate from the Himal area. All these different ethnic groups have their own distinct languages, costumes, food, music, and other cultural expressions (Ghimire, 2020). In Nepal, formal music education in compulsory schools is only in a developmental phase (Timonen, 2020). Therefore, the timely question is how to sustain these traditions in formal music education in a period of lifestyle changes from traditional to urban and while thousands of young people are migrating abroad to search for financial opportunities.

In Finland, the so-called "old minorities" include the Finnish-Swedish population, the Indigenous Sámi people—who in the Finnish area comprise speakers of North Sámi, Inari Sámi, and Skolt Sámi—and the Roma people, as well as several smaller ethnocultural and religious groups who have resided in Finland since the 19th century (Raento & Husso, 2001). In addition to the minorities, the eastern parts of the Finnish territory, Karelia, consisted of speakers of various languages, such as Olonets, Ludian, and Karelian, and also people who speak dialects of Kemijärvi, Kainuu,

North-Karelian, and Savo (Haapoja-Mäkelä, 2020). In the western parts, the dialects spoken include the Southwestern, Ostrobothnian, and Häme dialects. Notably, as in Nepal, the distinctive territories have their unique cultural expressions and musics. Furthermore, due to migration in the past decade, the list of languages and ethnicities in the country continues to grow. Currently, Finland has more than 400,000 people whose mother tongue is not Finnish, Swedish, or one of the Sámi languages.

In Nepal, a slogan from 1950s, *ek bhasha, ek bhesh, ek dharma, ek desh* (one language, one way of dress, one religion, one nation) illustrates the force with which the local identities, diverse cultural practices, and languages have been subsumed under an enforced Nepali identity (Weinberg, 2013). From 1951 to 1990, a ban was imposed on broadcasting ethnic songs in languages other than the imposed lingua franca, Nepali Bhasha (Nepali language), which derives from Sanskrit. Music of diverse communities was collected, but the texts were translated into Nepali. Arrangements took inspiration from popular music and added contemporary instruments (Greene, 2002). This invented form of folk music, Lok Gít, was then disseminated through state-sponsored national broadcasting institutions on the radio and television to foster "a sense of a distinctively Nepali identity that all could share" (Greene, 2002, p. 48), yet subjugating the rich and diverse musical soundscape of the communities along the way.

In the late 19th and early 20th centuries, Finland was heavily influenced by romantic nationalist and public enlightenment movements that deployed music and arts as important media for constructing a uniform national identity (see, e.g., Haapoja-Mäkelä, 2020; Heimonen, 2014). Notably, the 2004 National Core Curriculum for basic education still spoke of the Finnish culture as a singular and unified entity (Koskela et al., 2021).

The 19th-century Fennoman slogan *One language, one nation* (Anttonen, 2005) attests to the aims of reducing the linguistic diversity that comprised several dialects as well as Karelian, Swedish, and the Sámi languages. Deriving from German Romantic philosophical thought, Finnish intellectuals adapted romanticised ideas of the *folk*, whose music embodied the Finnish character and symbolised the particularities of the Finnish identity (Hill, 2007). These views efficiently ignored the fact that

> Finns' ethnic heritage stretches beyond Finland's national borders to the many Finno-Ugric peoples living around the eastern rim of the Baltic Sea and across northern Russia. Finnish cultural heritage can be found in all of Scandinavia, especially in Sweden.
>
> (Hill, 2007, p. 55)

In Finland, the term "folk music" emerged in the era leading up to independence (Haapoja-Mäkelä, 2020). Due to the effective dissemination of

a nationalistic agenda and standardisation of cultural expressions through educational institutions, such as schools, adult education, art, scholarship, and literature (Hill, 2014; Ramnarine, 2003), the term "folk music" may even today be associated with narratives of a homogenised, imaginary, and idealised Finnish society among the general public (Hill, 2014) and bear connotations that exclude Finland's historical and contemporary multicultural reality (see Heimonen & Hebert, 2012; Kallio & Länsman, 2018).

The impact of the nationalisation and related aesthetic valuations on local heritages in Finland is illustrated through two examples: The *runo singing* tradition and *pelimanni* music. Scholars and intellectuals of the 19th century were particularly interested in the *runo singing* tradition, a musical vernacular of the people dating back many centuries (Laitinen, 1985). Elias Lönnrot compiled the *Kalevala* epic, first published in 1835, of this sung poetry, which became "one of the country's most distinctive domestic symbols" (Anttonen, 2005, p. 163). Lönnrot collected the poems in areas such as Karelia, which contain multiple ethnic and linguistic identities (Haapoja-Mäkelä, 2020), then standardised and homogenised the language of the poems as well as seasoning them with aesthetics derived from European Romanticism (Hill, 2014). Only in recent years has a discussion emerged, through the work of a few scholars and Karelian activists, about how the work of Lönnrot impacted the fading of the Karelian language and culture. Some of the fiercest activists even consider the work of Lönnrot and *Kalevala* an appalling manifestation of the Finnish colonisation. In Lönnrot's time, the melodies of rune singing were considered "simple," even primitive, only having an ambitus of three to six notes. Furthermore, they were sung in a manner that was far from the aesthetics valued in the era of Romanticism. Consequently, the musical richness of the rune-singing tradition, such as ample variation, improvisatory qualities, creative use of melodies and rhythm (Laitinen, 2004), was ignored and silenced to the extent that the poems were commonly recited instead of sung in 20th-century educational and cultural contexts.

In western Finland, particularly in Ostrobothnia, the prevailing style of music of the 19th century and early 20th century was *pelimanni* music, a term deriving from the Swedish term "spelman," referring to a fiddler or folk instrumentalist (Hill, 2007). The *pelimanni* repertoire includes dance tunes, such as polskas, polkas, minuets, schottisches, mazurkas, and waltzes. Although performed in unique local styles, the music's connections to its Central European origins are clear (Hill, 2007). Leisiö and Westerholm (2006) have divided the eras of the *pelimanni* tradition into two phases: The first one, from the 17th century until the 1920s, was the time of local traditions. The *pelimannis* of the 19th century were played in Osthrabothnia with great rhythmic diversity. Each musician had their own sound, ornamentation, and intonation, which made the individual

and regional playing styles very distinctive from one another. There is also comprehensive archival material and recordings of players rooted in this era, as recording systems became significant at the beginning of the 21st century. Leisiö and Westerholm (2006) characterised the second phase, from the 1960s onwards, as a *national* era, because at that time this tradition also came to be considered a "national treasure." The ways of passing on the tradition differ between the two eras: in one, the tradition was oral, in the other, the ways of learning resembled those familiar to classical music as the *pelimanni* repertoires were increasingly published as transcriptions. Indeed, in the second era, learning the music "from staff notation, and interpret[ing] [it] as if [it] were Western [classical] music" (Schippers, 2010, p. 51) slowly mutilated the improvisational character and the diversity of expression that had been integral to the 19th-century *pelimanni* styles.

The process of the study

The study aims to take a global, kaleidoscopic view of the complexities and potential involved in providing space for traditional musics in formal education through examining data from the two countries, Finland and Nepal. In Finland, the researchers focussed on musicians from Tallari, an ensemble working under the Finnish Folk Music Institute (FFMI), an accredited expert organisation of the UNESCO Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage and a doctoral student of the Sibelius Academy (SibA) Folk Music Department. Tallari is a state- funded professional folk music ensemble, whose musical expression is rooted in the rich and lively fiddle playing tradition of Kaustinen, which was added to UNESCO's list of intangible cultural heritages in December 2021. Tallari play a significant role in revitalising the musical heritage of the Ostrobothnia region through their collaboration with local amateur musicians and tradition bearers' artistic and educational activities targeted at children and youth. In Nepal, the informants were musicians involved in educational and artistic activities under Echoes in the Valley (EitV) from Kathmandu, a cultural organisation working to promote the rich cultural heritage of Nepal. The study was executed as collaboration between the three organisations FFMI, EitV, and SibA in 2021.

The research data was collected through semi-structured interviews and the participants' written reflections. In the interviews and written reflections, the musicians from Finland (n-5) and Nepal (n-4) articulate the processes of how they choose the traditional musical material for their sources, what kinds of choices they make along the way and why, and what kinds of deliberations guide the outcomes of their creative processes. The discussions and written reflections were

analysed through data-driven content analysis (Tuomi & Sarajärvi, 2018). The informants of this inquiry are named M1F, M2F, M3F, M4F, M5F, referring to the musicians from Finland, and M1N, M2N, M3N, and M4N, referring to those from Nepal.

In Finland, bearers of living tradition are few; learning traditional musics from a particular area or getting to know individual musicians' styles often requires a visit to the archives or searching for material from sheet music. Nepal also has archival recordings, but they are often privately owned by universities or other organisations, meaning that musicians or scholars outside – and sometimes even inside – these organisations have only limited access to them. Furthermore, many of the field recordings done among the communities of Nepal have been recorded by foreign scholars, who have archived their materials outside Nepal. As a result, contemporary folk musicians more commonly find the material directly in communities.

Learning the musical material through holistic imitation

The musicians from Finland and Nepal were somewhat of one mind about how learning a particular style with a tradition bearer, community, or archival recordings begins: That is, trying to grasp the style at hand in as much detail as possible through playing or singing.

> Yes, it happens by imitation. It is a particularly wonderful situation when you get to play it with a tradition bearer, and you directly see what he/she does and how they handle their instrument.
>
> (M1F)

Another described a holistic adaptation:

> When we learned from Aimo [a tradition bearer from the Osthrobotnia region] and played a concert together with him, I really tried to copy everything, almost the shaking body movements too!
>
> (M3F)

While the fiddlers in Finland focussed on catching the bow movements that produce rich and multifaceted grooves and sound qualities, the drummer from Nepal described his learning in the following manner:

> I look for the brilliant sound quality, either the sounds of drums or the overall ensemble, and intensity of the player. By intensity I mean seriousness towards the music he is playing and how he articulates the music.
>
> (M3N)

The musicians highlighted that the route to learning is discovered somewhat intuitively:

> It is hard to describe what actually happens … how the phrasing needs to be done in a particular way and how it actually happens.
>
> (M2F)

They stressed that stylistic characteristics are a complex mix of diverse features, to the point where it is challenging to try to verbalise which features constitute the style:

> I'm trying to understand the aesthetics and somehow grasp the groove and rhythmic structure: so[,] how the musicians deal with the tempo, metrics, and duration of different beats.
>
> (M4F)

Tallari members discussed how the style of an individual *pelimanni* or the style of a particular region, such as the Kaustinen village tradition, is constituted of nuances, sound quality (rough/soft), ornamentation, rhythmic phrasing, intonation, and microtonalities. However, they noted that none of these features could easily be described in ways that conform to the music analysis used in Western classical music:

> [Transcriptions] don't tell [you] anything about the context of the music, the information of the intonation is missing and how long the different sounds have been. Also, the microtonality is not there.
>
> (M1F)

Developing contextual understanding

The musicians in both countries emphasised that the musical material should be seen as inseparable from its wider sociocultural surroundings.

> The music is so connected with the local life. If you don't take the sociocultural environment into account, you must realise that you are only presenting a small part of the local cultural heritage.
>
> (M1F)

A musician from Nepal used almost the same wording:

> We have come to the realisation that it [music] is, indeed, just a part of the whole picture we're trying to paint of any society.
>
> (M2N)

Indeed, all the musicians interviewed emphasised that learning a tradition was not just about "chasing some good tunes" (M1F). Instead, an effort should be made to achieve a deeper understanding of the context of the music and try to understand what music making means for the practitioners and the community in question, and what the function of that music is.

The folk musicians in Nepal commonly approach musical heritages by staying in a particular location and familiarising themselves with the ways of the community.

> Because we are interacting with real humans and not archived materials, it becomes easier as days pass by as we open, communicate our intention and share knowledge with each other. Most conversations, we've realised, revolve around everyday life, talks on politics, identity, language, and such. Music comes in as another natural/organic fit.
>
> (M2N)

The work requires building trust within the community:

> I need time to engage with the community first. Building trust with the community people and building ownership towards the tradition through regular participatory observation are a must for me to be able to start singing their song.
>
> (M1N)

Because many communities in Nepal have been suppressed by the caste system and societal orders derived from an understanding of societal hierarchies, historical and current disparities cannot be separated from an understanding of the musical cultures:

> Looking at a rich culture like Tharu through just a musical lens is unjustifiable, we need to first understand the community's struggle to fight years of oppression.
>
> (M2N)

The musicians described various ways of delving into these contextual understandings. For example, the musicians from Finland described how small stories in the archival recordings often served as sources for contextual understanding:

> When you listen to some archive tapes and they contain half music and half talking, I find the talking bit often super interesting.
>
> (M2F)

One Nepali interviewee highlighted the potential of song lyrics as a means of contextual understanding:

> My interest is also in the texts that are woven with music. Sometimes these texts can tell a lot about the history and social context of both music and the practitioner or performer.
>
> (M1N)

However, some musicians stressed the importance of contextual understanding behind the archival recordings themselves. Firstly, M5 and M1 from Finland noted that without understanding the context of these recordings, contemporary musicians, who are often classically trained or used to studio-quality recordings, might fail to value them:

> Firstly, quite often these musicians have been rather old at the time they have been recorded so the tape does not necessarily do justice to how they have been as musicians in their best years.
>
> (M2F)

Secondly, M1 from Finland pointed out that the traditional musicians' premises for making music differed from those of today's professional musicians, who aim for public performances or predefined professional standards and do not play for mere enjoyment or for sociocultural purposes.

> The local context is important[,] and the fact that the individual musicians have defined themselves how they make music, in what terms and what it means for them. The cultural context needs to be understood.
>
> (M1F)

Aesthetic navigation through ethical engagement

In all, the musicians articulated that ethical contemplation was a salient part of the process. On the one hand, they felt obligated towards the tradition bearers as they wanted to show respect to their musical skills and the tradition they carried:

> I always aim at maintaining respect to the original source. The artistic outcome needs to be the kind I can honestly stand behind. Exploring possible new directions but not something that takes it to the opposite directions from the original source.
>
> (M5F)

Learning alongside tradition bearers seemed to increase the pressure to present the tradition as "learned from the source"

> Performing with a performing musician colleague is not a difficult thing. However, practising alongside the tradition bearer themselves requires greater courage.
>
> (M1N)

The members of Tallari described how, on the rare occasion when they had been able to play with a tradition bearer, they had, quite intuitively, chosen not to arrange the material too much. Instead, they would support the tradition bearer in his/her music making and join in in ways that would help him or her to reach his or her full potential in the situation. They described how they wanted to show their appreciation to the musician and his or her skills. Similarly, M1 from Nepal described how she tried to increase the tradition bearers' appreciation of their practice by asking detailed questions about the music.

> Answers to such questions inform me about the tradition. At the same time, asking questions that put the bearer in a position of a knowledgeable informer is helpful in building confidence and awareness of the bearer towards the tradition-at-risk itself.
>
> (M1N)

For the Nepali participants, the hybridisation of the traditional material involved interacting with popular music aesthetics and performance settings, such as mixing excerpts of field recordings with late-night DJ sets or playing the rearranged material in rock clubs. However, as the musicians in Nepal often had strong personal connections to the tradition bearers, they followed their ethical norms quite closely while working with those communities. Some of the interviewed musicians also chose to continue the tradition in the ways that had been presented in the setting in which they first learned it. For the Finnish musicians, the aesthetic choices depended on the intended frame of the performance. Consequently, their processes fluctuated from strict imitation to highly arranged performances. However, they seemed very conscious of the navigation process, particularly when they were close to the source and deviated from it.

The Finnish musicians recognised that they had received classically oriented music education since their childhood. They admitted that it was hard to overcome some of the qualities adopted from the classical training, such as ergonomics and particular ideals of intonation and pitch, even when these would go against the traditional playing style.

Interestingly, both the Finnish and Nepali musicians mentioned that there was one motivating factor that encouraged them to step out of style deliberately: trying to get the younger generation interested in their traditions. As M4 from Nepal explained, experimenting with new playing techniques that derive inspiration from popular music and bringing traditional instruments such as the sarangi into popular music environments could help prove that:

> Sarangi can be played in any genre to connect to people or to inspire or motivate the newer generation towards the instrument.
>
> (M4N)

Talking about the concerts they give for schoolchildren, the musicians of Tallari similarly explained that they tend to choose and arrange their musical material based on the desire to speak their younger audiences' musical language.

Directing the gaze from national towards territorial and local

Without exception, the folk musicians interviewed provided detailed information about whose music they were learning, which area and to which era it belonged to, and which community it was rooted in. Considering this information in tandem with the problematic nature of nationalised local music traditions discussed at the beginning of the chapter, we suggest that decolonising music education might entail a shift from national to *territorial* and *local*, or, at times, even *individual* (Biddle & Knights, 2007). In addition, with the recent populistic rise of nationalism and protectionism, the territorial shift might highlight both historical and current territorial plurality and bypass the mythologising forms of nationalism that can be exclusive, toxic, and hostile towards minorities. Indeed, as pointed out by Biddle and Knights (2007), "the national (in all its varied imaginations) can sometimes seem too cumbersome, too amorphous, wrongly scaled or even hostile to these putatively 'local' 'human' practices" (p. 3). When it comes to diversity in music education, there is a need to recognise local and global diversities, consisting of Indigenous and other kinds of cultural pluralities. Shifting the gaze from national to territorial could support this critically oriented interrogation. Indeed, a fair amount of historical and political understanding seems to be required from music educators when diversities are at stake. An effort needs to be made to point out the gaps between the "imagined" or "invented" folk music and the local traditions they are rooted in as well as why such gaps exist, why these traditions have been chosen, and for what purposes. Moreover, understanding the local musical traditions as intangible cultural heritage rooted in the "communities, groups and individuals concerned" (UNESCO, 2003) could allow educators and scholars to better conceptualise

the nature of such traditions. Importantly, this conceptualisation could bring us closer to the possibilities of seeing music education in terms of human rights and of forms of social justice that emphasise the right for diverse cultural expressions (UNESCO, 2015).

The interconnected problematics of hegemonies and valuations

As Hess (2015) has pointed out, Western classical music has in many ways acted as a global coloniser. To scrutinise how this hegemony has efficiently subsumed local diversities, we need further research on a global scale. In this study, the Finnish musicians, who had received Western classical training, seemed to connect aesthetic navigation with a critical examination of this influence. The Nepali musicians often chose to connect with Western popular music that similarly suppresses the richness and diversity of sounds. The musicians in both countries struggled to express, for instance, the rhythmical groove of a particular playing style that did not fall under the metrics of Western music. Available terms for musical expression, such as "unstable tempo" or "uneven metrics" refer to stability in the tempo as the norm, and anything that does not fall under this norm is considered somehow imperfect. Consequently, we recommend that vocabulary should be critically examined to avoid reinforcing such valuations, whereby:

> Western classical music is perceived to be of greater prestige than world music and where differences in status and prestige are also reflected in the distinctions between historical versus contemporary forms, between "high arts" versus local culture, between scores and notation versus oral tradition, and between imitation versus creativity and improvisation.
>
> (Folkestad, 2002, p. 159)

Acknowledging the valuations and hegemonies that silence the diverse soundscapes both locally and globally, and constructing music education practices that appreciate diverse musical expressions in their own right and not in relation to some other musical tradition, could serve as a starting point for decolonising music education.

Diversity of expressions through creative participation and ethical deliberation

The findings of the present study echo those of Hill (2014), who points out that recontextualisation involves the blending of traditional features and "contemporary aesthetic and value systems" (p. 394). However, creative exploration also has its boundaries. All the musicians interviewed considered themselves as tradition bearers. Thus, the aesthetic choices they made throughout the process were deeply connected to the self-determined

ethical obligation to revitalise the traditions and keep them alive for future generations.

If we are to propose ideas for music education based on these findings, the lesson to be learned here is that new generations should be given a right to creative exploration in and with diverse musical traditions, in ways that Small (1998) calls musicking. The interviewed musicians identified themselves as links in the centuries-long chain of tradition bearers, but they highlighted their desire to connect with their musical traditions and take the opportunity and liberty to shape them. Indeed, this resembles Small's definition of musicking, as it "brings into existence relationships that are thought of as desirable . . . [and demonstrates how] a musical performance not only reflects those relationships but also shapes them" (p. 183).

The folk musicians' commitment to learning the tradition holistically through singing or playing finds a theoretical premise in Stanton (2018). He has interpreted Small (1998) through a de-colonial lens and highlighted the potential of musicking as a decolonising methodology. As Stanton (2018) points outs, "musicking's profound connections to embodied experience make it a locality ripe for de-colonial activity" (p. 4). As the processes of folk musicians in this study illustrate, the stylistic features escape verbal analysis but can be approached through experimental exploration. This echoes Regelski (2004), who promotes appreciation for experimental music participation that does not involve intellectual analysis. Notably, this approach could also be applied in various educational settings with diverse learners.

Musically, creative exploration of diverse music traditions requires comprehensive abilities, such as the ability to distinguish and play within different forms of expression and to relocate a variety of stylistic features into distinct musical settings. Moreover, this creative exploration should be based on ethical commitments that connect the handling of the musical material to complex questions about culturally related ethical responsibilities (Kallio et al., 2021b). Indeed, diverse intangible cultural heritages in music education could occupy a space where ethical deliberations accompany creative participation in the exploration of diverse forms of musical expression. This kind of space would allow these heritages to exist as living, creative new forms but be accompanied by the ethical work which creative music-making entails.

The need for epistemic learning

According to the findings of this study, education in and through musical traditions is a challenging task as it requires historical, contextual, and cultural understanding, the musical ability to produce diverse expressions, and a critical mindset in order to locate blind spots and silences. Decolonising music education calls for understanding the intertwined *political*, *ethical*,

and related *aesthetic* valuations that have influenced, and still influence, the formation of the local. As such, the turn towards music education practices that can accommodate different musical heritages, diversity of sounds and culturally rooted expressions requires a thorough investigation of the people and purposes that music education is serving (Bradley, 2012). Are formal music education institutions ready to commit to truly intercultural education, even at the cost of having to problematise hegemonies and prevailing sociopolitical realities (Gorski, 2008)? Indeed, looking at our collective and individual values, re-examining "the philosophies, motivations, and world views that underlie our consciousnesses and work" (Gorski, 2008, p. 516), stretching our epistemological understandings, and stepping into uncertainty and vulnerability (Gorski, 2008) could be the painful yet necessary steps that need to be taken towards decolonising the future of music education.

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