

‘Workplace landscapes’ and the construction of performance teachers’ identity: the case of advanced music training institutions in Greece

Angeliki Triantafyllaki

Faculty of Music Studies, National and Kapodistrian University of Athens, School of Philosophy,
Panepistimioupolis, 157 84, Greece

atriant@cantab.net

This paper draws on the metaphor of ‘workplace landscape’ to highlight the role of institutional values, evidenced within a Greek University Music Department and a Music Conservatoire, in the construction of musical performance teachers’ professional identity. Underpinned by a social constructionist framework and within an ethnographic case study approach, the findings revealed that, on the one hand, participating teachers were constrained by the ‘cultural scripts’ within their workplaces, and on the other, that they utilised and appropriated these cultural tools in constructing their professional identity and practice. The findings imply that advanced music training institutions should engage more radically in a critical rethinking of their ‘workplace landscapes’ as settings for professional identity construction in order to ensure that musical identities are most effectively nurtured.

Introduction

Performance teachers (i.e. those who engage in teaching musical performance students at an advanced level) could be considered advanced music training institutions’ greatest assets, as they stand at the interface of the transmission of knowledge and values. On the one hand, instrumental teaching practices are organised as a one-to-one contact that has been likened to a ‘master–apprentice’ approach to teaching (Jørgensen, 2000; Nerland, 2007), where the teacher becomes the ‘significant other’ for the students involved (Froehlich, 2002, p. 153). To this end, previous research has described and analysed, developed and evaluated teaching models, approaches and strategies within music lessons (Young *et al.*, 2003; Ward, 2004; Persson, 1996) or focused on the sensitive area of teacher–student interaction (Gipson, 1978; Rosenthal, 1984; Hepler, 1986; Rostvall & West, 2003). On the other hand, and within the context of advanced music training, the significance of this professional role is realised also through the high positions teachers occupy on account of their artistic endeavours as performing artists in music communities beyond the institution (Kingsbury, 1988; Nielsen, 1999). Research indicates that performance teachers consider themselves as being more ‘musicians’ than ‘teachers’, thereby focusing on ‘performer–teachers’ careers (Mills, 2004a, 2004b), and seeking to reveal the impact of professional discourses on the teaching practice itself (Nerland, 2007).

Yet, perhaps due to the particularities of performance teaching, where studio settings and one-to-one types of instruction dominate teachers' daily work realities, advanced music training institutions, in which many performance teachers work, remain under-researched. With only a few exceptions (see Bennett, 2008) their curricula are unexplored, and their 'learning cultures' (see Burt-Perkins, 2009) remain uncharted territories.¹ Finally, it is perhaps with the conviction that teachers identify more with the professional music field than with their roles as educators and pedagogues, that fewer scholars have raised awareness of the 'values' of advanced training institutions (Froehlich, 2007) that could impact on the ways in which teachers construct their educational practice, or on what they choose to do with their students in the classroom. To this end, there needs to be an uncovering of the fine distinctions in roles – those of *institutions* that prepare the musical performer and those of performance *teachers*, who in many cases pursue musical careers outside their educational workplaces.

Thinking about advanced music training institutions as 'workplace landscapes' means looking at teachers' engagement in these also as a social (rather than only an individualistic) activity, and thus affords attention to the diverse communities within which teachers situate their practice. Situating teachers' professional identities in educational workplaces can contribute to our understanding of what it feels like to be a performance teacher in particular structural, cultural and organisational contexts where many things are changing rapidly, and how teachers cope with these changes (Beijaard *et al.*, 2004).

Advanced music training institutions: tensions and values

Within the instrumental music teacher and teaching literature, there is a growing demand for contextualisation, i.e. situating individuals within institutional, communal, cultural and professional contexts. In the British conservatoire context, Porter (1998, p. 9) notes how conservatoires provide an environment that appeals to prominent part-time teacher-performers, over whom the institution has little contractual hold. Within the context of a Music Academy in Norway, Nerland and Hanken (2002) argue that such settings are subject to a kind of 'double positioning' in two different social fields – musical performance and education. The values of each 'field' offer participants in the Academy divergent ways of comprehending their institutional practice (p. 183). While not dealing with identity *per se*, Nerland and Hanken argue that the double positioning of such institutions in the fields of musical performance and education may involve understanding teachers as performers or pedagogues respectively (p. 184). In Australian creative arts higher education, Bennett *et al.* (2009) discuss the tensions artist academics, including musicians, face. Within a government-directed *research* environment they are called upon to strike a balance between their artistic and academic (including research) practice: while they are appointed to universities on account of their distinguished arts practice, they are expected to continue this practice within a system that fails to recognise it (p. 11).

Studies such as these remind us that the high degree of congruence concerning *cultural* practices for which performance teachers serve as agents might necessitate lower levels of *institutional* regulation of the individual practice (Nerland, 2000). This mutual commitment or *accountability* refers more to upholding the standards and values of professional music making as a 'community of practice' (Cottrell, 2004) rather than adhering

to institutional rules and regulations. Yet, the nature of performance teachers' professional practice and identity in the workplace is not as clear-cut as much of the literature suggests. Underlining connections between teachers and particular professional and institutional cultures (Nielsen, 1999; Nerland, 2000, 2006) or institutional expectations (Tucker, 1996; Cox, 1999) present the need to situate teachers and their teaching practices within musical *and* educational workplaces.

This paper draws on the metaphor of 'workplace landscape' (Reynolds, 1996) to ascribe to the fact that educational workplaces as 'landscapes' can be very persuasive, demanding, and in some cases, very restrictive, therefore limiting the range and type of professional identities available to teachers (Cooper & Olson, 1996). Reynolds (1996) links 'workplace landscapes' with 'cultural scripts' that are 'those subjectivities available to us to choose from as we play our part and workplace landscapes as those conditions that impact upon our performance' (p. 71). By exploring the 'cultural scripts' performance teachers draw on, we can begin to question taken-for-granted assumptions about instrumental teachers' work in advanced music training. This framework also affords opportunities to examine whether being 'positioned' (Davies & Harré, 1990) within one particular landscape gives rise to particular professional identities and practices.

Research context

Advanced music training in Greece has traditionally been linked to attending one of its 758 conservatoires² that, in their majority, are private organisations; not officially recognised as higher education (HE) institutions; and under the auspices of the Ministry of Culture. Only recently were degree specialisations in musical performance established in Greek state HE³ and specifically in two university music departments. More specifically, Greek conservatoires are organised around one-to-one instrumental tuition in a range of classical Western, jazz and traditional Greek instruments. Studies include a small number of theoretical subjects, such as harmony, history of music, chamber music and choir practice – compulsory if proceeding towards the Teacher's Degree or Soloist Diploma,⁴ after as many as 12 years of part-time study. Most conservatoires will accept all students regardless of age and musical ability. Teachers – in their vast majority conservatoire graduates with or without further studies abroad – are employed mostly on an hourly basis, with a small number of teachers in state-funded institutions holding also fractional or full-time contracts. Conservatoire directors follow their own policy regarding auditions, assessment criteria and teaching methods. Despite these shortcomings, many conservatoire graduates are accepted for postgraduate studies abroad.

Greek higher instrumental music education involves a four or five year course of studies. Undergraduates can choose to specialise in one of many classical and jazz instruments. In parallel they are required to pass a wide range of modules, both compulsory and elective (i.e. composition, history of music, music technology, music education). Students enter these institutions through the State National Examinations with instrumental auditions only taking place once they are in the institution – for some students that do not have the expected level of instrumental competency this may result in eventually graduating with a different specialisation (i.e. composition, music pedagogy). Auditions for the principal instrument are held by individual teachers and instruction is one-to-one.

Principal instrument teachers are usually seasoned performers with national and international performing experience, usually employed on fractional contracts, with only a small minority being permanent staff members with full-time posts.

The university music department participating in the study was established in the 1990s in a rural location. Performance teachers in the department were employed on fractional and full-time contracts and all had substantial international and/or national performing experience. The conservatoire was established at the beginning of the 20th century in an urban location. As a state-funded institution, teachers were employed on fractional and full-time contracts; there were no fees; and entry was through annual auditions. Both institutions' buildings were non-purpose built. Conservatoire teachers' performing experience was varied. Some had been active in the past and had now dedicated themselves to their teaching, while others continued to remain active as performers.

Method

Social constructionism and identity

Situating the study within a social constructionist framework allowed a focus on 'the processes by which any body of knowledge comes to be socially accepted as 'reality'' (Berger & Luckmann, 1966, p. 3). This epistemological stance has inspired much research on the social influences on the individual's acquisition of knowledge (Paul & Ballantine, 2002, p. 570) and is particularly suited to studying identity construction within a social framework. According to Cerulo (1997), a social constructionist approach to identity rejects any category that sets forward essential or core features as the unique property of a collective's members. From this perspective, every collective becomes a social artifact – an entity moulded, refabricated and mobilised in accord with reigning cultural scripts and centres of power (p. 387). This view affords attention to the ways in which advanced music training institutions as collectives or agents of socialisation organise and project the affective, cognitive and behavioural data individuals use to form a 'self' (Cerulo, 1997, p. 387). This process views identity construction as taking place through 'the discourses that are culturally available to us and which we draw upon in our communications with other people' (Burr, 1995, p. 51). Rules of inclusion, distinctions between insiders and outsiders as well as hierarchies structured around the kinds of professional knowledge valued are key to the construction of teachers' identities within these workplaces.

Yet, as Holstein and Gubrium (2000) argue, selves constituted in a particular site or organisation may take on the general qualities that the setting or organisation promotes but practitioners of everyday life exercise discretion, mediated by the complex combinations of meaning that competing professional and institutional affiliations might offer. Performance teachers' competing affiliations with multiple communities – many of which reside beyond their educational workplaces – provide them with a range of 'cultural scripts' to implement into their professional practice. The ways in which teachers choose to implement these resources are dependent on a range of factors, not least of all their personal biographies. Holstein and Gubrium (2000) suggest that 'biography does not determine identity any more than organisational location or institutional discourses dictate selves' (p. 169). Instead,

biographical particulars are used circumstantially, identified and descriptively mobilised to become part of local selves-in-the-making.

While performance teachers' professional identity construction is examined within the 'boundaries' of particular workplaces, it must be acknowledged that teachers have histories that extend beyond the boundaries of their institutions and the affiliations they may offer. And conversely, while participants' own words are valued, these words are understood partly by acknowledging the particularities of Greek instrumental music education as a 'reality' in which these teachers are embedded. This rationale differs largely from much previous work in instrumental teacher and teaching research in that it comes closer to conceptualising teachers as participants in concretely (and culturally) organised practices and constructing identities within these practices. Yet, while teachers may be influenced by such cultural practices, from a social constructionist viewpoint they (for the most part) retain some concept of the active agentic person (Burr, 1995). Conceptualising professional identity from this perspective affords attention to the fact that teachers both draw on their own experiences and re-conceptualise these through the particular cultural resources available to them in their workplaces.

Participants and research procedure

A sample of approximately one third of the total number of instrumental teaching staff participated in the research (Conservatoire $n = 18$, Music Department $n = 10$), via interviews, although informal discussions were held with many more members of staff. From the participating group of teachers, four case study teachers from each institutional sample were selected to include different instruments, providing for 'maximum variation' (Miles & Huberman, 1994) within the teacher community (i.e. in the Music Department: piano, violin, viola, cello, flute, clarinet and in the Conservatoire: all the above plus saxophone). Each teacher was asked to select two students for the lesson observations that were at different levels in their studies. In general, the ages of students I observed throughout fieldwork ranged from 14–25 in the Conservatoire and 18–25 in the Department.

Data collection took place over a period of three months in each institution. An ethnographic case study approach (Stenhouse, 1988) was employed that drew on in-depth interviews, documentary evidence, video-stimulated recall interviews, lesson observations and (participant) observations of institutional life. Specifically, in-depth interviews with teachers drew out their perspectives and allowed unique, individual stories to be elicited (Kvale, 1996, p. 30). Interviews with institutional management provided insights into institutional values, history and location as well as instrumental teachers' roles and responsibilities. Documentary evidence included programmes of study, brochures, institutional websites, concert programmes and articles from local newspapers and magazines. Finally, by providing first-hand experience in naturally occurring events (Wolcott, 1999, p. 46), participant observation encouraged the researcher to 'live' within each institution being studied in order to focus on the commonplace, everyday activities teachers engaged in, their feelings, attitudes and values (Bannister, 1992, p. 139). This included being present at musical events, such as concerts or concert practice sessions and encounters with teachers beyond lesson observations. Field notes made during these encounters were written and expanded as soon as possible thereafter and

subsequently assisted in the preparation of teacher interviews. The researcher's prior conservatoire training allowed a deeper understanding of the repertoires instrumental teachers employed in their daily practice. Due to the multi-site nature of the research, and as the 'workplace landscape' shifted, so the researcher's identity was re-negotiated. University staff viewed the researcher as a 'doctoral student/academic' and Conservatoire staff as a 'musician/conservatoire graduate' (see also Triantafyllaki, 2010).

Both within- and cross-case thematic analysis was employed (Stake, 2006). The latter, in particular, involved interpreting the data and synthesizing the lessons learnt across sites. The two levels of analysis were ongoing in that initial interpretations within each institution were questioned, informed or elaborated on the basis of sub-themes evolving from the cross-case analysis. In analysing talk, a qualitative content analysis approach for the subjective interpretation of text data through the systematic classification process of coding and identifying themes or patterns was utilised (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005, p. 2). Initial codes were sorted into broader themes according to how they were linked together. Institutional documents were viewed as social products, yet they were often treated by participants as objective and factual statements (Hammersley & Atkinson, 1995, p. 173) that provided much insight into how teachers used them in their daily practice to justify their perspectives and actions. In this paper, data are drawn primarily from in-depth interviews, field notes and institutional documents. Methodological triangulation involved establishing converging lines of inquiry (Yin, 2003, p. 98) between these different data sources but also searching for additional interpretations (Stake, 1995, p. 115) as individual sources were compared. This paper specifically elaborates the broad theme 'workplace' (dominant sub-themes: 'characteristics' – physical and organisational – and 'values') in relation to the theme 'identity' (dominant sub-themes: 'teacher' and 'performer'). It draws also on teachers' biographical data to explore the theme 'identity'.

Findings and discussion

In this paper, the two workplaces are presented as case studies that focus on the ways in which each institution established for participating teachers particular 'workplace landscapes' – geographical locations, physical layout, sets of roles and responsibilities, curricula. The ways in which participating teachers were constrained by the 'cultural scripts' (i.e. professional/institutional values, Greek instrumental training discourse) within their workplaces, and also utilised and appropriated these cultural tools in constructing their professional identities are explored.

Physical environment

The two institutions' distinct geographical locations encouraged particular practices (and inhibited others) in teachers' workplaces. It was the music department's rural location that necessitated the formation of teacher ensembles within the institution, providing participants with further performing opportunities. The management characterises one ensemble as 'a tool' for furthering teachers' performing careers. As one teacher indicated, it was this distance from the Greek urban music scene that necessitated an emphasis on the 'teacher as performing artist' in its effort to establish a justifiable identity within Greek

instrumental training discourse. In other words, it was essential to legitimate their discipline through arguing that they offered unique and essential knowledge not available elsewhere in Greek HE (see also Harwood, 2007, p. 324). In doing so, their performing identities were foregrounded:

'we are in a rural area . . . we have two kinds of evidence with which we can convince the rest . . . the active teacher-artists, and the Department's graduates that really have the level of studies so that when they present themselves they show people that this Department is really worth it.' (Prior Head of Department, musicologist)

The Conservatoire's urban location was taken for granted by its staff with regards to the performing opportunities available. On the rare occasion teachers mentioned their location, they did so to highlight the multiple opportunities for performing offered to them.

The findings also revealed that different values were embedded in each institution's physical layout. Neither institution was purpose-built. It was significant that the music department did not house a concert hall on its premises – concerts and recitals were held outside the institution, in designated buildings across town. The absence of these collective spaces meant that musical events could not be observed on a daily basis by visitor, teacher or student, according to such events an aura of formality. There were also no common rooms such as a staff room, cafeteria or a visitors'/seating area, the lack of which have been discussed as being a regular feature of advanced music training institutions (Kushner, 2000). Elsewhere it is argued that areas such as staffrooms or cafeterias are regions for the construction of teachers' professional identities (Woods, 1983). The lack of these common spaces in the department necessitated the accomplishment of teachers' professional identity construction in 'other' areas, such as when performing/practicing with colleagues; in lessons; when taking on performing engagements beyond the institution; or in institutional documents.

Particular ways of arguing for specific practices in each setting seemed to be 'structured' in each building's layout. The ground floor of the music department was separated into three blocks with three separate entrances. These were joined together by a large basement running across all three blocks that housed the majority of orchestral activity in the institution. Participants used the physical layout to argue for the separation between different specialisations and thus highlight the particularities of their own practice:

The performers are this side, the musicologists want more quiet so that is respected . . . so the case is that with the theoreticians we do not have all that much contact . . . I think it's a matter of space because here between ourselves the fagotto is playing, the violin is here, the pianist will go up the stairs, the cembalo will come down, the flautist will play, so you could say this is the "performer's wing". So that means we have a little more contact . . . it is more operational. (Violin teacher)

They are totally committed to what they do, they are hidden inside the basement playing. (Prior Head of Department, musicologist)

Distinct areas of instrumental and theoretical activity in the music department served as a 'stage' for its organisational structure (Samier, 2006) – encouraging teachers (and the management) to portray themselves in specific ways.

Not surprisingly, in the Conservatoire, due to the traditionally stronger emphasis this type of institution places on instrumental training (rather than theoretical knowledge), there was none of the symbolic separation between theoretical and instrumental practices, although it was clear that particular rooms were designated to particular instruments; as a cello teacher explained, 'can't you see this is the cello room', as the floorboard was 'full of scratches'.

Characterising the Conservatoire as a 'beacon of knowledge and culture' the Director then goes on to say: 'the student when entering the Conservatoire . . . sees a lovely building with some prestige . . .'. The Conservatoire's prevalence, long history and classical music tradition was expressed also by the following teacher:

The building is very imposing even though it's a little old . . . it's a little run-down but this fits the music that we play. (Piano accompanist)

The Conservatoire's main entrance on the ground floor opened straight into the concert hall, separated by just a few steps and then the audience seating area. Its imposing, high, glass ceiling and solid, stone columns constructed this space as a privileged area in the institution, its focal point, and most certainly its public front. Its open-plan arrangement meant that all activities held here were very public, as entering or leaving the Conservatoire entailed passing necessarily through this area. The high visibility of students' performing practices in near daily musical activities and final examination performances in the open-plan concert hall created a culture of mutual accountability within the institution. A stronger emphasis on displaying their *teaching* expertise would come into play during both concerts and examinations, when their students would be presented to the general public:

The work of each teacher is both discussed and seen. During exams it shows to other teachers, to the Director. But in general, the journey of a student in an event, in a competition is transparent to the outside world and is also discussed between students and between teachers. (Flute teacher)

It was initially difficult to discern whether these events aimed to transmit esteem from the teacher to the students or the other way around. When informed of the levels of anxiety teachers themselves harboured that their students would represent them adequately during such events, it seemed that musical events held in the concert hall were indicators of teachers' pedagogical worth in the Conservatoire. Collective experiences, such as concerts, examinations and auditions would promote a culture of 'transparency' (Nielsen, 2006) in the institution by uncovering the values of both the institutional setting and the professional music field. These could also be conceptualised as places where teachers' accountability to both their educational workplaces and to the profession that they serve is enacted.

Organisational structure

Strongly related to the institutions' physical layout and location, was their organisational structure. This made available to teachers in each workplace particular roles with regards to the emphasis placed on different practices, to the nature of curricula and auditioning procedures.

The music department and its teachers valued instrumental music teachers' artistic individuality⁵ and promoted a culture of performance excellence within the workplace:

They are top of their league. We know who (...) is, who (...) is. They are the best.
(Prior Head of Department, musicologist)

Teachers were involved in a variety of performing practices. While many of these were organised within the institution, their personal engagements beyond the institution were equally important:

The institution ... definitely expects us to play a lot. (Flute teacher)

In accordance with the programme of studies, the University expects of its teachers to be active artists, to be performers. (Viola teacher)

Throughout fieldwork, when teachers would perform solo or with teacher ensembles, concert programmes would describe teachers as 'internationally recognised' or having obtained 'excellent reviews'. Similarly, when presenting the teacher ensembles in the 2005–6 programme of studies distributed to first-year students and new staff, the same kinds of discourses were evident: teachers' artistic achievements of national and international status. Such documents would note the fact that teachers had studied abroad, often mentioning the teachers with whom they studied, and competitions they had participated and gained recognition in.

In the Conservatoire, performing as an 'institutional expectation' was not as strongly expressed. The Director noted how, 'the history of the Conservatoire includes both 'artists' and 'pedagogues'' and continued:

Teachers' pedagogic advancement is equally important to artistic advancement. This is why they invest in their students a little more. They see each child as being autonomous. Here we don't have 'we are finished now, see you next week'. It's not an appointment.
(Director, Piano teacher)

When questioning Conservatoire teachers about what they believed the institution's expectations were for their work, most expressed confusion with my use of the term 'conservatoire'. What had for me gained an independent existence – a kind of reification, through a growing collection of formal institutional documents that vividly described the long history and tradition of the institution – was for many teachers difficult to comprehend:

The Conservatoire is us, the teachers. It's a combination of teachers and students. The Conservatoire is its living substance ... It's those who teach, those who are taught – those to whom they address these efforts and their creative partnership. (Piano teacher)

... the student, due to the 1-1 nature of teaching, bonds with the person-teacher and not the Conservatoire's name. (Cello teacher)

The Conservatoire seemed to be a sum of its parts, with the key emphasis placed on its teachers, students and their ongoing relationship.

The findings revealed that institutions differed also in accordance with their aims and curricula, evident also in their distinct auditioning procedures. The music department voiced the aim of preparing students for the music profession, while the Conservatoire

voiced the aim of adequate preparation for the standards of examinations and concerts within the institution. These different forms of accountability to the standards and values of the music profession or the institution respectively created also different types of institutional regulation of the individual practice (Nerland, 2000). For example, teachers in the music department enjoyed some degree of autonomy when designing and developing courses for their instrumental specialisations and when individually auditioning students for the Performance strand. They felt accountable to preparing students adequately for the music profession upon graduation and were able to maintain this goal through the Department's 'studio' social organisation and the primacy of teachers' artistic individuality:

The institution does not set the standards; there is no guidance from the institution . . . As a consequence, the teacher is responsible if he sets a very easy programme that has nothing to do with the level that exists beyond the Department, in the 'music scene'. The responsibility is the teacher's for students that are not adequately prepared. He has the responsibility, the ethical responsibility essentially. (Cello teacher)

On its website, the Department stated the first type of employment upon graduation was 'musicians and conductors in symphony orchestras, choirs and ensembles'. Performance teachers drew on their performing experience in Greece and abroad in developing the curricula:

There was no one else then that had the international experience in order to design a programme comparable to those of European Universities. (Piano teacher)

In doing so, their performing skills were also utilised:

In order to have a well-justified view, theory must be combined with practice. What you hear you must be able to apply to see if it works. (Viola teacher)

The auditioning procedure revealed again the institutional value of emphasising teachers' high status as performing artists that held powerful positions within the institutional hierarchy. The privacy of auditioning procedures highlighted teachers' power and high degree of autonomy in individually selecting their own students. The process also attributed to participating teachers the status of 'expert': students entering the institution in late adolescence were required to break their bonds with their prior conservatoire education and place their trust in these performance teachers.

In the Conservatoire, teachers enjoyed the autonomy that the one-to-one lesson provided but strongly voiced their mutual accountability to their colleagues and the institution in view of the public auditioning and examination procedures. As one of a small number of Greek conservatoires that held auditions each year with designated teacher committees, there was much talk of closely monitoring students in order that their initial selection was justified:

Our ability to select our students is where it all begins. We always select children that stand out. This automatically provides teachers with the right kind of substance to work with. (Director, Piano teacher)

Yet, this initial 'advantage' did not last long:

Because their colleague will have ten more talents on his hands. The demands are very high. (Director, Piano teacher)

Here, the emphasis was not as much on preparing for the music profession but rather on upholding the standards and demands within the institution. One teacher revealed that selecting a student during auditions came with a major risk factor – that the student may or may not rise to the Conservatoire's standards:

During auditions, I played some notes and made him sing and he did this straight away and I would say to others 'why not, he has a good ear; he'll make it'. We had a little disagreement . . . I have this anxiety because the first or second time he played during exams he played a little dull. In the next exams he played a little better . . . I am anxious about him when he plays because when it's a choice that you persist upon, you want it to go well. Because he tries, and I want him to do well. (Horn teacher)

The Conservatoire, as an established institution, provided teachers with less autonomy in determining curricula in their instrumental disciplines. Yet when the history and tradition of the Conservatoire as a frame of reference became too limiting for teachers, they utilised their teaching experience and knowledge of institutional expectations in organising the programme of studies:

There is a set program but it's quite old. From our teaching experience we decided upon what each class should be playing. (Clarinet teacher)

From tradition you will gain what you believe should be continued. But in some other issues there can be some form of change. (Viola teacher)

Participating teachers were thus constrained to an extent by the cultural scripts their workplaces provided (i.e. professional/institutional values, Greek instrumental training discourse). Nonetheless, they were able to put their 'own spin' on things (Watson, 2006, p. 510).

Teachers' biographies and career paths

Like Holstein & Gubrium (2000, p. 169), I subscribe to the view that biographical particulars in the current study were not simply 'portraits' of teachers' career paths but were also used by teachers to strengthen present claims of professional identity and practice. In each workplace, teachers put together aspects of their past experiences in strengthening present claims of professional identity and practice.

In the *Music Department*, teachers described their career paths mostly by projecting their performing accomplishments. Concert programmes portrayed in order of importance the location of teachers' performance studies; name(s) of their own teachers; awards attained; ensembles/orchestras they participated in; and academic positions held within the institution. Equally, during interviews, teachers constructed their biographies in ways that emphasised their artistic individuality and close affiliation with the music profession. Awards in competitions, recordings and distinctions in studies were selectively put

forward to portray a performing persona (Davidson, 2002). Teachers' descriptions of their career paths or career stories – elsewhere argued to be an indication of teachers' self-image (Kelchtermans, 1993) – held similar early beginnings in musical performance with instrumental teaching being taken on during postgraduate study or in parallel to performance work.

Importantly, teachers' talk of their expertise occurred in socioculturally significant contexts (Hatano & Oura, 2003). As they spoke about their experiences, they drew on a variety of cultural images (Bernard, 2004), such as the processes involved in being an internationally recognised soloist (i.e. a nomadic lifestyle and constant travelling). Another image teachers in the music department drew on was the cultural resource of Greek conservatoire education in providing a shared framework through which to bring me into their understanding of the high standards of instrumental music training in their workplace. Teachers would talk about adjusting to the higher standards of foreign institutions during their transition from the Greek conservatoire (see also Burt & Mills, 2006). They sketched a portrait of the profession of musical performance as requiring effort, commitment and consistency in order to succeed. Drawing on Davidson's (2002) description of a 'performer' persona, such stories could be read as claims of having had an 'interesting' or 'exciting life' and therefore as attempts to go beyond the perceived limitations of the teacher identity (MacLure, 2001).

In the Conservatoire teachers' biographies and enacting of professional identities through documentary evidence and individual interviews was more varied. Teachers described their professional identities as musicians, performers *and* teachers. Yet an emphasis on their long histories of participation in the institution (Wenger, 1998) – as Conservatoire students themselves and now teachers – brought to the foreground mostly their identities as teachers and pedagogues. Unlike the music department, very few Conservatoire teachers identified themselves only as being performing artists even though many had held or were still holding parallel permanent positions in orchestras or in ensembles. Not unlike work patterns in other countries (Bennett, 2008), teachers' career stories sketched a picture of the Greek professional music scene as requiring flexibility in taking up parallel engagements.

The ways in which Conservatoire teachers constructed their career paths were in line with the wider variety of identities evidenced in this workplace. For example, a piano teacher constructed his career path as being opposed to the norm, entering music performance at an older age. The long and difficult process into musical performing was utilised in his teaching practice by opposing examination-centred teaching strategies and emphasising the role of process rather than product: 'students gradually stand out because all this work we've been doing is not for passing exams, or winning competitions'. Nevertheless, he drew on the cultural resource of being accountable to his colleagues in preparing his students for examinations. He encouraged students to make a name for themselves by performing throughout their studies in the institution and linked this to his anxiety of being adequately represented during examinations.

Teachers in both institutions exercised varying degrees of *agency* in positioning themselves within this plurality of related resources as they assessed the circumstances in which they found themselves (Coldron & Smith, 1999, p. 714). When assembling their career paths, teachers drew on the cultural scripts provided by their institutions – values,

discourses, expectations and so forth – yet did so in ways that highlighted their professional identities in that particular point in time.

Conclusion and recommendations

This paper sought to understand how 'workplace landscapes' and teacher identities interrelate in the context of a Greek university music department and a music conservatoire. Each institution established for participating teachers particular 'workplace landscapes' – geographical locations, physical layout, curricula, sets of roles and responsibilities – that mediated their behaviour and informed their outlooks in each setting (Holland *et al.*, 1998, pp. 53, 56). We saw, for example, how the location (rural/urban) and the physical layout of each workplace encouraged or prohibited certain forms of practices and social interactions within the community of teachers and encouraged the creation of different cultures in each institution. Uptis (2007) presents a compelling argument for developing a sense of place in educational institutions and their curricula that will support those practical activities that lead to meaningful relationships between members of the community, and between people and their environment. For advanced music training institutions this remains a relatively hidden agenda; further research on the profound influence of the physical contexts in which performance teachers situate their work is essential if such institutions are to realise their full potential.

At the level of the individual teacher, the findings revealed that in each 'workplace landscape' staff were provided with particular roles and responsibilities on account of institutions' histories, aims and curricula. At the same time, teachers' use of cultural resources was mediated also by their past and current professional experiences rooted beyond these workplaces, in other communities of practice (Nerland, 2000, p. 3). The continuous reassessment of such workplace norms, values and expectations at the levels of the individual teacher, the teacher community and the institution is necessary if we are to develop a clearer picture of what it means to be a performance teacher in advanced music training. For this to happen, advanced music training institutions need to provide teachers with the space, time and resources to explore and reflect on their professional practice as it develops both within and beyond their educational workplace and to establish a broader sense of professional identity. Yet, in neither institution was *reflection* voiced as the result of an organised attempt at the individual or institutional level to improve pedagogical practice.

Due to the specialist nature of one-to-one teaching, teachers have always engaged in reflection by observing, listening and questioning in order to improve the quality of the teaching and learning that takes place in their own classrooms. Yet, much of this activity has taken place on a private and implicit basis through the need for pedagogical action and the need to question, articulate and understand aspects of their own practices was more neglected, at least as a result of individual or collective initiative. Artists who work in formal educational sectors need opportunities to acquire the habits of reflecting not only, as they are bound to do, on their own art making, but also on their role as co-workers, mentors, teachers and facilitators (Hennessy, 2006, p. 191). This would require that reflection be organised not as an individual activity, but rather through the development of communities of arts practice (Burnard, 2006, p. 11), where teachers–students (Presland, 2005; Barrett & Gromko, 2007; Gaunt, 2008) and teachers–teachers (Purser, 2005) work in partnership and

forge collaborations in order to explore both identities and practices. Knowledge gained through such schemes could, through careful and sensitive dissemination, be made public through written records or specialised instrumental seminars of examples of 'good practice' within institutions. This kind of thinking would place *reflective practices* at the centre of what it means to be a performance teacher in Greece. It would reconcile performer and teacher identities providing performance teachers with more expanded stories of self.

Ultimately, it is this culture of reflection and collaboration that will develop and sustain a strong and positive sense of professional identity. This would both establish the expertise of performance teachers, differentiating them from other occupational groups, and raise the status of performance teachers and teaching in contemporary Greek society.

Acknowledgements

The author would like to thank Rosie Burt-Perkins for her helpful comments on an earlier version of this paper. The author greatly appreciates the contribution to this study of the performance teachers and the management in participating institutions.

Notes

- 1 See also Kushner (2000), Nielsen (1999) and Kingsbury (1988) that focus on the prevailing cultures and values in advanced music training from students' point of view.
- 2 Source: Greek Ministry of Culture. Report of the National Statistical Organisation (2002).
- 3 At the time of writing this article, all 'recognised' HE institutions in Greece are state-governed. Post-secondary institutions in the private sector (often known as colleges) are not as yet recognised as providing equivalent degrees. There is no instrumental tuition currently offered as a degree specialisation in the post-secondary private sector.
- 4 The programme for both qualifications can include both classical Western and contemporary Greek composers. The qualifications differ in the level of difficulty and length of the programme. For some conservatoires, the requirements for the Diploma may involve a 1.5 hour public performance from memory.
- 5 In this paper, by 'artistic individuality' is meant instrumental music teachers' strong links with the musical performing profession as evidenced through their expert knowledge and autonomy (Kingsbury, 1988).

References

- BANNISTER, R. (1992) 'Difficult but sensitive: Participant observation research in music education', *British Journal of Music Education*, **9** (2), 131–142.
- BARRETT, M. S. & GROMKO, J. E. (2007) 'Reflection and collaborative dialogue', *Psychology of Music*, **35** (2), 213–230.
- BEIJAARD, D., MEIJER, P. C. & VERLOOP, N. (2004) 'Reconsidering research on teachers' professional identity', *Teaching and Teacher Education*, **20** (2), 107–128.
- BENNETT, D. (2008) *Understanding the Classical Music Profession: The Past, the Present and Strategies for the Future*. Aldershot: Ashgate.
- BENNETT, D., WRIGHT, D. & BLOM, D. (2009) 'Artist academics: Performing the Australian research agenda', *International Journal of Education and the Arts*, **10**, 17. Retrieved August 25 2009 from <http://www.ijea.org/v10n17/>.

- BERGER, P. L. & LUCKMANN, T. (1966) *The Social Construction of Reality: A Treatise in the Sociology of Knowledge*. London: Penguin.
- BERNARD, R. (2004) 'Striking a chord: Elementary music teachers' expressions of their identities as musician-teachers', Unpublished PhD Thesis. Harvard Graduate School of Education, Cambridge, MA.
- BURNARD, P. (2006) 'Rethinking the imperatives for reflective practices in arts education', in P. Burnard & S. Hennessy (Eds), *Reflective Practices in Arts Education* (pp. 3–12). Dordrecht: Springer.
- BURR, V. (1995) *An Introduction to Social Constructionism*. London: Routledge.
- BURT, R. & MILLS, J. (2006) 'Taking the plunge: The hopes and fears of students as they begin music college', *British Journal of Music Education*, **23** (1), 51–73.
- BURT-PERKINS, R. (2009) 'Reassembling the parts: Investigating the "learning culture" of a UK conservatoire', paper to the *2nd Reflective Conservatoire Conference: Building Connections*. 28 February–3 March, Guildhall School of Music and Drama, London.
- CERULO, K. A. (1997) 'Identity construction: New issues, new directions', *Annual Review of Sociology*, **23**, 385–409.
- COLDRON, J. & SMITH, R. (1999) 'Active location in teachers' construction of their professional identities', *Journal of Curriculum Studies*, **31** (6), 711–726.
- CONNELLY, F. M. & CLANDININ, D. J. (Eds) (1999) *Shaping a Professional Identity: Stories of Educational Practice*. New York: Teachers College Press.
- COOPER, K. & OLSON, M. (1996) 'The multiple 'I's' of teacher identity', in M. Kompfe, D. Dworet & R. Boak (Eds), *Changing Research and Practice* (pp. 78–89). London: Falmer Press.
- COTTRELL, S. (2004) *Professional Music-Making in London: Ethnography and Experience*. Aldershot: Ashgate.
- COX, G. (1999) 'Secondary school music teachers talking', *Music Education Research*, **1** (1), 37–46.
- DAVIDSON, J. W. (2002) 'The solo performer's identity', in R. A. R. MacDonald, D. J. Hargreaves & D. Miell (Eds), *Musical Identities* (pp. 97–113). Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- DAVIES, B. & HARRÉ, R. (1990) 'Positioning: The discursive production of selves', *Journal for the Theory of Social Behaviour*, **20** (1), 43–63.
- FROELICH, H. (2002) 'Thoughts on schools of music and colleges of education as places of "rites and rituals": Consequences for research on practicing', in I. M. Hanken, S. G. Nielsen & M. Nerland (Eds), *Research In and For Higher Music Education. Festschrift for Harald Jørgensen* (pp. 167–186). Norway: NMH-Publikasjoner.
- FROELICH, H. (2007) *Sociology for Music Teachers: Perspectives for Practice*. Upper Saddle River: Pearson Prentice Hall.
- GAUNT, H. (2008) 'One-to-one tuition in a conservatoire: The perceptions of instrumental and vocal teachers', *Psychology of Music*, **36** (2), 215–245.
- GIPSON, R. C. (1978) 'An observational analysis of wind instrument private lessons', *Dissertation Abstracts International*, **39**, 2118A.
- HAMMERSLEY, M. & ATKINSON, P. (1995) *Ethnography: Principles in Practice*. Second Edition. London: Routledge.
- HARWOOD, E. (2007) 'Artists in the academy: Curriculum and instruction', in L. Bresler (Ed), *International Handbook of Research in Arts Education* (pp. 313–330). New York: Springer.
- HATANO, G. & OURA, Y. (2003) 'Commentary: Reconceptualizing school learning using insight from expertise research', *Educational Researcher*, **32** (8), 26–29.
- HENNESSY, S. (2006) 'The conditions and consequences of reflective practices in arts education', in P. Burnard & S. Hennessy (Eds), *Reflective Practices in Arts Education* (pp. 45–54). Dordrecht: Springer.
- HEPLER, L. E. (1986) 'The measurement of teacher-student interaction in private music lessons and its relation to teacher field dependence/ field independence', *Dissertation Abstracts International*, **47**, 2939A.

- HOLLAND, D., LACHICOTTE, W. JR., SKINNER, D. & CAIN, C. (1998) *Identity and Agency in Cultural Worlds*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- HOLSTEIN, J. A. & GUBRIUM, J. F. (2000) *The Self We Live By. Narrative Identity in a Postmodern World*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- HSIEH, H. & SHANNON, S. E. (2005) 'Three approaches to qualitative content analysis', *Qualitative Health Research*, **15** (9), 1277–1288.
- JØRGENSEN, H. (2000) 'Student learning in higher instrumental education: Who is responsible?' *British Journal of Music Education*, **17** (1), 67–77.
- KELCHTERMANS, G. (1993) 'Getting the story, understanding the lives: From career stories to teachers' professional development', *Teaching & Teacher Education*, **9** (5–6), 443–456.
- KINGSBURY, H. (1988) *Music, Talent, and Performance: A Conservatory Cultural System*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press.
- KUSHNER, S. (2000) *Personalizing Evaluation*. London: Sage.
- KVALE, S. (1996) *Interviews*. London: Sage.
- MACLURE, M. (2001) 'Arguing for your self: Identity as an organizing principle in teachers' jobs and lives', in J. Soler, A. Craft & H. Burgess (Eds), *Teacher Development: Exploring Our Own Practice* (pp. 167–180). London: Paul Chapman in association with the Open University.
- MILES, M. B. & HUBERMAN, A. M. (1994) *Qualitative Data Analysis: An Expanded Sourcebook*. Second Edition. London: Sage.
- MILLS, J. (2004a) 'Working in music: The conservatoire professor', *British Journal of Music Education*, **21** (2), 179–198.
- MILLS, J. (2004b) 'Working in music: Becoming a performer-teacher', *Music Education Research*, **6** (3), 245–261.
- NERLAND, M. (2000) 'Apprenticeship, cultural practices and research on instrumental teaching in higher music education: A theoretical perspective', *Proceedings of the ICMPC*. Oslo, Norway.
- NERLAND, M. (2006) 'Instrumental teaching as discursive practice: The construction of one-to-one teaching at an Academy of Music', paper to the *1st Reflective Conservatoire Conference*. 16–18 February, Guildhall School of Music and Drama, London.
- NERLAND, M. (2007) 'One-to-one teaching as cultural practice: Two case studies from an academy of music'. *Music Education Research*, **9** (3), 399–416.
- NERLAND, M. & HANKEN, I. M. (2002) 'Academies of music as arenas for education: Some reflections on the institutional construction of teacher-student relationships', in I. M. Hanken, S. G. Nielsen & M. Nerland (Eds), *Research In and For Higher Music Education. Festschrift for Harald Jørgensen* (pp. 167–186). Norway: NMH-Publikasjoner.
- NIELSEN, K. N. (1999) *Musical Apprenticeship: Learning at the Academy of Music as Socially Situated*, **24** (2). Psykologisk Skriftserie: Aarhus Universitet.
- NIELSEN, K. N. (2006) 'Apprenticeship at the academy of music', *International Journal of Education and the Arts*. Retrieved 17 June 2007 from <http://ijea.org.v7n4/>.
- PAUL, S. J. & BALLANTINE, J. H. (2002) 'The sociology of education and connections to music education research', in R. Colwell & C. Richardson (Eds), *The New Handbook of Research on Music Teaching and Learning* (pp. 566–583). New York: Oxford University Press.
- PERSSON, R. (1996) 'Brilliant performers as teachers: A case study of commonsense teaching in a conservatoire setting', *International Journal of Music Education*, **28** (1), 25–36.
- PORTER, K. (1998) 'Management in the conservatoire of the future: Administering or leading?', *Studies in Higher Education*, **23** (1), 7–16.
- PRESLAND, C. (2005) 'Conservatoire student and instrumental professor: The student perspective on a complex relationship', *British Journal of Music Education*, **22** (3), 237–248.
- PURSER, D. (2005) 'Performers as teachers: Exploring the teaching approaches of instrumental teachers in conservatoires', *British Journal of Music Education*, **22** (3), 287–298.

- REYNOLDS, C. (1996) 'Cultural scripts for teachers: Identities and their relation to workplace landscapes' in M. Kompf, W. R. Bond, D. Dworet & R. T. Boak (Eds), *Changing Research and Practice: Teachers' Professionalism, Identities and Knowledge* (pp. 69–77). London: Falmer Press.
- ROSENTHAL, R. K. (1984) 'The relative effects of guided model, model only, guide only and practice only treatments on the accuracy of advanced instrumentalists' musical performance', *Journal of Research in Music Education*, **32** (4), 265–273.
- ROSTVALL, A-L. & WEST, T. (2003) 'Analysis of interaction and learning in instrumental teaching', *Music Education Research*, **5** (3), 213–226.
- SAMIER, E. A. (2006) 'The aesthetics of charisma: Architectural, theatrical, and literary dimensions', in E. A. Samier & R. J. Bates with A. Stanley (Eds), *Aesthetic Dimensions of Educational Administration and Leadership* (pp. 161–174). Abingdon, Oxon: Routledge.
- STAKE, R. E. (1995) *The Art of Case Study Research*. Thousand Oaks: Sage.
- STAKE, R. E. (2006) *Multiple Case Study Analysis*. New York: Guilford Press.
- STENHOUSE, L. (1988) 'Case study methods', in J. P. Keeves (Ed), *Educational Research, Methodology and Measurement: An International Handbook* (pp. 49–53). Oxford: Pergamon.
- TRIANTAFYLAKI, A. (2010) 'Performance teachers' identity and professional knowledge in advanced music teaching', *Music Education Research*, **12** (1), 71–88.
- TUCKER, J. (1996) 'From performer to school music teacher: A problem of identity', in M. Kompf, W. R. Bond, D. Dworet & R. T. Boak (Eds), *Changing Research and Practice: Teachers' Professionalism, Identities and Knowledge* (pp. 120–130). London: Falmer Press.
- UPITIS, R. (2007) 'Four strong schools: Developing a sense of place through school architecture', *International Journal of Education and the Arts*, **8** (Interlude 1). Retrieved 12 June 2007 from <http://www.ijea.org/v8i1/>.
- WARD, V. (2004) 'The performance teacher as music analyst: A case study', *International Journal of Music Education*, **22** (3), 253–270.
- WATSON, C. (2006) 'Narratives of practice and the construction of identity in teaching', *Teachers and Teaching*, **12** (5), 509–526.
- WENGER, E. (1998) *Communities of Practice: Learning, Meaning and Identity*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- WOLCOTT, H. F. (1999) *Ethnography, a Way of Seeing*. Walnut Creek: AltaMira Press.
- WOODS, P. (1983) *Sociology and the School: An Interactionist Viewpoint*. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul.
- YIN, R. K. (2003) *Case Study Research: Design and Methods*. Third Edition. Thousand Oaks: Sage.
- YOUNG, V., BURWELL, K. & PICKUP, Y. (2003) 'Areas of study and teaching strategies in instrumental teaching: a case study', *Music Education Research*, **5** (2), 139–55.