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CULTURAL MEMORY AND THE HERITAGISATION OF A MUSIC CONSUMPTION COMMUNITY

INTRODUCTION

When one thinks of popular music heritage, one thinks, perhaps, of celebrities being inducted into the Rock & Roll Hall of Fame, of The Cavern in Liverpool, museum exhibitions about popular music icons, such as David Bowie or Kylie Minogue, or even Joe Coreé's burning of £5m worth of punk heritage on the basis that "punk was never meant to be nostalgic" (BBC, 2016). Although there are many recent examples of this kind of music heritage, research into how and why music consumption communities remember their heritage is scarce. And yet it is important that scholars should focus attention on this. It has to do, after all, with the sustainability and continuity of a community over the passage of time. Whilst consumption communities of various forms have been of significant interest to consumer researchers and marketers (e.g. Cova and Cova 2002; Schouten and McAlexander 1995; Muňiz and O'Guinn 2001), much of the literature has focused on defining the characteristics of the different types of communities and the dyadic relationship between the group and the product/brand (Thomas, Price and Schau 2012). There has been less research on specific issues such as how communities are sustained through the construction of their history and heritage.

In this paper, we aim to contribute insights into consumption communities' past by answering the research question: how do musical communities remember their past? Our inquiry sits within a tradition of research that seeks to answer the question: "how do societies remember?" (e.g. Connerton, 1991). We take a broadly social and cultural perspective to answering this question. Whereas previous work on cultural memory has tended to focus at the level of the state, the nation, or the large organisation, in this case, we focus on a smaller group with a specific, musical, offer. The heritage literature, to the extent that it has focused on music, has focused more on music celebrities and the mainstream, whereas this paper focuses on an independent band. Finally, the collective consumption literature has largely ignored social and cultural memory. This paper seeks to begin to close all of these gaps by designing an inquiry which generates empirical data to develop an understanding of this nexus of issues. We draw upon insights from theories of memory in culture, heritage and consumption communities to frame an exploration of the phenomenon.

Our empirical inquiry focuses on how independent English rock band New Model Army (henceforth "NMA") and its fans set up a free-of-charge exhibition of its art and artefacts in collaboration with the local museum service in the metropolitan county of West Yorkshire, England. The event was entitled *One Family – One Tribe: The Art & Artefacts of New Model Army.* This was a collection of the band's art and artefacts that reflected 25 years of the band's visual culture, including original cover artwork, lyrics notebooks, stage clothes, instruments, merchandise, photographs, audience souvenirs and press-cuttings. We make use of data from interviews, photographs, video, documents, and observations to document this case.

THEORETICAL FOUNDATIONS

The inquiry is based on three strands of theory, namely, memory in culture, heritage, and consumption communities, each of which is reviewed in the following sections.

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Memory in Culture

The constructs that people use individually and collectively to discuss their pasts form part of a socially agreed way of speaking about it. Group memory is always already social because it involves social interaction in discussions about the past. We are not talking here about memory as a function, a storage system, or an abstract idea, but as a dynamic, social, process of remembering Halbwachs, 1980; Assman and Czaplicka, 1995; Erll, 2016; Olick, Vinitzky-Seroussi, and Levy (ed.) 2011). Memory is always already cultural - for a variety of reasons, but particularly because it is mediated and makes use of symbols in communication, and because the act of remembering is culturally as well as socially situated. The domain of social remembering has tended to be at the level of the state, or nation or organisation (Erll, 2016). Finally, memory is often supported by material objects. In this particular case, the way in which the band chose to remember itself was by means of an institutionalised ritual, that of the museum exhibition, which involved the display of its own material art and artefacts.

Memory studies furnish us with a range of constructs and distinctions which are important to this inquiry. Erll (2016) sought to help lay the groundwork for a memory studies which is cultural and social. This perspective traces its roots to the work of Maurice Halbwachs, the French sociologist. Erll frames cultural memory as "the interplay of present and past in social contexts" (2008: 2). In a subsequent formulation, she develops this point, saying that memory is "the sum total of all the processes (biological, medial, social) which are involved in the interplay of past and present within socio-cultural contexts" (2016:101). She asserts that cultural memory studies is "fundamentally a multi-disciplinary project" (Erll and Nünning, 2008) and that the notion of culture in question here is related to (a) "the German tradition of the study of cultures" [Kulturwissenschaft] where culture is social, material and mental, and to (b) anthropology, referring to Geertz (1973), where culture is defined as "a community's specific way of life, led within its self-spun webs of meaning". Olick et al. (2011) point to a crucial difference within memory studies, namely the individual (cognitive) and the collective (social, medial). All individual remembering is social, in so far as it is done in social contexts, and the language that is used to conceive of, or to construct, memories is socially formed and learned. The collective level of memory has to do with the "media, institutions and practices by which social groups construct a shared past" (Erll and Nűnning 2008). According to Erll (2016:11), "the development of a modern understanding of culture as a shared sign system with a social, a material and a mental dimension …. and the formation of theories of collective memory were in fact closely related."

Social remembering is conceived as a dynamic process in which individuals who are members of a group actualise a version - or versions - of the past. Erll (2008) offers the idea that "the past is not given, but must instead continually be re-constructed and re-presented" (p. 7). Remembering is, therefore, theorised for the purposes of this paper as a dynamic performance and accomplishment. There are potentially different modes of remembering the same event. We take a museum exhibition to be a particular, institutionally framed, mode of remembering. All memory is mediated orally/aurally as well as in scripts. Cultural meaning is established and maintained in literate cultures through normative and formative texts: 'normative texts codify the norms of social behaviour' and "formative texts formulate the self-image of the group and the knowledge that secures their identity" (Assman, 2006:104, cited in Erll, 2016:34).

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Studies of music in relation to the past include, for example, Van Dijck (2006) who shows that "we need public spaces to share narratives and to create a common musical heritage"; DeNora (1999) constructs "music as a device for on-going identity work and for spinning a biographical thread of self-remembrance", and Van der Hoeven (2014) reports on individual memories of musical events. Studies of memory in culture have dealt with mourning (Papailias, 2016), the family (Erll, 2011), business history (Hansen, 2012), mnemonic practices (Olick and Robins, 1998), and organisational memory (Schatzki, 2006; Rowlinson et al., 2010; Üsdiken, Kipping, and Engwall 2011; Anteby and Molnar, 2012). However, there is a clear gap within the research in cultural memory studies about collective remembering of music. This study remedies this gap by focusing specially on a music consumption community which remembers itself through an exhibition.

Heritage

Curatorship is arguably the big new job of our times: it is the task of re-evaluating, filtering, digesting and connecting together. In an age saturated with new artefacts and information, it is perhaps the curator, the connection maker, who is the new storyteller, the meta-author.
Brian Eno (1991)

In this section, we explore the notion of heritage, and, because the focal exhibition took place within museum settings, we situate heritage in relation to current thinking in museology. Heritage is what we inherit at birth; it is the evidence of the past with which to make sense of the present, and it may determine what we hand on to future generations. It makes us who we are, gives us our community identity, and can shape our individual sense of well-being and belonging. Heritage is how history is mediated through the material evidence of our shared past and the intangibles of our community value systems, customs and beliefs. Museums tend to either highlight the material culture of the 'other' as objects of curiosity, or else elevate the status of objects into something worthy of display through its relationship with the higher ideals of the museum as the location of high cultural values (Rodner and Thomson 2012; see also Bennett and Janssen, 2016).

When confronted by heritage discourse and practice, we need to consider how heritage, the past, is dynamically constructed and interpreted by the community (see e.g. Belk 1988, Holt 2002). The construction of heritage is conceptualised here as a social activity, where heritage practices can usefully be understood as a form of social remembering. Discursive psychologists interested in the analysis of social rememberings stress that versions of past events are socially occasioned phenomena (Edwards and Potter, 1992), i.e. they occur in the context of communicative action and rhetoric and can play a key role, for example, in '... formulating a sense of identity, of one's place in the family and the wider world' (Edwards, Potter and Middleton, 1992: 444). The analysis of discourse and texts in this area examines the ways in which reports or discussions of past events (social rememberings) are constructed to perform actions (Edwards and Potter, 1992; Edwards, Potter and Middleton, 1992; Middleton and Edwards, 1990), focussing on the detailed construction of meaning and considering what the practical consequences of constructing the band's past (in this case) in a particular way might be, in terms of formulating the community's past. In this regard, following cultural memory theory, we regard cultural meaning – and the meaning of the past - as being established and maintained through both normative and formative texts (Erll, 2016).

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A key concept in recent years, often termed the New Museology, has been the need for museums to change, to be more flexible and indeed visibly more inclusive, in the objects and stories they display, the communities they work with, and indeed how they position social identities (Hutchison, 2013:145). This museological shift is dependent on the changing role of the curator, moving from custodian or guardian (and decision taker) to a more flexible approach to collaborative working, where there is potential at least for community representatives to determine not just which stories are told, but how (Golding and Modest 2013:20; Le Guern, 2014).

The quotation from Brian Eno above about curatorship being the "big new job of our times" signals that already more than twenty-five years before the time of writing the term curator could be appropriated and applied to other contexts, implying that all can be curators of their own lives outside of the museum. This is important to our study because, as is discussed fully below, the NMA exhibition was heavily influenced by fans and the band working together to curate the exhibition, thus raising the issue of a community's agency in the remembering of its past.

Whilst this approach to heritage is helpful, it has not to our knowledge been applied, alongside cultural memory theory, to a consumption community, which is the third and final body of literature to which we now turn.

Consumption Communities

Despite modernist critiques of the role of consumer society in disrupting long-established social structures, such as traditional religious and neighborhood communities, the human need to belong endures and manifests itself in the marketplace (O'Guinn and Muňiz, 2005). First proposed by Boorstin (1973), consumption communities are comprised of people who share common interests and concerns, and a sense of well-being, that comes from a communality of consumption behavior. Various types of consumption communities through which consumers forge communal ties have since been identified and studied, from subcultures of consumption (Schouten and McAlexander 1995), to consumer tribes (Cova and Cova 2002; Cova, Kozinets and Shankar 2007) and brand communities (Muňiz and O'Guinn 2001). As part of Arnould and Thompson's (2005: 873) marketplace cultures stream within consumer culture theory, this body of research "addresses the ways in which consumers forge feelings of social solidarity and create distinctive, fragmentary, self-selected, and sometimes transient cultural worlds through the pursuit of common consumption interests".

Consumers group together in various ways around different kinds of products and brands. Music, as a rich, complex and ubiquitous symbolic product, (Bradshaw and Shankar 2008; Larsen, Lawson and Todd 2010) is also a 'work space' for social work to be done (DeNora 1986; 2011). Unsurprisingly, then, music has featured in discussions of social formations and consumption. Foundational work on subcultures highlighted the role of music (alongside fashion) in subcultural style, which, Hebdige (1979) argues, functions as a form of protest against hegemonic power structures. Due to a decline in class culture (Bennett 1999) and a huge proliferation and diffusion of types of music, subcultures are no longer as demarcated by music as they once were. Yet, consumption communities continue to form around music, as highlighted by Goulding, Shankar and Canniford's (2013) study of clubbing tribes.

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Much of the extant literature seeks to define and characterise different kinds of consumption communities. However, the distinctions between them remain unclear, as there has been little consideration of how the different types of communities relate to each other (Canniford 2011). Much of the work on consumption communities owes a debt to Cova (1997: 307), who argues that the link is more important than the thing: “The goods and services which are valued are mainly those which, through their linking value, permit and support social interaction of the communal type”. Groups are held together by shared emotions, styles of life, moral beliefs, and consumption practices (Cova 1997) and exist to serve the needs of members for building relationships and engaging their interests (Fournier & Lee 2009).

In this vein, we are less interested here in defining what kind of consumption community NMA’s ‘family’ is in theory, but rather we are concerned with the role of history, heritage, and memory in creating a sense of collective belonging. Thomas, Price and Schau (2012), drawing on Arnould and Price (1993) and Turner (1969), define collective belonging as the degree to which a community embraces, values, and commits to solidarity and togetherness (communitas) as a part of its collective identity. A community will engage in unifying practices to enhance individuals’ sense of belonging and to preserve community continuity. Thomas et al. (2013) show that communities can preserve continuity even when heterogeneity, through a diversity of actors, operates as a destabilizing force.

Rock bands and their fans, much like members of other marketplace cultures (e.g. Thornton 1996, Kozinets 2001, Ulusoy 2016) are of course engaged in a continual process of negotiating their heritage. Indeed the heritage of a rock band, in the widest sense, includes all of the meanings which it has ever negotiated with its fans—musical, visual, material and experiential. The production and consumption of music are articulated (linked) by cultural texts of different kinds performed and consumed by bands, their fans and by third parties. They include musical sounds, lyrics, artwork, merchandise, publicity photographs, live performances, DVDs, and so on. The meanings of these texts are negotiated between bands and fans, and include the hedonic, sacred, secular, utilitarian, economic, political and social resonances of the band’s work. While the fans are free to make their own response to the texts, their interpretation is shaped or constrained by the way in which these texts are encoded by the band; at the same time, the fan-base of any particular band constitutes an interpretive community, an audience, whose sense-making, imagination, emotional reaction and creativity may to some extent, in its turn, shape and constrain or enable the band’s production. Thus both musical heritage and the music itself are socially constructed (Bowman 1998).

This notwithstanding, research into how and why music consumption communities remember their past is scarce - perhaps because the field of music has for so long been associated with youth, who are in the process of becoming rather than remembering. In this paper, we aim to contribute to remedying that lack by documenting how a consumption community which has been formed around popular music remembers its past. We will show how, in mounting the exhibition *One Family – One Tribe: The Art & Artefacts of New Model Army*, NMA is engaging in practices outside the customary writing/recording/touring/performing cycle of a rock band. However, this move is instrumental in providing a forum for remembering and for re-membering (becoming members again), with the potential to work as a powerful setting for the development and maintenance of the NMA community of memory. It provides opportunities for reflection, elaboration and a space where feelings of belonging and group allegiance are activated (cf.

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Edwards, Potter and Middleton, 1992) and where a sense of social identity and band loyalty may be heightened and experienced - that intrinsic connection that members of a social grouping feel towards each other in terms of shared attitudes, perceived similarity and a shared knowing of belonging and a collective sense of difference from those not in the community (Maffesoli 1996, Cova 1997, Muňiz and O'Guinn 2001).

Our starting research question is: how do musical communities remember their past? We also consider the implications a move to heritage has for the identity, membership, and continuity of a music consumption community.

METHODOLOGY

This study of the NMA touring exhibition is framed by a much wider ethnographic inquiry into the relationship between the band and its fans, which took place over several years (see for detail O'Reilly and Doherty, 2006, 2007; Doherty and O'Reilly, 2010) and informs the interpretation of the exhibition data. Within the marketing and consumer literature, a number of scholars have adopted ethnographic approaches to inquiry. Elliot and Jankel-Elliott (2003) apply the principles of ethnography to what they characterise as 'strategic consumer research.' They see ethnography as 'the study of behaviour in natural settings', requiring an understanding of how the people being studied understand the world, immersion in the field, and participation in the cultural life being studied. Arnould and Price (2006), citing Coupland (2005), argue for an understanding of what they call 'meso-level ethnography' as a means of understanding how customers 'use resources provided by firms in the culturally, socially situated practices of their everyday lives".

The wider inquiry included interviews with the band's frontman, Justin Sullivan, with Joolz Denby, the co-curator of the exhibition, and with NMA fans and other associates. It also involved attendance at, and observation of, the band's live performances, lengthy observation on the band's online fan forum, continual listening to the music, analysis of the lyrics, artwork, and videos, including Reid's (2015) documentary on the band, ancillary attendance at poetry events and a spoken word residency run by Joolz, document analysis, the production of a full-length video of a NMA concert performance, and informal conversations with members of the community. For the museum exhibition part of the inquiry, we interviewed the curator, visited the exhibition in a number of locations (Otley, Bradford, Salford), and captured video footage of the exhibits. The analytical approach of the study was interpretive, involving discursive analysis of the texts (Edwards and Potter 1992; Edwards, Potter and Middleton 1992), both as standalone texts, as well as in relationship to one another, and the context in which they were produced and consumed.

From the interview and visits, it emerged that the idea for the exhibition came from Joolz Denby, who has been a key band associate and responsible for the album cover artwork for the band since the early 1980s, and is an accomplished spoken word artist and writer in her own right. A NMA fan who worked closely with Joolz in developing the event was the audience development manager for a museum body. Together, they planned for the Otley preview event and secured the public funding with the aid of solicited fan testimonials. Artefacts and artwork which were the property of the band were given professional curatorial treatment and put on display. Initially, the exhibition was previewed in the Old Courthouse in the small town of Otley, a community arts centre which generally hosts arts events appealing to a different kind of audience. The preview was visited by a

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museum service team and, on the basis of this appraisal, the event was permitted to move to the Cartwright Hall in Bradford, West Yorkshire, where exhibition space is usually reserved for major artists - Anish Kapoor had been a recent exhibitor. There, it received approximately 10,000 visits. Under a municipal twinning arrangement between Bradford and Hamm, Germany, it was next shown at the Hamm Maximilian Park (6,000 visitors), and later at Salford Museum & Art Gallery, near Manchester, England.

In the two rooms occupied at the Bradford exhibition, objects exhibited by the band included lyrics notes and books, paintings, portraits, photographs, a photo-collage, the original painted leather jacket from the band's *Ghost of Cain* album cover, posters, CD and album cover artwork, musical instruments, costumes used in the earlier part of the band's performing career, laminated backstage passes, stage decorations/banners, five costumed mannequins, clogs, a hat worn by Justin Sullivan in 1980s videos, press cuttings, a 'Family Scrapbook' of comments from fans, artwork produced by a fan in response to the band music. There were, finally, several objects pointing to death (skulls, skeletons) and spirituality (an altar, a serpent on a cross, Tarot cards, a framed painting and statuette of the Blessed Virgin Mary). At the Otley exhibition, there were computers available so that fans could interact online (on the NMA Noticeboard) with those fans who could not make a visit. There was also a video loop which showed NMA in concert. The band themselves, apart from some members' performances on each of the opening nights, were of course not physically present at the exhibition. Instead, there were the five mannequins dressed in early-NMA stage clothing. In addition to these objects, there were some key exhibits on which our analysis focuses, namely: a reproduction merchandise booth, an altar, a Family Scrapbook containing fan testimonials solicited by the curators, and two important text-exhibits entitled 'New Model Army Artwork' (Denby 1997) and 'Thoughts on the NMA Family' (Denby, 2004). The continuous presence of these last two documents on the band's web-site testifies to their importance to the framing of the band's creative aesthetic and community ethos respectively.

FINDINGS

We report the findings of our analysis in three main emergent themes: Family; Imagination, Religion, and Magic; and Traces of the Past. The theme of Family emerges from the data as a field metaphor in continuous use within the community to describe itself. It is, therefore, vital to an understanding of the community's idea of itself, both present and past. Imagination, Religion and Magic also emerges as a theme which focuses on the band's aesthetic as well as its imagined identity. Finally, the theme of Traces of the Past addresses how, both within the museum exhibition as well as within the wider study, the past is signified in a wide variety of texts.

Family

Under the heading of Family, we consider the emic framing of the music consumption community using the kinship metaphor of Family and consider *Thoughts on the NMA Family* (Denby, 2004) and the Family Scrapbook, as a repository of collected fan memories and testimonials.

On the walls of the museum, and providing a framework of interpretation for the other exhibits, was a series of panels reproducing the text of Joolz's *Thoughts on the NMA Family*. This is a text through which a highly respected, ab initio, band associate can be seen to be actively working to

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'provide members with the meaning, connection, inspiration, aspiration even mystery and shared sense of purpose that is related to their shared consumption identities' (Kozinets 1999: 261). The piece is in part a fierce polemic, partly a retrospective essay and partly a manifesto, communicating core band values. The emergence of the Family is presented in this text as a spontaneous, organic reaction to the sustained 'persecution of a creative force' (by the mainstream music media) and, by implication, the ideas, beliefs, and values of their fans. In response, the fans are constructed as strong-minded and independent in their refusal to be influenced by negative evaluations of NMA and the dismissal of the band. They are characterized as possessing a strong psychological and emotional connection with the band that transcends any attempt to sabotage the NMA project and that engenders a desire to defend and protect it as if it were a family member. The band-fan relationship is constructed as one of 'mutual pride and respect', and a 'strong personal bond' which endures. The Family itself is constructed in affective terms connected directly to the fans' response to NMA's music:

more than anything else, it's a feeling; some would say, an instinctive emotional response to the intensely emotional music created by the band.

The band is constructed as 'a creative force that intelligently addressed and examined the ideas and beliefs [the fans] held dear', 'never [having] manipulated or lied to the fans for financial gain'. It is imagined as a politically engaged change agent willing to pitch in and fight for its beliefs. The band spoke the truth, and 'paid a heavy price'. They are not interested in being cool or celebrities, nor do they need to behave like rock stars – they have a professional ethic built upon respect for their crew and associates.

This sense of band-fan and fan-fan mutual caring is linked to the very survival of the musical project. The choice of a kinship-denoting field metaphor signifies blood connections and helps to connote ideas of family history or ancestry – a kind of genetic trace that needs to be accounted for. The Family is not a 'formal, contrived organisation'; nor is it 'an elite, a club, a gang or anything else along those lines'; instead it is 'a spontaneous sense of fellowship that has developed over the years'. In fact:

…For many, NMA and the Family has simply become a place of emotional sanctuary where they don't have to be anything but themselves and where they can be proud, not ashamed, of their deepest feelings in an atmosphere of comradeship, love and support.

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The sanctuary is constructed as a place of comfort and relief from feelings of dislocation and alienation, a place where one can find a sense of belonging and tribal solidarity or an emotional 'consciousness of kin' (see Muňiz and O'Guinn 2001) — an intrinsic connection that members of a consumption community feel towards each other, based on shared attitudes, perceived similarity, and importantly, a collective sense of difference from those not in the community.

The exhibition is "dedicated to the memory of Darryl Kempster" a NMA Family member who was tragically killed on 28 June 2004 in South Africa. It also features Robert Heaton, the band's drummer from 1982 to 1998, who died on 4th November 2004 from pancreatic cancer. In Reid's (2015) documentary on the band, Justin Sullivan explains that Heaton did most of the work on *Green and Grey*, the song which has become probably the most significant one in the community's

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repertoire. There is therefore a sense of mourning and remembrance about the exhibition. The mention of these important Family members reflects a desire to com-memor-ate them and to re-member them into the community from beyond life. Death is also signified by the exhibition of skulls and skeletons in some of the cases and on the merchandise booth. These, too can be read as memento mori, which in turn links to a recurring motif of the band's lyrics, namely that of human vanitas and the impermanence of life.

The involvement of fans in the design, planning, fundraising, and set-up of the exhibition was considerable. The fans were involved in advocating the exhibition, and in fact a selection of their testimonials were included in a book which became an exhibit. E-mails from fans were pasted into a ring-bound, Family Scrapbook, and thus became artefacts in the exhibition. The fans are represented in the exhibition by these testimonials, which contain their representations of the band, themselves, their relationship with the band, and membership of the Family.

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Our first quotation from the Scrapbook makes use of the idea of family to talk about the individual and collective dimensions of the community. This fan also sees the Family as a source of pride.
Naturally, as in any family, each person has their own, individual viewpoint and adds their own valued contribution to the greater picture. But as to my thoughts on the NMA Family – I personally am incredibly proud of it and proud to say I belong to it.

(NMA Fan #01, exhibit).

Other collected memories include those that see their connection with the band as something which endures through time, in good times and bad, like this fan who also talks about the complete happiness that consuming NMA's music live gives them:

New Model Army have been something that I have been able to come back to year after year, good times and bad (personally and for the band). I cannot remember how many times I have seen them live, there are not many things that make me completely happy in/with the world, but being at an Army gig does that.

(NMA Fan #02, exhibit).

For others, the memories go back to a specific moment of physical impact of the music:

I remember the actual day as clear as a bell … The first thing that made me listen intently was the intro to No Rest for the Wicked*. The echoed delay bass guitar drew me in - and I stopped drinking a can of beer and concentrated hard as the rest of the song came surging in. I was deeply affected by the pure power and emotional energy pounding out from a small radio cassette player on the windowsill. My head spun and I felt an indescribable stirring in my stomach. Justin's voice pulled at something deep inside me that I have never been able to forget.*

(NMA Fan #03, exhibit).

These collected memories, some diachronic, some synchronic, become part of the collective memory of the community through the mode of remembering of the exhibition. The memories are about the fans' connection with the band and its music, the linking value in the community. The kinship bonds within the Family are not blood-ties but musical.

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Imagination, Religion, and Magic

Central to an understanding of heritage is the role of memory, but we wish to argue here, from the data, that imagination also has a key role to play. We use imagination here in the Romantic, and later Jungian (e.g. Jung, 1990), sense of the human faculty which is capable of connecting with (what is constructed as) the 'sublime' or 'divine', be this framed as magical, religious/spiritual, artistic, or, to use the terminology of analytical psychology, the collective unconscious. Quite apart from the band's song lyrics and interviews over many years, the exhibits themselves point us in this direction. We read this, specifically, from the centre-piece altar (see Figure 1 below), the presence of religious objects, and Joolz's discussion of her artistic practice (Denby, 1997).

There is a sense in which a museum collection may be read as a shrine, a preservation of cultural resources which are sacred to a particular society. In this sense, the art and artefacts exhibition might be regarded as a touring shrine to NMA, the ark of the community's covenant with itself. There are also particular reasons for using the word 'shrine' in this instance. This has to do with the ways in which the sacred is represented and invoked – imagined - in the exhibition. One key display in this regard is the altar, which was the first thing the visitor saw on entering the Bradford exhibition – see Figure 1, described below.

Figure 1: The Altar

INSERT FIGURE 1 HERE

On a dais about 12 centimetres off the ground, stood two very tall candlesticks wrapped in a white fabric and holding thick red candles. Midway between them, against a white-emulsioned back panel, was a framed copy of 'Celtic knot' original artwork for the *Thunder and Consolation* album (1989). Its location in the exhibition in the centre of the altar is a clear sign of its importance. In a Catholic church, for example, it is the tabernacle which is in the middle of the altar; the object of worship is central. The making of this altar for the exhibition stems from Joolz's own spiritual practice of shrine-making. Indeed, it is a key aspect of the particularity of this 'case' that Joolz's aesthetic is heavily influenced by references to magical, esoteric, and spiritual resources. The altar knotwork symbol, which is sometimes loosely referred to as Celtic, but is in fact Pictish, points to a long-past kind of spirituality and culture which is pagan, and to the idea of a time and place when society was organized tribally. NMA does actually make use of Celtic signifiers on other artwork. For example, the band's *Green and Grey* cover (Heaton and Sullivan, 1987) carries the well-known Celtic triskeles, which Laing and Laing (1992:18) suggest were of magical significance - but 'the exact original meaning of the symbolism is lost to us'. *Green and Grey* is considered by many to be the band's defining song; significantly, this was the song which was chosen to be sung at the funeral service for Robert Heaton, the band's drummer and creative contributor from 1982 to 1998, who is commemorated in the exhibition.

Here, grateful to Erll for the insight, we note the link to the work of Aby Warburg, and his interest in the "readoption of vivid images and symbols in different epochs and cultures" (Warburg, 1992), cited in Erll, 2016:19, ff.). This NMA altar is, we argue, an instance of just such a readoption - of a centuries-old Pictish symbol by late twentieth century to early twenty-first century music consumption community. Warburg's saying that "God is in the detail" (1992:618) might be read

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here as suggesting that the Family or tribal "God" here, the spiritual underpinning of the consumption community, is symbolised by a single, central, detail, a Pictish triskele artwork, signifying the community's hymn or anthem, *Green and Grey* (Heaton/Sullivan, 1987). The song can be read as a reproach sung by those who choose to stay in the "valleys of green and grey" to someone who has yielded to the attraction of "the land of gold and poison that beckons to us all". This "young brave" who has stolen away is seen as leaving the community for reasons to do with self-will and not community-mindedness, behaving "as if we were not of the same blood family, as if we live by different laws" – a pointer to the ethos of the Family. Seen in the light of this close reading, the altar symbol functions as a kind of normative text (Assman, 2006:104) for the community.

Belk, Wallendorf, and Sherry (1989) explore the 'manifestations of the sacred inherent in consumer behaviour'. A key theme in their paper was that 'consumers made sacred and profane distinctions in their behaviours and uses of space, time and objects'. The altar exhibit at the exhibition can be read as a case of sacralisation of the NMA Family. Belk et al. (1989) cite Clifford (1985) in support of the idea that 'placement in a … museum … can sacralize objects'. Here, the band, with the help of the fans, sacralises its art and artefacts by collecting it and placing it in a museum, and further sacralises the NMA Family through the symbolism of the altar.

The album artwork in the centre of the altar is constructed as pointing back to Pictish times, long beyond the living memory of the community, into a distant past. This centrally important symbol tells us that the community work of re-membering the past is not only a matter of memory but of imagination. It is significant, we believe, that the cultural memory literature has little to say, specifically, about the role of imagination in social remembering. There is, therefore, scope to argue, from this data, that social remembering is not simply a matter of memory, and could be re-conceived to include also practices of imagination.

Turning now to the theme of magic, we note that, in her formative text on the band's artwork *New Model Army Artwork* (Denby, 1997), Joolz articulates a particular kind of aesthetic. Consider for example the construction of a T-shirt design in the following extract:

NMA art requires passion and commitment. It requires close attention to details, long study and years of observation. Then somehow, like a piece of conjure, it all comes right. There's a lot of actual magic in NMA art - glamours, hints, things which seem obvious but aren't, dark stuff. When you put on that T-shirt, with the device, formula or image printed into the warp and weft of the very fabric, you put onto your body, next to your living skin, a message; something breathing and vital, an essence distilled from liquid into vapour. Don't imagine that because it looks like a Big, Black T-shirt it is a Big, Black T-shirt - oh, no, it's a medicine bag, a fetiche, a code. You probably don't believe me, and that's your choice, of course - but I know it's true. [emphasis in original]

Apart from being an expressive text written by a practising spoken word artist and writer, this imaginal transformation of the T-shirt merchandise into 'something breathing and vital', a distilled essence, a 'medicine bag', a 'code', has links to hermetical and alchemical thinking. The idea of alchemy is, therefore, important to an understanding of how Joolz sought to contribute to an imagining of the art and artefacts, and, partly therewith, the artistic ethos of the community itself. Alchemy is about the magical transmutation of base metal into precious metal. As a trope, the idea

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of the distillation of essence from liquid into vapour (matter into spirit) might be used, for example, to characterise the potential transformation of the everyday into peak experiences at gigs, of a T-shirt into a living, breathing fabric which connects band to wearer (fan), of lyric transformed by the alchemy of live singing into powerful rock anthems uniting band and fans, or of profane objects into bearers of sacred significance – such as the *Green and Grey* artwork.

The NMA exhibition - at first reading, a mixture of symbolic clothing, religious objects and Celtic miscellany - offers a seeming jumble of fetishised ‘things’ with no discernable relatedness to one other, rather like the 16th century ‘irrational cabinets of curiosity’ with their emphasis on ‘magical and or transcendental significance’, which had the universal aim of presenting a world view as perceived by their owners/curators (Hooper-Greenhill, 1992:7). Yet these objects convey meaning for NMA and their Family in a way that has its roots in the earliest forms of exhibition communication where knowledge was *divinatio*. ‘Magic and the occult were integral parts of knowledge’ (Hooper-Greenhill,1992:15). In their work, the band draws on shamanistic, religious, and archaic tribal roots. The objects are not irrational in meaning, but chart the growth, development, and significance of NMA to the band and to the Family. The exhibition represents ‘the objectifications of the relations between people’ (Atfield, 2000:50), and range from the mystical to the everyday. The 'banal' everyday objects, including clogs and stage clothing are elevated into iconic objects by both association to their wearers and by the power of such items as containers of ‘sympathetic magic … by which we announce our allegiance’ (Lurie, 1982: 30). Equally the guitars and keyboards retain their magic as conduits of the creativity of the band.

Through these processes of sacralisation, “magnification”, and imagination, the band produces normative and formative texts about the music consumption community.

Traces of the Past

The band’s name, New Model Army, already consciously refers to the eponymous historical organisation (1645-1660), whose existence preceded it by more than three hundred years and was the first professional army in England. The original New Model Army was heavily influenced by Puritan beliefs, and was active on the parliamentary side in the English Civil War (1642-1651). The choice of this name by the band was a deliberate reach-out to a long tradition of English anti-establishment agitation as a means of responding to Thatcherite fascism (1979-1990), which promoted the Big Lie: “There’s no such thing as society” (Woman’s Own, 1987). According to Justin Sullivan, this was partly because this historical war was ‘the nearest thing we had to a revolution’ (Sullivan, 2000). This historical reference in the band’s name is important not simply as evidence of a past-ward orientation in the music consumption community, but also because of the importance of the Puritan imagination in British indie music, as identified by Fonarow (2006). Note: we do not regard NMA as an indie band; their independence goes much deeper. Fonarow argues (2006:28) that “indie’s core values promote and replicate the doctrine of Protestant religiosity: Puritanism … Within indie we find a Puritan distrust of authority, a preference for non-corporate, independently-owned commercial operations, an avocation of simplicity in musical form, production and style [….].”

The English civil war was a time of many radicalisms, religious and political. In addition to a desire for independence from the crown, there was also a clear acknowledgement of social

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interdependence. Petegorsky (1999) discusses the True Levellers or Diggers, a movement led by Gerrard Winstanley, which sought to dig the common land at Cobham in Surrey. This was a short-lived outworking of Winstanley's utopian ideas which involved the abolition of "private property in the means of production" and the idea that "the earth and its products were to be the common possession of the entire populace", held as wealth in common (1999:210) – a common-wealth, or radical kind of sharing economy (rather than the exchange economy with which marketing is pre-occupied – see Belk (2010)). In the early days of the band's life, Justin Sullivan used the stage name Slade the Leveller. This is usually explained - as for example in the film documentary by Reid (2015) - by reference to the need to avoid scrutiny by dole inspectors. Nevertheless, the name chosen was a specific reference to the seventeenth-century group of left wing political radicals called the Levellers (see Hill, 1991). Further evidence of Sullivan's regard for the Levellers is his appearance in a folk opera called Freeborn John (Hammer 2007) to celebrate and remember the life of a prominent Leveller by the name of John Lilburne (incidentally a Quaker, as were Sullivan's parents). The opera was written by Rev Hammer, a long-time friend and collaborator of the band, and the performers included Rev Hammer, NMA, as well as The Levellers and Maddy Prior.

Since its formation in 1980, NMA's stance has been progressive and left, and its song lyrics reflect protest against events such as the suppression of the miners' strike, the Falklands War, the Gulf Wars, corporate greed, and road-building which is destructive of nature. History features prominently as a theme in many of the band's 250 (approx.) original songs, including *The Attack*, *Ballad*, *The Charge*, *Headlights*, *Here Comes The War*, *History*, *Killing*, *A Liberal Education*, *Lights Go Out*, *My Country*, *Poison Street*, *Prison*, *Purity*, and *Whirlwind*. In the NMA song corpus, history is generally constructed as always present and as something that shapes us, as well as something of value, with which it behoves us to retain a connection and from which to learn.

The NMA's move to exhibit itself can be read as consistent with the understanding of the past, as communicated in their songs, as important to, and influential for, our everyday experience in the present, thus challenging an alternative, objectified, view of the past as static, calcified and of questionable relevance to the creative, dynamic innovative present (c.f. Corner and Harvey, 1991). There is an opportunity for *preservation,* certainly, in the museum - to make a mark against the (eventual) passing of NMA as a musical group (sadly fore-shadowed by the death of Family members) - but also to present the Family as actively engaged in an ongoing heritage project of its own making - as a community with connections to the (ancient and sacred) past, respectful of history, and mindful of the power of remembrance in creating versions of the past that have purchase in the present and future, particularly in solidifying the band-fan relationship (in its mythologizing and sacralising of the NMA Family) and the lifeblood of the NMA project. In this sense, all of the exhibits are traces of a past, socially remembered and imagined.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Our starting research question was: how do musical communities remember their past? We framed our inquiry using cultural memory, heritage and consumption community theory. This enabled us to generate findings about how the community remembers its past. On the basis of the theoretical approach and research design outlined above, we offer a conceptual framework (Figure 2 below) which attempts to answer this question. In this figure, we bring together and integrate the different

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themes into a conceptual framework of how consumption communities remember their pasts. The process of remembering involves the active construction of heritage, not simply a reflection on the past. Below this figure, responding to our second question, we outline the implications the move to heritage has for the identity and membership of a music consumption community. In particular, we draw attention to the important role of imagination, so far relatively neglected in the cultural memory literature.

Figure 2: Heritagisation of Consumption Communities

INSERT FIGURE 2 HERE

We explain this framework as follows. Consonant with cultural memory theory, it frames social remembering as being an interplay between past and present. Within a given, historically grounded, present, a social group, such as a consumption community (in this case, the NMA Family), constructs its own past heritage. This process constructs the community's relationship to the past, which may be recent (the deaths of Family members, the Falklands War), or distant in time (the seventeenth century English civil war, the Picts), or in space (those who have left the community "for the land of gold and poison"). Those who are remembered may be living or dead. The construction of heritage consists of four processes, namely social remembering, imagination, collecting and curating. We have shown above how social remembering and imagination are fundamentally important for heritagisation. All heritage construction takes shape within a certain mode of remembering (the museum exhibition in this case) in which scripts, symbols, and materials/objects/artefacts are originated, re-adopted, selected, or synthesised, and then gathered and curated (Eno, 1991) to form the output of this process, namely a collective memory produced from the collected memories of community members (NMA and its fans). The outcome of the process of heritagisation can be stronger cohesion and sense of identity within the community.

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At any moment when a community remembers itself, it may also re-imagine itself. Erll (2011) pointed out that "memory is a transdisciplinary problem" (2011:2). Here, we see an important need to combine memory studies with studies of the imagination and its relationship to community, such as, for example, Anderson's writing (1983) about the "imagined community". We suggest that the scholarly discussion about how societies remember should not just be about social remembering but also focus on social re-imagining(s). In terms of answering the second question, this remembered and imagined version of, or story about, its past is a significant component of the community's present and future identity, buttressing it against attack from the forces of time, acting as a mark against its passing. The heritagisation process enables the community to remember itself, but also enables members of the Family to re-member themselves - in the sense of re-inscribing themselves into community membership, re-affiliating themselves with the community, and renewing their allegiance - and thereby to strengthen their identity. We may conceive this process of remembering and re-imagining the past as analogous to Belk's idea of the extended individual self (Belk, 1988). In other words, the construction of heritage can be seen as making an extended group self. We would also point out that this heritagisation process is made possible by a process of sharing (Belk, 2010). In the present inquiry, the data has shown how memories and testimonials of individual fans – and indeed the fans themselves - are collected (gathered, brought together, shared) for the purposes of the exhibition and to help to construct the collective memory. We have also seen how one community's collectivist ethos - of sharing its

emotional sanctuary, its social, community-making, labour, and its memories, and, one could add, its music through the shared experience of live concerts – is foregrounded, relative to e.g. an exchange perspective. Other authors (e.g. Kozinets, 2001) have noted the presence of sacralising (and mythologising) practices within communities, as is the case here. However, we do not think that these kinds of practices are necessarily generic, so they are not specifically mentioned in the framework.

Our contribution is, therefore, to show how theories of cultural memory and heritage are important to an understanding of the important process of how consumption communities remember their past and how this can help to sustain community continuity along the temporal axis of past – present – future. The inquiry in this case focused on a musical consumption community, but we suggest that the framework which we have put forward could equally apply to other kinds of consumption communities, whether centred around other art-forms or around mainstream consumer products.

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Figure 1: The Altar

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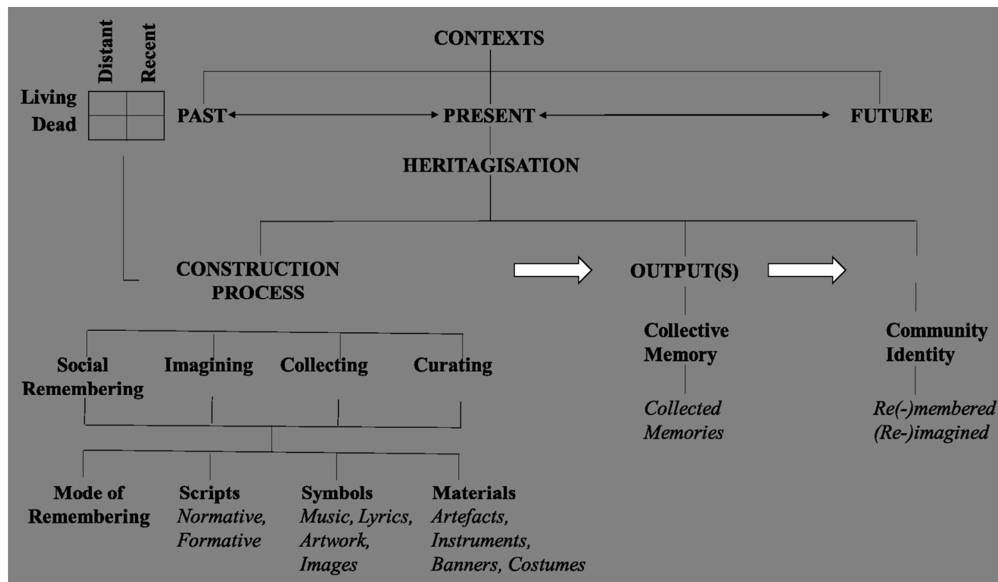

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