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Disciplining Music Heritage: A Preliminary Survey

AV Villén

Heritagisation of music proliferates. Since 2008, over three hundred music-related "elements" have been inscribed in the UNESCO (2026) lists of intangible cultural heritage. These range from ones "in need of urgent safeguarding" such as "Sega tambour Chagos" of Mauritius, to globally wide-spread idioms representative of humanity, as in the case of "Reggae music of Jamaica." At the same time, the notion of heritage is exploited frequently in urban branding in local settings. The initiative for such action may originate from municipal economic interests, but is sanctioned on a global level again by UNESCO through its Creative Cities Network that "promotes cooperation with and among cities that have identified creativity as a strategic factor for sustainable urban development" (CCN 2026a). While there is a steady emphasis on diversity in the presentations of the cities, often certain genres and phenomena occupy the centre stage: "Home to … one of the most influential rock bands in history, music is at the heart of Liverpool's cultural identity" (CCN 2026b).

Scholarly debate about music heritagisation is equally on the increase. On the basis of a quick search into relevant databases, roughly two thirds of the peer-reviewed articles that mention "music heritage" have been published after 2010 (see Figure 1). Additionally, in the *International Journal of Heritage Studies* for instance, special issues have been devoted to popular music (2014) and jazz festivals (2020). Such tendencies point to a variety of institutional and disciplinary levels and settings of music heritagisation, ranging from global organisations and national authorities to local tourist

boards and idiosyncratic whims of scholarship. Crucially, these levels are interconnected, especially through the reliance on scholarly expertise in global and national decision-making in the matter. Within scholarship, this is sanctioned on a disciplinary level, as for instance a key ethnomusicological organisation, the International Council for Traditions of Music and Dance (ICTMD), is in formal consultative relations with UNESCO.

<insert Figure 1 here>

Figure 1. The number of peer-reviewed articles mentioning the phrase "music heritage" in "international e-materials" of the National Library of Finland (as of 1 October 2020).

The diversity of institutional and disciplinary settings begs the question whether there are significant similarities or drastic differences between them. How does music heritage become conceptualised and constructed in these surroundings? Are certain genres and styles of music treated as heritage more readily than others, and what kind of explicit and implicit motivations and goals are involved when constructing music as heritage in different disciplinary environments? A broader aim here concerns exploring the ways in which the notion of heritage relates to ideals of multi-, inter- and transdisciplinarity, especially as ethnomusicology, popular music studies and critical heritage studies alike tend to be celebrated as such (see e.g. Post 2018; Bennett and Waksman 2015; Smith 2006).

It is indeed notable that while scholarly literature about music heritage abounds, the volumes in question tend to be limited within singular disciplines, regardless of their alleged interdisciplinary qualities. In other words, those who approach music heritage from within ethnomusicology (e.g. Howard 2012; Norton and Matsumoto 2019) do not converse with like-minded popular music scholars (e.g. Cohen et al. 2014; Bennett 2022), regardless of methodological similarities. In addition, when disciplinary

questions are addressed, they remain either equally monodisciplinary or go beyond music scholarship, leaving the latter's internal disciplinary boundaries unchallenged. To be sure, the implications of preservationist and applied ethnomusicology to heritage have been discussed (e.g. Neale 2018; Grant 2012), yet not in relation to musicology or popular music studies. For instance, in the rare takes on how ethnomusicology and heritage relate to recordings and radio, there are no references to either popular music or media studies (e.g. Landau and Topp Fargion 2012; Western 2018). An exception to these trends is provided by Aleen Leigh Stanton and John Schofield (2019: 1038), as they foreground musicology as a methodology in heritage studies and note how "analysing music itself is surprisingly rare in the field of music heritage".

A terminological caveat is in order. For analytical purposes, I use the formulation "music heritage" as a catch-all term for all instances where music is treated as (intangible cultural) heritage. This is to recognise its semantic as well as political differences from "musical heritage" or "music as heritage", inasmuch as in the latter two music is conceptually subservient to heritage. In my first language Finnish the distinctions are more obvious: *musiikkiperintö* is one word (like "lorry"), as opposed to *musiikillinen perintö* or *musiikki perintönä* (cf. "single-unit truck"). Concerning English, one can exemplify the conceptual quandaries by juxtaposing "popular music heritage" with "popular musical heritage" – that is, whether the emphasis is on popular music or popularity of music heritage. Moreover, on the basis of a basic phrase search into the Taylor and Francis online repository of the *International Journal of Heritage Studies*, the terms are used more or less interchangeably, with the outcome of 31 articles for "music heritage" and 25 for "musical heritage" in volumes 1–35 (1994–2025, as of 29 October 2025). With respect to the heritage elements inscribed in the UNESCO lists, in turn, the number of hits in the nomination files from 2009 to 2024 is eight for "music

heritage" and 28 for "musical heritage". Thus, given the terminological fluctuation, I have treated the phrases as interchangeable when producing the corpus.

Labelling, institutionalising, publishing

The range of contexts of disciplining heritage is broad indeed, and it may be argued that since the 1970s there has been "an increase in 'unofficial knowledge' about the past alongside the 'official knowledge' of state and academic discourses", implicated in seeking differentiated legitimacy "for novel ways of knowing the past" (Hodges 2011: 360). The co-existence of and dialogue between such knowledges may result in administratively desirable "impact" and "public engagement" where "indigenous" interpretations become integrated with scholarly ones. Still, the weight of academic knowledge-production should not be underestimated: "Without the disciplinary processes … aligned on the trajectory of scholarly differentiation rather than collaborative objectives or public accountability, no fertile distinction might exist from which impact – with its implication of an abrupt closure of distance – could be generated" (Hodges 2011: 369).

Thus, my examination concentrates on the academic disciplines and their subdivisions that relate to the construction of music heritage. As no such disciplinary label as "music heritage studies" exists thus far, apart from incidental references to "the field of popular music heritage studies" (Cantillon et al. 2020: 4), the key disciplines include musicology, ethnomusicology, popular music studies, and heritage studies. One might consider adding music sociology to the list, yet its status as a discipline in its own right is more contested. Many popular music scholars have in fact their background in sociology, and, methodologically, music sociology overlaps with ethnomusicology as well as with 'critical' and other more recent strands of musicology (see e.g. DeNora 2000: 4–24; Tagg 2012: 133–144). Given the emphasis on scholarly differentiation, as

opposed to vocational or scientific ones, educational, mathematical and medical strands of music research such as music theory, music psychology and music therapy remain outside my scrutiny (cf. Bergesen Schei et al. 2012: 27–28). Such a demarcation is warranted also on the basis of social constructionism inherent in the aim to interrogate how "music heritage" is conceptualised and created discursively, though admittedly constructivist approaches have been widely adopted within music education in particular. There is in fact a growing body of heritage-related research emerging from within music education, though more often with a preservationist than constructivist approach (e.g. Grant 2017; Cores Torres and Rodríguez 2023). Also, the profile of music education is closer to applied than pure research as it serves the needs of music schools and basic education directly by educating music teachers instead of heterogeneous humanists or social scientists.

To discipline is to punish, even if during the modern era there has been an important shift from physical torture to a variety of control mechanisms based on surveillance and, indeed, education. Following the influential lead set by philosopher Michel Foucault (1977: 211), disciplines operate as "techniques of making useful individuals" through "flexible methods of control" that include, especially in the scholarly environment, "the transmission of knowledge" and "the diffusion of aptitudes and skills". Considering academic disciplines in more detail, at issue is the institutional division of intellectual labour with its organisational space and regularised set of collective practices (Chandler 2009: 734). In such institutionalisation of knowledge, universities are central establishments, alongside academic publications as "gatekeepers of disciplinary norms" (Post 2009: 751–753). In the "knowledge economy" of scientific research, peer-reviewed journal articles in turn are "generally considered the gold standard of publishing" (Nygaard and Bellanova 2018: 46, 51; see also Levy 2023). The

journals themselves are, and have been since the late eighteenth century, pivotal in establishing learned societies and the professionalisation of science through disciplinary specialisation (Fyfe et al. 2022: 11–13).

Thus, in the anticipation of departments of music heritage studies to emerge, I probe the key peer-reviewed journals in the four main disciplines mentioned. To separate top journals from the less prestigious ones is to engage into academic politics for sure, but luckily enough one – as an individual scholar – does not have to rely on one's own estimations, let alone predilections. In the academic knowledge economy, journals are ranked continuously, and "gaming the metrics" has become a standard aspect of manipulating research funding (e.g. Biagioli and Lippman 2020). In Finland, the "rating and classification system" *Julkaisufoorumi* ("Publication Forum") was launched in 2010 "to support the quality assessment of research output", taking also into account "the different publication cultures characteristic of various disciplines" (PF 2025). The system has become instrumental and integrated in how public funding is distributed to universities. In the system, journals, series and publishers are rated on a scale from zero to three. To get a grade above zero requires peer-review, and:

> The Levels 2 and 3 are awarded to a limited number of academic journals, conferences and book publishers of the highest level and impact as judged by the Expert Panels. They are mostly international publication channels but in Humanities and Social Sciences, Level 2 also includes Finnish and Swedish-language forums. (PF 2025.)

To separate the top music heritage journals, as it were, is not straightforward either. First of all, if and when a discipline becomes fully established only after there is a journal carrying its name, the study of music heritage is still in its infancy. In fact, there are no top tier journals listed in *Julkaisufoorumi* with the word "heritage" in their title

(as of 1 October 2020). Three "heritage journals" thus defined have received the grade two, namely the *International Journal of Architectural Heritage*, the *International Journal of Heritage Studies* and the *Journal of Cultural Heritage*. The situation evinces pertinent implications as regards disciplining music heritage. One of the most crucial of these concerns the difference in the disciplinary status of both music studies and heritage studies; on the basis of the classificatory system adopted in Finland, the former clearly is more established as a field of academic research. Regarding the disciplinary strands or subfields in question, nine music studies journals emerge as the key publication channels. The top grade has been awarded to *Ethnomusicology*, the *Journal of the American Musicological Society*, the *Journal of Musicology* and *Popular Music*. The runner-ups are *Acta Musicologica*, *Ethnomusicology Forum*, the *Journal of Musicological Research*, the *Journal of Popular Music Studies* and *Popular Music and Society*.

Such a demarcation is limited to be sure, as the emphasis on disciplinary labels leads to excluding a number of potentially relevant journals of high standard, notably the *Journal of Folklore Research* and *Traditions of Music and Dance* (formerly the *Yearbook for Traditional Music*). This caveat notwithstanding, the treatment of music heritage in the selected journals offers an indication of the institutionalised dynamics at stake without any further requirement to justify or explicate the disciplinary connection. Moreover, to ensure a balanced comparative setting, I deal with the fully available volumes published in the 2010s.

The temporal demarcation reflects the politics of academic publishing as well. Apparently many "papers subsequently regarded as groundbreaking [are] rejected multiple times before finally finding a home" (Levy 2023: 1). I hesitate to deem my analysis groundbreaking by any standards, but the fact remains that there has been a

significant delay in publishing this article because the manuscript was originally rejected by leading journals of heritage studies and cultural studies alike. The dissection of the (inter)disciplinary dynamics at issue will have to wait.

Quantities, canons and genres

I commence with a quantitative probe by counting the annual numbers of relevant research articles between 2010 and 2019 (Figure 2). The criteria of relevance is simple: the corpus comprises heritage journal articles where "music" is mentioned and, conversely, music journal articles where "heritage" is mentioned, even if in passing. This yields a total number of 672 articles. As a subset, there are altogether 68 articles where the phrases "music heritage" or "musical heritage" are used.

Concerning the full corpus, a number of observations can be made. First of all, the number of annual articles in a given journal remains fairly steady, disrupted by occasional peaks here and there. For some reason, in 2012 there is a surge upwards in the music journals. The exception confirming the rule of steadiness is constituted by the *International Journal of Heritage Studies*, whose annual amount of research articles with the word "music" in them doubled in 2014 from ten-or-so to twenty-or-so and has remained rather constant since. This leads to another observation, namely that the percentual share of heritage journal articles has doubled overall during the decade; in 2010, ethnomusicology, musicology, popular music studies and heritage studies occupied each roughly a quarter of the total output, but since 2013 heritage studies have taken the lead with a share more than a third (see Figures 2 and 3).

<insert Figure 2 here>

Figure 2. Annual numbers of relevant research articles in the 2010s in the key journals in ethnomusicology, musicology, popular music studies and heritage studies (as of 1 October 2020).

<insert Figure 3 here>

Figure 3. Annual percentages of relevant research articles in the key journals in ethnomusicology, musicology, popular music studies and heritage studies (as of 1 October 2020).

A third observation concerns the average annual amount of relevant research articles per journal. This is to say that in the ethnomusicological journals one is likely in one year's time to encounter eight articles mentioning heritage, while in the musicological and popular music studies journals the expected rate is halved, give or take a decimal. Conversely, in the heritage studies journals the anticipatory annual number of music-related articles is seven. This in turn has two implications in particular. The first one is that the discussion over music heritage takes place mostly within ethnomusicology and heritage studies. Second, given the history of musicology extending back to the late nineteenth century as well as the resulting breadth of scholarship, explicit concerns about heritage appear to be relatively limited, at least in quantitative terms.

Admittedly, the above observations and implications are speculative in nature, and their quantitative validation would necessitate a more nuanced approach based on a larger corpus and careful definition of numerical variables. In the anticipation of such analyses, it is instructive to examine the qualitative emphases and differences at issue, particularly in relation to conceptualisations of music heritage and to methodologies involved. In this task, a central analytical concept is the *canon*, not least because of its etymological reference to a straight bar or rod (Gr. *κανών*), and the subsequent meaning as a rule. Additional historical layers to the concept are provided through its adoption first within Christianity as the sanctioned collection of biblical books on one hand and

the list of acknowledged saints on the other, and later in the realm of art in the form of similar listings of most revered works and their authors. Regarding music, musicologist Katherine Bergeron (1992: 4–5) stresses the importance of the canon as the epicentre of "panoptical" disciplinary power and control that constitute the boundaries and standards of excellence of a given field of scholarship as a site of "training" and continuous collective surveillance (see also Foucault 1977). Elaborating on the idea, musicologist Don Michael Randel (1992: 11–13) in turn notes the centrality of constructing and sustaining acceptable topics and methods of research, particularly as these become evident in the utilisation of generic labels in a circular manner, as if the type of music determined the appropriate analytical approach and vice versa. At issue for him are also the dynamics of expansion and appropriation, or, the tension between broadening of the horizon of investigations through methodological redevelopment and what may be termed methodological imperialism, "a process of colonization that imposes traditional methods on new territories" (Randel 1992: 15, 17).

The notion of genre is indeed instrumental when considering disciplining music, whether in academia or at the market place. Alongside canons, genres operate in identity formation, albeit on a more abstract level; one cannot teach or buy a genre as such, but representatives of it, the most valuable of which are then collected in anthologies and history tomes. Both genres and canons are nonetheless central musical markers of identity and social value hierarchies (Frith 1996; Bohlman 1988). Canons and genres are equally pertinent notions in matters relating to cultural heritage, not only with respect to the construction of canons of both universal and national art (e.g. Locher 2014: 34–35) but also to the extent that transnational and global forms and structures of heritage administration may be considered as "hypercanonisation" because of their geopolitical reach and managerial resources (Rodríguez-Ortega 2018: 2–3). Also, as in

music studies, in heritage studies there is a scholarly canon in its own right, even if extending no further back in time than the 1980s (see Albert 2013; Gentry and Smith 2019). Thus it roughly coincides with the emergence of popular music studies, while the scholarly and scientific foundations of musicology were laid a century earlier, and the modern classics of ethnomusicology were released in the 1950s and the 1960s (see Bohlman 1992; Bates 2013). An additional temporal overlap is the gradual appearance of both "new musicology" and "new museology" in the early 1990s, both exhibiting affinities to the critical theorisation of cultural studies (e.g. Cook and Everist 1999: viii–ix; Witcomb and Buckley 2013: 568–569). Regarding types and genres of music as research topic, these disciplinary realignments are significant inasmuch as they signal a shift from repertoire-based approaches to an emphasis on methodological reflection and application across genres. Their impact is of course another matter, and thus one way to interrogate the ways of disciplining music heritage is to chart the dispersion of music genres, whether explicitly mentioned or implict on the basis of instrumentation in particular, in the relevant research articles.

A conventional assumption in this respect would be that in ethnomusicological journals various types of folk or traditional music dominate, while in musicology the category of classical or art music prevails. In popular music studies, the question of genre may appear even more redundant, whereas heritage studies journals are potentially all-inclusive. The importance of canonisation is worth recognising though, in which case one might expect a certain presence of the "rockist" emphases of much popular music historiography (see Grier 2013) on the one hand, and of phenomena associated with the Central European masterpieces of classical music on the other. This carries further crucial methodological and epistemological implications inasmuch as the monumentalising and textualising effects of canonisation suggest an emphasis on

textual reading – both literally and as a synonym for interpretation – rather than ethnographic participation. Moreover, with respect to academic canonisation, one may hypothesise that in the more recently established disciplinary fields of popular music studies and (critical) heritage studies references to the key journals in other fields are more recurrent than vice versa.

Music heritage (un)defined

Regardless of whether one pays attention to genres, methodologies or crossdisciplinary references, after browsing through the key journals, it becomes soon evident that there is a variable amount of references to music heritage, not to mention conceptual or theoretical discussion over definitions. Perhaps not very surprisingly, in the *International Journal of Architectural Heritage* and the *Journal of Cultural Heritage*, the notion of music heritage is fairly rare. In those few occasions when mentioned, it is associated with either intangible cultural heritage in general (Di Giulio et al. 2019: 5) or historical uniqueness and rarity in a museumifying and elitist manner (Le Conte et al. 2012: S162). The difference between these and the *International Journal of Heritage Studies* is drastic actually, as in the latter, 22 research articles mentioning music heritage have been published in the 2010s.

Within this group of articles, more than three quarters deal with "popular music heritage" in one form or another, either on a general level or with a focus on a particular genre, artist or group. Also in comparison to music journals the *International Journal of Heritage Studies* stands out unmistakably, with *Popular Music and Society* as the runner-up with 14 hits, followed by *Ethnomusicology Forum* and the *Journal of American Musicological Society* with nine and eight, respectively. Overall, between the four disciplinary fields the differences are less dramatic; in heritage studies there are 24 relevant articles, in popular music studies 18, in musicology 13 and in ethnomusicology

ten. When examined on annual basis (Figure 4), certain years become noticeable: 2012 for ethnomusicology, 2014 and 2015 for heritage studies and 2016 for popular music studies. The simple explanation for this, with the exception of 2015, is the release of special thematic issues, with an emphasis on "ethnomusicology, archives and communities" (*Ethnomusicology Forum* 2012, issue 2), on "popular music as cultural heritage" (*International Journal of Heritage Studies* 2014, issue 3) and on "popular music, cultural memory, and heritage" (*Popular Music and Society* 2016, issue 1).

<insert Figure 4 here>

Figure 4. Annual numbers of research articles mentioning either "music heritage" or "musical heritage" in the key journals in ethnomusicology, musicology, popular music studies and heritage studies in the 2010s (as of 1 October 2020).

Regarding theorising music heritage, it is more commonplace to encounter alluding references to the processual, institutional and participatory qualities of the phenomenon rather than explicit definitions. In their take on country music heritage, Stanton and Schofield (2019: 1036) find heritage studies aligning with popular music studies in that both are "characterised by scholars increasingly avoiding what they consider overdone conventional tangible heritage formats – including the protection or official recognition of buildings, birthplaces, tourist sites – in favour of an approach built on the principles of 'enacted culture'[.]" According to them, this entails an emphasis on community-led practices and initiatives which centre on the wishes and values of local communities, and which can be rather removed from official or otherwise authorised stances.

To the extent this is so, there are evident methodological implications. Recalling Stanton's and Schofield's (2019: 1038) remark about the scarcity of music analysis in music heritage research, their combination of musicological subgenre comparison, cultural mapping and ethnographic approaches is admittedly unique as far as the 68

music heritage articles are concerned. This notwithstanding, the preference towards unofficial forms of heritage as enacted culture all but necessitates a substantial reliance on ethnographic approaches, especially in the absence of registers of documentation. Of the twenty-two *International Journal of Heritage Studies* articles in question, in a dozen various ethnographic methods are utilised, especially structured interviews with curators, archivists and other heritage agents. Also systematic observation and documentation of museum exhibitions is fairly common in this group of articles, complemented by a couple of more idiosyncratic takes based on bureaucratic autoethnography (Chocano 2019) and "conversations" during a research seminar with select metal musicians as guests (Ashby and Schofield 2015). What is somewhat peculiar regarding the prevalence of ethnographic approaches is that in this limited corpus it increases towards the end of the decade, with seven out of eight articles published since 2016 relying explicitly on such a methodology (Stanton and Schofield 2019; Chocano 2019; Fairchild 2018; Joyce 2018; Lee and Wong 2017; Strong, Cannizzo, and Rogers 2017; Baker, Istvandity and Nowak 2016). During the first half of the decade, there are half a dozen articles with a conceptual or theoretical orientation (Mortensen and Madsen 2015; Bendrups 2015; Grant 2015; Roberts and Cohen 2014; Brandellero and Janssen 2014), and a similar amount of those relying on variants of discourse and content analysis of select public documentation or media representations (Baker and Collins 2015; Zevnik 2014; Reitsamer 2014; Roberts 2014; Stanković 2014).

Towards ethnoheritomusicology

Such a shift in emphasis may suggest certain disciplinary maturation inasmuch as at issue is complementing and even challenging earlier theoretical postulations and possible generalisations with empirical ethnographic evidence. One might relate this to

processes of disciplinary canon formation and even paradigm shifts (see Kuhn 1966), though the evidence in favour of such fundamental changes is tendential at best. A related question concerns the extent to which scholars' claims about such shifts function as a justification of the approach they have chosen, possibly even somewhat complacently so. In this respect, the issue may pertain more profoundly to the methodological axioms and entrenchments of the disciplinary fields in question, particularly as regards the distinction between ethnomusicology and popular music studies. An agent provocateur might generalise that the methodological fixation on anthropological ethnography within the former and on sociological structural and textual analysis in the latter is furthermore intertwined with generic and stylistic preferences: ethnomusicologists study folk or non-Western musics while popular music scholars study whatever popular music may be. As the methodologies themselves are not genre-specific and all types of music can be popular depending on the definition, there are obvious overlaps in these disciplinary fields that result notably from the emphasis on socio-cultural contextualisation. These overlaps have been recognised from the very beginning of both disciplines; one of the most common ways to define popular music is to stress its reliance on mass production and mediation, and such dimensions of songwriting in the USA were analytically discussed in the early volumes of *Ethnomusicology* (Cray 1961; Etzkorn 1963). Conversely, the very first volume of *Popular Music* is devoted to definitional issues and includes a number of articles with explicit linkage to ethnomusicological research (Blacking 1981; Kubik 1981; Baily 1981). Given these initial points of convergence, it is instructive to note how discussion about crossdisciplinary contributions in and between these two fields has re-emerged in recent years, albeit implicated in an axiomatic – and Anglocentric – equation of ethnomusicology with "ethnographic and/or anthropological approaches" (Bates 2013:

16; see also Dawe 2015).

As a consequence, then, the ethnographic emphasis in studies about music heritage would surely deem such studies a subfield of ethnomusicology rather than popular music studies, would it not? One may also note that in his brief response concerning the "directions for the future of heritage studies", Tim Winter (2013: 395) recognises the existence of ethnomusicology amongst the academic disciplines across which heritage studies is fragmented – and it remains for the reader to consider if popular music studies is included in his "and-so-on" insinuation. Nevertheless, judging by the lists of references in the articles in the *International Journal of Heritage Studies* in the 2010s, the situation becomes reversed. Citing the key popular music studies journals is twice as common as (and somewhat more consistent than) to draw from ethnomusicological ones (see Figure 5). One may note how the emergence of these references is linked to the release of the special thematic issue on popular music in 2014 (volume 20, issue 3); incidentally, before that popular music is mentioned in the journal only once (Voase 2007) and ethnomusicology not at all.

<insert Figure 5 here>

Figure 5. Annual amounts of references in the *International Journal of Heritage Studies* to the key ethnomusicological and popular music studies journals listed in Table 1 above (as of 1 October 2020).

Regarding the role of different fields of music scholarship as possible "parent disciplines" of heritage studies (cf. Winter 2013: 395), the respective results for musicology are even fainter. Apart from the methodological emphasis given to it by Stanton and Schofield (2019), it is mentioned only in passing when listing disciplines that coalesce at heritage conferences or complement archaeology and architecture, "the main disciplines in the field" (Lixinski 2015: 203; Smith 2012: 533). Interestingly

enough, in those few instances where "classical" music is discussed, references to musicology do not surface. The discussion nonetheless points to the longer-standing processes of constructing national culture and official music heritage on the foundation of classical music in Europe (Reitsamer 2014; Zevnik 2014), as well as to more recent official applications within the European Union that foreground and aestheticise "sublimity and pathos in the idea of heritage" (Lähdesmäki 2017: 719).

Some of that jazz

References to jazz are equally marginal in the 2010s' issues, though frequently exhibiting certain fickleness with respect to its status either as a historical and often conditional part of popular music (e.g. Baker and Collins 2015; Stanković 2014; Kift 2013), or as a form of avant-garde art and "high culture" (e.g. Delgado Marín 2019; Afinoguénova 2010: 424). A somewhat different case concerning the role of jazz in music heritagisation is present in Jerome Camal's (2016: 396) exploration into the dissonances, frictions and "awkward engagements" in the "patrimonialisation" of *gwoka*, an African-derived form of Guadaloupean drum music and dance. He refers to jazz as a crucial ingredient in the musical mixtures that constitute *gwoka modènn* (i.e., modern *gwoka*), but also as a marketable "cosmopolitan" generic label as opposed to *gwoka* itself that risks becoming lost amidst myriad other local genres of world music (Camal 2016: 397, 404). The role of jazz in the heritagisation processes and projects of *gwoka* remains yet tangential. Moreover, with respect to academic disciplines Camal (2016: 403–406) gives more weight to ethnomusicological expertise within the zones of awkward engagements as they manifest themselves in a particular postcolonial context and in an "emergence of a practical form of postnationalism" implicated in desires to seek both external validation and channels of diffusion for local purposes, whilst also balancing with the politics of regionalism of the European adminstrative centre (in this

case France).

Outside my temporal demarcation, a separate instance indicating increased interest in jazz heritagisation is provided by the 2020 *International Journal of Heritage Studies* special issue on "the cultural heritage of jazz festivals" (volume 26, issue 6). In the editorial of the issue it is asserted that "European jazz festivals in particular offer a distinctive lens through which to explore key issues in heritage research, given their complex relationship to questions of race and diaspora, national identity, and cultural politics" (Whyton and McKay 2020: 543). Yet the distinctiveness in question remains opaque, both in relation to other racialised genres of music and with respect to festivals in general, musical or not. Regarding the weight of racialisation – and racism – in heritagisation, the editors further claim that "jazz encapsulates and even dramatises questions of intangible and tangible heritage alike", particularly with respect to the scarcity of early recordings and lack of maintenance of key heritage sites (Whyton and McKay 2020: 543–544). While this serves as an appurtenant reminder of the effects of structural racism on the access to commercial reproduction technologies and on acknowledging cultural significance, one may ponder if jazz is radically different in this respect from other forms of cultural expression associated with the history of slavery in the Americas, and to some extent that of the lower estates and classes basically everywhere. This quickly leads to further musings about the relationship between jazz as heritage and jazz as art, or, to what extent these dimensions of institutionalised discourses consolidate each other. Such cogitation is absent from the editorial, but intriguingly the editors add to the perplexity by stressing the non-existence of research that, "[*d*]*espite* the growing interest in the popular music and heritage themes and festivalisation of culture", would consider "jazz and its festivals within the broader contexts of heritage studies and the discourses surrounding place-making, the

marketisation of heritage, urban governance, and cultural policy" (Whyton and McKay 2020: 543; emphasis added). A page later the implied position of jazz as a type of popular music is in fact made explicit, and a similar vernacularising statement about the allegedly broad appeal of jazz is made by co-editor Tony Whyton (2020: 548) in his own article:

> The presence of jazz feeds into discussions of music as a racialised and gendered discourse, as well as the shifting cultural status of art forms. Indeed, jazz in Europe today challenges traditional distinctions between high culture and vernacular practices, as the music exists in both concert hall settings and a range of underground venues, bars, clubs and everyday contexts.

There is no denying this, though the same could be said of basically any type of music, depending on the underground entrance in question and whose everyday is at issue. More revealing nevertheless is the fact that references to jazz education are conspicuously absent from Whyton's (2020) treatment, especially when considering studies of musical taste that reveal a positive correlation between higher education and the appreciation of jazz and classical music (e.g. Savage 2006: 169; Wilks 2013). In eminent educational institutions such as the Juilliard School of Music, one can enroll in a (renowned) jazz programme while popular music is not recognised similarly as a separate field of study. The same applies to my institution, Sibelius Academy of the University of the Arts, Helsinki.

The academic disciplinary confines of jazz and its heritage constitute another set of perplexing possibilities. As music historian Gary Tomlinson (1992: 77) remarks, in the universities jazz has been institutionalised, aestheticised and canonised by following the model provided by European classical music. Crucially, this has resulted in "repeating … Western myths of the non-contingency of artworks", privileging "artistic purity untouched by function and context, and the elite status of artistic expression",

without much consideration of "nondominant cultural strains, such as African-American traditions, that have developed in multivalent interaction with hegemonic cultures around them" (Tomlinson 1992: 77–79). As a consequence, the disciplinary status and position of jazz research is a contested one, as on the one hand its early forms tend to be amalgamated with popular music of the early twentieth century, and on the other hand the post-World War II developments are customarily associated with the notion of art. In academia, this often leads to a disciplinary hesitation between cultural studies, ethnomusicology and musicology, depending also on whether one's analytical interest lies in societal structures, ethnicity or formal musical details, respectively (e.g. Bowie 2009; Kajanová 2013: 348–355). Be that as it may, in the *International Journal of Heritage Studies* special issue, the methodological specificity of jazz as a topic of heritage studies remains undisclosed. Instead, extending the words of Whyton (2020: 550) to the issue as a whole, there is an emphasis on "mixed methodology" that comprises "historical and archival research, ethnographic fieldwork, audience engagement activities and qualitative interviews". Thus, the approaches align with those adopted in the critical heritage studies of musical phenomena in the recent years, whether framed as "popular music heritage studies" or ethnomusicology.

Instrumentalising music as heritage

With respect to the key three journals of heritage studies, one should be wary of their differences in subdisciplinary orientation. A rather blatant indication of this is that while the *International Journal of Heritage Studies* embraces interdisciplinarity and "encourages *debate* over the nature and meaning of heritage as well as its links to memory, identities and place" (IJHS 2026), the *International Journal of Architectural Heritage* "provides a multidisciplinary *scientific* overview of existing resources and modern technologies useful for the study and repair of historical buildings and other

structures" (IJAH 2026). The *Journal of Cultural Heritage*, in turn, defines itself as "A Multidisciplinary Journal of *Science and Technology* … for studying problems concerning conservation and awareness of cultural heritage in a wide framework" (JCH 2026; emphases added).

The explicit if not exclusionary dedication of the *International Journal of Architectural Heritage* to architecture and the preservation of built environment results – hardly surprisingly – in general indifference towards the conceptual nuances of music heritage. Apart from an incidental reference to it as a dimension of intangible cultural heritage (Di Giulio et al. 2019: 5), the relevance of music in matters relating to architectural heritage is mainly instrumental or contextual. Regarding the former stance, in some studies the "acoustic performance of music" and the vibration caused by some instruments has been measured and discussed in terms of the effects on structural stability (e.g. Macieira et al. 2020; Caselles et al. 2019). With respect to the contextual relevance of music, at issue is mostly the said stability in either current or anticipated circumstances that provide a setting for a variety of cultural activities, including music schools, concerts and music-related tourism (e.g. Di Gangi and Monti 2016; Vecchiattini 2019; Nuno Martins et al. 2020). Different types of contextual relevance are present in studies where music is considered as a "qualitative asset" or "intangible information" collated together with tangible one in the process of "semantic enrichment" within (Historic) Building Information Modelling (Liu 2018: 282; Bruno et al. 2019: 3). Relatedly, in some articles the physical shape of a building is discussed in relation to models derived from music, either on the basis of theories of "musical harmony" or by imitating the contours of an instrument (De Naeyer 2019: 27; Liu, Cai, and Zhang 2020: 204).

In the *Journal of Cultural Heritage*, a similar nonchalant attitude towards defining music heritage prevails by and large, regardless of the "wide framework" of awareness mentioned in the journal's aims and scope (JCH 2020). The term itself is to be encountered only once, in relation to mechanical modelling of a harpsichord made in 1652, "a unique piece of musical heritage and French furniture[, and] one of the rare examples of the work of Ioannes Couchet" (Le Conte et al. 2012: S162), now belonging to the collections of the Musée de la musique in Paris. Otherwise, musical phenomena are fairly recurrent in the journal, and in fact exhibiting a similar increase in the number of relevant research articles as in the *International Journal of Heritage Studies*. While there are ten articles published in the noughties that mention music, in the first half of the 2010s there are thirteen and since then, thirty. In 2012, "musical instruments" were allotted a separate section in a special supplementary issue on "wood science for conservation", comprising four articles that dealt with functional rehabilitation, hygro-thermal conditions, mechanical modelling and computational structural investigation of wooden instruments (Bonamini 2012; Goli et al. 2012; Le Conte et al. 2012; Saft and Kaliske 2012). In 2017 in turn, an entire special supplementary issue was released on wooden musical instrument conservation and knowledge, with the aim of introducing "the complexity and multidisciplinar[it]y of the field" (Le Conte 2017: S1). Regarding disciplining music heritage, it is indeed instructive how in the editorial of the special issue notions of multi- and interdisciplinarity are utilised frequently. In addition, in the end it is maintained that the "loose collection of articles" in question are intended "to stimulate further future collaborations between makers, curators, conservators, scientists and engineers" that will, with "an interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary approach" as the starting-point, "develop further into a transdisciplinary methodology in order to be able to develop the field in an integrative manner" (Le Conte 2017: S1).

As the above list of professionals indicate, the continuum between multi-, inter- and transdisciplinarity is conceived as a phenomenon firmly situated within natural and technical sciences. Overall, such disciplinary labels as ethnomusicology, popular music studies or critical heritage studies are not to be found in the research articles of the *Journal of Cultural Heritage*; musicology in turn is mentioned once, in relation to the relevance of the distinction between the natural sciences and humanities for the work of museum curators, particularly as this involves describing "the role of historical instruments within a framework of musical and cultural history" with the publishing of a collection catalogue in mind (Bär 2017: S9). The article in question is quite unique amongst the music-related ones in the *Journal of Cultural Heritage* due to its research material and approach; instead of physiological measurements or modelling of either instruments or environments, the aim is to document "examination methods" used in "a corpus of 84 more recent catalogues edited between 1968 and 2016", or, in "the era of modern musical instrument catalogues" (Bär 2017: S8). Thus, while never explicated, at issue is a meta-analysis of sorts. Also, even if the methodological principles of such meta-analytical documentation remain opaque, there is certain affinity to the contextualising approaches prevalent in ethnomusicology, popular music studies and critical heritage studies, inasmuch as the ultimate contribution of documenting technical methods used in cataloguing is to improve the socio-cultural contextualisation of a musical instrument by facilitating "interdisciplinary collaboration with researchers from the humanities and the natural sciences" (Bär 2017: S11). Similar affinities are evident also elsewhere, and even more so especially when discussing the transformation of a violin rescued from the Titanic, from a musical utensil to a heritage "relic" and a form of "prosthetic memory" on the basis of the media coverage of the havoc, by paying particular attention to ethical implications of the negotiations concerning the

instrument's historical, emotional and economic value (Perez-Alvaro and Manders 2016: 869, 871).

Pressure of heritage and the violent musician

Otherwise, and in general, the treatment of music in the *Journal of Cultural Heritage* is predicated on a number of interconnected ontological, epistemological and methodological axioms that amalgamate in the idea of cultural heritage as an innate property of an antiquated artifact. Quite crucially, here cultural heritage is imbued with a degree of autonomy that results in such a "pressure" that "replacing the playing of the instrument with alternative measurements" is required (Le Carrou, Le Conte, and Dugot 2017: S112). As the implied instrumentalist conception of playing as a form of measurement indicates, the pressure at stake is furthermore straight-forwardly associated with preservationist and restorative agendas that serve "efficient" conservation of "great cultural achievements" (e.g. Saft and Kaliske 2012: S165, S174). The ideological weight of these achievements may be so extensive that even when there is a recognition of a "conflict between conservation of the original substance and maintenance of the original use", the "eminent importance" of the preservation of the "wooden cultural heritage" in question is left unexplained (Konopka, Ehricht, and Kaliske 2019: 210). Moreover, the ulterior motives at issue may also be implicated in an emphasis on and a desire for unearthing "technical evolution" (Eveno and Le Conte 2016: 615; Le Carrou, Le Conte, and Dugot 2017: S118), as well as in the quest of provenance and authenticity (Čufar 2017: S47), sometimes with rather explicit financial interests:

> The information derived by [non-invasive microstructural analysis with synchrotron radiation X-ray microtomography] has an important role in the

> valuation, insurance, and identification of valuable stringed instruments such as violins, violas and cellos. The economic value of a historical instrument, for example, may decrease considerably if a defect or repair is discovered. A violin with a crack in the sound post region of the back plate is conventionally valued at only 50% of the same instrument without the defect. … [T]his approach will be of fundamental importance in the evaluation and the definition of the restoration and conservation protocols for instruments of great historical, artistic and economic importance. (Sodini et al. 2012: S44, S48.)

By all appearances, then, a crack in a violin is more a matter of money than music, as if the manufacts in question exist only because of prestige and not as sonorous devices to be tampered with. Indeed, occasionally the value ascribed to the mere existence of the odd historical contraption may result in statements that border on absurdity in their hostility towards actual usage: "the musician, blowing into the instrument, causes a violent thermo-hygro gradient that could damage this cultural heritage" (Eveno and Le Conte 2016: 615). For such proponents of perpetual preservation, the solution presents itself frequently in the form of non-invasive microstructural measurements and digital modelling, yet raising vital epistemological quandaries. How can one know or be sure that what is achieved by modelling a musical instrument yields the same results as if playing it? As long as the conservation rules prohibit usage and thus render such a comparison impossible (or an act of crime), the answer to this question hinges on a belief in scientific precision (or imprisonment) rather than on any certainty such precision may offer.

The epistemological qualms notwithstanding, there are research articles in the *Journal of Cultural Heritage* where the dynamics between regulating use and improving conservation are discussed with less anxiety over the chemical reactions induced by the

violent musician, however rhetorical the trepidation may be. A case in point is an "assessment of mechanical loading on the sound properties" of a "precious" violin still in active use, one that "history endows with a role in cultural heritage", namely the *Cannone* favoured by none other than Niccolò Paganini (Fioravanti et al. 2012: 145–146). Moreover, questions about the importance of actually hearing the heritage instruments in their intended use are raised in relation to the possible "sonority value" they may inhibit: "Of all artefacts preserved, musical instruments incur the hardest feelings if they are kept silent. Playing them is the touchstone to sensations that transcend its [*sic*] material being" (Perez-Alvaro and Manders 2016: 872; see also Vaiedelich and Fritz 2017).

Conclusion

On the basis of the investigation into the ways in which music heritage as a type of cultural heritage becomes conceptualised and constructed within the disciplinary confines of key heritage journals, one can first of all note prevalent dualism where critical heritage studies aligns with popular music, and the scientific approaches to heritage with European classical music. Furthermore, explicit crossdisciplinary connections are non-existent: in the 2010 volumes, critical heritage studies is not mentioned in the peer-reveiwed research articles in either the *Journal of Cultural Heritage* or the *International Journal of Architectural Heritage*. In the *International Journal of Heritage Studies*, in turn, references to classical music remain incidental and ancillary in critical treatments of official heritage management (see Reitsamer 2014; Zevnik 2014; Lähdesmäki 2017). The dualist division between the fields manifests itself furthermore in a methodological emphasis on qualitative ethnographic approaches in critical heritage studies, as opposed to quantitative physical measurements on the other side.

With respect to the disciplinary divisions in music research, it is more common to encounter at least some explicit reliance to ethnomusicology or popular music studies than musicology. Recent references to the emergence of "popular music heritage studies" as a research field in its own right (e.g. Strong, Cannizzo, and Rogers 2017: 86; Cantillon, Baker, and Nowak 2020: 4) nevertheless suggest there will be some debate in the near future about the overlaps, connections and breakaways concerning both heritage studies and popular music studies. Given the dearth of reliance on ethnomusicological and musicological literature within the key heritage studies journals, as well as the dominant affinity to critical heritage studies when discussing popular music, one may ponder additionally to what extent is "music heritage studies" conceivable as a research area that is based on the study of popular music from a critical heritage studies stance.

While I have not delved in detail into the key (ethno)musicology journals, a further implication is that ethnomusicology and musicology sustain their individual conditions and spheres of disciplining music heritage. This is linked to issues of canonisation in both fields, and thus an appurtenant pursuit in future research would be to interrogate in more detail the extents to which heritage might function as a canonising mechanism in ethnomusicology, while the classical canon is discursively situated beyond heritage, as it were. Such an investigation would effectively foreground the increasing centrality of heritage in cultural policy, whether one emphasises the centrality of the classical canon in music education or the weight of vernacular practices in the ubiquitous national inventories of intangible cultural heritage. Moreover, in both cases the future scholar of disciplining music heritage might ponder whether or not "music heritage" implies canonising tendencies of generic reification, while "musical heritage" would connote communities, both real and imagined.

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