

## Value changes in Norwegian music education:

From increased acceptance of rock to a reduced status for classical music?

Knut Tønnsberg

### ABSTRACT

#### **Value changes in Norwegian music education: From increased acceptance of rock to a reduced status for classical music?**

*This article is based on a research project with the purpose of studying the academization of popular music genres in Norway. During a 25 year period from 1979 to 2004, popular music programmes were established at all former purely classical music conservatories in Norway. One of the findings from this study was that this academization led to an increased status of popular music, both in the community and within the conservatories. In part, the cause for this increased status was that popular music programmes at some institutions experienced massive numbers of applications compared to a classical education, thus changing the attitudes towards the classical music programmes in a negative direction. This has clearly been demonstrated at the University of Agder (UiA), where it has been proposed several times that the classical conservatory programme should be closed down. Based on a three-phase value reversal model used to analyse the academization of jazz in the United States, the author analyses the situation at UiA, thereby extending the model in accordance with the development of this specific institution. The author also asks if, when the value of a social phenomenon increases, it is necessary that another phenomenon directly connected to it loses its value? The main empirical basis for the findings are interviews with 25 Norwegian and seven US conservatory teachers. In addition, the article is based on findings from the archives at UiA, as well as the author's own collection of documents during many years as an employee at the same institution.*

*Keywords: popular music, popular music education, value changes*

## Background

“There are more than 1,000 institutions for higher music education all over the world. Unlike other institutions for music education (e.g., primary school, high school, and music schools), higher music education has not been recognized as a separate and interesting institutional arena for research” (Jørgensen 2010: 67). Jørgensen based this statement on his survey of 847 publications from 26 countries over the past 60 years. My intention with this article is to contribute to the research on this neglected arena, as Jørgensen calls it, particularly on *life within the institution*, which was one of the research topics found in Jørgensen’s survey, with the type of institution in this article being Norwegian music conservatories.

In Norway, there are six music conservatories, most of which were established in the early 1970s as a result of an attempt by political and cultural authorities to combat the flood of inferior pop music that flowed over an unprepared Norwegian cultural landscape, in addition to promoting high-quality classical music (Solhjell 2005). However, as early as 1979, jazz studies were established at the Trøndelag Conservatory, which today is a part of the Norwegian University of Science and Technology, while in 1991 a broader jazz-pop-rock education was established at the Agder Conservatory of Music, which is now part of the University of Agder. Over the next 13 years, popular music education programmes were also established at the four other former purely classical music conservatories. The results of tensions and conflicts in conservatories that offer both classical and popular music educations are well documented, not least in American conservatory institutions. For example, Michael L. Mark (1987), Henry Kingsbury (1988), Bruno Nettle (1995), Alice G. Marquis (1998) and Nicholas Netzel (2001) have all contributed with research on what has taken place when jazz was established at classical music conservatories in the US, though these texts have usually been related to the attitudes of a traditional classical teaching staff towards the new genres and its performers, which were written during a time when a classical education still had hegemony in the institutions. At the conservatory education programmes at UiA, the classical music teachers from 1999 to the present have experienced that the hegemonic upper hand has gradually been replaced by a reduced status, declining student numbers, closures of bachelor programmes and the termination of employees. The closure of all classical conservatory education at this institution has been repeatedly suggested, with a corresponding concentration solely on popular music having been proposed several times. This article attempts to discuss the reasons for this development, and in order to analyse the evolution of this situation a three-phase model called the *reversal value model* is used, which is first explained and discussed, then modified and expanded according to the development of UiA.

## Method

### The value reversal model

Michael L. Mark's article, *The Acceptance of Jazz in the Music Education Curriculum: A Model for Interpreting a Historical Process* (1987), describes the introduction of jazz into music education institutions in the US. To help accomplish this, Mark applies a model from the article *Zigging, Zagging Morality* by Joseph Sobran (1979), which discussed "value reversal specifically in the context of the acceptance by society of homosexuality and abortion" (Mark 1987:18). The elements in Sobran's three-phase model are (ibid):

Phase 1: The "reformers" demand exceptions to the old rule.

Phase 2: They attack the old rule itself.

Phase 3: They demand the substitution of the old rule.

According to Mark (1987:18), Sobran explain the three phases like this: Phase 1 is the phase of bathos. The old rule – against homosexuality and abortion – is not directly attacked, but its application is criticized as being too rigid. Phase 2 is the phase of aggressive scepticism. Once we are used to making exceptions, we are told not to pass any judgements. Phase 3 is the triumphant phase, in which the original value is inverted, as homosexuality and abortion become absolute rights. What began as an exception – a problem or a necessary evil – emerges as positively desirable.

In his article, Mark applies the model on the stepwise entry of jazz into the US education system, and my interpretation of his understanding of this process is:

Phase 1 - Before 1960: Jazz courses in the curriculum, from exceptions to standard practise. Phase 2 - During the 1960s: Jazz music, from criticism to respect. Phase 3 - From the 1970s: Jazz has become part of "life as usual".

Phase 1 is characterized by a number of cases of courses in jazz and some jazz repertoire in school orchestras, although it was rare that the courses paid off in the form of credits, and jazz had a lower status than the classical repertoire. This phase is further characterized by the fact that these exceptions became so numerous and ongoing that providing jazz-related topics became a matter of keeping up with the times.

The most crucial event in Phase 2 was the Tanglewood Symposium, which was held in 1967 at the Boston Symphony Orchestra's summer home in Massachusetts. Here, music educators were gathered to discuss and identify music education in a changing society, with one of the statements made being that "Music of all periods, styles, forms and cultures belong in the curriculum" (Mark 1987: 20). This and other statements considered jazz and popular music as being equal to classical music.

Moreover, the Tanglewood Symposium, the establishment of the National Association of Jazz Educators (NAJE) in 1968 and the fact that this organization was accepted into The National Association for Music Education (MENC) in the same year, “brought the respectability that jazz educators had lacked earlier” (Mark 1987: 20).

The respectability that Tanglewood and NAJE brought constituted the beginning of Phase 3, as from the beginning of the 1970s it was no longer as easy to criticize jazz and jazz studies. Music teachers, school administrators, parents and communities throughout the country accepted jazz as a normal activity in the schools and music education institutions next to classical music.

Twenty years after Mark’s article a Norwegian PhD project was carried out, which was based on an investigation of the process of gaining academic acceptance for jazz and popular music genres at Norwegian music conservatories (Tønberg 2007), applying the three-phase model. This study included 32 interviews, 25 of which were of employees in the six “mixed” conservatories in Norway, i.e. they offered both popular music and classical music performing studies. Seven interviews were further conducted at the New England Conservatory in Boston to help acquire a comparative American perspective. One reason for the PhD project was to find out what Mark hinted at near the end of his article: “It is possible that other historical events in music education developed in a similar manner” (p. 21).

In this article I will first discuss some aspects of Mark’s article that are relevant to the topics presented below. Second, I will refer to my own application of the model and discuss some methodological challenges connected to this application. Third, I will suggest the need for modifying and supplying the model so that it corresponds to the developments in Norway. Fourth, I will discuss two issues that my application of the model has raised, namely the institutional basis for decisions regarding the prioritization of one education programme at the expense of another and the possible usability of the inverted value reversal model, which illustrates the relatively extreme situation that emerged at a specific Norwegian university conservatory.

### Discussing some aspects of the value reversal model

What I perceive from reading Mark’s article is that he seems to claim that jazz during Phase 3 achieved the same position as classical music had held before Phase 3. Mark does not state this explicitly since he does not relate jazz to classical music at all in his account. However, I interpret him in this manner, principally due to the phrase “jazz has become part of ‘life as usual’ in the world of music education” (p. 21). I do not think that jazz became part of everyday life; rather, it became a part of a quite new and *unusual* life. Up until the beginning of Phase 1, everyday life in educational

institutions was not with two music worlds living together in harmony. Instead, it was a single music world enjoying an *exclusive* position in the curriculum. My interpretation of the situation in Phase 3 is that jazz in the 1980s did not achieve the same position in the American education system as classical music had before Phase 1. When jazz finally gained acceptance, it did not squeeze classical music out of the curriculum, it merely had a supplementary role. Hence, even if the negative value had turned positive, jazz had still not reached *that* high a level. While jazz did not end up on top of the musical value hierarchy throne where classical music previously sat, it did manage to enter the system and grab a solid number two position, while classical music lost its exclusive status.

This leads me to a second aspect, which is actually connected to the first: Sobran's description of Phase 3 includes the concept of *substitution*. What the reformers demand is not only that their rule should be equally accepted as the former rule, but that the new rule must *replace* the old rule. The thinking is that the new practice should not continue existing side by side with the old practice because the old practice should not continue to exist. In Mark's description, there is nothing that indicates that jazz *replaced* classical music in the music education institutions, as it was intended to merely be a supplement. A truly inverted value would be if jazz acquired hegemony, and classical music thus became a marginalized phenomenon. My own application of the value reversal model in Norway indicates that this possibility is not only a hypothetical one.

A third aspect is the relationship between jazz and popular music, which has nothing to do with the debate on whether jazz is popular music or not. For discussions concerning "What is popular music?" and "Is jazz popular music?", Cloonan (2005) and Frith (2007) have made valuable contributions. In *this* article, I focus on *music education*.

Is Mark's article about the acceptance of jazz relevant for an account concerning popular music? He wrote the following to me in an e-mail in 2006: "When I wrote about jazz, I was actually describing popular music as well. Both went through the same process." Why then is this an important distinction? It is important because it is of vital significance in my own account. The differences between how the staff at the music education institutions regarded jazz as something qualitatively different and more serious and worthwhile than pop and rock were crucial in the Norwegian developmental process. This is evident in the interview survey of the 25 Norwegian conservatory teachers, and is discussed more in the discussion section.

## Methodological challenges by applying the value reversal model in Norway

Using Mark's application of the value reversal model and his characterizing of the academizing of jazz in the US as a starting point, I carried out a research project on the academization of jazz and popular music in Norway from the middle of the 1970s until today in order to find both the similarities and differences between the two countries. The purpose was to see whether the development in the Norwegian music conservatory field had progressed even further than that in the US of the 1960s, 1970s and 1980s. I not only took a national point of view, I also focused on a single institution where the development had gone the furthest, and which during the period from 2008–2012 experienced an extreme situation. This specific institution is the formerly independent Agder Conservatory of Music, which in 2007 became a department of the University of Agder (UiA), as with all the other conservatories in Norway. However, I must first discuss the challenges connected to applying a model in one culture that has been used – or even found to be useful – in another culture. Is it not true that the differences between the US and Norway are so large that applying this model would imply great weaknesses? The answer of course is that they are. Since jazz is an American “invention” and classical music is a European one – if we in this context apply a Eurocentric perspective – it would be obvious that the reactions against the academization of jazz into a purely classical music education institution would be different in the two cultures. One should believe that academizing jazz in an American education system would create less serious reactions than academizing jazz in a Western European education system since jazz is America's music and therefore more tolerable.

In order to find out if this was the case, I became a visiting scholar for two months in 2004 at the New England Conservatory (NEC) in Boston. Seven interviews, among them one with Günther Schuller, who established the jazz education at NEC in 1969, and the two authors of *A History of the New England Conservatory from 1867* (McPherson and Klein 1995), indicated that the academization of jazz was even worse in the US compared to Europe. Why was this so? As one of my interviewees told me, “Our faculty in those days were really the last generation who were almost universally educated in Europe, and for them the model for education was very much the Paris Conservatory, but also London, Vienna and Rome”. Furthermore, “A lot of people felt that turning to jazz was bastardizing the school's commitment to serious music.” So perhaps one could say that American traditional music was not the way into an *American* education field, but rather into a *Western European* education field, not geographically speaking, but culturally, musically and historically. But why “even worse”? With reference to my

NEC interviewees, this is for two reasons: Because American classical conservatories in the 1960s were said to be even more conservative compared to their European “mother institutions” and because of the racial connotations of black music.

But what about the differences in time? Mark’s and Sobran’s articles were written several decades earlier than my survey. Were the perspectives not so different, the cultural impulses around the world so strong and the decomposing of the value hierarchies gone so far, then what we are dealing with is an impossible comparison between two cultures, these being the American community of the 1970s-1980s and the 21st century Norwegian one? Yes I would say, and therefore I have used the three-phase model only as a starting point related to the first decades of the Norwegian development. Recent events in Norway provide the opportunity to modify and supply the model, as well as to discuss causes as to why the development in Norway has gone as far as it has away from a value analytical perspective.

However, the circumstances in Norway and the US are not *that* different. As mentioned earlier, the research literature of Kingsbury and Nettl in particular, together with a rich collection of material from my stay at the NEC in the form of both interviews and books (McPherson and Klein 1995), contains words and phrases such as the untouchable jazz students, the pollution of classical music, that jazz singing could harm classical voices, that formal lessons are impossible in jazz and popular music, that it was forbidden to play jazz on classical grand pianos, which is exactly what I have found in Norway. So, with the abovementioned reflections and reservations, I conclude that the value reversal model is also useful in Norway as a starting point for comparison.

Before discussing the various phases in Norway, I must explain the relationship between jazz education and popular music education in this country. While the six Norwegian music conservatories were purely devoted to classical music before 1979, all of them are now “mixed”, offering both classical and jazz or popular music studies. Two of the institutions, among them the University of Agder, offer a broad genre-based jazz-pop-rock education under the term “popular music”, while the other four offer a more exclusive jazz profile. In fact, the two Norwegian institutions use the concept of “rhythmic music” for popular music, a concept used in Denmark as well, though in Anglo-American relations the same institutions use the term “popular music”, which communicates in a better way what this is all about.

The Agder Conservatory of Music was the first to establish programmes with a broader popular music profile, and for this reason I would say that this institution has experienced the worst conflicts in Norway between the two academic groups. On the one hand, there was the group of classical faculties, who regarded themselves for their entire life as being on top of the vertical musical value hierarchy, whereas on the

other, there were the popular music faculties, who regarded themselves as being *beside* their classical colleagues along a horizontal continuum of equal musical genres. These conflicts are primarily about condescension and disrespect shown by the classical group in the 1980s and 1990s, and was expressed and experienced more strongly compared to the other institutions at that time, which offered only the more “serious” jazz genre. The word “bastardization” from the NEC would also well suit Agder. In any case, this is my opinion after having conducted nine scientific interviews about these conflicts with my own colleagues, who belonged to both groups.

In this article, I focus on both the Norwegian conservatory field and on the University of Agder. As previously mentioned, this institution was the worst of all the cases in Norway, so the findings from here cannot be generalized to other institutions. However, to assess this one-case study, it is necessary to have something to compare it with, which is the entire Norwegian conservatory field. In addition, the development in Norway tends to be more and more like the situation at the University of Agder in terms of an increasing number of applicants to popular music studies and a stable number of applicants to classical ones, both of which I will come back to. Consequently, a study and a discussion of this single case could provide useful knowledge for future institutional leaders.

## Results

In the following, I will explain the results of my analysis for the situation in Norway in general and for the University of Agder in particular, using the value reversal model as an analytical tool.

### Phase 1 - The leavening phase

Both Joseph Sobran’s newspaper article from 1979 and Mark’s journal article from 1987 use the term “reformers” when referring to the persons who demanded exemption from the traditional educational system. Who were the “reformers” in Norway? They are the classically educated musicians who were employed as classical conservatory teachers, but who were or had also been active performers within jazz or popular music outside their conservatory career. At five of the six music conservatories in Norway, there were competent jazz and popular musicians on the classical staff. Typical examples of such reformers are the classical guitarist who was originally a pop musician and the winner of the Norwegian championship of rock in 1963, as



well as the classical theorist and composer, who was a skilled jazz pianist who had toured with “a whole bunch” of American jazz musicians in the 1960s and 1970s.

When times changed and the need arose, these teachers had the precise expertise and useful interest to convince conservatory directors of the benefits of classical students broadening their view by offering jazz courses and seminars, including the first in 1975. At the Agder Conservatory of Music this “leavening process” started about 10 years later, resulting in the initiation of courses in electric guitar and electric bass in the middle of the 1980s.

## Phase 2 - National status for popular music

Is it possible in Norway to find corresponding events to the Tanglewood Symposium of 1967, which stated that music of all styles and cultures belongs in the curriculum? The answer is yes, and the most important event in this regard was the publishing of a national declaration, which was drafted by a committee appointed by the Norwegian government (Norwegian Ministry of Education 1999). This declaration, hereinafter referred to as the Boysen Report after the committee chairman, who was also the principal at the Norwegian State Academy of Music, acquired considerable symbolic importance in Norway due to statements concerning the relationship between classical and popular music educations in general, and for Agder in particular. The first statement was an ascertainment of the fact that enrolment in popular music studies was very high, and that these programmes had great national importance within a genre in which the national capacity was inadequate. The other statement in the same paragraph implied a judgement of the appropriateness of maintaining classical music studies in Agder:

According to the committee, the question of whether it is appropriate to uphold the classical department at the conservatory should be studied. [...]

The recruitment to classical studies is relatively weak, the ability of such a small faculty to provide a subject of sufficient depth and width should be discussed. (my translation) (Norwegian Ministry of Education 1999)

These statements from an official Norwegian committee contributed to the acceptance of and increase in the status of popular music, popular music teachers and popular music education institutions. Thus, this document had the same legitimizing effect on popular music education in Norway as the Tanglewood declaration, thereby contributing to a higher level of respect for jazz and jazz education in the US.

### Phase 3 - Popular music breaking away

The Boysen Report was the direct cause in Agder of demands made by the popular music staff in 2000 for a separation between classical and popular music, a point which was subsequently agreed upon in 2001. Through this separation, the popular music staff members obtained their own department, their own budget and their own directors, who in turn could develop popular music studies in accordance with their own needs and based on their own areas of expertise, without opposition from the classical milieu.

In the US, Phase 3 implied that jazz education was perceived as being as acceptable as a classical education. The crucial formulations for my analysis of the circumstances in Norway are Mark's description of the college music education curriculum, and that they now often include a "sizeable segment of jazz studies" (p. 21). What are the similarities to this situation at the University of Agder? The answer is that this institution offers a purely specialized popular music teacher education, with all the subjects in the three-year teacher education programme being specialized as early as 1991. Is this a result of the fact that several years have passed since Mark wrote his article? I would say not necessarily in reply to this question.

According to an interview in 2004 with the head of the New England Conservatory of Music, this institution is an American example of a conservatory where even today jazz and classical students study together in certain theoretical subjects because both the jazz teachers and the students consider such knowledge to be useful:

*The jazz students usually respect classical music. They are interested in it, at least contemporary 20th century to the present, they know it is useful information to study Stravinsky and Bartok and they know that will help them as jazz musicians.*

What are the causes for the special development in Agder? These have to do with the fact that at Agder they do not have a specialized jazz education since the teachers in this staff are musicians in rock, pop, jazz, funk and Latin music – in other words, in many different genres. Why is this the case? The answer is because most of the teachers instructing popular music students were educated at the Berklee College of Music in Boston in the late 1970s and early 1980s. Moreover, these teachers do not think that their students need any traditional music theory and history. Therefore, since 2001, when the popular music milieu disconnected itself from the classical milieu, these educational programmes have been independent to the exact same degree as the classical programmes at the same institution, or stated differently: The

Agder Conservatory of Music had finally achieved an institutional hegemonic balance between the classical and popular music educational programmes.

But was this truly a positive development? Should the popular music staff really be allowed to acquire their “freedom” and no longer be required to cooperate with the classical staff? What were the arguments for this “emancipation”? Were the university directors concerned about the needs for skilled popular musicians in society? The answer is not at all since in Norwegian society, as with the rest of the world, there is no demand for formally educated popular musicians in either the public or private sector. Did anybody think that studying popular music was of a higher personal value for the coming generation than studying classical music? The answer is no, nothing indicates an argument like that. Was the splitting of the conservatory a strategic decision on behalf of the popular music staff at the cost of the classical staff? No, but the *effect* of the division was a positive rise for the popular music staff and a stagnation for the classical. So, what was the actual argument? It was to achieve *peace* in the organization, to remove personal conflicts and to start focusing on more important matters than whether the budget allowed for buying “another grand piano – or a drum skin”, which became a standing, lightly ironic expression for the distance and struggle between the classical management and the popular music teachers. Money for the maintenance of drums and electric guitars was not easily obtainable, while the arguments for buying yet another grand piano were much easier to understand. So this “fission decision” had really nothing to do with academic leadership or institutional strategy; the conservatory was in an emergency situation, which was solved in the only way possible.

#### Phase 4 - Popular music assuming hegemony

In 2004, a proposal from the Faculty of Fine Arts at the University of Agder recommended the establishment of a PhD programme in Music Performance based on the entire conservatory staff, including both the classical and popular music staff, which was refused by the university board. In 2005, a new proposal was submitted, this time with only popular music as the basis for a new PhD. Due to the popular music milieu having too little research competence, the board approved the proposal and guaranteed funding for two new popular music professors. Three years later, the first three popular music research fellows were appointed, while the Doctoral Programme in Popular Music Performance was well under way. In January 2013, the first popular music candidate defended his PhD dissertation.

Why did the university board not accept the proposal of a broader PhD programme based on both the classical and popular music research competency level? Could it

have anything to do with the new academic status that Agder University College was given in 2007, when the institution became the more “proper” University of Agder, the seventh in Norway? Perhaps only popular music was “sexy” enough to be used when marketing the new university, hence making UiA attractive and functioning on the “boasting list” of being among UiA’s “firsts”. According to the UiA leadership, it was not the intrinsic value of popular music itself or its significance for students or society that legitimized the establishment of the doctoral programme. Instead, it was the extrinsic or instrumental value that was most important, with the popular music PhD as means and medium exploited in the university’s efforts to become famous and distinguished. The following sentence is taken from a case document for the board meeting of June 20<sup>th</sup>, 2007 (University of Agder 2007: 87/07 my translation):

As shown by our evaluation, the University of Agder is going to reign supreme in Scandinavia when it comes to offering such a specialized doctoral programme in performing popular music.

Establishing a totally new and traditionally non-academic doctoral programme in Popular Music Performance would make UiA *unique, innovative* and *attractive* (terms from the same document) and place the new university on the map, something which it certainly did. The term “this university is a little rock and roll” (i.e. a little crazy in a positive sense), as used by the new university principal, Torunn Laudal, in the opening ceremony in November 2007, soon reached the media and was interpreted as if she considered the new university a *Rock [Music] University*. This term has already been used so many times, both inside and outside the institution, that it is almost a hackneyed expression. The statement by the principal, as well as the media’s use of it, was suited to strengthening the popular music hegemony. Hence, this administration now sat with both the power and the media interest, and they did it at the expense of the classic teacher group.

## Phase 5 - Classical dismissal and resignation

In August 2008, two months before the initiation of the PhD programme in Popular Music Performance at the University of Agder, a portfolio committee appointed by the university board and led by the deputy principal gave its recommendation to shut down the classical music education programmes:

The classical department will be shut down from 2010. (...) The committee recommends that the classical education programmes be terminated as

separate, independent study programmes at both the bachelor and master level. (...) Expertise in classical music should be retained to the extent that it is necessary with regard to the popular music department. (my transl.) (University of Agder 2008:14)

The proposal implied dismissing some of the faculty members, including the classical person mentioned earlier who offered courses in electric guitar and electric bass in the 1980s. The reason for the proposal were differences between the two departments when it came to recruitment and academic weight:

The classical department has experienced a declining number of applications for many years, while there is a large number of applicants to the popular music department and this department is facing the establishment of a PhD programme. (my translation) (University of Agder 2008:14)

It was correct that the number of applicants to the classical education programmes was low compared to the number of applicants to the popular music education programmes. And even if the number of classical applicants was not really declining, the proposal was based on hard facts.

The figure below illustrates the difference between the number of applicants to popular music studies compared to classical music studies, with classical low and steady and popular music high and increasing.

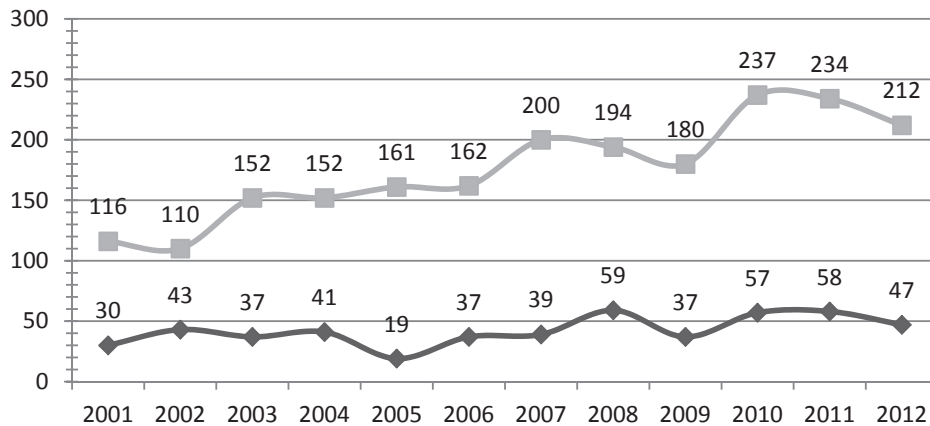


Figure 1

The classical department was not shut down, as protests from the classical staff and students, the trade unions at the university and the representatives for the regional arts centres resulted in the crucial term in the proposal, *close down*, being changed to *reorganize*, and in the fall of 2008 two reorganizational processes were initiated. The goal of the first process was to achieve a situation in which the level of expertise in the classical department corresponded better with the declared needs of the university's leadership. During the spring of 2009, two full-time and three part-time teachers were defined as "internally redundant" and received dismissal notifications, while in 2010 four of them were out of a job and in 2011 it was over for the last one.

The second process was terminating the 45 years of independent classical instrumental teacher education. From a situation of having two single music teacher education programmes, one based on classical and one on popular music, and each with a high degree of genre-specialized modules, a committee worked for almost a year with a brand new *hybrid classical-popular music teacher education program*, which was the only one from the fall 2010. This committee included more popular music teachers than classical ones in order to secure that the needs of the popular music staff were met.

Several faculties were sceptical about this new education programme. Why? Was it because the hybrid idea was unknown and therefore strange? Was it because the decision came from above? Was it because the new education programme would force the two groups of colleagues to cooperate? I think there were three main reasons for this scepticism. First, very few members of the two academic groups thought a hybrid education would work. They did not believe in the idea of mixing classical and popular music, as they did not think it was possible to construct a curriculum based on those two different "musics". Secondly, they did not think that society needed teachers with "a bit of" classical and "a bit of" popular music expertise, either. Their opinion was that instrumental teachers have to acquire in-depth knowledge about *one*, and not *two* musical worlds. Thirdly, and most importantly, some faculties had the feeling that this was yet another emergency effort, a drastic action, and one that was not initiated on the basis of the expressed needs from either society or the conservatory teachers themselves. The hybrid education programme was initiated from the bureaucracy, and even worse, the decision about it was made to solve a problem, that being the "classical problem", i.e. the remaining classical staff who were at the mercy of the popular music staff.

In the spring of 2012, a committee was once again set up to investigate classical music's place in the future of the Faculty of Fine Arts. One of the committee's conclusions was that there was a need for a radical modernization of classical music studies in the direction of a more contemporary-oriented profile, as well as more points of tangency within popular music education. Moreover, in April of the same year it became clear that the number of classical teachers was too high in relation

to the number of students. In May 2012, three years after the time of the internal redundance, four classical teachers received offers for early retirement and left their positions voluntarily and gradually from the summer of 2012. And because of the low number of applicants to classical studies in 2012, as in previous years, the musician education became a purely popular music one, as the new first-year classical students had to choose teacher education.

Below is a schematic illustration of how I interpret the development of the popular music education programmes at the University of Agder compared to the classical programmes:

Phase 1	1985-1998	The leaven phase. Classical conservatory teachers with external popular music careers demand exceptions from the traditional conservatory praxis
Phase 2	1999-2000	Increasing national status for popular music educations, but the classical hegemony maintains. The Boysen Report
Phase 3	2001-2003	Popular music breaks away. Institutional hegemonic balance between classical and popular music education programs
Phase 4	2004-2007	Establishing PhD program in popular music, not in classical, which loses hegemony
Phase 5	2008-2012	Popular music solidly on top. Dismissing classical teachers, closing down classical programs

*Table 1*

The table shows that it was correct what Mark hinted at the end of his article. Other historical events in music education, than the academizing of jazz in the US, did really develop in a similar manner. Anyway, the developments at the University of Agder have necessitated a modifying and expanding of the model, which is the point of the next paragraph.

## **Modifying the value reversal model into an inverted value reversal model**

As I see it, Phases 1, 2 and 3 correspond with Mark's three phases, while Phases 4 and 5 give an expression of the developments at the University of Agder over the past eight years. This illustrates the first part of my modification of Sobran's and Mark's

three-phase model. However, as I have previously indicated in the article, it is possible to imagine a situation in which popular music not only acquires hegemony in an institution, but also more or less *replaces* classical music. I then have to ask myself: Is Norway, or at least the University of Agder, in a situation today that is analogous but *inverted* to the one in the US before Phase 1, in which jazz was “not considered to be as good as classical music” (Mark, 1987)? Was it the case at UiA in 2008, when the portfolio committee presented the closing down proposal, that “*classical* music was not considered to be as good as *popular* music? My answer is: Yes, I think so, which implies a need for a Phase 0, which represents the 20 years when classical music was in the exclusive position of being “alone on the throne”.

This brings me to the second part of my modification of the model and to the idea of not only focusing on the process where a phenomenon’s value inverts from negative to positive, but at the same time focusing on the related, but opposite phenomenon whose value consequently appears to invert from positive to negative. It is the model for two such parallel processes, from the *rise* of *one* phenomenon to the *decline* of *another*, both related to each other with mutual dependence, which I have called an *inverted value reversal model*:

		Classical music programs	Popular music programs
Phase 0	1965-1984	An exclusive position	--
Phase 1	1985-1998	Losing the exclusive position	The leaven phase
Phase 2	1999-2000	High, but declining status	Low, but increasing status
Phase 3	2001-2003	Hegemonic balance	Hegemonic balance
Phase 4	2004-2007	Losing hegemony	Acquiring hegemony
Phase 5	2008-2012	Dismissing and terminating	Establishing PhD program
Phase 6	2013-	--	An exclusive position?

Table 2

The question is: When the value of a societal phenomenon has been totally inverted, in the sense that it has developed from a negative to a positive value, is it then a matter of necessity that another phenomenon mutually connected to the first one will lose its value?

As a starting point to reflect on such a question, I am thinking of an image: A balanced pair of scales, with something lying in each of the two pans. If somebody increases the weight on the left side it sinks, while the right side rises. While this does not mean that the weight on the right side has been reduced, it does mean that the *relative* weight on the right side has been reduced. Inside the right pan of the scale,



there is nothing that indicates a reduced weight. It is only by looking outside of the right pan that *changes in position* will appear, both in relation to the left side and in relation to the surroundings of the weight system, from which it is obvious that the right side has less weight than the left.

Can this image shed light on the development of the relationship between the classical and popular music education programmes at the University of Agder? Can this image also be used to evaluate whether the inverted value reversal model is reasonable or useful? Yes, I think so, at least if we assume that popular and classical music educations are located at the opposite ends of the same continuum. Of course, this might not always apply, although in the case of the University of Agder this can be said to be the situation since the breaking away in 2001. We then have to imagine the balanced scale as an image of a conservatory of music, with the two pans as images of the popular music teachers (left) and the classical music teachers (right). From their own perspective, when the status of the popular music teachers increased, the classical teachers' status was not reduced, although their *relative* value was reduced to some extent from their perspective, as well as that of the popular teachers, the total conservatory, the surroundings and the University of Agder. Furthermore, this decline of relative value could lead to condescension and disrespect, which is exactly what the popular music teachers experienced 10–15 years earlier. And though relatively, among the many possible effects of such a decline of value, perhaps the closing down proposal could have been one of them.

Book titles such as *Rethinking music* (Cook & Everist 2001) and *De-canonizing music history* (Kurkela & Väkevä 2009) literally symbolize weight shifts and value reversals in our understanding of the relations between different types of music, and as I see it, they indicate that the increasing status for popular music and the declining status for classical music at UiA are not very strange.

## **Discussing some aspects concerning the development in Norway**

In order to make a little change of perspective in the direction of a more philosophical one, I must now ask: In relation to these institutional decisions, particularly those concerning the priority of one education at the expense of another, which value judgments were present in the minds of the university directors and board members? And which value judgments *should* be present? Should an education institution have values as the basis for their decisions other than purely commercial ones? For instance, should an

institution consider ethical dilemmas in regard to the faculty members who might lose their jobs? What about the university's responsibility for preserving a nation's cultural heritage? Should a university take care of a traditional, European and Norwegian art-music education programme just because of the positive cultural value for the nation, or as a means of reproducing the national project? Should a university board consider that classical music studies will soon be an endangered species, a species on the red list, and therefore worthy of preservation? Should a university board simply be concerned with strengthening sustainable education or should they also protect the endangered studies? Should a university have the right to regard classical music studies as education programmes only and terminate them just because of a small number of applicants when the consequence is that a 45-year-old regional cultural institution disappears? Should these kinds of aspects be discussed when making decisions that can lead to serious changes in the lives of people and in the university's surrounding community? My own *experience* is that questions such as this have been absent when making decisions at the University of Agder, while my *opinion* is that such questioning should be present when making such serious decisions.

To further explain what I mean, I will introduce a legitimizing model called, "the six orders of worth" (Boltanski and Thevenot, 1999). This model claims to be universal because it constitutes a sufficient repertoire for legitimization in a modern society. The six orders or principles of evaluation are market, civic, inspired, fame, industrial and domestic. In public situations in which actors have to justify their views, they have to activate one or more of these principles. Hence, I have used this model as an analysing tool to find out why all of the six conservatories in Norway established jazz or popular music programmes over a period of 25 years, as well as the reasons that the leaders and reformers had for proposing the new educations. Since I found this model useful for analysing the reasons for establishing education programmes, perhaps it would be useful when analysing the reasons for closing down education programmes?

In the following, I will apply the six orders of worth on the decisions of the University of Agder when launching the proposal in 2008 about closing down the classical music programmes. I have previously referred to the first of the six orders, the *market*, which is the only argument I have seen in public documents. And arguing only with reference to that order, the conclusion was easy to draw because of the higher number of applicants to the popular music studies compared to the classical studies. But why did the market thinking prevail in the evaluation of whether the classical music education should be maintained? The answer is because the board of the University of Agder had to deal with a national budgeting model in which a high number of students and a large production of credits contributed to the financing of studies. And this view dominated the university's historical role as a humanistic education and research

institution, which is a prerequisite for critical thinking. If the leaders of UiA argued with reference to the *civic* order, they could have referred to the classical teachers' claims about their jobs and their rights just as much as for the popular music teachers being employed. Referring to the *inspired* order, they could have argued pre-classically by taking into consideration this music's possibility to develop young people's personality, both musically and socially, although this argument would also work when arguing for popular music. To argue with referring to the order of *fame* would not be easy as far as classical music is concerned, as I think nowadays in Norway there are very few classically educated musicians who become artists or gain any type of meaningful reputation. In this case, the popular music students are in quite another situation; the teachers at the conservatory include the students in their own bands, and a large number of conservatory trained popular musicians are engaged in the Norwegian music industry. The same goes for the next order, that of *industry*, in terms of arguing pre-classically by referring to progress and technological advance, which is not easy compared to the popular music field. Then we have the last one, the *domestic* order, which is about traditions, the maintenance of hierarchies, upbringing and the reproduction of, e.g. the national heritage. As I see it, this domestic order is the opposite of the market order. If I could give UiA's leaders some advice, I would ask them to thoroughly discuss this aspect, namely the university's responsibility for the local-, regional- and national cultural heritage. If not a classical conservatory of music, then which institutions should take responsibility for teaching new generations to play Edvard Grieg?

## Conclusion

The question I have asked in this article is: When the value of a societal phenomenon has been totally inverted, in the sense that it has developed from a negative to a positive value, is it then a matter of necessity that another phenomenon mutually connected to the first one will lose its value?

Through my own application of the value reversal model, I found it both possible and necessary to modify and extend it with new phases, both in front and behind. And based on the developments at the University of Agder, where the popular music education programme was given priority at the expense of the classical programme, my answer is the following: The fact that one phenomenon receives a higher value will not necessarily imply that another phenomenon receives a reduced value, but viewed from several perspectives, this other phenomenon can receive a reduced *relative* value, which can have negative implications.

I have used the situation at the University of Agder as a sample case, though I do not claim that the modified and extended model should be universal. But the inverted value reversal model, used as an analysing or planning tool and based on a set of principles of evaluation, may help institution directors to become aware of the effects and consequences of their decisions.

And several other university boards could be forced to make similar serious decisions, such as those that the board of the University of Agder had to make, if classical music educations of the Western world follow the same developments as I have seen in Norway compared to popular music. Based on my analyses in 2004, 2005, 2006 and 2009 of the number of national Norwegian applicants, I found for the first time in 2009 that the number of classical music applicants who attended the entrance exams for the undergraduate programmes was lower than the number of popular music applicants (Tønberg, 2012). If this finding proves to be an expression of a stable tendency, then far more institutions than just the University of Agder will have to face the challenges discussed in this article in the coming years.

## References

- Boltanski, Luc & Thévenot, Laurent (1999). The sociology of critical capacity. *European Journal of Social Theory*, August 2, 359–377.
- Cloonan, Martin (2005). What is popular music? Some observations. *British Journal of Music Education*, 22(1), 77–93.
- Cook, Nicholas & Everist, Mark (eds) (2001). *Rethinking music*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Frith, Simon (2007). Is jazz popular music? *Jazz Research Journal*, 1 (1), 7–23.
- Jørgensen, Harald (2010). Higher music education: A neglected arena for research? *Bulletin of the Council for Research in Music Education*, 186, 67–80.
- Kingsbury, Henry (1988). *Music, talent, and performance. A conservatory cultural system*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press.
- Kurkela, Vesa & Väkevä, Lauri (eds) (2009). *De-canonizing music history*. Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholar Publishing.
- Mark, Michael L. (1987). The acceptance of jazz in the music education curriculum: A model for interpreting a historical process. *Bulletin of the Council for Research in Music Education*, 92, 15–22.
- Marquis, Alice G. (1998). Jazz Goes to College: Has Academic Status Served the Art? In *Popular Music and Society*, 22(2), 117–124.

- McPherson, Bruce & Klein, James (1995). *Measure by measure. A history of the New England Conservatory from 1867*. Boston: The Trustees of New England Conservatory of Music.
- Nettl, Bruno (1995). *Heartland excursions. Ethnomusicological reflections on schools of music*. Urbana: University of Illinois Press.
- Netzel, Nicholas (2001). *From the bandstand to the Ivory tower. Tracing history of jazz pedagogy and the acceptance of jazz into the academy*. Minnesota: Carleton College.
- Norwegian Ministry of Education (1999). *Fra vugge til podium. Utredning om den faglige organiseringen av musikkutdanningen*. [From cradle to podium. Study on the organization of music education.] Oslo. Retrieved 20 December 2012 from [http://www.regjeringen.no/nb/dep/kd/dok/rapporter\\_planer/rapporter/1999/den-faglige-organiseringen-av-musikkutda.html?id=277136](http://www.regjeringen.no/nb/dep/kd/dok/rapporter_planer/rapporter/1999/den-faglige-organiseringen-av-musikkutda.html?id=277136)
- Sobran, Joseph (October 7, 1979). Zigging, zagging morality. *Washington Post*.
- Solhjell, Dag (2005). *Fra akademiregime til fagforeningsregime. Kunstpolitikk 1940–1980*. Oslo: UniPub.
- Tønnsberg, Knut (2007). *Institusjonaliseringen av de rytmiske musikkutdanningene ved Høgskolen i Agder*. (The institutionalization of popular music at the University College of Agder.) NMH-publications 2007:2.
- Tønnsberg, Knut (2012). Rekrutteringen til de utøvende musikkutdanningene i Norge. (The recruitment to the music performance studies in Norway). *NTM-online. Norsk tidsskrift for musikkforskning*, 1 (2012).
- University of Agder (2000). *Innstilling fra studieporteføljeutvalget*. [Recommendation of the study portfolio committee] September 1, 2008.
- University of Agder (2007). *Etablering av doktorgradsutdanning i utøvende rytmisk musikk*. [Establishing ph.d.-program in performing popular music.] University board, June 20. 2007. 87/7. Archive reference: 07/548–621.

Associate Professor, PhD  
Knut Tønnsberg  
University of Agder  
Faculty of Fine Arts, Department of Music  
Gimlemoen 25A, 4630 Kristiansand, Norway  
knut.tonsberg@uia.no

