



A New Ecosystem of Early Music Studies

COST action 21161

Report of WG5 Policies (Barcelona, 2023)

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Introduction, Aims, Questions

The Working Group for Policies (WG5) met for two days of discussions, hosted by the Institución Milá y Fontanals de Investigación en Humanidades, Barcelona, 13th-14th February 2023. The aim of this initial meeting was to begin a process of data collection and analysis regarding European cultural policy. Participants in the meetings covered a broad spectrum of fields, including musicology, performance practice, creative industries, policy, museum curation and data/archival work.

Policy plays a fundamental, often underestimated, role in defining the presence and significance of early music studies in the wider culture. Whether on a Europe-wide, national or local scale, cultural and cultural heritage policy has the potential to give a much more prominent role to early music in the wider European culture and in public discourse than it currently has. And yet early music scholars and practitioners have only a partial or fragmentary understanding of cultural policy in Europe and the ways in which it impacts on musicology and its broader manifestations. Conversely, the expertise of early music researchers and practitioners is all too often ignored by policymakers, funding bodies and other cultural administrators.

The WG5 meeting took the form of open-ended discussions involving stakeholders in a variety of fields and with different areas of knowledge and experience. The discussions centred on the current dynamics of European cultural policy and how the phenomenon of early music, including performance and musicological scholarship in its broadest sense, might be located within it.

Discussions were organised around the following questions:

1. Where may early music be located in European cultural policy?
2. What are the implications of policy documents for early music practice and research?
3. In what ways could policy shed light on the ontologies and practices of early music in the wider culture?
4. What strategies can early music adopt so as to influence cultural policy and thereby increase its cultural presence?

DISCUSSION: EU Work Plan for Culture 2023-2026

Document: <https://culture.ec.europa.eu/news/council-of-ministers-agrees-on-new-eu-work-plan-for-culture-2023-2026>

The Work Plan sets out a series of priorities and targets for the Cultural and Creative Sectors (CCSs) for the years 2023 to 2026. The Work Plan acknowledges various challenges to cultural activity and sustainability, including the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, the climate crisis, the Russian war against Ukraine, and outlines a proposal for the role of culture in European civic and social life. In respect to the

latter, the document seems to point largely to cultural infrastructure, namely the funding of CCSs and the role of institutions in the support of culture.

Based on the results of feedback communicated anecdotally in the meeting, the process of applying for 'cascading' grants - where a relatively small amount of money is distributed to many projects through various networks - is seen as abstruse and alien. Those working in the CCSs often simply do not respond to funding calls owing to a lack of familiarity with the application process. Agathe Créac'h reported that RÉMA was one of twenty-six signatories to a joint letter recently sent to EU Commissioner Mariya Gabriel regarding the culture plan, in which various representatives of CCSs provided feedback on the grants framework. It is noted that Commissioner Gabriel resigned on 15 May 2023.

Another approach to reading this policy document was suggested: focusing on keywords that may be relevant to early music studies. Among the 'guiding principles' in the EU Work Plan for Culture 2023-2026, several ideas were highlighted:

- **Cultural heritage**, which alongside culture itself 'has an intrinsic value and contributes to strengthening European identity';
- **Cultural and linguistic diversity**, 'fundamental assets of the EU [which] are to be respected, promoted and enhanced, including through mobility and the circulation of works';
- **Cultural diversity and intercultural dialogue**, which are 'essential for the promotion and protection of human rights' (C 466, p. 3).

Such expressions are open to criticism, for example:

- What is 'European identity' in this context? What does that mean for early music?
- The notion that culture has an 'intrinsic value' is an old (19th-century) idea that fails to do justice to the cultural and symbolic value of early music in contemporary (European) culture. For instance, it might be more productive to present early music instead in terms of a shared grammar or language that balances notions of intrinsic and extrinsic value.

The Work Plan is also a political document in another sense, less of a real 'work plan' than a means of codifying already-existing plans for culture (the New European Bauhaus, Horizon Europe, etc.). Yet many plans seem not to have come to fruition (e.g. European Observatory for Music) or have had unexpected results (e.g. Music Moves Europe).

In terms of infrastructure, the Work Plan also identifies **libraries** as 'play[ing] a key role in Europe's democratic, social, cultural, and educational landscape at all levels' (C 466, p. 7). It also highlights the recent 'digital transformation' of the CCS, with a special section devoted to the **European video games sector**, which lies 'at the

forefront of new cultural practices in the digital environment' (C 466, p. 6). This latter point connects with the Horizon Europe calls (see below).

Rossella Magli noted that COST recently hosted an event showing how a work plan like this one might be implemented. The EU seems to want to take a bottom-up rather than top-down approach at the moment, meaning that organization amongst various stakeholders can be effective. COST can play a role by hosting events inviting various stakeholders and providing groups a platform for making a case to commissioners or MEPs.

DISCUSSION: Horizon Europe

Document: https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/docs/2021-2027/horizon/wp-call/2023-2024/wp-5-culture-creativity-and-inclusive-society_horizon-2023-2024_en.pdf

In December 2022, the European Commission (EC) Horizon Europe released the 2023-2024 Work Programme 'Culture, Creativity and Inclusive Society', which consists of a call for proposals for projects that bring together stakeholders across public and private entities and contribute to new policy recommendations. The Horizon Europe 2023-2024 call 'aims to provide evidence-based policy options for a socially just and inclusive European green and digital transition and recovery' (p. 7). (Horizon Europe releases a new call every two years.)

Questions for discussion: What are the avenues to explore for early music? How can early music and musicology be inserted into this dynamic?

Much of the discussion was focused specifically on the calls dedicated to 'Research and innovation on cultural heritage and CCIs [cultural and creative industries]', as follows:

- 2023-HERITAGE (pp. 62ff.)
- 2023-HERITAGE-ECCCH 'A European Collaborative Cloud for Cultural Heritage' (pp. 77ff.)
- 2024-HERITAGE (pp. 89ff.)

The budget for each call and the respective deadlines are given on pp. 61ff.

The various calls, especially the 'European Collaborative Cloud for Cultural Heritage', are organised around **digital media** and the **digitisation of cultural heritage**, and are in line with the New European Bauhaus (NEB). There is clear potential for early music studies to be involved in such projects and conversations.

How then does early music want to represent itself in such a context? What partnerships does it need to establish? It is not so much that musicology needs to be 'redesigned' to fit these dynamics; the last decade at least has seen a growth in the number of projects involving multimedia and digital platforms. Rather, it may be a

matter of reframing musicological expertise within existing policy discussions, and in building networks between musicology and other fields of expertise and digital platforms. Furthermore, potential projects in this area range from the creation of vast data collections, interactive new media (combining sound and image), collaboration with digital platforms (such as Spotify), and exploring the ludic aspects of musical practice and listening (music as a game, music in digital games, and so on).

The discussion raised several points that might prove valuable to future Horizon applications:

- Be clear about the audience for the project.
- Realize that Horizon projects are intended to advance science in general rather than specific knowledge.
- Find a way to insert music into current discussions and concerns about cultural heritage. For example, site-specific projects or projects involving music in heritage spaces have much potential.
- Be creative and selective in the choice of partners.
- Communicate a different vision in a captivating way.

‘Lightning’ Presentation 1

TINA FRÜHAUF: RILM (RÉPERTOIRE INTERNATIONAL DE LITTÉRATURE MUSICALE/INTERNATIONAL REPERTORY OF MUSIC LITERATURE)

Tina Frühauf presented a concise report on RILM (Répertoire International de Littérature Musicale/International Repertory of Music Literature). RILM was founded in 1966 by the American musicologist Barry S. Brook (1918-1997) under the joint sponsorship of the International Musicological Society (IMS) and the International Association of Music Libraries, Archives and Documentation Centres (IAML). In 2007 the International Council for Traditional Music (ICTM) joined as a third sponsoring organisation and most recently IASPM. From the outset relying on an international profile as well as cutting-edge technologies, RILM has produced for over five decades the preeminent abstracting and indexing service to music researchers in the world at large: *RILM Abstracts of Music Literature*.

Dr Frühauf highlighted the **international** aspect of RILM, particularly with the **digital turn** in music studies. In November 2016 RILM launched its platform Egret, hosting the encyclopedia MGG Online previously known as *Musik in Geschichte und Gegenwart*, followed by further releases. Egret is an international platform. It is built on international standards and its developers are from different countries; it feeds on and offers multilingual access to over 60 music encyclopedias to date. Egret feeds from RILM’s **multilingual metadata, which is rooted in diversity** (not only linguistic, but cultural, religious, etc.). Indeed, RILM has the largest pool of music-related metadata in the world, a large percentage of which covers Europe.

RILM's international scope is made possible by its collaborative UNESCO-style structure. UNESCO promotes international cooperation among its 200+ member states 'in the fields of education, science, culture, communication and information'. For RILM, 'member states' are those countries that have established national RILM committees; these committees are responsible for submissions of citations and abstracts of all works published in their countries that meet RILM's scope guidelines. In this way, the national committees help to ensure that the work of music scholars in their countries enters the international discourse on music by being summarised and indexed in the most comprehensive and widely distributed bibliography for music. At its core, RILM is a collaborative effort aimed at disseminating the world's research on music to - and by - the world's research community.

As an entity rooted in multilingual diversity and with a vast set of musicological metadata aiming at global coverage, RILM can contribute to the policy goals of early music within Europe in at least two respects:

1. The US being a 'third country', RILM's identity accords with the EU's strategic approach to international cultural relations and strengthening the cultural dimension of the EU's external relations. This point links with Priority d) in the EU Work Plan for Culture 2023-26: 'Culture for co-creative partnerships: strengthening the cultural dimension of EU external relations' (C 466, p. 4).
2. RILM can collaborate on early-music digitisation, and stimulate the digital transformation of the cultural and creative sectors. This chimes with the Horizon Europe calls focused on digitisation of cultural heritage, including the establishment of cloud platform(s) for European cultural heritage.

'Lightning' Presentation 2

NATACHA FABBRI: MUSIC AND MUSICOLOGY IN MUSEUMS; THE NEB (NEW EUROPEAN BAUHAUS)

Natacha Fabbri (Museo Galileo, Florence, IT) presented on museums and the presence of music and sounds within museum spaces and the relevance of such issues to the New European Bauhaus initiative. (The NEB initiative was launched in autumn 2020 by European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen in her State of the European Union speech. For more information, see: https://new-european-bauhaus.europa.eu/index_en.) The three pillars of NEB are sustainability, inclusion and aesthetics.

In the past decade, the increasingly pervasive presence of sound and music in museum settings has contributed a different idea of both the sonic dimension of a museum and its role in the transmission of cultural heritage through multisensorial languages. For example, in the very last years - especially after the COVID-19 restrictions - political institutions in Italy showed a growing interest in these topics

(municipalities, regional councils, ministry of culture with the involvement of national museums, ICOM Italia, etc.).

When talking about sounds in a historical museum, we should distinguish (at least) three kinds of sounds:

1. The so-called **'voices' or 'sounds' of the instruments that are depicted or engraved on the artifacts** and that are usually the product of research in musical iconography (focusing on their material compositions, functions and decorations).
2. **Live performances in the exhibition rooms of the museum, which create a shared and multisensorial experience.** Although live performances in museum rooms are undoubtedly entertaining and often much appreciated, they also pose some challenges: capacity limitations; fragile interiors; restriction of the repertoire because of its acoustical characteristics (too intensive vibrations or high volume); economical sustainability; as well as disruption of the traditional programme of visit, as live performances impede visitors from hearing the descriptions provided by the app and clash with the long-standing belief that museums are places of silence.
3. **Music employed in narratives.** We can overcome these issues and strengthen the possibility of bringing sight and hearing together, as well as create an immersive experience (a dialogue between 'music to see' and 'objects to listen to') thanks to innovative technological solutions that broaden the sensory perception of an artifact. Sustainability: one can offer a completely new visit tour (both in presence and virtually) by changing the musicological connotation of the room and of the narrative. Narratives can use music as a sound carpet or as a tool to go beyond a physical description of the artifact in order to create an emotional environment, to enrich the reconstruction of a collective memory, clarify a concept, explain or reflect on the values or functions of the artifacts to which they relate. This kind of reading can be provided during the visit by using earphones and watching the videos of the Museum app. In addition, a specific section of the website could be arranged to hold these videos - thus creating a continuity between pre, during and post visits.

With regard to the NEB, the weakest point, Dr Fabbri suggested, is the imperative to design a project in line with the Green Deal objectives, i.e. that a project must be designed with an ecological kind of sustainability.

This leads to the proposal of a different example of museum, which could meet NEB requirements. The Museo Vincenzo Galilei is under construction, located in Santa Maria a Monte (Vincenzo Galilei's native town): it is funded by the municipality and supported by regional policies, which promote adaptive re-use of heritage buildings as well as balancing access to cultural heritage with sustainable cultural tourism.

Further links:

<https://www.museogalileo.it/en/library-and-research-institute/projects/scienza-e-musica-en.html>

'Rappresentare l'armonia del mondo': <https://youtu.be/UWKd9mq2mzM>

Summary and Next Steps

One of the outcomes of the meeting was to begin a process of orientation in the landscape of European culture policy and its ever-shifting dynamics. On the basis of initial discussions, one of the main conclusions is that early music studies might fruitfully engage with European cultural policy in a sort of double move:

1. Despite the perceived lack of substance in the current policy discourse as well as its ideological aspect, early music studies might usefully take up the task of a **strategic engagement** with European policy, adopting its language and inserting itself into its apparatus. In practice, this means responding to calls by framing early music in the language of current policy.
2. As a result of 1) above, early music studies may be able to make a real **contribution towards changes** in cultural policy, to influence it and make it more informed and substantive.

Thus, if there is a perceived vacuum of ideas within cultural policy documents, this is conversely an opportunity for early music to insert itself into policy conversations by adopting its language and concepts. It was also acknowledged that policy documents are the product of negotiation, a co-authored response to many different voices and agendas. A practical strategy lies in building networks between different sectors (e.g. being in contact with a Member of European Parliament).

Important points to be followed up were raised in these discussions, including:

- How does early music gain/retain a seat at the table in policy discussions like the ones that developed this Work Plan? Contact with MEPs or other connected persons is likely helpful.
- How best to navigate between ideals and goals and the frameworks of support already in place? Find ways to communicate needs and goals to policymakers.
- How does the world of early music—and especially musicologists—become more visible? Find ways to position ourselves as a network of experts ready to be consulted on cultural policy.

As the Action progresses, the WG will take steps toward producing an analysis of relevant cultural policy, as well as gather information and resources that will help to establish expertise on navigating cultural policy.