

Portfolio of Original Compositions with Written Commentary

Marcello Messina

Submitted in accordance with the requirements for
the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

The University of Leeds

School of Music

July 2013

The candidate confirms that the work submitted is his own and that appropriate credit has been given where reference has been made to the work of others.

This copy has been supplied on the understanding that it is copyright material and that no quotation from the thesis may be published without proper acknowledgement.

© 2013 The University of Leeds and Marcello Messina.

The right of Marcello Messina to be identified as Author of this work has been asserted by him in accordance with the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988.

Acknowledgements

My profoundest gratitude goes to my life companion Teresa, who has devotedly and patiently accompanied me in these years. Endless thanks to my mother Ester, who helped me fund this project, and has always encouraged and supported me. Thanks also to all the members of my family for their support.

Special thanks to all the musicians who have performed the pieces of this portfolio: the Icarus Ensemble and their guitarist Giacomo “Jack” Baldelli; Sarah Leonard with Jonathan Gooing and Colin Blamey, members of the Hull Sinfonietta/Portumnus Ensemble; LSTwo; the LUUMS Symphony Orchestra; Mikroblech; notes inégales; Clare McCaldin with Ian Shaw; last but not least, projectisle’s members Caroline Lucas, Adam Fergler and Lauren Redhead, whose help and cooperation as fellow research students was also extremely appreciated.

Many thanks to my employers and colleagues from the Language Centre (Self-Access Area team), the Equality Service, the School of Music and the Institute for Transport Studies (Bryan Matthews in particular) at the University of Leeds; and to those from the Disability Service at Leeds Metropolitan University.

Finally, I am deeply indebted with my two supervisors Mic Spencer and Ewan Stefani for their precious advice during the last four years.

Abstract

The North/South divide in Italy has been narrated, examined and explained in various ways by numerous scholars, many of whom have underlined the subordinate condition of the Mezzogiorno and the failure to grant a real autonomy to Sicily. My examination of these issues is tightly intertwined with my activity as contemporary experimental composer, in that both involve an effort in challenging assumptions and coming to terms with situations of substantial political isolation.

This portfolio, which represents an attempt to connect these two research fields, is articulated in two main parts: the first part comprises a series of instrumental pieces, in which structural elements are used to highlight and criticise politico-economic, cultural and/or historical patterns; the second part consists of a group of vocal pieces, in which the lyrics are deliberately re-organised in order to twist the meaning of the original text and adapt it to the message that is intended to be delivered; a third group consists of two additional pieces, both notated in very succinct scores and characterised by strong improvisational and theatrical elements, which share mixed features of both these strategies.

In terms of the critical commentary, the introductory section is centred on the presentation of the main issues related to the Sicilian Question, contextualised in the framework of the subordination of the whole Mezzogiorno within the Italian economic-political system. These issues function as main premises, on the basis of which I adopt a specific position as a composer and intellectual, centred on the commitment to contribute to forms of oppositional culture aimed at unveiling and symbolically overturning an oppressed condition through evocative forms of musical expression.

Contents

Acknowledgements	3
Abstract	5
List of Figures.....	7
1. Introduction.....	9
1.1 Examining the Sicilian Question through Creative Composition.....	9
1.2 Aspects of the Subordination of the Mezzogiorno and Thoughts on the Sicilian Question.....	13
1.3 The Composer as a New Southern Intellectual	16
1.4 Problems of Poetics	21
1.5 Generating the Material	25
2. Instrumental Scores.....	32
2.1 <i>A bannerà</i> : A Quasi-Manifesto of Polysemic Allegory.....	32
2.2 Economic and Political Allegories	39
2.2.1 <i>U mpastu</i> : An Allegory of Unequal Exchange	40
2.2.2 <i>A manìkula</i> : The Construction of the Other	47
2.2.3 Historical Narratives: <i>U kriwu</i> and <i>A bannerà</i>	50
2.3 <i>I mballakkeri</i> : Allegory and Parody of Political Representation	54
2.4 <i>I supikkjarìi</i> : Allegory and Parody of Cultural Capitalism.....	60
2.5 <i>A ttinghitè</i> : Violence, Criminalisation and the Monopolisation of National Compassion.....	64
3. Partial and Succinct Scores	71
4. Vocal Scores.....	76
4.1 <i>Circling round my flesh and Separate Place</i>	76
4.2 <i>Not peace, but other things</i>	82
5. Conclusions.....	90
6. Bibliography.....	92
Appendix 1. Interviews	104
Interview 1. Emanuele Casale (May 2010)	104
Interview 2. Angelo Sturiale (June 2013).....	107
Appendix 2. Programme Notes	109
Appendix 3. Lists of Activities	113
List 1. Public Performances	113
List 2. Conference Papers	115
List 3. Published Scores	115

List of Figures

Figure 1: the statue of Garibaldi, beheaded and inserted in a toilet in Castellammare di Stabia, May 2011.	24
Figure 2: the numerical matrix used to generate pitches and intervals in <i>A ttinghitè</i>	25
Figure 3: a possible reorganisation of the tiles from the initial configuration of the 15 puzzle.	26
Figure 4: two consecutive passages in <i>Muscular Catabolism of Anthropomorphic Potatoes</i>	27
Figure 5: the 16 fragments used to generate the 5 collections of MIDI files in <i>I mballakkeri</i>	28
Figure 6: the same element appearing in <i>I supikkjarii</i> (top – bb. 3-6) and, raised by a semitone, in <i>Circling round my flesh</i> (bottom – song I: bb. 1-2).....	29
Figure 7: the same element appearing in <i>Separate Place</i> (top – b. 28) and <i>Circling round my flesh</i> (bottom – song 4: bb. 1-2).....	30
Figure 8: the <i>mise-en-scène</i> arranged for the premiere of <i>A bannerà</i>	33
Figure 9: the distribution of silent sections in <i>A bannerà</i>	37
Figure 10: <i>U mpastu</i> the second fragment given to flute II in section II.a.....	41
Figure 11: <i>U mpastu</i> - a division into two semiotic units of the second fragment given to flute II in section II.a	41
Figure 12: <i>U mpastu</i> - the first fragment given to clarinet I in section I.b.....	42
Figure 13: <i>U mpastu</i> - a division into two semiotic units of the first fragment given to clarinet I in section I.b.....	42
Figure 14: <i>U mpastu</i> - the segmentation of trombone I in section I.a	43
Figure 15: <i>U mpastu</i> - C' in contrabasses I, section I.c.....	43
Figure 16: <i>U mpastu</i> – a diagram of the relationship between creative and reactive fragments ...	44
Figure 17: a chart depicting the number of instrument that stay silent in each section of <i>U mpastu</i>	46
Figure 18: a map of the derivation of the material in section I of <i>A manikula</i> from fragments of <i>U mpastu</i>	48
Figure 19: the pre-compositional model used for <i>U kriwu</i>	51
Figure 20: a map of the relationship between sections of the piece and intermissions of silence in the recording of the premiere of <i>A bannerà</i>	52
Figure 21: a diagram of the functioning of <i>I mballakkeri</i>	55
Figure 22: a comparison between the duration of the studio recording and that of the live recording of <i>I mballakkeri</i>	56
Figure 23: a diagram of the interaction in <i>I mballakkeri</i>	58
Figure 24: a diagram of the interaction between voter and elected representative in a democratic electoral system.....	58
Figure 25: the three different types of durations in <i>A ttinghitè</i>	67
Figure 26: the initial configuration in <i>A ttinghitè</i>	68
Figure 27: a snapshot from the performance of <i>They are not doing anything wrong</i>	74
Figure 28: a map of the possible dislocations of the interlude <i>Lamentu</i> within the song cycle <i>Circling round my flesh</i>	79
Figure 29: the soprano part in the prologue section of <i>Separate Place</i>	80
Figure 30: <i>Separate Place</i> - bb. 14-18. Figures in the piano and bass clarinet parts, that may suggest a joyous and hilarious mood.....	82
Figure 31: No MUOS activist Turi Vaccaro Cordaro playing the Sicilian <i>friscalettu</i> while symbolically blocking a police car.	88

1. Introduction

1.1 Examining the Sicilian Question through Creative Composition

It is recognised that the events that led to the unification of Europe were strongly influenced and determined by a necessity to put an end to the power disputes that led to two World Wars in less than 30 years.¹ If the trend towards the overcoming of national borders has been accompanied, on one hand, by a growing feeling of shared continental belonging, on the other hand it has brought about the revival of local identities, stateless national movements that in many cases have seen the EU as an opportunity to alleviate the hegemony of their central state power rather than a threat: this is surely the case of places like Scotland, Catalonia, Sardinia, Corsica, etc.²

The mention of the concepts of nation and state may prove to be problematic if not clarified: whilst it is accepted and maintained that both these notions are extremely arbitrary and derive from social and economic constructs, it can also be noted that they are arbitrary in very different ways, and that their amalgamation in single nation-state entities can prove to be particularly oppressive for some specific regions and communities, that may resort in their denied nationhood as an instrument of resistance against said oppression. These situations may represent a notable exception where nationalist claims can be acceptable even from a non-nationalist point of view.³

Sicily, which is used as a case study in this work, fits well in this context, and while the emergence of local protest movements campaigning for the Island's independence/autonomy⁴ and the ever-growing tensions between the Island's Regional Government and the Italian Government⁵ may appear to be quite recent phenomena, they are actually rooted in a long-time and articulated "Question", whose latest phase originated precisely after World War II. Importantly, Sicily cannot just be considered as an isolated and self-contained reality, but

¹ Cf. for example Dinan (2004:1-9).

² Perhaps the strongest evidence of this state of things was attested by the organisation of the conference *Independence in Europe: Equality of Nations in the 21st Century*, held in the European Parliament on 17 November 2010.

³ An important work in this sense is Appiah (1997).

⁴ On the progressive emergence of Sicilian and Southern Italian protest movements oriented towards autonomy or independence, cf. Patruno (2011).

⁵ The most dramatic example of these tensions is represented by the dispute over the MUOS, which will be discussed later in this commentary.

needs to be framed within the wider context of the subordinate condition suffered by the whole Southern Italy [henceforth Mezzogiorno] in the Italian politico-economic system.

Before outlining the methodology employed in this work, it is important to warn the reader that my approach to these issues is far from being neutral, and that on the contrary my sympathy towards the Sicilian independence/autonomy agenda is an important characteristic of my personal, artistic and academic profile: while on one hand I can assure the reader that my lack of neutrality will have no impact on the quality of my research (and after all it is difficult or impossible for any researcher to be absolutely neutral), on the other hand I can claim that my commitment to the independence/autonomy cause is an essential feature of my compositional practice.

The choice of practice-led research in creative composition as the chief instrument of examination of the presented extra-musical issue deserves some clarifications. Music has the faculty to symbolically evoke, imitate or reproduce the structure and behaviours of existing entities, the interaction between different entities, and the development of these structures, behaviours and interactions throughout time: while this faculty confers the musical trace a strong power in terms of signification, it does not make it strictly a sign, at least not in Saussurean terms⁶, due to the absence, or ineffability, of articulated meaning (Monelle, 1992:1-31). While this can be initially seen as a proof of manifest inferiority of the musical medium when compared with verbal language, one can argue that it is in fact an extremely positive strength, insofar as the absence of articulated meaning, rather than depriving the medium of sense, confers it unlimited possibilities in this respect (Monelle, 2000:196-197), which can be used creatively⁷, as I will demonstrate further on in this work when examining my piece *A banner*. Here, it is important to observe that the absence of articulated meaning allows for alternative interpretations of the musical work, removed from the extra-musical connotations attached to it and only focused on its inherent aesthetic features: I am confident that such interpretations are absolutely plausible with regards to all the pieces of this portfolio, which can be enjoyed as pure works of art.

However, this fruitful utilisation of the absence of articulated meaning may pose a fundamental risk, namely the risk that meaning may end up being seen as an obstacle, and that, when writing for the voice, the composer may feel the necessity to avoid using any text in their compositions, or make any possible effort to make the text unintelligible by breaking it

⁶ On the nature of the sign as a combination of signifier and signified, cf. Saussure (1973:97-100).

⁷ An utterly illuminating work in this sense is Stoianova's analysis of Nono's *Il canto sospeso* (Stoianova,1987).

down into smaller components⁸: while this strategy can prove to be absolutely successful in many cases⁹, I found myself in the position of needing to overcome a growing diffidence towards the use of intelligible text. Nevertheless, throughout the course of this research programme I have managed to devise and refine a strategy that has allowed me to use intelligible text while benefitting from an extraordinary degree of flexibility in meaning, as I will demonstrate further when examining my song cycle *Circling round my flesh* and my piece *Separate place*, both with lyrics by John Whale, and my song *Not peace, but other things*, which sets texts by Philip Larkin.

This twofold approach to meaning outlines the two different strategies I employ as a composer/researcher in order to examine, and react to, the Sicilian Question:

- In a series of instrumental pieces, structural elements are used to highlight politico-economic, socio-cultural and/or historical patterns in order to criticise them. These pieces, which will be presented in Chapter 2 of this work, are:
 - *A manikula* for piccolo (doubling flute), clarinet in Bb (doubling bass clarinet in Bb), French horn, percussion, piano, guitar, violin, viola and violoncello.
 - *U mpastu* for orchestra.
 - *A bannera* for double ensemble with two conductors.
 - *I supikkjarì* for flute, clarinet, percussion, electric guitar, electric bass, piano and sampler.
 - *A ttinghitè* for solo electric guitar.
 - *I mballakkeri* for Disklavier and electronics.

- In a group of vocal pieces the lyrics are deliberately re-organised in order to twist the meaning of the original text and adapt it to the message that is intended to be delivered. These pieces, which will be presented in Chapter 4, are:
 - *Circling round my flesh* [with lyrics by John Whale] for mezzosoprano and piano.
 - *Separate Place* [with lyrics by John Whale] for soprano, piano and bass clarinet.
 - *Not peace, but other things* [with lyrics by Philip Larkin] for clarinet, soprano and piano.

⁸ Cf. for example Stockhausen's analysis of Nono's *Il canto sospeso* (Stockhausen, 1964), and in particular the passage where he tries to explain Nono's choice of fragmenting some of the texts (ibidem:49)

⁹ Cf. Stoianova (1987).

- Two additional pieces, both notated in very succinct scores and characterised by strong improvisational and theatrical elements, share mixed features of both these strategies. They are presented in Chapter 3, and are:
 - *A mattanza* for trumpet, percussion, electric guitar, piano, keyboards and contrabass.
 - *They are not doing anything wrong* for three performers with a wheelbarrow and a fiddle.

It is important to note that my musical activities throughout the course of my PhD programme were not limited only to the eleven compositions included in this portfolio: alongside with them, I have composed a series of other pieces, including the chamber works *Antudo* (2011), *I patruna* (2012), *Nzikitanza* (2012) and *A ugghja* (2013), the fixed-media pieces *Via Maqueda* (2010), *[2]* (2012) and *[9]* (2013), and the video art piece *Murazzu Ruttu* (2012); moreover, I have been involved in an ongoing collaboration with the Ursprung Collective, a spoken poetry and music project based in the US, producing six pieces between 2011 and the present day; I have also participated to the Manchester-based art marathon 12-12-12 Humanity, performing a cycle of semi-improvised pieces titled *Strakanakki* (2012). All the works included in the portfolio and most of the other works were also performed in public, especially, but not exclusively, in events connected to academia, such as the Huddersfield Contemporary Music Festival, the Salford Sonic Fusion Festival, the York Spring Festival of New Music, the Leeds International Concert Series, the Spectrum Concert Series in New York, and various other events in Great Britain, Italy, Portugal and the US. I was also active as a speaker in several academic conferences, whose proceedings were published in some cases. A full list of my activities during the course of the PhD programme is included in Appendix 3.

In terms of the portfolio, it is evident that both the main strategies illustrated above benefit, in different ways, from a substantial fluidity of meaning that allows for a complete renegotiation/redefinition of values, as it is evident especially from the second group of pieces outlined above. This possibility of complete renegotiation/redefinition of values can also be seen as the proof of the potential of anticipating or rehearsing future occurrences and developments,¹⁰ de facto opening room for the construction of new knowledge: to this extent, I can claim that my practice-led research based approach to the aforementioned Question can prove to be as fruitful as any other approach based on more “traditional” types of research.

¹⁰ See also Attali (1985).

Moreover, beyond the above considerations, it is important to spare a few lines about the crucial importance of the temporal dimension in which the aforementioned structures, behaviours and interactions occur in music: the strongly temporal (whether linear or non-linear) nature of the musical medium implies important relationships with history, which allows me to engage, in my practice, with different conceptions of history, which are extremely relevant to the extra-musical issues examined in this commentary, as I will demonstrate further on.

1.2 Aspects of the Subordination of the Mezzogiorno and Thoughts on the Sicilian Question

Before presenting the musical compositions which constitute the portfolio, it is necessary to provide a brief contextual explanation of the extra-musical framework in which the portfolio is situated. This is required for two main reasons: firstly, because writing the pieces of this portfolio would not have been possible without the reflections instigated by this situation; secondly, because, although an enormous corpus of academic and non-academic literature presenting similar analyses of this situation exists, these insights are still excluded from the dominant discourses, and thus alienated from the vast majority of public opinion (Huysse, 2006:143-157)– it is then necessary to present these issues, rather than assuming any previous knowledge of them from the reader.

The ever-growing North/South divide in Italy¹¹ has been narrated, examined and explained in various ways by many scholars and schools of thought throughout the one and half century of Italian history since the Unification in 1861. Although an extensive account of all the existing theories in this respect is not among the purposes of this work, it can be useful to say that the existing works on the Southern Question have provided explanations for it that range from the cultural backwardness and/or the biological inferiority of Southern Italians¹² to more balanced

¹¹ A glance at the crucial differences in average income and employment rate can help quantify the North/South gap. The unemployment rate in the Mezzogiorno is more than double the rate of the North (ISTAT, 2012). It is important also to notice that the composition of the employed population is significantly different in the two macro-regions, in that the amount of employed in the industrial sector in the North is three times higher than in the Mezzogiorno (SVIMEZ, 2012; ISTAT, 2012). Differences in average income are also dramatically pronounced: the average disposable income per capita in the North is around € 20,800, as opposed to € 13,400 in the Mezzogiorno – differences between single regions are even bigger, ranging from € 22,847 in Bolzano, against € 12,522 in Campania and € 12,970 in Sicily (ISTAT, 2013).

¹² Among the first influential advocates of these theories were, at the end on the 19th century, the exponents of the Lombrosian School of Criminology, including Lombroso himself (1896; 1900) and

socio-politico-economic explanations: among these, although not always officially accepted by the governing institutions, the theories that acknowledge the state of subordination¹³ of the Mezzogiorno within the Italian politico-economic system enjoy significant recognition in academic and scientific circles.¹⁴ In other words, many scholars argue that forms of economic exploitation are exerted on the Mezzogiorno by the rest of the country. This situation, analysed through the prisms of imperialism and unequal exchange, is presented in section 2.2.1 of this work, in relation to my orchestral work *U mpastu*.

The subordination of the Mezzogiorno is perpetrated by political, cultural and physical instruments. In this context, the issue of the representation of the Mezzogiorno as an Other, and the consequent political marginalisation arising from it, has been widely examined, and will be presented in section 2.2.2 of this work with reference to my piece *A manikula*; the mechanism of representing the Mezzogiorno as an Other also involves the defamation and criminalisation of its inhabitants, as will be discussed in section 2.5 with reference to my piece *A ttinghitè*.

Physical instruments of enforcement of the subordination include the violent annexation of the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies to the Kingdom of Sardinia (Piedmont), which led to the proclamation of the Kingdom of Italy in 1861, and the bloody repression of the brigandage (i.e. the Southern resistance against the invasion) in the following years, which involved martial law applied against peasants, reprisals against the unarmed population, mass murders and rapes (Dickie, 1992; Guerri, 2010). The reflection on history proposed in section 2.2.3 with reference to the pieces *U kriwu* (which is not included in this portfolio) and *A bannerà* mainly takes inspiration from these historical events.

Niceforo (1898). These theories have been recently revived by Lynn (2010), who asserts: that the North/South gap is a consequence of “regional differences in intelligence” (ibidem:94), i.e. lower IQs in the Mezzogiorno and higher IQs in the North; that “[a] possible explanation for the northern regions having had higher IQs than the southern regions at least from 1880 and possibly from 1400 to 1600 is that the populations of the north and south are genetically different” (ibidem:98); and that the lower IQs of Southern people may be caused by “the diffusion of genes from the Near East and North Africa” (ibidem:99) in their land. Except for the use of the notion of IQ, these assertions are extremely similar to Lombroso’s reflections on the origin of the alleged propensity for criminality of the Southern Italian populations (Lombroso, 1902:513).

¹³ The word “subordination” is used here to avoid an excessive polemical approach to the issue. However, many scholars openly use its synonym “colonisation”: cf. for example Nitti (1900), Gramsci (1966) and Salvemini (1963).

¹⁴ Extremely important works in this sense are Nitti (1900), Salvemini (1963), Gramsci (1966), Capecelatro and Carlo (1974), Zitara (1973), Esposito (2013), Viesti (2013).

In more general terms, massacres tend to have a crucial role in Southern history, in particular as a part of the activities of the mafias¹⁵, who often act as a military pacifier on behalf of the institutions (Saviano, 2008; Tranfaglia, 1991; Caruso, 2010). With regards to Sicily, Marino sees massacres as an instrument of what he defines the “pedagogy of fear”, (2007:20) i.e., the technique of deterring subalterns from rebelling, employed by “those who hold the power” (ibidem:20) by committing acts of extreme violence, in order to secure the preservation of their own power (ibidem:18-21): in this sense, massacres have been committed by the Italian State,¹⁶ by foreign occupiers such as the Nazi Germans and the Allies during World War II¹⁷, or by the Mafia,¹⁸ either on behalf of one of the former two or for its own internal interests. The role of massacres is discussed further in Chapter 3, with reference to the pieces *A mattanza* and *They are not doing anything wrong*.

A recurring issue revolving around Southern and Sicilian subordination is the allegedly diffused clientelistic political system, as investigated by Palloni (1979): in relation to this issue, Putnam has proposed an analysis that attempts to validate the idea of a Mezzogiorno extensively characterised by the lack of horizontal solidarity (Putnam, 1993:121-162). Other observers see the hegemony of national parties over local politics as a more balanced explanation of the problems associated to local administrations (Nitti, 1900; Salvemini, 1963; Zitara, 1973; Esposito, 2013). My pieces *I mballakkeri* and, to some extent, *I supikkjarii*, were written as personal reflections on these issues: whilst *I mballakkeri*, presented in section 2.3, was composed as a musical comment on the 2012 Sicilian Regional Elections, *I supikkjarii*, presented in section 2.4, originated from a broader reflection on meanings, signs and their vulnerability in the context of postmodern (or late modern) reality, which has important implications for the myriad of emerging Sicilian and Southern protest movements.

As outlined above, Sicily’s situation is tightly intertwined with that of the Mezzogiorno, while simultaneously being a separate Question, which can be defined as the island’s gradual loss of sovereignty that led to the current status quo (Mignemi, 1980).¹⁹ The latest stage of the Sicilian

¹⁵ This term will appear in lower case and plural form when referring, in general, to the criminal organisations in the Mezzogiorno, whereas the singular capitalised form will refer specifically to the Sicilian Mafia.

¹⁶ Important examples are the *Strage del pane* in 1944 (see note 60) and the Massacre of Avola in 1968 (see note 63).

¹⁷ Cf. Nicastro (2007).

¹⁸ See chapter 3 on the two massacres of 1992.

¹⁹ Mignemi identifies the origin of the Question in the 1815 Congress of Vienna which restored the Bourbon King Ferdinand IV as ruler over the kingdoms of Sicily and Naples, later unified into the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies. (1980:5). Several later stages can be identified, such as the Island’s 1820 and 1848 attempted anti-Bourbon revolutions, the aforementioned annexation of the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies to the Kingdom of Italy under the Savoy crown in 1861, followed by several anti-Savoy

Question is characterised by the failure to apply two important pieces of legislation, granted after the end of World War II: namely the Sicilian Autonomy Statute (1946), which confers exclusive decisional powers to the Regional Government (Mignemi, 1980; Pracanica and Bolignani, 2006; Costa, 2009); and the Paris Peace Treaty (1947), and, specifically, the Treaty of Peace with Italy, which prescribes the substantial demilitarisation of Sicily and Sardinia (Mignemi, 1980; Costa, 2009). The failure to apply the aforementioned documents, imputable not only to the Italian Government's unwillingness to concede a proper autonomy to the island and to its complacency towards the US and NATO's strategic use of the Sicilian territory, but also in part to the local politics, determines a situation of constant subordination to national and international interests, leading to a regime of exploitation of Sicily's resources, in open contradiction with the nominal sovereignty granted to the island. The reflection on this situation influenced the composition of my pieces *Circling round my flesh* and *Separate Place*, presented in chapter 4.1, in which I explore the analogy between oppressed gender and oppressed land.

The central relevance of the Sicilian Question is most evident in the quasi-unanimous opposition met by the construction, near the town of Niscemi, of the Mobile User Objective System (MUOS), an enormous radar system owned by the US Department of Defense: the hostility towards the MUOS, mainly due to the long-term health risks for the population posed by the installation (Zucchetti and Coraddu, 2011), is shared by local activists, citizens and even members of the Regional institutions, as it will be discussed in chapter 4.2, with reference to my piece *Not peace, but other things*. The fact that the Italian Government has repeatedly insisted on the absolute necessity of building the installation, minimising or ignoring the risks posed for the population – even to the point of taking the Sicilian Regional Government to court after the latter had revoked the permission to build granted to the US Ministry of Defense – makes the debate on Sicilian sovereignty fundamental, regardless of any specific ideological standpoint.

1.3 The Composer as a New Southern Intellectual

The situation described in the previous chapters can help outline the picture of a Mezzogiorno deprived of its voice and lacking political and cultural influence on the Italian socio-cultural

insurrections in the island (most notably in 1866 and 1891-94), and by the outbreak of the Sicilian Independence Movement (MIS) in 1943-47, supported by the Voluntary Army for the Independence of Sicily (EVIS) from 1944.

system. This situation is certainly not due to a lack of intellectual participation in the issues related to the region: on the contrary, the Southern Question has produced an impressive volume of literature in the course of the one and half centuries of Italian history.

However, it is often claimed that the Southern Question does not receive the same attention that is granted to the issues related to the North, especially from the national institutions and the national mass media (Delzìo, 2010): this in turn produces a systematic understatement of the necessities of the Mezzogiorno when it comes to making important political decisions, and when there is the need to inform the population about these necessities.

As a response to this situation, Zitara advocated the consolidation of a class of new Southern intellectuals, capable of framing the reflections on the Mezzogiorno into an authentically oppositional culture, with no reticence in denouncing the problems caused directly by the Italian system and in proposing revolutionary solutions, such as the separation from the Italian state (Zitara, 1973:17). Zitara's claim derives from Gramsci's important writings on the production and function of intellectuals, and their dependence on the social forces that dominate society (Gramsci, 1971:4-23): in this context, the traditional²⁰ Southern intellectuals appear totally dependent from the dominating Italian socio-economic system and the various forces that compose it, and have every interest in preserving and imposing it to the population (Zitara, 1973:33-36). In relation to this, it is important to note that the adherence of the Southern intellectuals to majoritarian or oppositional national parties results irrelevant for the sake of the Southern population, as the interests of these parties are external to those that concern the Mezzogiorno (Zitara, 1973:36-39).

At present, it could be argued that a class of new Southern intellectuals exist, even if in still small numbers, and is gradually growing: moreover, oppositional forms of Southern culture have permeated a wide range of different disciplines, such as economy, sociology, cultural studies, literary fiction, etc.²¹ Popular musicians, especially from the folk and rock scenes, are also significantly contributing to this culture,²² whereas a considerable involvement of contemporary composers appears still remote.

²⁰ Here one should resist the temptation of reading the dichotomy between new and traditional Southern intellectual as a mere application of the Gramscian distinction between organic and traditional intellectuals. Gramsci's model, in fact, was tightly connected to the idea that the Southern rural proletariat could not produce its organic intellectuals, and thus was doomed to wait to be rescued and guided by the Northern working class (Gramsci, 1966:63-81; Gramsci, 1971:4-23).

²¹ A useful work in this context is Lepore (2011).

²² I have partly analysed this trend in my recent conference papers on Sicilian (Messina, 2011a) and Southern Italian popular music (Messina, 2011b). Cf. also Bennato (2010).

The response to Zitara's call as a contemporary composer can be considered one of the main motives behind my entire compositional activity, including this portfolio. Soon after starting this research programme, I also started seeking examples of concern for the situation of the Mezzogiorno in other contemporary composers.²³ I found significant contrasting examples in the figures of Luigi Nono, Emanuele Casale and Angelo Sturiale.

Luigi Nono's passionate efforts to compose music that could contribute to the struggle of the Italian Communist Party (PCI) cannot be ignored in terms of their impact on my work: unavoidably, he is one of the main inspirational models for my experience as a composer. Nono conjugated his work as a composer with an intense intellectual and political activity, whose uncompromising nature is attested by, for instance, his imprisonment in Peru in 1967²⁴, or his standing as a candidate for the PCI in the 1963 political elections in Italy (Nono, 2007:155-157). Among the large volume of writings left by Nono, there is the posthumous transcription of a lecture he presented in Avellino on 15 June 1978, *Musica e massa popolare*, which contains a rare example of his ideas on the Mezzogiorno²⁵:

When we talk about the South, the abandoned South, the isolated South, a specific type of South, this is true only to a limited extent. Even in the South there is an economic/financial distribution of capital, which at times is determined by a multinational firm, with a foreign owner who makes their own mind for themselves when taking decisions – in this case the economic/financial intervention has a direct influence on the culture and the society, which I would describe as an element of extreme disaggregation that does not create the premises for development, but for maximum exploitation – or can be determined by heavy flows of financial intervention which are distributed on the basis of violent corruption, of human corruption, of social corruption, of moral corruption and that are associated with anti-historical instances of conservatism, similar to institutions, such as the mafia. These forces cooperate to maintain a subaltern condition, in dividing and disaggregating. (Nono, 2002:149) [my translation]

²³ A preliminary study in this sense is represented by my work on Italian composers and political dissent, which has constituted the core of my teaching experience at the University of Leeds.

²⁴ Cf. Restagno (1987:45): Nono was imprisoned after a lecture he gave at the National University of San Marcos in Lima, where he had spoken in favour of the political prisoners and the guerrilleros exterminated by the Civil Guard. After a night spent in jail, and thanks to the intervention of Italian institutions, he was freed and expelled from Peru.

²⁵ Ramazzotti points out the existence of some notes, handwritten by Nono on the exploitation of the Irpinia, which are archived in the Archivio Luigi Nono in Venice, and the composer's engagement with the condition of the FIAT workers in Palermo in *Da un diario italiano* (Ramazzotti, 2011:183).

Here Nono lists the causes of the subordinate condition of the *Mezzogiorno*, correctly denouncing the exploitation exerted by external firms and the unequal distribution of resources piloted by the mafia. However, he clearly states that the reasons behind the subordination are not to be found only in the isolation and abandonment of the Mezzogiorno, and he then mentions a distribution of private capital controlled by foreign interests and a great deal of (allegedly state) financial intervention which is badly distributed on account of corruption and violence.

The most problematic element in Nono's discourse is the stress on a supposed availability of financial resources which is difficult to identify when looking at the real situation at the time of this speech, in 1978. If the expression "heavy flows of financial intervention" refers to state intervention, it is true that in 1978 the extraordinary intervention for the Mezzogiorno, the Cassa per il Mezzogiorno, was still active; however, this intervention only consisted of an annual average of 0.70% of the national GDP (Lepore, 2012:90-93), while the ordinary public expenditure in the Mezzogiorno has always been considerably inferior to that sent to the North of Italy (Lepore, 2012:111; Carello, 1989:176; Carlo and Capecelatro, 1974:49). The reference to the exploitation exerted by foreign capitalists may also sound suspicious, as Nono omits the crucial and profitable role of Northern Italian firms in the exploitation of the Mezzogiorno, which at that time had received a significant additional enhancement exactly in virtue of the extraordinary intervention (IBRD, 1995:10). This aspect of Nono's analysis appears especially problematic,²⁶ although it is certainly done with the best intentions, and in particular with the clear and honourable purpose of avoiding any "demagogic North-South confrontation" (Nono, 2002:147).

Another important feature of Nono's lecture is the attempt of identifying a cultural response to this situation within creative artistic production, and in particular musical composition. He proposes examples from his own music and extensively mentions Verdi, whose legacy with the Risorgimento may appear suspicious to contemporary Southern Italian observers, but was undoubtedly culturally neutral at the time of the speech. In conclusion, Nono's attempt at describing and reacting to the situation of the Mezzogiorno can certainly prove to be useful in the context of my research.

²⁶ Arguably, a similar stance has evolved, in the present day, into the dominant ideology behind the implementation of the fiscal federalism, seen as a tool to give back to the North the public money "wasted" in the Mezzogiorno: this stance derives from the deliberate confusion between the issues related to a bad administration of the resources at local level and those related to an inadequate distribution of public expenditure at national level (Giannola, Petraglia and Scalera, 2011).

The other two composers I came in contact with belong to a much younger generation than Nono's and are both Sicilians. Emanuele Casale's musical activity is dramatically permeated with the urge to express concern for social and political issues: as a way to implement this, he stresses the need for a maximum clarity and transparency of the signifiers, which are essential in order to make meanings accessible by large and diverse audiences. One of the best examples of Casale's work, in this sense, is *Conversazioni con Chomsky* (2010), a "talk-opera"²⁷ based on Chomsky's political writings, and characterised by distinctive poetic devices such as the "sonorous interview" and the "musical debate" (Casale, 2010), developed in order to make the conveyed messages immediately clear to the listener, and assisted by an extensive use of visual animations. Casale's catalogue is also characterised by the coexistence of extremely varied languages, ranging, for instance, from the microtonal inflections of *Composizione per voce* (1997) to the more "traditional" harmony of *A Victor Hugo Daza* (2006), dedicated to a Bolivian boy, murdered in 2000 by the military while he was taking part in the Cochabamba protests against water privatisation. Most importantly, Casale appears positively interested in maintaining a significant contact with his homeland, as it is attested, for example, by his choice to live and work in his home town, Catania, or by his innovative setting of a text in Sicilian in *Composizione per voce*; he is also significantly aware of the implications of being a Southerner in the context of his activity as a composer and intellectual: "the necessity of communication and the urge for rebellion are strictly related [...]. In the South, [this necessity of communication] is certainly stronger, at least for an intellectual" (Casale, appendix 1: Interview 1).

Albeit characterised by uncompromising aesthetic positions, which he defines "radical", "iconoclastic" and "anarchic" (Sturiale, 2013), Angelo Sturiale's work is less concerned with the immediate engagement with social and political themes. After spending most of his career abroad, between Scandinavia, Japan and Mexico, Sturiale decided to move back to Sicily in 2011. Quite surprisingly, in 2013 he decided to join one of the parties of the centre-left coalition and run for the Municipal Council elections in Catania, proposing a political agenda strongly interlaced with his aesthetic standpoints (Sturiale, appendix 1: interview 2)

Although none of the three composers presented above can embody the model of intellectual advocated by Zitara, each of them possesses characteristics that have proven to be extremely useful in the context of my own artistic project: much as the tight interlacement between Nono's work and his engagement with social and political issues represents, regardless of any ideological distance, an important model for my career, similarly Casale's conjugation of

²⁷ This term, coined by the composer, indicates an opera based on speech more than on singing.

political themes and communicative transparency has growingly become an inspirational model, especially for my vocal pieces; last but not least, Sturiale's career clearly attests to the possibility of returning to Sicily and starting to participate actively in the local politics after having consolidated one's artistic career abroad, providing an extremely significant stimulation to my long-term perspectives as a composer and intellectual.

1.4 Problems of Poetics

In order to fully respond to Zitara's call, I need to avail myself of specific expressive devices that could allow for an effective manipulation of meaning, capable of unveiling and symbolically overturn an oppressed condition. I need, in brief, to identify a poetic ground on which I can situate a form of artistic resistance.

While music, as suggested above, cannot signify in strict Saussurean terms, it surely possesses the faculty to represent and evoke, benefitting not only from itself as a medium, but also from all the textual and visual manifestations associated to it. In addition to this, the musical medium is fluid in its representational nature, creating the conditions for an enriched – while, potentially, also ambiguous – polysemicity of the meanings it evokes: as Monelle puts it, “music does not halt signification on the meaning of a word, but always promotes movement along the chain of interpretants” (2000:197). Monelle goes on to suggest that this movement is possible in virtue of the predominantly allegorical nature of music, as opposed to the inherently symbolical and referential nature of language (2000:196-207).

Allegory can be identified as the primary poetic form that conjugates representation and polysemicity: the allegorical trace does not only refer to one external – other – meaning, but to a flexible multiplicity of varied meanings (Quilligan, 1979:28). This flexibility, in turn, puts the reader/spectator/listener in a crucial position in the trace (Quilligan, 1979:226; Slemon, 1988:160), insofar as s/he is required to “choose to make a text with the writer's words” (Hunter, 2010:275), or, more broadly, to actively interpret and make sense of the given trace.

This centrality of the reader/spectator/listener can remind one of the active role to be granted to the audiences in Boal's well-known description of the “poetics of the oppressed” (1979:119-156), whose main objective is that of changing “the people – “spectators”, passive beings in the theatrical phenomenon – into subjects, into actors, transformers of the dramatic action” (ibidem:122), in order to overturn the hegemony of coercive/purgative forms of artistic

expression of Aristotelian origin (ibidem:1-50), and make artistic practice “a *rehearsal of revolution*” (ibidem:141).

Non-coercive forms of artistic expression can also facilitate, as mentioned above, possible alternative interpretations of the work, removed from the external connotations attached to it and only focused on its inherent aesthetic features: one of the main challenges in the task of involving audiences can in fact be the cultural-specificity of a trace that refers to a particular social and geographical context, which may appear distant or even irrelevant to audiences who do not belong to said context. This has certainly been the case for me and for most of the pieces included in this portfolio²⁸, mainly performed in presence of English and Scottish audiences, with little or no knowledge of Sicilian and Southern Italian issues.

The conjunction between the necessity of reversing a coercive oppressed condition, based on symbolic as much as factual constructs of subordination, and problems related to cultural-specificity, characterises also allegorical forms of artistic expression, particularly in post-colonial contexts (Slemon, 1988), where allegory is used as a weapon for shifting official historical narratives and “opening up the past to imaginative revision” (ibidem:165). The affinity between the condition of post-colonial contexts and that of Sicily and the Mezzogiorno is manifest (Conelli, 2013), not only on account of the patterns of subordination illustrated earlier in this work, but also in virtue of extremely similar qualities of political discourse, which makes such figures as Thomas Sankara and Patrice Lumumba very popular amongst some Sicilian and Southern protest movements.²⁹

In virtue of all these characteristics, allegory, which has characterised my poetics as a composer for quite a long time now, can definitely embody an ideal poetic ground on which artistic resistance can be situated: in this work, allegory will be used not only as a framework to describe decisions made when composing the pieces, but also as a retrospective device, in order to explore subconscious or unintentional elements which may well contribute to reinforce or enrich the allegorical construction.³⁰

Allegory will not always be employed on its own as a general poetic device throughout this work: in many pieces, elements of parody will be used. Parody’s potential in the context of politically informed musical composition can be identified in its association with the concept of

²⁸ Except, arguably, for *I supikkjarii*, which was performed again in Italy (Reggio Emilia) after the premiere at the Huddersfield Contemporary Music Festival.

²⁹ A musical attempt at connecting the Southern and Sicilian protest to Sankara’s life and activity is represented by Fiorella Mannoia’s album *Sud* (2012), inspired by Pino Aprile’s book *Terroni* [extensively cited in this work as Aprile, 2010] and dedicated to Sankara (Giupponi, 2012).

³⁰ On the possibility of unintentional allegorical coding, see Hariman (2002:283)

carnavalesque (Bakhtin, 1984:127). Carnival is a social institution that allows for a momentary subversion of the power relations, so that, during the Carnival period, the buffoon becomes the king and vice versa: the rulers get laughed at and the subordinates take on their role. However, this laughter, which has an immediate liberating power, has the effect of renovating and purifying the ruler's power: "ritual laughter was always directed toward something higher: the sun (the highest god), other gods, the highest earthly authorities were put to shame and ridiculed to force them to renew themselves" (ibidem:126-127). Due to this particular characteristic, parody will not be used extensively throughout this portfolio, but limited only to some particular moments.

Akin to parody, but more specific in terms of procedure and different in terms of results, is the deliberate re-organisation of the lyrics of the three vocal piece of this portfolio: the re-organisation, as seen earlier in this work, is performed in order to alter the original meaning of the text and adapt it to a different message. To some extent, this procedure is comparable to Bey's concept of "Art Sabotage" (1986:18-19), which advocates a deliberate assault towards existing work of arts, and is listed as one of the poetic device that can help achieving what he calls a "Temporary Autonomous Zone", a form of momentarily liberation from oppression, "a guerrilla operation which liberates an area (of land, of time, of imagination) and then dissolves itself to re-form elsewhere/elsewhen, before the State can crush it." (ibidem:94). Bey's Art Sabotage and Temporary Autonomous Zone coexist with the consciousness of their transitory nature and with the expectation that established power will take over again.

In the context of the Mezzogiorno, Bey's Temporary Autonomous Zone can be compared to what Pugliese describes as "Provisional Street Justice" (2008)³¹: namely, the Neapolitan practice of disfiguring monuments that celebrate the Italian linguistic and political hegemony over the Southern populations. While Pugliese provides the graffiti on the statue of Dante in Naples as a case study (ibidem:8-18), other traces, posterior to Pugliese's work, can arguably be associated to this type of cultural manifestation, such as the disfigurement of the statue of Garibaldi and its insertion in a public toilet, in the city council of Castellammare di Stabia, performed in May 2011 by workers of a shipbuilding³² company who were protesting against job cuts. Pugliese describes these manifestations, perceived as incomprehensible and vandalistic by the dominant social groups, as attempts at proposing alternative political

³¹ Pugliese borrowed the phrase from Ferrel (Pugliese, 2001:17).

³² Incidentally, the shipbuilding factories in Castellammare di Stabia are one of the most emblematic examples of the forced impoverishment of the Mezzogiorno after the Italian Unification: the factories were among the most important shipbuilding centres in Europe (Sirago, 2012), but after the Unification the centres of production were moved to the North (Mazza, 2011; Lizza, 2011).

discourses, capable of reorienting the “caucacentric, monoglossic nation-state space into a place that is coextensive with southern community histories, politics and cultural practices” (Pugliese, 2008:13). It is important to highlight the fact that the disfiguration of these monuments does not represent a direct assault towards the work of art in itself, nor the author, but towards the cultural and political significations embedded in the monuments.



Figure 1: the statue of Garibaldi, beheaded and inserted in a toilet in Castellammare di Stabia, May 2011.
[Source: Dagospia.com - http://www.dagospia.com/mediagallery/dago_fotogallery-37479/329372.htm - image of public domain as stated on the website]

My re-organisation of lyrics assumes a similar function as the forms of expression discussed above: however, contrarily to what happens in them, it is not based on the unsolicited assault on a specific work, but on the absolute respect for the poets with whom I collaborate and on pre-discussed agreements as to my intentions over the setting of their words.³³

³³ In the case of John Whale the agreement has taken place with the poet himself. In the case of Philip Larkin, his publisher Faber & Faber has authorised my project.

1.5 Generating and Combining Compositional Material

The strategies and techniques employed to generate musical material for the compositions of this portfolio are generally the same utilised for the whole of my musical production: essentially, when writing a new piece, I tend to recycle existing pitches, duration and figures from my older pieces rather than creating new material.

For example, when working on the pieces of this portfolio, I generated new material only in one occasion, namely, when composing *A ttinghitè* for solo electric guitar: I used a numerical matrix in order to derive pitches and intervals, whereas the decision on durations were left to more intuitive procedures.

33 3/4	109 6/8	106 7/16
40 1/4	70 4/8	68 11/16
13 3/4	17 2/8	15 15/16
-45	-45	-46
-135 3/4	-115 4/8	-116 5/16
-258 3/4	-194 1/8	-194 13/16
-413 3/4	-280 6/8	-281 6/16
-600 3/4	-375 3/8	-376
-819 2/4	-478 1/8	-478 11/16
-1070 2/4	-588 6/8	-589 6/16
-1353 2/4	-707 4/8	-708 1/16
-1668 2/4	-834 2/8	-834 12/16

7								
14	2							
21	9							
28	16	4						
35	23	11						
42	30	18	6					
49	37	25	13	1				
56	44	32	20	8				
63	51	39	27	15	3			
70	58	46	34	22	10			
77	65	53	41	29	17	5		
84	72	60	48	36	24	12		

Figure 2: the numerical matrix used to generate pitches and intervals in *A ttinghitè*

For all the other pieces of this portfolio, the compositional material was borrowed and developed from previous pieces of mine: in this case, the smallest elements I worked with

were not pitches and intervals, but entire fragments. Fragments were borrowed from other pieces and recombined in new pieces: in some cases, they were treated as invariable modular blocks; more often, several types of variations were applied to them.

The prototype I had initially devised for reorganising fragments from existing pieces was based on the 15 puzzle, a widely spread game invented by Sam Loyd at the beginning of the 20th century (Loyd, 1914). The 15 puzzle is essentially based on a grid with sliding tiles where the movement of the tiles is determined by the position of the only one empty slot, and where the number of possible configurations in the grid is lower than the total number of possible numerical combinations.

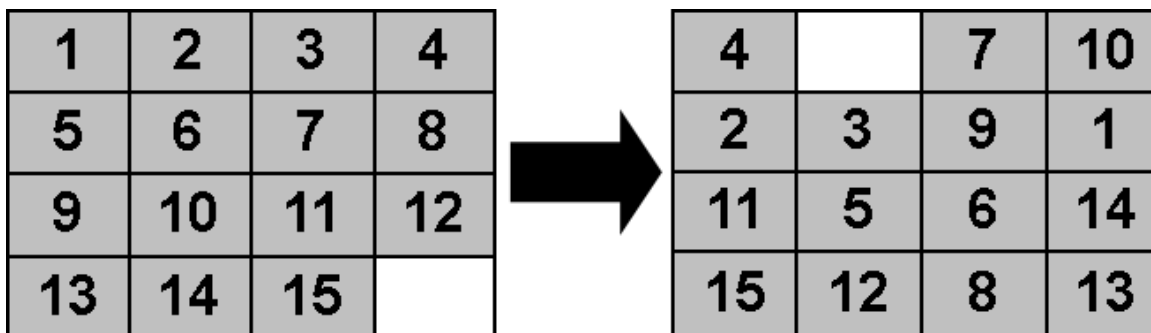


Figure 3: a possible reorganisation of the tiles from the initial configuration of the 15 puzzle

The 15 puzzle model was initially used very strictly to reorganise the material: an example from my old music is the piece *Muscular Catabolism of Anthropomorphic Potatoes* (2008), where the model systematically determined the permutations of the vertical and horizontal dislocation of the musical fragments (see Figure 4).

In the pieces that compose this portfolio, the 15 puzzle is used more as an abstract principle than a systematic mathematical model: the recombination of existing fragments is performed much more freely, and often does not follow any mathematical system; in other instances, mathematical principles related to the 15 puzzle are used for macrostructural procedures. The latter is the case of *A banner*, where a similar model was used to determine the combination of sections played by the first and second ensemble.

Alto Flute

Guitar

Violin

Viola

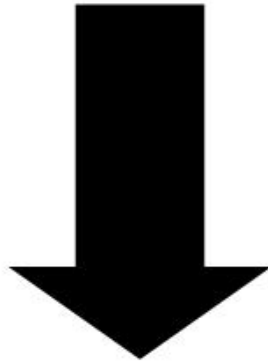
1 2 3 4

5 6 7 8

9 10 11 12

13 14 15 16

Detailed description: This musical score is divided into four measures. The instruments are Alto Flute, Guitar, Violin, and Viola. The measures are numbered 1 through 16. Measure 1 (Alto Flute) contains fragment 1. Measure 2 (Alto Flute) contains fragment 2. Measure 3 (Alto Flute) contains fragment 3. Measure 4 (Alto Flute) contains fragment 4. Measure 1 (Guitar) contains fragment 5. Measure 2 (Guitar) contains fragment 6. Measure 3 (Guitar) contains fragment 7. Measure 4 (Guitar) contains fragment 8. Measure 1 (Violin) contains fragment 9. Measure 2 (Violin) contains fragment 10. Measure 3 (Violin) contains fragment 11. Measure 4 (Violin) contains fragment 12. Measure 1 (Viola) contains fragment 13. Measure 2 (Viola) contains fragment 14. Measure 3 (Viola) contains fragment 15. Measure 4 (Viola) contains fragment 16.



A. Fl.

Gtr.

Vln.

Vla.

4 16 7 10

2 3 9 1

11 5 6 14

15 12 8 13

Detailed description: This musical score is divided into four measures. The instruments are Alto Flute (A. Fl.), Guitar (Gtr.), Violin (Vln.), and Viola (Vla.). The measures contain reorganized fragments. Measure 1 (A. Fl.) contains fragment 4. Measure 2 (A. Fl.) contains fragment 16. Measure 3 (A. Fl.) contains fragment 7. Measure 4 (A. Fl.) contains fragment 10. Measure 1 (Gtr.) contains fragment 2. Measure 2 (Gtr.) contains fragment 3. Measure 3 (Gtr.) contains fragment 9. Measure 4 (Gtr.) contains fragment 1. Measure 1 (Vln.) contains fragment 11. Measure 2 (Vln.) contains fragment 5. Measure 3 (Vln.) contains fragment 6. Measure 4 (Vln.) contains fragment 14. Measure 1 (Vla.) contains fragment 15. Measure 2 (Vla.) contains fragment 12. Measure 3 (Vla.) contains fragment 8. Measure 4 (Vla.) contains fragment 13.

Figure 4: two consecutive passages in *Muscular Catabolism of Anthropomorphic Potatoes* – the reorganisation of the fragments is determined by the 15 puzzle model.

In *I mballakkeri*, the 15 puzzle model was used initially to combine 16 initial fragments into the 6 collections of MIDI files that constitute the instrumental part of the piece (see Figure 5). The same principle was then used to determine the order of the triggering activated by the MIDI controller.



Figure 5: the 16 fragments used to generate the 5 collections of MIDI files in *I mballakkeri*.

The abundant use of recombination procedures can be evident when examining smaller portions of different scores of mine: some fragments used in a piece can reappear in other pieces. Figure 6 and Figure 7 give evidence of this trend with reference to the pieces *I supikkjarii*, *Circling round my flesh* and *Separate Place*.

As will be illustrated further in section 2.2, the relation between the pieces *U mpastu* and *A manikula* is totally dependent on the borrowing of fragments of the former piece, recombined to form the various sections of the latter piece (see Figure 18): in this case, as will be explained further, this type of work assumes an important role within the allegorical signification of the pieces.

Wood Block

mp f

flz

slap

f

mf f ff mp

Detailed description: This is a multi-staff musical score for the piece 'I supikkjarii'. It features five staves. The top two staves are for vocal lines, with dynamic markings of *mp* and *f*. The middle staff is for a wood block, marked *mp*. The bottom two staves are for a percussion instrument, with 'slap' markings and dynamics of *f*. A specific melodic element, consisting of a sequence of notes with a triplet and a slur, is highlighted with a thick black box. This element is marked with dynamics *mf*, *f*, *ff*, and *mp* across the staves.

Adagio $\text{♩} = 60$

mp p

I thought

mp p

Detailed description: This is a musical score for the piece 'Circling round my flesh'. It is marked 'Adagio' with a tempo of $\text{♩} = 60$. The score is in 3/4 time and features three staves. The top staff is for the vocal line, with lyrics 'I thought' and dynamics of *mp* and *p*. The bottom two staves are for piano accompaniment, with dynamics of *mp* and *p*. A specific melodic element, identical to the one in the top score but raised by a semitone, is highlighted with a thick black box. An arrow points from this box to the corresponding box in the top score.

Figure 6: the same element appearing in *I supikkjarii* (top – bb. 3-6) and, raised by a semitone, in *Circling round my flesh* (bottom – song I: bb. 1-2).

The figure displays two musical score excerpts. The top excerpt, from *Separate Place* (measure 28), features a Soprano line (S.) with the lyrics "out of this" and a piano accompaniment (Pno.) with a boxed section. The bottom excerpt, from *Circling round my flesh* (song 4: bb. 1-2), features a Bass Clarinet line (B. Cl.) with the lyrics "now that" and a piano accompaniment (Pno.) with a boxed section. Arrows indicate the correspondence between the boxed piano parts in both excerpts.

Figure 7: the same element appearing in *Separate Place* (top – b. 28) and *Circling round my flesh* (bottom – song 4: bb. 1-2)

In principle, the pieces that compose this portfolio could be divided in 4 groups, on the basis of the different collections of fragments that were used to compose them:

1. the first group includes *U mpastu* and *A manikula*;
2. the second group comprises *A banneria*, *I supikkjarii*, *Circling round my flesh* and *Separate Place*;
3. *I mballakkeri* constitutes a separate third group on its own, in that the initial fragments used to compose the piece and shown in Figure 5 were borrowed from several previous piano pieces of mine;

4. the fourth group includes *A ttinghitè* for which, as seen above, new pitches were generated, and *Not piece, but other things*, which was composed from modified and recombined fragments of *A ttinghitè*.

A mattanza and *They are not doing anything wrong* are not included in any of the above groups, since they present a very limited amount of material in terms of pitches, intervals, durations, etc. In both cases, however, the material was derived from other pieces of this portfolio, applying similar recombination principles as the ones illustrated above.

2. Instrumental Scores

2.1 *A banner*: A Quasi-Manifesto of Polysemic Allegory

Presenting allegorical music involves providing interpretive keys to the listener. When text is not an integral part of the work, the role of interpretive key can be played by external textual elements related to it, such as the title and the programme note. Other non-textual elements, such as visual elements, can also orient the listener/spectator towards a definite interpretation of the work.

The title of my piece *A banner*, which means “the flag” in Sicilian, is intended to suggest the adoption of a very specific standpoint, in a way to function as a quasi-manifesto of my music. While the title may appear obscure to non-Sicilian speakers, the programme note provides a much clearer explanation in English – the text expresses my staunch opposition towards the celebration for the 150th anniversary of the proclamation of the Kingdom of Italy, on 17 March 2011, and attests to my defiance of the Italian flag and my solidarity with those who had just showed anti-Italian feelings in Sicily and in the rest of the Mezzogiorno (Appendix 2: Programme Note 3).

The premiere of *A banner* took place exactly on the day following the celebrations, 18 March 2011, in Clothworkers’ Centenary Concert Hall, by the ensemble LSTwo conducted by Jess Ward (conductor 1) and Mic Spencer (conductor 2). The score was later published in 2013 by Musicisti Associati Produzioni.

After the initial reading of the title and the programme note, the listener/spectator is ideally confronted with the next interpretive key: the particular *mise-en-scène* organised for the performance. The ensemble is divided into two sub-ensembles (called ensemble Primo and ensemble Secondo respectively), each of which is conducted by a different conductor: this arguably gives the listener/spectator an initial sense of conflict and separation. The two ensembles are also remarkably different in terms of numbers: the ensemble Primo is composed of 9 musicians, whereas the ensemble Secondo is composed of only 4. In terms of space, the ensemble Primo extends itself to the point of almost surrounding the ensemble Secondo. These elements can potentially give the listener/spectator a sense of disproportion, both in terms of numbers and space.

The next element that may attract the attention of the listener/spectator is the behaviour of the conductors – conductor 2 turns their back on conductor 1:³⁴ another element of contrast and division is offered to the audience. Interestingly, the two conductors still need to watch each other’s movements at the beginning of each section. Most of the sections of the piece, however, call for most of the sections to be started by ensemble Secondo, so that conductor 2 really seldom needs to watch conductor 1.

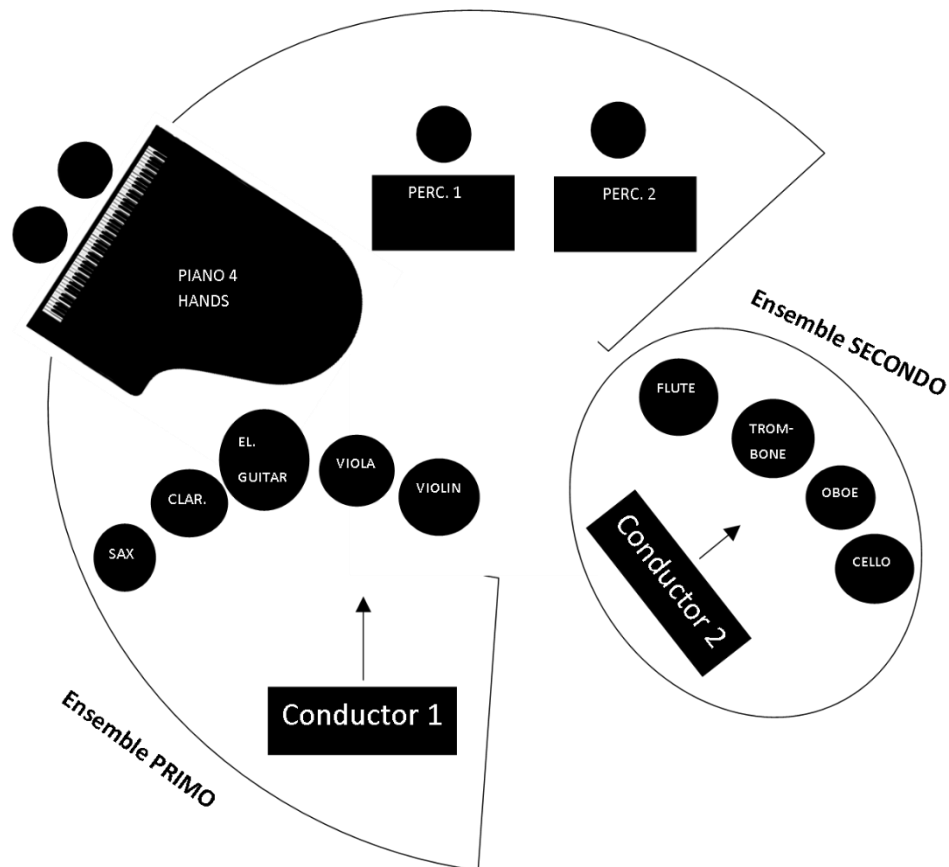


Figure 8: the *mise-en-scène* arranged for the premiere of *A banner*

All of these elements put the listener/spectator in the state of mind of having to interpret the piece: the audience, in brief, feels solicited to find an explanation and to solve a puzzle. Some members of the audience and some of the musicians, after the premiere, suggested their interpretation of the piece to me, based on the clues at their disposal. The majority of those who proposed an interpretation understood the ensemble Secondo as representing Sicily, and

³⁴ This feature was not planned when composing the piece: it was added to the piece during the rehearsals with the ensemble, thanks to an intuition of conductor 2 (Mic Spencer).

the ensemble Primo as representing Italy. This is, of course, a perfectly plausible reading, as the different amounts of musicians in the two line-ups mirror, in a sense, the numerical disproportion between Italians and Sicilians and the condition of the latter group as an ethnic minority. The spatial disproportion between ensemble Primo and ensemble Secondo fits also well in the allegory, illustrating the difference in territorial extension between Sicily and the mainland. Moreover, the behaviour of ensemble Secondo's conductor (who turns the back at the other ensemble and conductor), could easily be seen as representing an exasperated declaration of autonomy and self-determination. Above all, this interpretation fits very well with the programme note and the title.

Although this interpretation is absolutely plausible and definitely fits well with my intentions and with the issues declared in the programme note, other interpretations are possible and equally appropriate. Another reading of the piece, proposed by some listeners, saw ensemble Primo as representing the Southern Italian and Sicilian people, mentioned in the programme note, who engaged in burning the Italian flag, hissing and booing at the national Italian anthem, and waving the Sicilian flag in demand of a correct application of the Sicilian Autonomy Statute: this interpretation would see ensemble Secondo as representing the minority of "pseudo-historians, demagogues and buffoons [who] keep babbling on about how proud we should be of having been invaded, conquered and ruthlessly exploited by our Northern brothers back in the 1860s" (Appendix 2: Programme Note 3). This interpretation is also viable and fits well with my intentions too. The numerical and spatial disproportion between the two line-ups would, in this case, portray the numerical disproportion between a restricted group of decision makers/opinion leaders and a mass of people engaging in protest from below, while the behaviour of ensemble Secondo's conductor would represent deliberate lack of interest for the claims coming from the people from the side of decision makers and opinion leaders.

At least one more interpretation is possible, comparable with the celebration of the 150th anniversary of the Italian Unification mentioned in the programme note, where ensemble Primo, dominating in terms of space and numbers, would represent the majority of the country engaged in celebrations, whereas ensemble Secondo would represent a minority of Southern Italian and Sicilian dissidents, engaged in protest against the celebrations and refusing to participate to the rhetoric associated to them, in line with the behaviour of ensemble Secondo's conductor who turns back at the other ensemble.

So far, possible interpretations of the piece have been explored with regards to the textual and visual elements only – nothing has yet been said about the musical structure of the piece and

how it can generate further interpretive horizons. The piece is divided in 15 sections. Each section contains a part for ensemble Primo and a part for ensemble Secondo. In some sections, one of the ensembles *tacet* while the other one plays – in other sections they both play: one of the ensembles will be the first to start while the other one follows after a flexible temporal range (up to 5 seconds, up to 7 seconds, etc.), so that the two ensembles are never synchronised. Each of the ensembles does not necessarily play tutti in all the sections.

Table 1 shows a full outline of the 15 sections and illustrates some other significant features of the piece. First of all, both ensembles stay silent for three sections each, which means that 6 of the 15 sections of the piece are played by just one ensemble. The *tacet* sections become increasingly more frequent as the piece progresses: in fact, of the six *tacet* sections, just one occurs in the first seven sections, whereas the remaining five *tacet* sections are concentrated in the last 8 sections of the piece.

In 6 out of the 9 sections where both ensembles play, the ensemble Secondo starts, and the ensemble Primo follows. Similarly, the ensemble Secondo mostly plays tutti (9 times out of 12), whereas the ensemble Primo plays tutti just in sections II and XI, and in both cases the other ensemble *tacet*.

In brief, the spatial and territorial dominance of ensemble Primo is countered by the almost total primacy enjoyed by ensemble Secondo in terms of starting the sections. Ensemble Secondo is also much more cohesive than ensemble Primo, since it plays tutti in almost all sections. Although silent sections are distributed equally between the two ensembles (3 each), the last two *tacet* are both assigned to ensemble Primo, in sections XIII and XV, in the context of a substantial reduction to silence, as in the last 3 sections the only instrument left playing for ensemble Primo is the piano in bar XIV.³⁵

³⁵ To help clarify this detail, I should probably mention the fact that during rehearsals, after the end of section XII, all the instrumentalists in ensemble Primo, except the two pianists, used to walk out of the stage and sit in the audience. This feature, which would have surely reinforced the allegoric impact of the piece, was not included in the public performance of the piece.

Table 1: an outline of the 15 sections of *A banner*

Section	Ensemble	
	ENSEMBLE PRIMO	ENSEMBLE SECONDO
I	Starts <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 7 players (everyone minus the two pianists) 	Follows after up to 5 seconds <ul style="list-style-type: none"> TUTTI
II	Starts <ul style="list-style-type: none"> TUTTI 	TACET
III	Follows after up to 7 seconds <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 5 players (clarinet, alto sax, percussion 1 & 2 and electric guitar) 	Starts <ul style="list-style-type: none"> TUTTI
IV	Follows after up to 3 seconds <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 7 players (everyone minus the two pianists) 	Starts <ul style="list-style-type: none"> TUTTI
V	Follows after up to 7 seconds <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2 players (percussion 1 & 2) 	Starts <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3 players (flute, oboe and cello)
VI	Starts <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 6 players (everyone minus alto sax and percussion 1 & 2) 	Follows after up to 5 seconds <ul style="list-style-type: none"> TUTTI
VII	Starts <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2 players (the two pianists) 	Follows after up to 5 seconds <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2 players (flute and cello)
VIII	TACET	Starts <ul style="list-style-type: none"> TUTTI
IX	Starts <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 5 players (clarinet, alto sax, the two pianists and electric guitar) 	TACET
X	Follows after up to 5 seconds <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 6 players (everyone minus alto sax and percussion 1 & 2) 	Starts <ul style="list-style-type: none"> TUTTI
XI	Starts <ul style="list-style-type: none"> TUTTI 	TACET
XII	Follows after up to 5 seconds <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 7 players (everyone minus clarinet and alto sax) 	Starts <ul style="list-style-type: none"> TUTTI
XIII	TACET	Starts 3 players (flute, oboe and cello)
XIV	Follows after up to 5 seconds <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2 players (the two pianists) 	Starts <ul style="list-style-type: none"> TUTTI
XV	TACET	Starts <ul style="list-style-type: none"> TUTTI

Primo	Secondo
I	I
II	
III	III
IV	IV
V	V
VI	VI
VII	VII
	VIII
IX	
X	X
XI	
XII	XII
	XIII
XIV	XIV
	XIV

Figure 9: the distribution of silent sections in *A banner*

Some new hypotheses, coherent with the three interpretations proposed above, can be drawn from the last examined data. In the context of the first interpretation seen above, the primacy of ensemble Secondo in terms of starting the sections can be seen as a further assertion of Sicily's autonomy and self-determination. Similarly, the ensemble Secondo's predominance in terms of cohesiveness can mean a more compact identity of Sicilians as opposed to a more fragmented and weak Italianness, confirmed also by the progressive reduction to silence of ensemble Primo in the last three sections of the piece.

The same elements can also fit well in the context of the second interpretation: the absolute predominance of ensemble Secondo in terms of starting the sections could be interpreted as the decision makers/opinion leaders' privileged position in terms of initiating and controlling public opinion and piloting consensus. The progressive reduction to silence of ensemble Primo, as opposed to the endurance of ensemble Secondo in terms of maintaining cohesiveness, can

be seen as the protesters' refusal to keep engaging in the same debate and confronting decision makers/opinion leaders, always stuck on the same positions.

Finally, in the context of the third interpretation, the cohesiveness of ensemble Secondo can mean compactness in refusing to celebrate the Unification. The primacy of ensemble Secondo in terms of starting the sections can also be seen as a refusal to leave the initiative and the control of official narratives to the majority of people engaged in celebrations.

Other crucial features can be identified in the sonic layout of the work. Partly due to the limited length of the sections, and partly due to the time needed by both conductors, at the end of each section, to prepare for the next section, coordinate with the other ensemble and give some preliminary empty bars to their own ensemble, the piece sounds really fragmented and aphoristic, to the point that often the silence in between sections is longer than the sections themselves.

Temporal fragmentation is used to respond to a very specific representational intent, namely, the depiction of a disjointed historical progression, on one hand described with patchy and partial narratives, and on the other hand characterised, in its development, by significant sporadic events, rather than by an ordered and meaningful advancement. I will focus in more detail on this reflection on history further on in this work, with reference to this and other pieces.

In the context of the three interpretations of *A banner* proposed earlier in this chapter, the allegorical representation of a fragmented history, both in terms of official versus revisionist narrative and in terms of actual historical progression, can certainly fit well in all the three proposed interpretations. The asynchrony between the two ensembles can also contribute to this feature, in representing a disjointed perception of historical events between different groups.

The three different interpretations of the piece do not exclude each other and are meant to coexist as essential parts of the work, reinforcing its potential in terms of signification. Polysemy confers to the musical piece the possibility of alluding to broad and potentially universal meanings, while being, at the same time, strongly rooted in the particular circumstances illustrated above. In line with Boal's aforementioned ideas on non-coercive poetics, the piece does not mystify one particular interpretation and does not impose it on the audience. This multiplicity of possible interpretations applies also to the other pieces of this portfolio. In the next sections of this commentary, however, I will mainly focus on my own understanding of the pieces, only occasionally outlining alternative interpretations.

2.2 Economic and Political Allegories

The patterns of exploitation discussed in the introduction to this work can be seen as local manifestations of a global system, which bases its activity on the subordination and exploitation of certain territories by other territories, according to a model that is commonly known as imperialism.³⁶

The creation and maintenance of subordinated and exploited areas is granted in first place by the contingency, for some territories, of developing capitalist modes of production before other territories, thus becoming “developed areas” under the new global economico/political regime. This is followed, in turn, by the progressive enforcement of non-capitalist economies to comply with the capitalist modes of production, through the infiltration in said economies of capitalist goods and commodities and through military intervention. This is not done in order to bring all territories to the same level of development, but in order to create a dualistic model of development, where developed and underdeveloped areas exist. The interplay between these two types of areas is also fundamental: through unequal exchange in trade, the developed areas can buy raw materials, agricultural products and industrial products at cheap prices from the underdeveloped areas, and sell them expensive industrial products, commodities and services at expensive rates. This inevitably leads to an exacerbation of the gap between the so-called centre and the so-called periphery, with a constant drain of resources from the latter to the former. Moreover, the infiltration of capitalist goods and commodities in a non-capitalist economy leads to the destruction of the local modes of production and exchange, with the consequent reorganisation of the workforce, which, in the case of some developed areas, can be almost entirely reabsorbed in the productive system, whereas in the case of the underdeveloped areas is likely to leave huge amounts of unemployed or underemployed workers, many of whom decide to migrate to the developed areas and offer their labour there, allegedly at cheaper rates than the local averages. Left with their economies destroyed and huge amounts of the population unemployed, underdeveloped areas cannot channelise their savings in order to create the capital accumulation which represent the basis for development, and are condemned to keep functioning as markets for the expensive goods, commodities and services exported by the developed areas, and as suppliers of cheap workforce, raw materials, agricultural products and industrial products (Zitara, 1973; Emmanuel, 1972; Dandekar, 1980; Jedlicki, 2007). In addition to this,

³⁶ This term is preferred, in this work, to the rival term “globalisation”, which tends to give the idea of a mutually integrated international market and to conceal the dramatic inequality in wealth distribution implied in the process: cf. Petras and Veltmeyer (2000), Callinicos (2002), Chilcote (2002).

underdeveloped areas function more and more as dumps for the solid waste produced in the developed areas.

Scholars such as Capecelatro and Carlo (1974) and Zitara (1973) observed and explained the relationship between the North and the South of Italy by examining the patterns of exchange between the two areas, and concluded that the same type of unequal exchange takes place in Italy, condemning the South to perennial underdevelopment, which in turn is used by the North as a basis for its development (Capecelatro and Carlo, 1974; Zitara, 1971; Zitara, 1973).

These considerations functioned as premises for a large compositional project, in which, inspired by a renowned publication by Saviano (2008), I started from the concept of cement, seen as an emblematic material, instrumental in the oppression exerted on the South and Sicily by the mafias: the role of the construction industry, strictly connected to that of waste disposal, is crucial in order to understand the responsibilities of the Northern economic and political establishment in relation to this oppression. Northern industries dispose their waste in the Mezzogiorno through the mediation of the mafias. Some of the refuse is then stocked in mines, previously emptied of construction materials (Massari, 2004; Saviano, 2008:282-301; Sebaste, 2010). Other waste is used as cheap construction material for motorways, buildings, etc. (Aprile, 2010:207-243). The cycle of cement and waste is responsible for the death of hundreds of thousands of people (Marra et al, 2012). The project comprises three pieces, *U mpastu*, for orchestra, *A manikula*, for 9 instruments, and *U kriwu*, a shorter piece for microtonal trumpet and microtonal French horn which is not included in this portfolio.

2.2.1 *U mpastu*: An Allegory of Unequal Exchange

U mpastu ("the cement mortar") was written for the 2010 LUUMS Symphony Orchestra Composition Competition and premiered by the orchestra conducted by Adam Fergler on 12 June 2012, at the Great Hall, University of Leeds; the score was later published by Musicisti Associati Produzioni in 2013. The piece takes the critique of the mechanism of exchange as primary philosophical premise while using it as main generative tool, in that the specific mode of development of the material is aimed at the depiction of a process of exchange of tokens/signs/goods between different agents, whose effect is the gradual formation of a state of inequality with the progressive exclusion of an increasing number of areas, that leads to stagnation of the system.

The generation process was organised in two main moments: a purely "creative" one, where the initial material is obtained in a rather intuitive way, and a "moment of reaction", in which the material is attained in response to the previously generated material. In *U mpastu*, the

dialectics between creation and reaction always takes place between two different instruments and in the context of two different (always consecutive) sections. So, for instance, the part assigned to clarinet II in section I.b represents a reaction to the part assigned to flute II in section II.a, as will be demonstrated below.

If, at first glance, this mechanism could resemble the process of communication, I intend it to refer mainly to the interaction of supply and demand, which basically regulates the functioning of the market in a model characterised by free exchange. The main symbolic expression of the dialectics between supply and demand is price; moreover, monetary entities can be seen as a semiotic representation, or, as it were, a “semiotisation”, of goods: the exchange of goods becomes an exchange of signs and, as in the process of communication, the equilibrium is determined by mechanisms of power.

The very first section of *U mpastu*, I.a, was mainly intuitively derived. Intuitive processes also characterise all the other 'creative' moments of the following sections.

To explain how the 'reactive' moments were created, I will provide an example: Figure 10 shows the second fragment given to flute II from section II.a.



Figure 10: *U mpastu* the second fragment given to flute II in section II.a

It is easily dividable into two semiotic units, as shown in Figure 11 below:

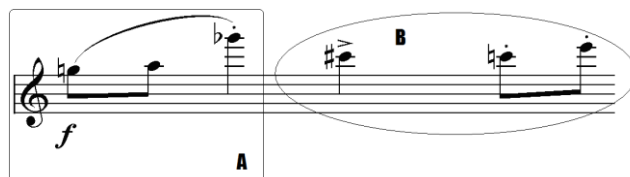


Figure 11: *U mpastu* - a division into two semiotic units of the second fragment given to flute II in section II.a

Unit A refers to the information actually conveyed, while unit B refers to or, as it were, “names” the agent at which the information is aimed: in this case the information is aimed at clarinet I in the following section, I.b, on which I will now focus (see Figure 12).



Figure 12: *U mpastu* - the first fragment given to clarinet I in section I.b

Again, there is the possibility to divide the fragment in two units, as shown in Figure 13.

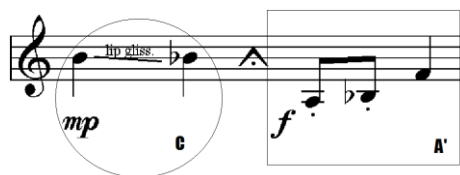


Figure 13: *U mpastu* - a division into two semiotic units of the first fragment given to clarinet I in section I.b

Where unit A' actually derives from unit A.³⁷ Now I will focus on unit C. In the first example, I showed how a creative fragment is formed by two units, one of which conveys the information, while the other one indicates the agent at which the information is aimed. This second example shows what a fragment of reaction is composed of: I showed how A' derives from A and constitutes the response to it. C, on the other hand, is meant to refer to the source of the information conveyed in A', that is, flute II.

I obtained C by observing the behaviour of the other fragment that previously referred to flute II or to similar instruments (i.e., piccolo or flute I). This is the case for trombone I in section I.a, (see Figure 14).

³⁷ Please note that the clarinet part is transposed.

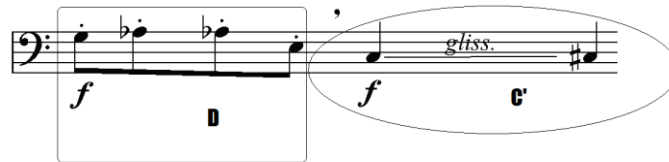


Figure 14: *U mpastu* - the segmentation of trombone I in section I.a

Here C' names flute II in section II.a (first fragment), while D represents the conveyed information. C was obtained by observing and 'interpreting' (that is, altering) C': thus C retains the glissando gesture and the interval that characterise C', but alters the direction of the glissando. Further on in the piece, when other instruments have to name flute II, they will use a similar pattern to C and C'. This is the case, for example, of contrabasses I in section I.c (see Figure 15).

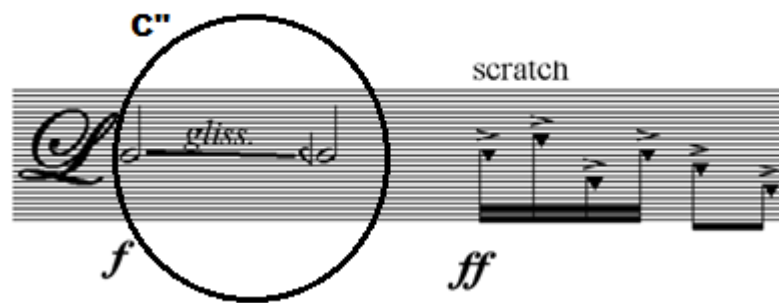


Figure 15: *U mpastu* - C'' in contrabasses I, section I.c

Figure 16 recapitulates the relationship between creative and reactive fragments.

The above procedure was applied in order to generate new fragments throughout the entire piece. In each section, the instrumental fragments either respond to previous fragments from the preceding section or instigate a reaction from another instrument in the following section. This creates an intricate web of interactions, that is meant to function as a simplified allegorical model of the system of exchange in the globalised market. The global acoustic effect of the piece can be described as a sort of chaotic oppression, characterised by the repeated movement of the sound from one half of the orchestra to the other and vice versa, which always passes through a moment of overlap of the two halves.

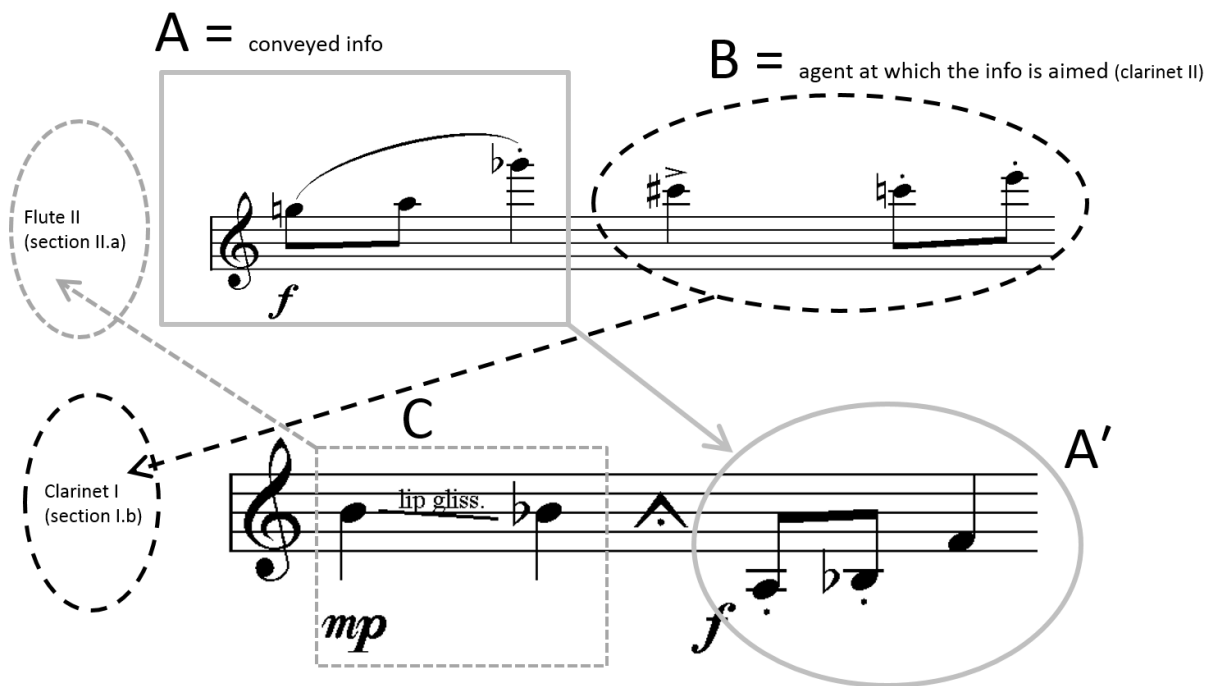


Figure 16: *U mpastu* – a diagram of the relationship between creative and reactive fragments

Each of the instrumental fragments in *U mpastu* is accompanied by a number, which indicates the times the fragment should be played for in the relevant section. These numbers were also generated by means of exchange procedure, and more precisely by applying simple conversion rates (i.e., multiplying or dividing by 2) to the interaction between instrumental fragments illustrated above. So for example, within the aforementioned interaction between flute II in section II.a and clarinet I in section I.b, the flute repeats its fragment 4 times, whereas the clarinet responds by repeating its fragment 8 times: similar examples are spread throughout the piece, and increase as the piece progresses. This process is deliberately meant to create imbalance between the instrumental fragments, thus allegorically reproducing the phenomenon of unequal exchange.

To recapitulate, each of the instrumental fragments in the piece is meant to react to another fragment or instigate a reaction from another instrument, with an exchange of material taking place in each interaction. Interactions are also regulated by the intervention exchange rates, which become more frequently uneven as the piece progresses. The diagram in Table 2 illustrates all the interactions between instrumental fragments taking place between section II.a and section I.b; the grey areas indicate unequal exchange.

Table 2: *U mpastu* - the interactions between instrumental fragments (sections II.a – I.b)

Section II.a → Section I.b				
Number of repeats	Instrument		Instrument	Number of repeats
4	Flute II	→	Clarinet I	8
8	Piccolo	→	Bassoon I	8
9	1st violins II	→	Horn I	9
10	Trumpet III	→	Contrabasses I	10
2	Tuba	→	Bass drum	4
7	Trombone	→	Flute I	7
2	Bassoon II	→	Trumpets I & II	4
4	Timpani	→	Oboe I	8
10	Horn III & IV	→	Bass clarinet	10
7	Cellos II	→	Trombone I	7

A glance at Table 3, which illustrates the interactions taking place between section I.b and section II.b, can reveal how the frequency of unbalanced interactions increases with the progression of the piece.

Essentially, from a situation characterised by a majority of balanced interactions, the piece passes to a regimen of prevalently unbalanced interactions. In the following sections, while the unbalanced interactions remain dominant, the total number of interactions between instruments decreases dramatically, with the result of gradually leaving more and more instruments out of the web of interactions. Consequently, the number of instruments that remain silent for an entire section gradually increases, reaching a climax in the final section II.d, in which 7 instruments remain silent. Figure 17 illustrates the exponential increase in instruments that remain silent in the last 4 sections of the piece.

Table 3: *U mpastu* - the interactions between instrumental fragments (sections I.b – II.b)

Section I.b → Section II.b			
Number of repeats	Instrument	Instrument	Number of repeats
4	Flute I	→ Trumpet III	8
4	Clarinet I	→ Trombone	8
3	Trombone I	→ Bassoon II	6
10	Bass drum	→ Oboes II & III	10
5	1st violins I	→ Piccolo	10
5	1st violins II	→ Flute II	10
5	Violas	→ Tuba	5
5	Cellos I	→ Clarinet II	10
5	Contrabasses II	→ Timpani	10

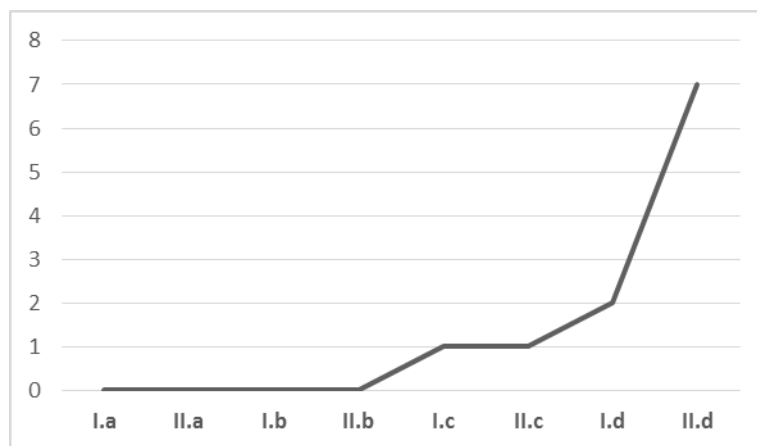


Figure 17: a chart depicting the number of instrument that stay silent in each section of *U mpastu*

The scarcity of instruments playing in the last section has the immediate effect of breaking with the acoustic impression suggested by the rest of the piece, and does not sound as a resolution, but as a necrosis of the system. Within the allegorical construction of the piece, this is meant to suggest the inevitable decline of the regimen of free exchange in a closed system, in absence of new territories and space to subjugate. This decline, however, is not uniform,

and tends to exclude or marginalise some areas and territories before others, creating a substantial condition of inequality throughout the lifecycle of the system.

2.2.2 *A manikula*: The Construction of the Other

By allegorically stating the impossibility for the regimen of free exchange to sustain itself independently, *U mpastu* indirectly confirms the imperialistic nature of the system, whose survival is granted only by the continuous occupation of new areas and territories. Culturally, this translates into the constant research of the Other, to subjugate and control, by exploiting its profitability while marginalising it politically (Williamson: 1986). The pursue and construction of the Other is additionally instrumental to the legitimisation of the system: the Other embodies the negation of all the values on which the system poses its ethical foundations. In the context of the Italian socio-politico-economical system, the Mezzogiorno represents a constructed Other, a negation of Italianness instrumental to the creation of an Italian national identity (Dickie, 1994; Dickie, 1997:119; Gribaudo, 1997; Conelli, 2013): therefore, it has been emphasised that the marginalisation of the Mezzogiorno as a constructed Other is not only a form of regionalism that sets the concept of North against the concept of South, but also a form of Italian nationalism (Dickie, 1994; Dickie, 1997).

Reflection on these issues has accompanied the composition of *A manikula* (“the trowel”), written for the LSTwo Ensemble, that premiered the piece under the direction of Mic Spencer on 23 April 2010 as part of the University of Leeds Contemporary Music Festival 2010 (the piece was published by Musicisti Associati Produzioni in 2013).

The compositional process of *A manikula* temporally coincided with that of *U mpastu*: in brief, the material used for the fragments in *U mpastu* was used in the various sections of *A manikula*. This procedure was employed with the specific intent of allegorically representing a connection between the economic processes evoked in *U mpastu* and the socio-cultural constructs that lead to the marginalisation of the Other, suggested in *A manikula*.

The figure displays a musical score for section I of *A manikula*. The score is divided into several staves for different instruments: Flute I, Oboe I, Trombone I, Horn I, Clarinet I, Bass drum, and Bassoon I. Each instrument part is shown with a callout box containing a fragment of the original *U mpastu* material. Arrows point from these callout boxes to the corresponding parts in the score, illustrating the derivation of the material. The score includes dynamics such as *f*, *mf*, and *ff*, and tempo markings like *Cresc. molto* and *G = 100*. The score is marked with Roman numerals and letters, indicating the structure of the sections.

Figure 18: a map of the derivation of the material in section I of *A manikula* from fragments of *U mpastu*

A manikula is structured in ten main sections, numbered with roman numerals: seven additional sections, marked with the letters “*vspr*”, are inserted between the ten main sections. Whilst the main sections are characterised by a substantial brevity in duration and by the synchronisation between the instrumental parts, the *vspr* sections are characterised by unsynchronised fragments repeated several times, and by considerably longer durations if compared with the main sections. I obtained the instrumentation for the *vspr* sections by using the instruments that were not used in the preceding or following main section, as illustrated in Table 4.

Table 4: the instrumentation of each section in *A manikula*

General instrumentation	I vspr1	II vspr2	III	IV vspr3	V	VI vspr4	VII vspr5	VIII vspr6	IX	vspr7	X
Piccolo (db. Flute)	√	√	√	→ √	√	x	√	√	√	√	√
Clarinet (db. Bass Clarinet)	√	→ √	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
Horn	√	√	√	x	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
Percussion	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	→ √	√	√	√
Piano	√	√	√	x	√	√	→ √	√	x	√	x
Guitar	→ √	√	√	√	√	→ √	√	√	√	√	← √
Violin	→ √	√	√	→ √	√	√	√	√	√	√	x
Viola	→ √	√	√	√	√	→ √	√	√	√	√	√
Violoncello	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√

With the exception of the presence of the violin in section *vspr6*, it is evident that the presence of an instrument in a *vspr* section can only occur if the same instrument is not used in the preceding or following main section. This process is principally intended to depict a hierarchy of elements where certain items, or categories of items, are excluded from the main space of interactions and relegated to different, segregated areas. In fact, the *vspr* sections are characterised, as noted above, by a different type of instrumental interactions to that taking place in the main sections, and by a considerably marked stillness and repetitiveness of the material. In addition to this, it is important to highlight the fact that the presence of an instrument in a *vspr* section is primarily determined by its exclusion from an adjacent main section. Moreover, there are no two *vspr* sections that contain exactly the same group of instruments: in other words, although some instruments get excluded from the main sections and ‘segregated’ into the *vspr* sections more often than others (e.g., the guitar and the viola), there is no fixed group of instruments that appears constantly in the *vspr* sections. Last of all, all instruments appear in the main sections, and in particular sections III and V feature the whole ensemble.

The elements analysed here can help to better illustrate the allegorical construction of the piece. The mechanism of exclusion of certain instruments from the main sections and the consequent dislocation of them in the *vspr* sections is intended to reproduce the exclusion of portions of the population from the democratic debate and their relegation into peripheral sections of reality. The Other is defined by means of their political elimination and does not have control over the definition of their own identity: this makes their identity fluid and arbitrarily utilisable by those who are participating to the political debate. The primary result

of this process is the extreme mutability of the border that separates the Other from the dominant social group: much as in *A manikula* the group of instruments dislocated to the *vspr* sections changes in every section, in Italy the imaginary border that delimitates the Mezzogiorno is extremely vague, and changes dramatically from time to time (Dickie 1997:116-117); at times, the Other is admitted into the dominant social group, and is expected to (proudly) perceive themselves as a part of it, similarly to what, in the piece, happens in the main sections III and V, both of which feature all the instruments and do not generate any *vspr* section. By not being part of a fixed social group, the Other cannot count on the solidarity of their peers, because they change every time: hence the difference in temporal synchronisation between the main sections and the *vspr* sections. Even more remote, for the Other, is the possibility of receiving the solidarity of those in the dominant social group, who receive cultural and economic advantages from the Other's exclusion.

The problem of solidarity takes us back to the phenomenon of unequal exchange, which potentially results in the erosion of possible forms of cohesion between workforces coming from developed areas and workforces coming from underdeveloped areas, on account of the fact that the former, benefitting from higher wages as a collateral effect of the exploitation, end up participating in exerting the same exploitation suffered by the latter (Emmanuel, 1972; Dandekar, 1980). In relation to this dramatic issue, Zitara described the Southern workforce as "external proletariat", that is, a social class that is excluded from the democratic process in virtue of which the workforce from the North gradually gains a higher social and financial power (1973).

2.2.3 Historical Narratives

The third piece of the cycle, *U kriwu* ("the sieve"), is a shorter work, written for microtonal trumpet and microtonal French horn and not included in this portfolio: it was premiered on 21 April 2010 by Mikrolech 2 at the Clothworkers' Centenary Concert Hall, as part of the University of Leeds Contemporary Music Festival 2010. As in *A manikula*, the initial material used for the composition of *U kriwu* was represented by fragments of *U mpastu*. Contrarily to what happens in *A manikula*, however, the original fragments are considerably modified in *U kriwu*: the modifications were determined by means of a geometric model based on the projection of circles on a Cartesian system. The intersections between the circles and the various lines forming the system were used to determine various parameters, such as the dynamics, the transposition and the durations of the single notes.

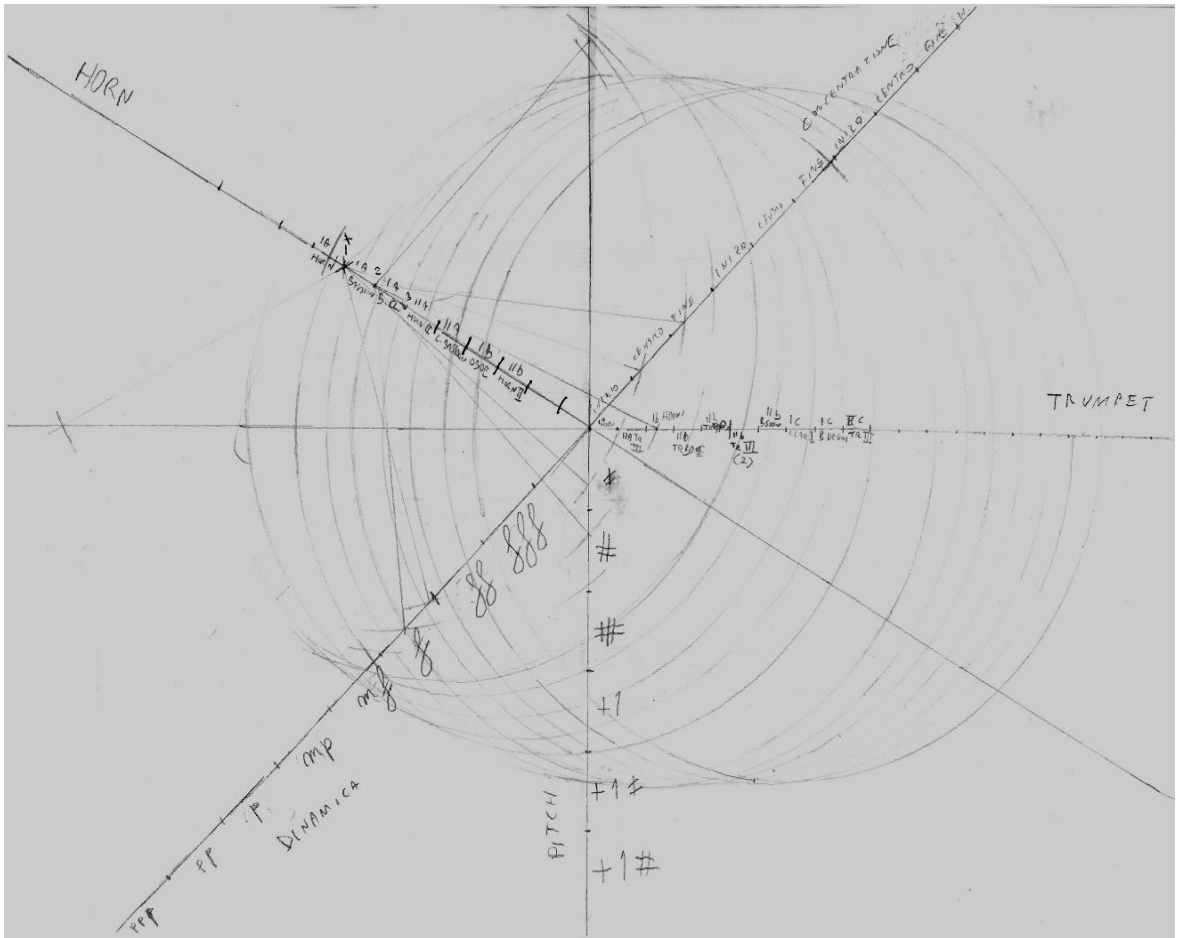


Figure 19: the pre-compositional model used for *U kriwu*

This geometric model of generation and modification of the material originates from the notion of concentric circles in European development, which implies the existence of central and peripheral areas within the continent and within the European Union, which are characterised by different levels of economic integration (Stubb, 1997). This notion can be associated to the model known as “Thünen’s rings”, developed by Johann Heinrich von Thünen at the beginning of the 19th century: according to this model, different types of production naturally become localised in different specialised areas, arranged as concentric circles around a centre, represented by the city (Thünen, 1966; Samuelson, 1983:1470-1471). Thünen's models is also used by some historians to assess the origins of the different levels of continental development: in brief, the Southern and Eastern parts of the continent became economically subordinated to Western Europe, in that the production of the former became increasingly focussed on the demand originating from the latter (Braudel, 1983:38-40; Hinrichs, 1999:138-145).

Much as this model of historical interpretation fits well with the above considerations on imperialism and unequal exchange, it can be argued that some substantial emphasis should be also put on the role of military actions in facilitating and enforcing this process. The subordination of Southern Italy, for example, cannot be explained without reference to the military annexation that led to the Unification of Italy in 1861: the economic exploitation was possible only after the use of military force.

A vision of history based on continuous and uniform processes can thus be used as a backdrop to be placed against a vision of history based on discrete and violent events, where the role of physical oppression is crucial in imposing political and economic decisions. In relation to this, *U kriwu* can be compared with *A banner*, in which the temporal fragmentation of the material is intended evoke a historical progression that evolves through separated sporadic events, rather than through a continuous process.

In *A banner*, as mentioned above, the fifteen sections are separated from each other by prolonged intermissions of silence, to the point that some of the shortest sections are likely to be followed or preceded by longer portions of silence: in the recording of the premiere, for example, it is possible to appreciate that the intermission of silence between sections VII and VIII is longer than section VIII itself, or that the intermission between sections V and VI has the same length of section VI (See fig. 5).

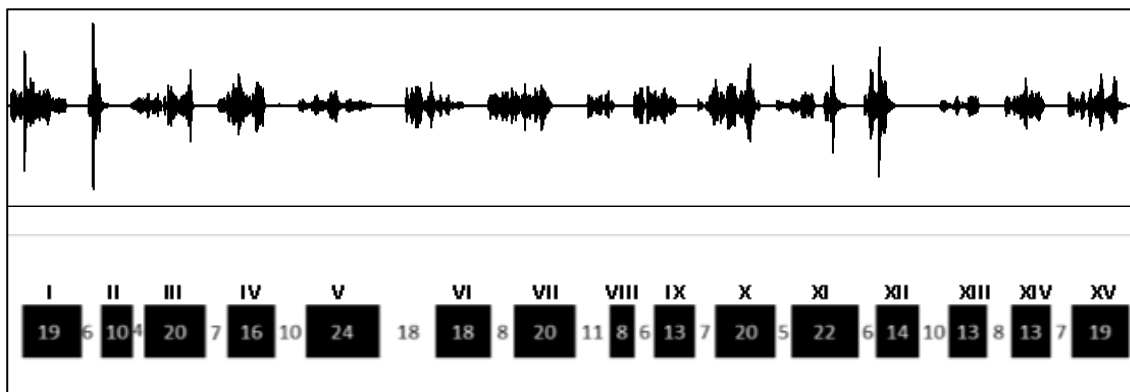


Figure 20: a map of the relationship between sections of the piece and intermissions of silence in the recording of the premiere of *A banner*. On the top is the waveform, which clearly shows the constant alternation between sound and silence, and at the bottom is a diagram of this alternation, with blocks of sound in black and portions of silence in white: numbers indicate seconds.

The vision of history based on discrete and violent events can be certainly associated to the scepticism expressed by some scholars, as to whether the development of Mezzogiorno was actually in a pre-capitalist phase at the time of the Unification: Carlo and Capecelatro (1974), most notably, although interpreting the North/South divide through the prism of imperialism, refute this notion and show how, in the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies, there were forms of

capital accumulation that were creating the condition for the creation of an industrial bourgeoisie (ibidem:32-34), and argue that it was precisely the annexation to Piedmont, possible as a result of the geopolitical isolation suffered by the Two Sicilies (caused in turn by tensions with England over the exploitation of Sicilian sulphur), that instigated the mechanism of underdevelopment (ibidem:35-43). These considerations echo the claims of previous illustrious defenders of the Mezzogiorno, such as Nitti and Salvemini, among the first in denouncing the post-Unification plunder of Southern resources operated by the unified State (Nitti, 1900; Salvemini, 1963:71-92,157-191). In more recent years, this tradition has led to the production of a myriad of works presenting a revision of traditional historiography, putting the accent on the exasperated violence towards Southern people that characterised the military campaign for the annexation, and denouncing the ruthless impoverishment of the Mezzogiorno that followed the annexation.³⁸

Exactly in the gap between revisionist and official historiography lies the second and most crucial function of the temporal fragmentation that characterises *A banner*, namely the depiction of institutional accounts of the events characterised by suspicious and conspicuous omissions, which constitute the very basis upon which the dualistic model staged in the piece exists: in other words, the piece allegorically states, among other things, that the dramatic divisions between Italians exist in part because of the divulgation of partial historical narratives, which do not pay a just tribute to the enormous sufferings and losses to which Southern people were subjected for the sake of the Unification.³⁹

The discovery of an alternative historical narrative represents one of the most powerful keys to overturn symbolic constructs of power: among other things, for example, it exposes as a fabrication the idea of an intrinsic and natural backwardness of Southern people, and challenges similar beliefs regarding the ancestral lack of civic culture, proposed, among others, by Putnam (1993), who resorts on a historical investigation in order to validate the idea of a Mezzogiorno lacking any form of horizontal solidarity (ibidem:121-162), and where the general disaffection towards the State and the democratic participation is due to forms of vertical exploitation: most notably, the mafias, that according to Putnam have “characterized southern culture and social structure for at least a millennium” (ibidem:148).⁴⁰ In the next chapter, while

³⁸ Among the most notable examples, cf. Alianello (1982), Ciano (1996), Izzo (1999), Di Fiore (2010) and Guerri (2010).

³⁹ Similar claims on the necessity of a serious and balanced revision of the official historiography, in order to recuperate a common memory and transcend divisions, are made by Guerri (2010:7-9).

⁴⁰ The last claim appears especially arbitrary, in that it is generally understood that the mafias originated in the 19th century, immediately before or immediately after the Italian Unification (Dimico, Isopi and Olsson, 2012; Bandiera, 2003; Crisantino, 1994).

analysing my piece *I mballakkeri*, I will focus on the process of electoral representation, in an attempt at providing an alternative view to Putnam's.

2.3 *I mballakkeri*: Allegory and Parody of Political Representation

The piece *I mballakkeri* ("the fibbers" in Sicilian) for Disklavier and electronics was composed entirely during the campaigns that led to the Sicilian Regional elections on 28 October 2012, as a protest against the domination of mainland parties over local protest movements, whose voice was marginalised by the media. The electoral campaign had come, in turn, after a summer characterised by violent and multi-partisan attacks perpetrated by the national press and TV against the Sicilian Autonomy Statute.⁴¹

The piece was written for performance as part of the Interactive Keyboard Symposium at Goldsmiths, University of London on 9 November 2012. The technical specifications I had initially set for the piece required an extended period of (mainly self-taught) training on the use of Max/Msp as a tool for implementing programs (patchers) for live control/triggering of MIDI information and live generation of electronics, in addition to an initiation to the control of the MIDI-operated piano (Disklavier). I undertook this training between August and October, 2012, effectively managing to deliver the piece and perform it at the Interactive Keyboard Symposium.

The Disklavier part consists of five collections of fragments, stored in the Max/Msp patcher as MIDI files. Each of the collections was pre-written by decomposing the fragments of the previous one, and contains sixteen fragments, to be triggered in a specific notated order by the performer, using a MIDI keyboard controller. The performer has a certain degree of freedom in terms of deciding how many times s/he prefers to repeat each fragment, and in terms of deciding whether s/he prefers to play each of the fragments in full, or to play just a part of it.

The processing of the MIDI files generates numerical data, which is then processed in the patcher through various algorithms and used to trigger samples on the left channel of the sound system, and generate/trigger effects on the right channel (see Figure 21). More specifically, the left channel samples, previously obtained by processing recordings of

⁴¹ Examples of these attacks are Lafranca et al (2012) and Indini (2012). The arguments of the pro-Statute faction are summarised, for instance, in Coppola (2012) and Maduli (2012).

rehearsals of the Disklavier part, are a collection of fourteen sound files: every time a trigger is sent, one of these fourteen files is randomly selected and played back by the patcher. The right channel consists of six different types of effects: three different sine waves, a sawtooth wave, a triangular wave and pink noise – except for the last one, all the effects have their pitch modified by parameters that belong to the MIDI files triggered in the Disklavier part; again, one effect only is selected via random procedures once the trigger is sent. In both channels, a trigger is sent each time a certain amount of data coming from the MIDI files has been processed.

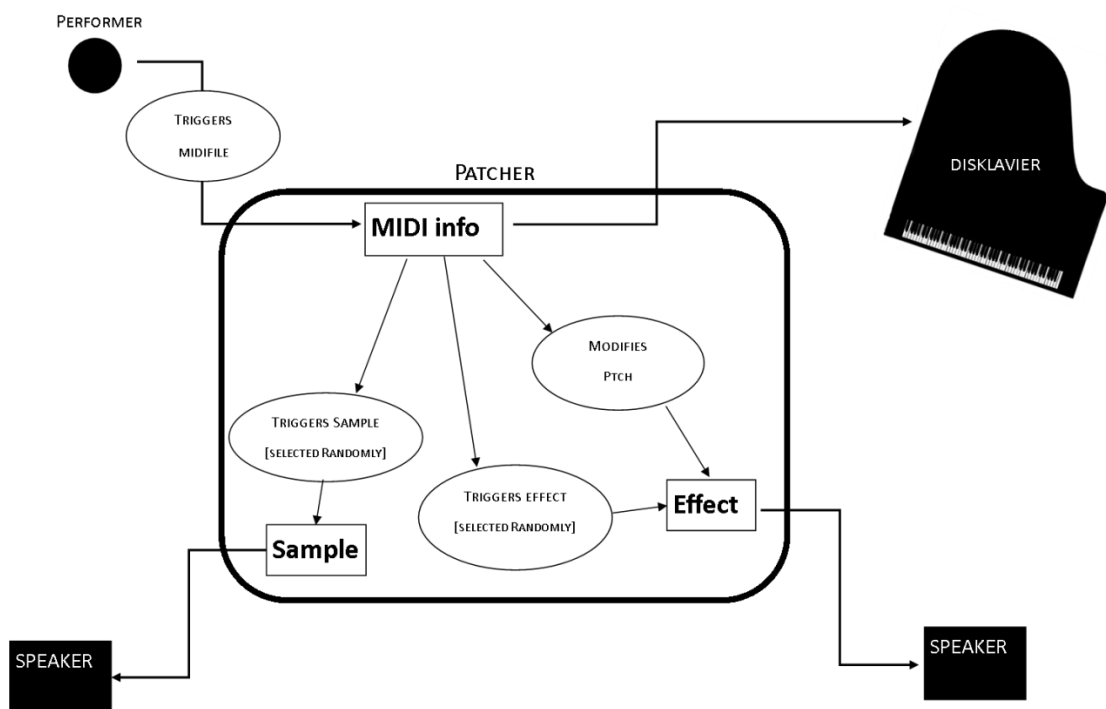


Figure 21: a diagram of the functioning of *I mballakkeri*

In the piece, the interaction between the Disklavier part and the electronics does not happen in the physical medium, but before the MIDI information is translated into sound by the Disklavier. Thus, it can well be argued that the Disklavier does not interact with the electronics, but with the MIDI files: this means that, in brief, the live element of the piece is only to be found in the partial freedom left to the performer in terms of deciding number of repeats and length for each fragment, and in the random selection operated by the patcher as to which effect/sample to play once the trigger is sent. Other than that, the interaction between the MIDI files and the electronics is fixed.

The performer's choices are meant to be crucially influenced by the aural feedback s/he gets from the Disklavier and the speakers. Except for their inherent randomness, the samples and

effects parts are quite predictable and are likely to react in similar ways in different venues – the only potential issue with them may be volume levels. The Disklavier, on the other hand, presents a number of problems which can strongly influence the performer, making performances extremely different depending on the venue: different models of Disklaviers, depending on the year of production and on whether the instrument is an upright or a grand piano, react extremely differently to the same material, especially in terms accuracy in playing back fast material, but also, dramatically, in terms of dynamics – mainly due to a phenomenon called velocity dependant delay (Risset and Van Duyne, 1996:68-69; Goebel and Bresin, 2001; Kapur et al, 2008: 49). This, in *I mballakkeri*, results in the performer making radically different choices each time the venue, and therefore the instrument, change. The result of this situation is most evident in terms of total duration of the piece: this can be easily demonstrated by comparing the studio recording of the piece, which lasts 10' 25'', with the recording of the concert, 5' 52'' long. Thus, much as the performer is free to choose how long to linger on certain fragments/sections of the piece, yet this freedom is dramatically narrowed by the aural feedback s/he gets from the Disklavier.

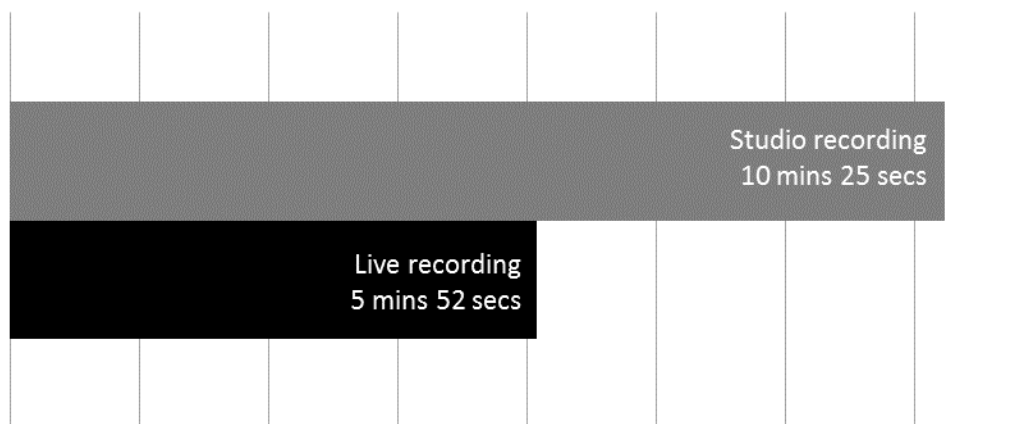


Figure 22: a comparison between the duration of the studio recording and that of the live recording of *I mballakkeri*.

To recapitulate, the piece is characterised by a substantial staticity of interaction that contrasts with the machine-operated randomness of samples and effects triggering and with a certain amount of nominal freedom in terms of performer action, which, in real terms, is dramatically narrowed by the performer's interaction with the aural result s/he receives, mainly from the Disklavier (see Figure 23).

The features illustrated above are meant to embody a specific allegorical role in the piece. The object of the allegory is the dialectics between voter and elected representative in a democratic electoral system – theoretically centred on the decisional power of the former, but practically based on an imbalance in total favour of the latter, whose role is influencing the voter.

As mentioned earlier, an important feature of the electoral campaigns was the silencing of local protest movements, especially from television debates. The AGCOM, the Italian regulator and competition authority for communications, guaranteed space in television and radio broadcasts only to candidates of political parties already represented in the National and/or the Regional Parliament (AGCOM, 2012). This resulted in the repeated exclusion of smaller parties from crucial public debates, which in turn led to an incident in Catania on 18 September 2012, when candidates and activists of the Movimento dei Forconi were denied access to the studios of Antenna Sicilia (an influential local television channel) by the police, resulting in clashes and in the utterly unlikely scene of a candidate for Regional Governor being repeatedly hit by the police (Valisano and Catalano, 2012).

The facts exposed above can help better illustrate the degree of influence that can be secured by dominating political forces during the electoral period, through an exclusive visibility granted by the media which, in turn, facilitates the hegemony on the spread of a particular discourse. The average voter does not have, in this context, easy access to information on all the alternative proposals and is nudged to choose from an artificially limited amount of options, which are determined on the basis of pre-existing relations of power. A quasi-perpetual cycle is thus instigated, which leaves little or no space to smaller and less established emerging movements, which might represent many of the voters better than the mainstream parties.

These considerations, schematised in Figure 24, can help clarify the allegorical significance of the specific interaction between the performer and the produced sound that takes place in *mballakkeri*. Much as the performer of the piece is influenced by the aural feedback s/he gets from the aural realisation of the fragments s/he has previously triggered, similarly the voter is likely to be influenced by the small number of political forces that are already in power.

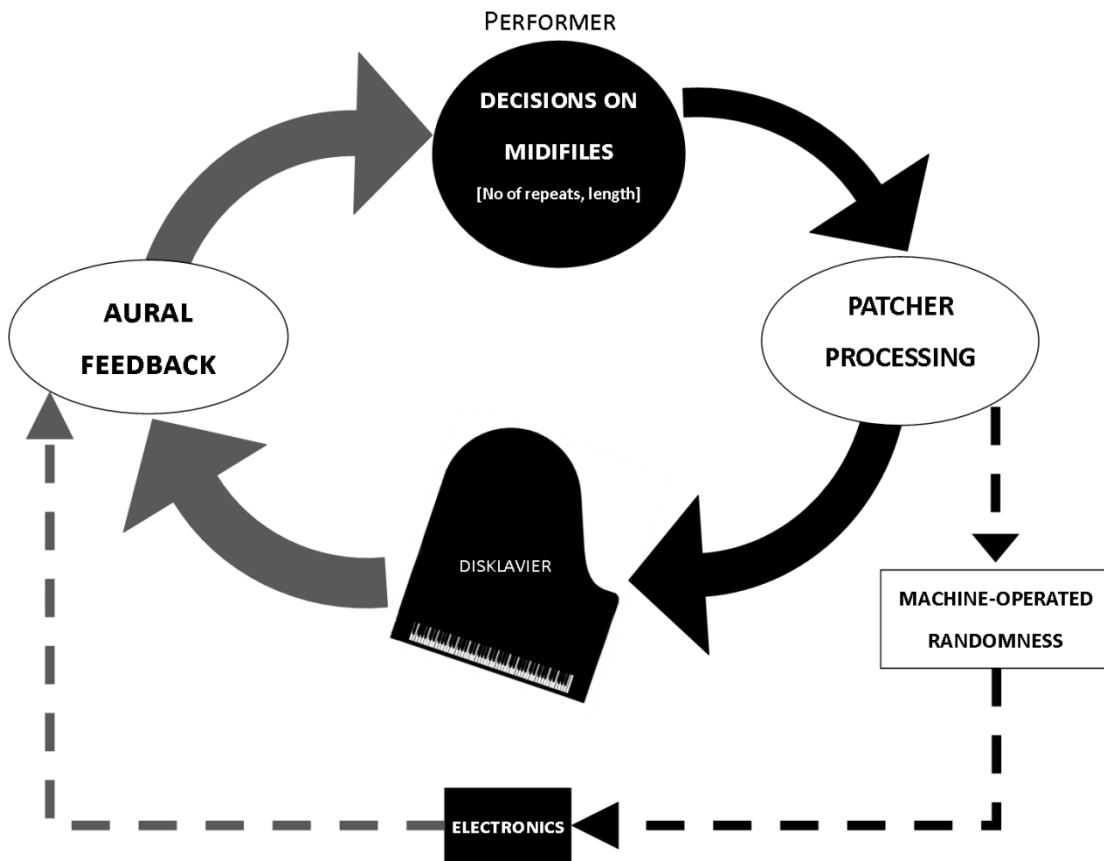


Figure 23: a diagram of the interaction in *I mballakkeri*

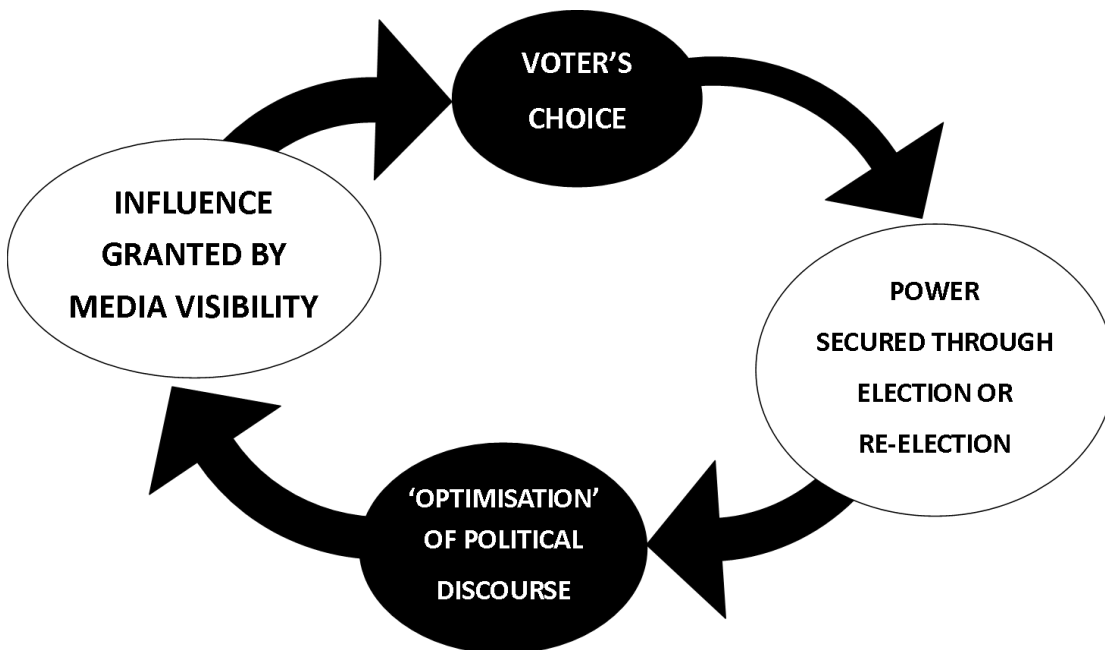


Figure 24: a diagram of the interaction between voter and elected representative in a democratic electoral system.

The aforementioned progressive decomposition of the Disklavier fragments also plays an important role within the allegorical coding of the piece, and is meant to reproduce the process by which some types of political discourse produce an involution of potentially radical ideas into empty simplified formulas, with the detrimental effect of turning debate away from the complexity of real problems. In this way, pressures coming from below are likely to be instrumentalised by old forms of power.

With regards to the 2012 Sicilian Elections, some observers have noticed the unprecedented stress put by all major candidates, and, in particular, by the candidates of the two main national parties, on Sicilian Autonomy and the Statute (Condorelli, 2012; Sardo, 2012).

While the strategy of instrumentalising ideas coming from below by incorporating them into mainstream political discourses can prove to be effective in the short term, in the long run it may result in general political disaffection, whose ultimate effect, in turn, can be the increasing abstention from vote of increasing portions of the population: in the 2012 Sicilian elections abstentionism reached a record high, with 52.58 % of eligible Sicilians declining to vote (Corriere della Sera, 2012).

This last reflexion can help elucidate the role of the electronics in the piece: since the samples are made out of recording of rehearsals of the Disklavier part and the effects are elaborated using data derived from the MIDI files, it can be easily predicted that both these types of material are, in different ways, mimicking the Disklavier part – this is evident especially in some sections of the piece, where the melodic contour of the fragments is clearly imitated (mocked) by the effects. The intended result is a parodic distortion of the material presented in the Disklavier part, which, in the framework of the allegorical construction, is meant to represent a parody of political discourse. Interestingly, in the course of the piece, taking advantage of the decomposition of the Disklavier part, the parodic element represented by the electronics takes over, to the point that in the last section of the piece the Disklavier fragments, already reduced to the bare minimum in terms of material, gradually fade away, leaving the end of the piece to the electronics only: this process is precisely meant to depict a gradual and inexorable disaffection towards political discourse, that, by progressively losing credibility, is in the end subjugated and replaced by its own caricature. Political abstention is the implicit allegorical result of this process, in a scenario where mainstream political discourse has lost any credibility and inevitably becomes the caricature of itself.

It can be argued that political abstention is not the best way of defeating the cycle of mainstream political representation:⁴² nevertheless, in this piece it is seen as an inevitable outcome when the average voter has no easy access to alternative movements. In light of the aforementioned record high abstention at the 2012 Sicilian Regional elections, this piece can be seen as a symbolic justification and rehabilitation of those who decided not to vote: this could also suggest that the voting behaviour of any population, including Sicilians and Southern Italians, is more likely to depend on the visibility, the discourse and the behaviour of local and national politicians, rather than on the alleged lack of civic traditions postulated by Putnam (1993).

A final remark needs to be made about the dialectics, resulting in imbalance, between electronics and instrumental sound, which, as seen above, plays an important role in depicting and criticising an important social phenomenon: this procedure is used creatively in at least another important piece of this portfolio, namely *I supikkjarìi*, which will be discussed in the next chapter of this work.

2.4 *I supikkjarìi*: Allegory and Parody of Cultural Capitalism⁴³

I supikkjarìi was commissioned by the Huddersfield Contemporary Music Festival as part of the European Composers' Professional Development Programme 2011, and premiered on 23 November 2011 during the Huddersfield Contemporary Music Festival 2011 by the Icarus Ensemble conducted by Franco Fusi. The piece was performed again in Reggio Emilia (Italy) on 23 June 2012. The score was also published by the University of York Music Press (UYMP) in 2012, and a recording is going to be released by Huddersfield Contemporary Recordings (HCR) in late 2013.

The title means "the abuses of power" in Sicilian and is not particularly referred to violent abuses, but instead to more subtle violations, that have to do with the saturation of information in the contemporary world, which has the double results of obstructing the space for alternative discourses on one hand, while on the other hand incorporating potentially

⁴² A different, more optimistic view on abstentionism is held by Žižek in the epilogue of his work *Violence* (2008:179-183). Cf. also Baudrillard (1983).

⁴³ This phrase is referred both to Bourdieu's well-known concept of "cultural capital", i.e. all the non-monetary advantages that enable the accumulation of social power (Bourdieu:1986), and to Žižek's notion of "cultural capitalism", discussed in this section.

revolutionary instances, belonging to said alternative discourses, into the ruling politico-economic system.

This process is widely observed and described by various authors. Klein (2000:107-124) remarks on the fact that, from the early 1990s, oppressed minorities gradually became the target of brands wanting to expand their market, so that the praise of diversity became part of the purchased commodity. Žižek (2009) calls the phenomenon “cultural capitalism”, and observes how, as the consequence of increasing pressures about ethical and sustainability issues, some companies have started charging an extra price for products that are, or claim to be, sustainably sourced and manufactured. The consequence is that the consumer makes up for the sense of guilt deriving from the act of consumption by purchasing redemption as part of the very same act of consumption (ibidem:51-65)

On the whole, this phenomenon can be evaluated in the light of the general loss of meaning of the sign in the postmodern world, which, as hypothesised by Baudrillard, may be explained by postulating the capacity of mass communication of actually destroying meaning: “the loss of meaning is directly linked to the dissolving, dissuasive action of information, the media, and the mass media.” (1994:79). Potentially radical symbolic constructions are at first emptied of their meaning and then returned to the public under the “obscene” form of commodities (Žižek, 2010:57). This represents an extremely powerful recipe for the inhibition of dissent, arguably more effective than forms of physical repression, to the point that in this context, according to Baudrillard, the very expressions of dissent may turn into more or less voluntary defences of the power (1994:14-20).

In the 1990s and 2000s, Berlusconi’s television channels used to exploit anti-Berlusconi feelings by broadcasting a huge number of comedy shows with an openly satirical attitude towards Berlusconi himself, thus attracting even the most radical portions of the society. While enjoying anti-regime satire, people were arguably creating profit for the ruler, ultimately making him and his allies more powerful and harder to overthrow.

Similarly in the Mezzogiorno, following the emergence of the new protest movements, a series of puppet parties materialised, eventually in coalition with some of the mainstream national political forces, created on purpose to attract, divert and monopolise protest votes.

All forms of dissident consciousness are thus likely to be “disarmed and reabsorbed by a system of which they themselves might well be considered a part, since they can achieve no distance from it” (Jameson, 1984:87). Contemporary reality shows itself as dominated and

colonised in its entirety by an all-encompassing and all-devouring power system, identified by some authors with Postmodernism (Jameson, 1984; Jameson, 1991; Sandoval, 2000).⁴⁴

It needs to be noted that this situation poses a significant challenge to my work itself, whose oppositional intents may run the risk of transmuting into their exact antithesis, namely a – yet involuntary – celebration of the existing order: such the piece *I supikkjarii* might sound to a superficial listener, mainly due to the deliberate insistence on gestures such as looping and sampling, commonly (and unjustly) associated to more commercial forms of musical production. The implications of sampling, in particular, were discussed in an interview with the performer (Icarus Ensemble’s keyboard player) Marco Pedrazzini, with the result of highlighting a scenario where the composer’s role, arguably still based mainly on score-writing, is in danger of being made obsolete by the unlimited possibilities granted by the technique of sampling (Pedrazzini, 2011), in line with Baudrillard’s theory, mentioned above, of the destruction of meaning brought about by the overproduction of information (Baudrillard, 1994:79). Moreover, it is perhaps possible to speculate on the vulnerability, in this context, of any form of artistic expression framed in an inherently polysemic poetic device, such as allegory.

I certainly acknowledge the vulnerable status of *I supikkjarii*, which, side by side with my other pieces and all the other forms of radical expression, is in danger of being incorporated into the narratives of the ruling politico-economic system.⁴⁵ On the other hand, it can be reiterated that the allegorical codification of the intents of the piece, exactly in virtue of its inherently polysemic nature, can function as a powerful means of purposeful renegotiation of meanings, which, as Hariman claims, can work as a natural form of defence from the implications of “capitalism’s incredible overproduction of signs” (2002:269), to the point of representing a powerful tool for “encoding reality and binding people together” (Ibidem:270). In other words, by mimicking and evoking the same contradictions intrinsic to the ruling system, the piece might provide symbolic tools that can contribute to encourage forms of antagonism.

⁴⁴ The substantial embracement of these claims on postmodern reality does not imply disagreement with the point made by Callinicos in his critique of Jameson, namely the scepticism over the idea that a multinational phase of capitalism has supplanted an earlier phase based on imperialism (Callinicos, 1989:132-144): on the contrary, I maintain that global economy is dramatically based on the dialectics between a centre and a periphery, and on progressive development nurtured by growing underdevelopment, as already shown in chapter 2.2.1 of this work.

⁴⁵ To some extent, the pieces of this portfolio are commodities: in particular *I supikkjarii*, my first piece to be published, is sold in the form of a score and will be sold in the form of a recording. Moreover, any composer who wishes to be heard by a large audience needs to enter into the logic of capitalism by marketing themselves as a brand: this need was clearly pointed out in many events I have attended, including a seminar which was part of the same project that led to the composition of *I supikkjarii*. Cf. also Rebhahn (2012).

In *I supikkjarii*, the co-existence of acoustic and electrical/electronic instruments facilitates the alternation between acoustically balanced sections, characterised by specified time signatures and tempi, and moments of sonic saturation, mainly characterised by synchronised or unsynchronised repetition. This alternation is meant to represent the dialectics between the creation of alternative discourse and its destruction by obstruction and distorted replication. It is important to observe that the acoustically balanced sections and the moments of saturation derive from the same material: an extensive recourse to the loop station connected to the electric guitar assists this process, by allowing material that appears in the acoustically balanced sections to later saturate the sonic channel; the sampler also plays an important role, insofar as it triggers samples which were pre-composed by modifying recordings of rehearsals on preliminary sketches of the piece; other crucial techniques in this sense are the production of interference noise, obtained by the guitarist and bassist by unplugging the jack from the instrument and putting it in contact with the skin or metallic surfaces; the use of electric guitar versus amplifier feedback; the different right-hand techniques for the electric bass, which enable the instrument to either blend well or clash with the rest of the ensemble, depending on need; last of all, the use of an additional microphone to pick up the percussive sound produced by the pedal of the loopstation every time it is depressed by the performer.

The very last effect, clearly distinguishable throughout the whole duration of the piece, has the function, especially in the initial sections of the piece, of announcing a clear cut between ordinary balanced moments and moments when the electric and electronic sounds take over. This cut between these two types of sections tends to be gradually obfuscated as the piece develops, as acoustic instruments start participating in the moments of sonic saturation alongside electric and electronic instruments, and techniques initially associated with the moments of sonic saturation start appearing also in the acoustically balanced moments.⁴⁶ In other words, antagonist discourses become progressively less distinguishable from their very usurpation, potentially producing delusion and disillusion, and attitudes comparable to the massive electoral abstentionism discussed in the previous chapter of this work.

The climax of this process is reached in sections N and R, where the whole ensemble participates to the creation of the sonic saturation. Section R is also the final section of the piece, and is ended by the whole ensemble stopping playing and leaving on its own the amplifier feedback produced by the electric guitar, against the backdrop of the (much quieter)

⁴⁶ This fluidity was made possible by the use of amplification for all instruments when the piece was premiered in Bates Mill in Huddersfield. However, and quite surprisingly, the interaction worked even better when the piece was performed without amplification in the Spazio Icarus in Reggio Emilia, a smaller venue.

interference noise produced by the bass player with the jack. This final gesture can represent the possibility of incisive oppositional attitudes, capable of surviving the supremacy of the dominant flow of signs and emerging from it: in fact, in section R the guitar feedback initially merges with the sonic saturation produced by the rest of the ensemble, only to emerge later, when the other instruments stop playing (once again, the percussive click of the loopstation heralds the passage from one moment to the other). Arguably, the same gesture produces two extremely different aural effects depending on the two different contexts: it is barely distinguishable from the aural chaos initially, whereas later it seems to convey a lucid message.

In line with the polysemicity of the allegorical structure of the piece, and coherently with the acknowledgement of a vulnerable state within the hegemony of the dominant politico-economic system, the last gesture might also assume a totally different connotation: namely, the concern that higher forms of control could nullify the relative freedom implied in a system characterised by a chaotic multitude of forms of expression. This fear and the above mentioned hopefulness coexist within the allegorical construction of the piece.

A very similar gesture, based on the feedback produced by the amplifier and the electric guitar, also concludes the last piece of this part of the portfolio, *A ttinghitè*, which will be presented and discussed in the next section.

2.5 *A ttinghitè*: Violence, Criminalisation and the Monopolisation of National Compassion

The piece *A ttinghitè* for solo electric guitar was written for Italian guitarist Giacomo Baldelli and premiered on the 23 November 2012 at the Clothworkers' Centenary Concert Hall as part of the University of Leeds International Concert Series, and it was performed again by Baldelli in New York, at the Spectrum on 24 March 2013. The score was published by Musicisti Associati Produzioni in 2013.

An introduction about the genesis of the piece is needed: while working with the Icarus Ensemble on *I supikkjarìi*, Baldelli, who is also the ensemble's guitarist, had asked me to write an electric guitar piece for his upcoming solo project. Soon after, I started writing the piece in May 2012, and a series of disastrous earthquakes occurred in Emilia Romagna, the Northern Italian region where the Icarus Ensemble is based. In late June I then went to the Icarus headquarters for the second performance of *I supikkjarìi* and could appreciate the aftermath

of the catastrophic events that had just occurred in the previous month (the venue where the piece was performed had at least one visible crack as a result of the intense seismic activity). The piece increasingly become interlaced with the events and can be seen as an artistic reaction to the 2012 earthquakes in Emilia Romagna, and as a declaration of extreme solidarity to the victims of those catastrophic events.

This said, it was impossible, for many observers, to avoid comparing the national Italian reaction to the events in Emilia Romagna, to similar events that had previously happened in Sicily and in the rest of the Mezzogiorno, such as the catastrophic floods around Messina in October 2009 and November 2011, the disastrous earthquake in L'Aquila in April 2009, and the landslides in Calabria in February 2010: in summary, this kind of comparisons typically tend to outline a picture where national solidarity and mourning are massive for catastrophic events that happen in the North, and insufficient or even cold when similar events occur in the Mezzogiorno, on account of different levels of media coverage of the events and of different reactions of the institutions.⁴⁷ The lack of national solidarity can generally be understood in terms of the lack of sympathy felt for a human group perceived as Other, as discussed earlier in this work: in this context, it can be argued that, within the Italian system, the North enjoys what Žižek calls a "hegemony in sufferings" (2008:2), i.e. the faculty of monopolising mediatic attention, and thus public compassion, on its own catastrophes, by virtue of the political and cultural domination exerted on the other half of the country.

Furthermore, catastrophic events in the Mezzogiorno are often sardonically invoked by various groups, typically among football fans, but also, and most remarkably, by politicians and members of the institutions (Palombarini, 2011; Martin, 2012:52-53; Gruber, 2009:49; Giallombardo, 2012). In other words, the lack of solidarity does not exclude an active role in cynically desiring or evoking the catastrophes, often conceived as a sort of punishment for the populations involved (D'Angelo, 2009): Dickie argues that similar kinds of invocations, disguised as comic jokes, constituted an important instrument for the ascension to power enjoyed by the Lega Nord,⁴⁸ in that they allow for a violation of common taboos, which has a liberating power for the Lega's supporters (Dickie, 1994).

⁴⁷ This situation is often denounced by the local press: on the oblivion of the floods in Messina, cf. Tremedia (2009), D'Angelo (2009), Gazzetta Jonica (2010), QdS (2011); on the abandonment of L'Aquila after the earthquake, cf. De Seta (2010), Oliva (2010), Pezzopane (2013).

⁴⁸ The Lega Nord is a regionalist Northern Italian party, characterised by separatist claims and open xenophobia towards Southerners and foreign immigrants. Cf. also Huyssene (2006).

Somewhat connected to these manifestations is the constant and abundant criminalisation of the populations of the Mezzogiorno,⁴⁹ which results in a systematic and exaggerated mediatisation of crime episodes occurring in the Mezzogiorno, not without major mystifications of the events (Palidda, 2011:230-234; Dines, 2013), or in the media overemphasis on the regional origins of the offenders, often accompanied by any sort of clichés, when crimes are committed in the rest of Italy by people coming from the Mezzogiorno.⁵⁰

The constant criminalisation of Southern people, associated with the liberating articulation of the forbidden desire of witnessing the annihilation of their territories by natural catastrophes and with the lack of compassion exhibited when such catastrophes happen, exist as part of a widespread inclination in establishing rankings of human beings, against which each social group finds itself, identifying those in the lower ranks, to be despised, and those in the upper ranks, to be admired or imitated. Importantly, the existence of rankings explains the social acceptability of (verbal, psychological or physical) violence if it is exerted from a higher rank to a lower rank, and not in the opposite direction (Aprile, 2010:22-23). Žižek (2008) locates the issue in the distinction between subjective and objective violence, the former being immediately evident because “performed by a clearly identifiable agent” (ibidem:1); on the contrary, objective violence is embedded in the patterns of domination and subordination upon which the socio-politico-economical system is based (ibidem:1-7).⁵¹

The reflection on these issues strongly influenced the way *A ttinghitè* was conceived and structured. The first important characteristic of the piece is its particular setup: the guitar is connected to two jack leads by means of a splitter, and each of the leads is plugged to a different amplifier and different effect pedals.

The piece is characterised by a particular type of notation, where exact durations are not notated: three ranges of preferred duration exist, and are indicated by the noteheads (filled for shorter notes and empty for longer notes) and the presence or absence of the stem (notes with a stem are very short), as shown in Figure 25. This allows the performer to apply his/her

⁴⁹ Cf. also note 12 on the Lombrosian School.

⁵⁰ A recent example of such media mystification is the media coverage of the attempt on the life of two members of the *carabinieri* police force in Rome, which was committed by a man with Calabrese origins: in particular, an anchorwoman from the TV channel La7 declared that, on account of his origins, the man had probably some connections with the *'Ndrangheta*, which is the Calabrese mafia (Quotidiano della Calabria, 2013; Naso, 2013).

⁵¹ A key musical work in this sense is Federico Reuben's *On Violence* (2012), inspired by Žižek's work. Although *A ttinghitè* had been already completed and was about to be premiered when I had the chance to attend the premiere of Reuben's work, I do acknowledge a considerable influence of the latter on the *a posteriori* reflections I have made on my own work.

own discretion in terms of the exact duration of each single notes, and facilitates the simultaneous control of multiple events, required by the piece in virtue of the abundant use of pedal changes.

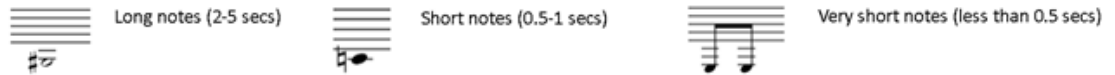


Figure 25: the three different types of durations in *A ttinghitè*

The pedals interact very often with the events notated in the main staff, interfering with and modifying the material played by the guitar. Importantly, the control of the dynamics is exerted at different levels: the performer is given dynamics indications below the staff, which refer to the physical intensity at which strings are to be strummed on the instrument; the volume of amplifier 2 is also controlled by a volume pedal, which behaves independently from the physical dynamics; lastly, the volume of amplifier 1 cannot be controlled during the performance, and has to be set before the beginning of the piece at a reasonably high level, necessary to activate the feedback called for throughout the piece⁵² – this makes the behaviour of amplifier 1 potentially fall beyond the control of the performer, with the likely emission of unwanted sound during the piece. The potential noisiness of amplifier 1 pairs up with the abundant utilisation of the overdrive in amplifier 2; moreover, whilst the volume of amplifier 2 can be controlled by means of the volume pedal, the particular disposition of the gear does allow for the silencing of any sound directly coming from the guitar into the amplifier, but cannot silence any independent material coming from the multieffect unit: in other words, if delay has already been triggered, the volume pedal cannot silence it. This effectively confers a degree of uncontrollability to amplifier 2 as well.

To summarise, the sound triggered by the electric guitar is subjected to the higher hierarchical status of the two amplifiers, which have the faculty of independently manipulating, distorting and replicating the information created by the instrument, and the capacity of overcoming it in terms of volume. This system of hierarchies subjugates the performer, who has to carefully adapt the intensity, the timing and the sequential order of her/his gestures to the system: in this context, the relative freedom in terms of note durations, offered by means of the

⁵² When premiering the piece, Baldelli actually decided to use amplifier 2 to activate the feedback, due to logistical convenience. Although this choice slightly modified the predicted sonic result of some of the events called for in the score, its impact on the overall force of the piece as a whole was negligible.

particular notation mentioned above, only partly alleviates the intricacy of the tasks required to him/her.

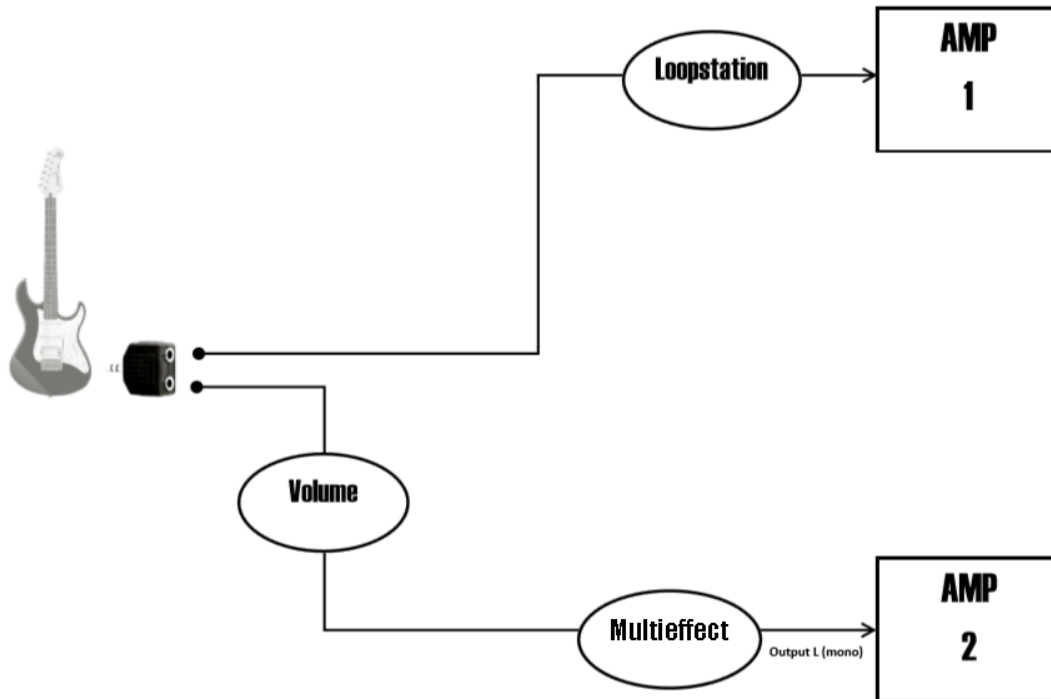


Figure 26: the initial configuration in *A ttinghitè*

The material played directly on the instrument, initially relatively limited, undergoes different variations thanks to the action of the multieffect pedal; on the contrary, the loopstation proposes repeatedly the same loop (this is initially constituted by one layer, onto which two other layers are later superimposed), which tends to confer a degree of uniformity to the whole aural organisation of the piece. The repetitions triggered by the delay pedal have a similar function to that of the loopstation: however, the different materials triggered by the two pedals clash in several parts of the piece. The material played on the instrument becomes gradually more varied, and different right-hand techniques are added, such as palm muting and palm slapping, and subsequently the use of the e-bow (p.12); however, this material is frequently overcome by the loopstation or the delay.

The hegemony of the two pedals and the amplifier continues until the performer changes the configuration of the system, by unplugging one of the jacks (the one connected to the loop pedal) from the guitar, and connecting it to the second output of the multieffect pedal (p.16): this gesture dramatically changes the hierarchical configuration of the system, in that the multieffect pedal now controls both the amplifiers, and the influence of the loopstation

becomes peripheral. In this new system of power relationship, the performer thrives, and her/his gestures noticeably change: the feedback, which had so far been used with relative judiciousness, is now abundantly exploited, and is periodically reinvigorated by the random strum of the strings, a gesture that had never appeared before.

Here again, the feedback entirely dominates the last section of the piece, totally overpowering the loopstation: unlike what happens in *I supikkjarii*, however, in this piece the continuity of the feedback is periodically broken by intermissions of silence, and then restored, suggesting a sort of struggle in securing hegemony, which in turn could evoke a higher degree of symbolic violence in the process. Certainly, the conclusive dominion of the feedback here retains the primary function it had assumed in *I supikkjarii*, i.e. an emancipatory gesture, in this case associated with an active renegotiation of the hierarchies that is explicitly represented by the reconfiguration of the cabling operated by the performer. In other words, the exploit of the feedback, introduced by the reconfiguration of the system, defeats the previous hierarchical structure, which had become exasperating, as it is arguably audible between 6'00'' and 8'00'' in the recording.

At the premiere in Leeds, the conclusion of the piece was particularly disconcerting to a couple of members of the audience, who walked out from the concert hall just after the end of the piece, halfway through the concert. This negative reaction might be viewed positively useful in some ways. First of all, it attests to the success of my work in communicating a sense of symbolic violence, capable of menacing the objective violence inherent in the assumptions and conventions that construct social events, such as the performance of classical music in a concert hall: in other words, the two members of the audience left because they saw their expectations, based on a hierarchy of symbolic categories, aggressively unfulfilled by my piece, which is exactly the point of my work.⁵³ Secondly, and more generally, their choice of leaving the concert hall implicitly avows the non-coercive nature of my poetics: their very act implies a noticeable statement of disagreement and aversion towards my music, which may be interpreted as a signal of the faculty of the latter of encouraging a sort of resolute action without imposing nor mystifying a particular vision, in line with Boal's insights on poetics (1979) – in this context, the fact that the resultant action was a negative reaction to my music is absolutely irrelevant.

⁵³ It could be easily argued that this is a very general feature possessed by all contemporary music: I do not see this as limiting my argument, but on the contrary it is a crucial proof of the fact that my activity as a contemporary experimental composer is tightly connected to the theoretical exploration of the extra-musical issues presented in this work. In both cases, in fact, I need to challenge assumptions and come to terms with situations of substantial political isolation.

The reflection on violence will continue, in different terms, in the next chapter of this work, where an investigation of the role of massacres in Sicily will be proposed, with regards to two pieces characterised by the singular conciseness of their respective scores.

3. Partial and Succinct Scores

This section is constituted by two pieces that possess elements of both the types of musical compositions presented in this portfolio, but which cannot be fully assimilated with one or the other, in virtue of the mixed nature of the presence of these elements in each of the pieces. Most importantly, the two pieces originated from two very specific calls for works, both seeking scores contained in a limited and pre-determined paper format, thus restraining the possible amount of instructions to be included in the score, with the result of opening the piece up for improvisational and/or theatrical interpretations.

A *mattanza* was written on a postcard in response to a call for postcard-scores by the London-based ensemble *notes inégales*, that premiered the piece in Leeds on 5 June 2013. The purchase of a tourist postcard in the Sicilian satellite island of Favignana, during a short stay in May 2013, inspired the composition of the piece. The postcard depicts a scene from one of the most ancient fishing practices of Western and Southern Sicily, namely the massacre of the tunas called *mattanza* (hence the title of my piece). This practice is intensely permeated by extremely interesting elements: among other things, it involves a ritual where the fishermen (*tunnaroti*) sing together before and during the fishing – this type of song is called *cialoma*, and is characterised by the interaction between a solo leader and the choir before the most important stages of the *mattanza*, and then by a rhythmic collective song during the last, and most dramatic, stage of the fishing (Giarelli, 1998:132). The *mattanza* is nowadays endangered due to the unequal competition of industrial fishing (Giarelli, 1998:132).

On the other hand, allegedly on account of the spectacular violence embedded in this practice,⁵⁴ the term *mattanza* gradually came to be used, both in Sicilian and in Italian, to refer to human massacres. The role of massacres is, as mentioned earlier in this work, fundamental in understanding the particular patterns of subordination that connect the Mezzogiorno, and Sicily in particular, with Italy. The massacres, have, as mentioned above, a crucial pedagogic function, which makes them necessary in order to create fatalism among the subordinates and deter any type of rebellion on their side. The Italian State, and other occupying powers, have

⁵⁴ N.B. This affirmation and the subsequent comparison of the *mattanza* with the Mafia massacres in Sicily do not imply any association of it with the phenomenology of the Mafia, nor do they suggest any negative judgement of this traditional practice, whose inevitable and spectacular cruelty is, in any case, much less ruthless and much more sustainable than modern fishing techniques. On the contrary, the preservation of the *mattanza* is extremely desirable, also from an ethnographic and ethnomusicological point of view. Besides, the transposition of strong scenes connected to fishing into human tragedies can be seen as a characteristic of Sicilian and Southern Italian songwriting, to which my piece partly refers: cf. for example Domenico Modugno's song *Lu pisce spada* (1954).

abundantly perpetrated massacres in Sicily, as discussed earlier (Marino, 2007). On many other occasions, the Mafia has functioned as an instrument to accomplish these acts, in collusion with the State and the other occupying powers (Caruso, 2010; Saviano, 2008). This use of the Mafia, an organisation perceived as a direct expression of Sicilianness within the dominant narratives, has arguably the additional function of worsening the common stigmatisation of Sicilian identity, also with the result of alienating Sicilians from their own identity.

The scene depicted on the postcard may be considered significant as an allegory of these issues: the fishermen engaged in the *mattanza* are in the foreground, while a crowd of tourists spectates the scene; towards the top right corner of the postcard, is it possible to spot an Italian flag, symbolically supervising and consecrating the event (see front of the score). The pedagogic function of massacres entails a quasi-artificial *mise-en-scène* of the events, with the precise purpose of impressing the public, as attested, for example, by the exceptionally exaggerated violence displayed in the Capaci massacre on 23 May 1992, when anti-Mafia judge Giovanni Falcone with his wife and bodyguards were blown up by means of 400 kg of TNT (Tomasino, 2007:358-365; Ingroia, 2007:429-432). This massacre and the subsequent massacre of Via D'Amelio on 19 July 1992, in which Falcone's colleague Paolo Borsellino and his bodyguards were killed, are believed to be part of a general cooperation between the Mafia and the Italian State (Ingroia, 2007; Caruso, 2010; Lodato, 2002; Borsellino P., 2002; Borsellino R., 2010). The barely visible, peripheral – though significantly dominant in terms of height – presence of the Italian flag in the postcard can function as an eloquent allegory of a State that wisely commissions the death of its enemies, and then disappears behind the usual and predictable condemnations of the Mafia as an inherently Sicilian phenomenon.

Writing a postcard score implies the voluntary delegation of a considerable portion of control on the final aural result to the performers, who have the possibility to interpret the limited amount of given instruction in a myriad of different ways, as it is attested in the dramatic difference between the rehearsal and the concert recordings, which can be arguably considered two different pieces of music. The composer's role, initially necessary for the genesis of the main ideas, is almost eclipsed, hidden in the very moment the score is submitted to the ensemble: this type of (extremely fruitful) relationship with the ensemble can assume, in the allegorical context of this piece, the function of a parody of the quiet delegation of State murders to criminal organisations.

The great amount of freedom conceded to the performers poses the problem of establishing who really owns the intellectual property of the piece. Much as the postcard score can be totally considered my work, both the performances, recorded and submitted as an additional

documentation with this portfolio, could be in great part considered property of the performers. Prior to including the recordings in this portfolio, I have asked permission to the members of *notes inégales*, who were happy to let me use them.

The score consists of 3 notated fragments of music, positioned on the top right corner in the guise of a stamp. The rest of the space is occupied by textual instructions, of general interest in the left-hand half, and instrument-specific on the right-hand half. All the instruments are requested to engage with the same material, but each instrument is required to do so in a different way, ignoring some aspects and focussing on other elements. Importantly, the score asks for a repetition *ad libitum* of the fragments, suggesting a cyclical dimension which resonates with the cyclicity inherent in the occurrence of Sicilian massacres,⁵⁵ which could be interpreted as ritual murders that regularly take place at crucial turning points in Italian history and serve the renovation or the conservation of the central power (Marino, 2007). As mentioned above, the two documented traces of this piece, recorded respectively during the rehearsal and the concert, are extremely different: in fact, each of them highlights different aspects of the conceptual reflections embedded in the score.⁵⁶ The recording of the rehearsal is rich in improvised figures, electric guitar noise, and vocal intermissions such as a shout in the middle of the piece, a laughter and the uttered words “that’s it!” at the end of the performance: these elements certainly resonate with the extremely chaotic and theatrical nature of both the practice of the *mattanza* and the massacres committed in Sicily. The concert performance was totally different, as the musicians decided to follow the original notated instructions more closely: this made the audience appreciate the repetitive and contemplative nature of the piece, which is meant to recall the ritual cyclicity of State murders outlined above.

They are not doing anything wrong was written on a double-sided sheet of A3 paper, as prescribed in the call issued by the experimental ensemble *projectisle*, who premiered the piece on 2 December 2009 at the School of Music, University of Leeds. The other constraint, loosely prescribed by the ensemble, was the opportunity of using a wheelbarrow as an essential element of the performance, whether as an instrument or as a stage element.

I produced a semi-graphic score in two parts, one for each side of the A3 sheet, titled respectively *Public Humiliation* and *Ritual Murder*.⁵⁷ The first part features two blindfolded performers on their knees, with

⁵⁵ This approach towards repetition is also explored in my cycle of fixed-media pieces specifically focussed on Sicilian massacres. This cycle is not yet finished, at the moment, the only pieces that have been completed are *Via Maqueda* (2010) and *Murazzu Ruttu* (2010).

⁵⁶ It needs to be clarified that the ensemble engaged with the piece without knowing any of the issues exposed here. Quite uncommonly, they did not even ask what the title of the piece meant. This makes the similarities between their performances and my thoughts behind the composition of this piece totally fortuitous, perhaps in line with Hariman’s aforementioned insights on the possibility of unintentional allegorical coding (2002:283).

⁵⁷ The latter subtitle was inspired by Attali (1985).

their heads stuck inside the wheelbarrow,⁵⁸ who utter the word “shame”, in crescendo and accelerando; in the meanwhile, a fiddler lays mouth-gagged on the floor, repeatedly playing a sequence of pitches with her violin. In the middle of the crescendo, one of the performers at the wheelbarrow screams “silenzio!”⁵⁹ very loudly and firmly, silencing the other performers and ending the first part. In the second part, the performers at the wheelbarrow gently carry it over the fiddler’s belly, “ritually murdering” her, while she emits a painful scream.



Figure 27: a snapshot from the performance of *They are not doing anything wrong*.

In writing a piece with such a strong theatrical character I was certainly influenced by various pieces of musical theatre, especially in terms of the use of stage objects, such as the wheelbarrow, as dramatic centre of the action: for instance, before composing the piece I had attended a performance of Birtwistle’s opera *Down by the Greenwood Side* on a libretto by Michael Nyman (1969) – this version, directed by John Fulljames, featured a circular papier-mâché structure that was used to delimitate the main acting area; outside the domain of musical theatre, I was also influenced by the work of Antonio Rezza, and in particular his collaborations with the sculptor/scenographer Flavia Mastrella, based on the fusion between the actor/performer and the sculpture/scenography (cf. Rezza and Mastrella, 1991). In *They are not doing anything wrong*, the wheelbarrow defines the two main dramatic spaces (i.e., the wheelbarrowers area and the fiddler area), while at the same time playing a fundamental role in the action. Furthermore, the change in the wheelbarrow’s function temporally delimits the two parts of the piece.

Another important feature of *They are not doing anything wrong* is the active utilisation of body movements, and the juxtaposition, in the score, of musical instruction and body movement indications: in

⁵⁸ The score originally calls for four performers at the wheelbarrow.

⁵⁹ Literally meaning “silence!” in Italian, translatable as “shut up!” in English.

this respect, the main influence was Stockhausen's *Harlekin* (1978); in terms of the centrality of body movements within the dramatic action, I was also beneficially influenced by the work of Buster Keaton, and especially by his performance in *Film*, written by Samuel Beckett (1965), for which I had earlier composed a digital soundtrack as part of my Masters degree.

The theatrical nature of this piece can certainly help the audience recognise its inherent allegorical nature, by virtue of the presence of intelligible text and a clear *mise-en-scène*. Humiliation is exerted on the dominated community by entities that hide their real identity, as mentioned above apropos of the State committing its massacres through the Mafia. Humiliation is a form of objective violence exerted indiscriminately and prejudicially, in order to politically isolate its target. This isolation is functional in order to subsequently justify and/or conceal specific types of action against the dominated community. The example of massacres in Sicily can help better illustrate this issue: much as Mafia massacres are orchestrated to impress and outrage the national community, massacres directly committed by the State are rapidly covered up and cancelled from the national (but not always local) historical memory. Relevant examples in this sense are the massacre of Via Maqueda in Palermo on 19 October 1944,⁶⁰ the massacre of Murazzu Ruttu on 17 June 1945,⁶¹ the massacre of Portella della Ginestra on 1 May 1947,⁶² and the massacre of Avola on 2 December 1968.⁶³

The behaviour of the fiddler is also worth noting: the musical practice turns into an ultimate form of resistance, when the individual/community has already been silenced (mouth-gagged), and is about to be crushed/overpowered/annihilated (see Figure 27). Incidentally, the physical disposition of the fiddler and the wheelbarrow, together with the act of playing an instrument, closely resemble the image of the 2013 NO MUOS protest (see Figure 31) which will be presented in the last chapter of this work.

⁶⁰ This massacre is also known as *Strage del pane* ('bread slaughter') because the killed and wounded innocents were merely asking for crops and work. The Italian army opened fire on the public, killing 24 people and wounding 158 other innocent people. Buscemi, one of the few authors who has written about this episode, claims that this episode has been deliberately cancelled from the public's historical memory (2007:175). On this episode, see also Paternostro (2005).

⁶¹ The EVIS (Voluntary Army for the Independence of Sicily) had been founded by Antonio Canepa (under the pseudonym of Mario Turri) on 25 October 1944, five days after the massacre of Via Maqueda, which represented one of the immediate reasons for its formation (Barletta, 1995:21-22; Gliozzo, 1998:17-18). Eight months later, the founder of the EVIS, together with two other young militants, were caught in ambush and murdered by the police in Murazzu Ruttu, near Randazzo.

⁶² The massacre of Portella della Ginestra, in which 11 people died and 27 were seriously wounded, is one of the most obscure episodes in Italian history, and many important documents related to it are still protected by state secret. The massacre is commonly (and controversially) attributed to the bandit Salvatore Giuliano, who had previously milited in the EVIS, while a number of different theories exist on the commissioners (Casarrubea, 2005; Marino, 2007). Cf. also the film *Segreti di stato* by Paolo Benvenuti (2003).

⁶³ The massacre of Avola marked the last time when the Italian police fired into the crowd in the whole national territory. Two workers were killed during the demonstrations, and 44 were injured (Macaluso et al, 1968). Cf. also the musical theatre work *I fatti di Avola* by Carlo Muratori on a text by Filippo Arriva (Muratori and Arriva, 2008).

4. Vocal Scores

4.1 *Circling round my flesh and Separate Place*

In 2011 I participated in the project *As in waking dream: A Woman's Life and Love* supported by DARE, a partnership between the University of Leeds and Opera North. I paired up with poet John Whale as we were commissioned to write a song cycle in response to Schumann's liederzyklus *Frauenliebe und Leben*, which, in turn, is a setting of poems by Adelbert von Chamisso. The resulting work, *Circling round my flesh*, was then premiered on 23 May 2011 by Clare McCaldin (mezzosoprano) and Ian Shaw (piano), at the Howard Assembly Room in Leeds.

Whale had written five stanzas for me to set to music, but I used only four of them for the song cycle: the fifth and last stanza, left out of the song cycle, was used for the composition of a new piece, *Separate Place*, which was premiered on 6 January 2012 by Sarah Leonard (soprano), Jonathan Gooing (piano) and Colin Blamey (bass clarinet), at Middleton Hall, University of Hull, as part of the RMA Research Students' Conference 2012.

Whale's poem is centred on the tragedy of the protagonist, a woman who falls in love, gets married, gives birth to a child, and then is abandoned by her spouse. The poem is full of elements that clearly connote a situation of subordination and vulnerability of the protagonist, defenceless against the actions of her lover: the subordination is suggested, in turn, by the impact of the encounter with the man on the protagonist's life, connoted by an insistence on the metaphor of blindness and by the loss of the happiness of her childhood (first stanza); by the golden ring tight around her flesh (second stanza); by the pain and spasms associated to her giving birth to *his* son ("this miniature of you"), who "sucks the very life" from her (third stanza); by her self-mourning after he abandons her (fourth stanza); finally, by her solitude and desolation in the epilogue of the story (fifth stanza).

As soon as Whale started sending me the first stanzas, I had the idea of using the tragedy of the oppressed individual as an allegory of an oppressed land, by transposing the semantic plan from the individual to the collective dimension. The sequence of events that gradually overwhelm the protagonist who is seduced, married, impregnated, and then abandoned can easily be compared to the sequence of events involving a land being conquered, annexed, exploited and abandoned/isolated.

The analogy between the oppressed gender and the oppressed land has been widely explored. Particularly powerful comparisons can be found in Sicilian literature and popular music: in this context, the extensive collaboration between poet Ignazio Buttitta and singer/songwriter Rosa Balistreri is notable, having produced such songs as *La Sicilia avi un patruni*, which explicit the opposition between the Italian ruler, portrayed as a male patriarch, and Sicily, always referred to as the female subordinate (Balistreri and Buttitta, 1978).

Another key work that influenced my work with Whale's poetry was Caroline Lucas's "performative paper" *There was an Englishman, an Irishman and a Scotsman...* (2011), which explores the intersection between gender and nation, the latter seen as a mainly male-dominated entity, which subjugates and exploits the mother-land in the same way as it does with the female body.

Moane (2011) identifies patriarchy and colonisation as comparable hierarchical systems, both exerted by means of "violence", "political exclusion", "economic and sexual exploitation", "control of the culture", and the "fragmentation – or divide and conquer – strategy" (ibidem:27-56). Williamson places the equivalence in capitalism's need for the construction of the Other, which is needed for economic exploitation, but at the same time is to be eliminated politically (1986): this aspect can certainly be compared to the aforementioned topic of the Mezzogiorno as a constructed Other, a negation of Italianness which in turn is instrumental to the creation of an Italian national identity, which has been explored extensively (Dickie, 1994; Dickie, 1997:119; Gribaudi, 1997; Conelli, 2013).

As far as the poem is concerned as an independent work of art, it could be argued that the individual tragedy of the protagonist, independently from the specific intentions of the poet, is already comparable to the collective condition of the female gender, which is to be considered a major motif of the work. My main aim was respecting and highlighting this important feature, while at the same time providing elements that could stimulate an alternative (although, as usual, non-coercive) interpretation of the work, namely an allegory of the oppressed and colonised land, with a special reference to the case of Sicily and the Mezzogiorno. I thus decided to set the poem as transparently as possible, avoiding or minimising the use of extended techniques and the practice of phonetic deconstruction that had characterised my vocal works prior to this point, in order to make the text as intelligible as possible, to the point of subordinating the music to the text. I intended to adhere to Whale's poem as much as possible, and when changes were made, they were carefully negotiated with him.

Two major structural interventions in the poem facilitated the construction of my own allegorical discourse within the overall work. The first intervention, as mentioned above, was the exclusion of the fifth stanza from the piece, which was intended to limit the narrative structure to four main moments, namely seduction/conquest, marriage/annexation, childbirth/exploitation and abandonment/isolation; at that moment, the possibility of writing a new piece by setting the fifth stanza had already been discussed. The second and most crucial intervention was the insertion of a solo voice interlude into the song cycle, with the function of providing an interpretive key in order to decipher the allegorical construction.

The interlude, *Lamentu* (“lament” in Sicilian), sprang out of the assemblage of semantic elements already present in Whale’s poem, reorganised to form a new discourse, about a people advocating separation from those who invaded and exploited them and their land. A few grammatical additions on my part included the switching of the first person pronoun from the singular “I” to the plural “we”, in order to transfer the narrative to the collective dimension, and the shift to past and future tenses.

I then started by collecting all the semantic elements, belonging to Whale’s poem, that could prove to be useful for the interlude, and compiled a shortlist of terms, ready to be used.

Table 5: a shortlist of semantic elements from John’s Whale lyrics

go	blind	hangs	before	go	blind	hangs	before	go	those	times	gold	almost	everything
known	eternity	circles	round	known	eternity	circles	round	known	wipe	up	blood	mother	sweat
moan	upon	back	sucks	moan	upon	back	sucks	moan	gold	complaint	myself	narrative	pain
pain	soul	sing	myself	pain	soul	sing	myself	pain	everything	own	catalogue	pain	separate
place	garden	dawning	broken	song	exile								

From this list of words, I composed the lyrics for the interlude:

We will go separate:

You took all our gold and made us blind,

You sucked our blood and broke our bones,

Confined us in exile,

Wiped out everything we knew.

The lyrics of the interlude make strong references to some of the main narratives put forward by Sicilian and Southern independence/autonomy movements, such as the perceived inevitability of a political separation to come (first line), the resentment for the economic exploitation exerted by the ruling population (first half of the second line), for the physical exploitation and the exertion of violence (third line), for the territorial isolation (fourth line), and for the destruction of the subordinated people’s consciousness and culture (second half of the second line, fifth line).

As stated in the performance notes, the interlude *Lamentu* can be performed once in between any two of the four songs, or twice, before the first song and after the fourth and last song. In virtue of this flexibility in terms of temporal dislocation within the piece, and of both the thematic diversion from the original scope of Whale’s work and the clear inconsistency with the – otherwise fixed – instrumentation of the piece, it may be argued that, in the context of the collaborative piece of work, the interlude can be seen as what Bey (1986) calls a Temporary Autonomous Zone, in that it sets a limited portion of independent space within the work, which is not affected by the political relations involved in the collaboration nor by the fixity of the piano and voice interaction that characterises the rest of the piece, and is characterised by an extreme mobility within the piece, which encourages the perception of its independence.

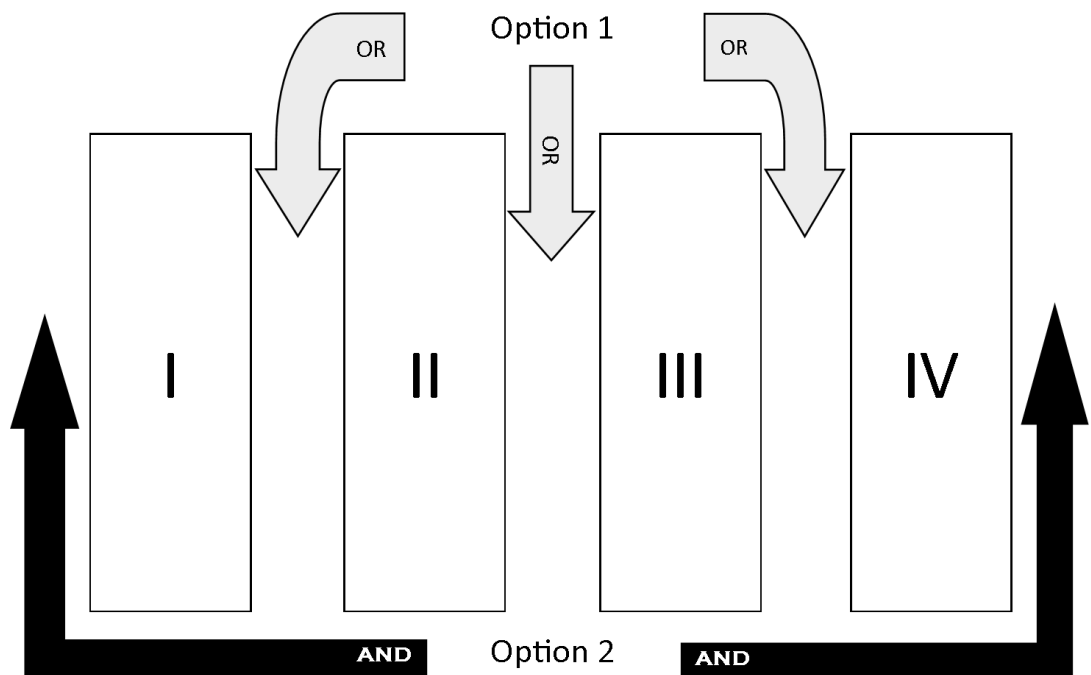


Figure 28: a map of the possible dislocations of the interlude *Lamentu* within the song cycle *Circling round my flesh*

The independent status of the interlude enables it to function as an interpretive key for the whole work, and whilst the whole interpretation of the work is affected, the original purpose of the poem remains clear and intact, coexisting alongside its allegorical recodification.

The interlude *Lamentu* was inserted also in the piece *Separate Place*, composed by using the lyrics of the fifth stanza of Whale's poem as central textual material. Whilst, as mentioned above, the possibility of writing a piece on the fifth stanza had already been discussed, the final incentive to write it came from a call for scores for the lunchtime concert of the RMA Research Student Conference 2012 at the University of Hull, partly supported by the Larkin Society, that encouraged the setting of poems by Philip Larkin. Partly due to the fact that I already had Whale's poem at hand and partly due to reasons that I will explain in the next chapter, I decided to ignore the encouragement to openly relate the work to Larkin's poetry: in reality, there is a hidden connection between *Separate Place* and one of Larkin's poems, which will be revealed in the next chapter.

Separate Place, for soprano, piano and bass clarinet, is composed of four sections, namely a Prologue, which functions as a recapitulation of the previous vicissitudes in the protagonist's story, a central section named *Separate Place* after the piece, that contains the setting of Whale's fifth stanza, the interlude *Lamentu*, minimally tweaked to accommodate the slightly different register of the singer, and a final epilogue. The prologue and the epilogue contain unsynchronised parts, while in the central part the three instruments are synchronised, and in the interlude the soprano sings unaccompanied.

The prologue is narratively constructed in order to evoke the previous events happened to the protagonist by using a minimum number of textual elements from the first four stanzas of Whale's poem, with a similar procedure to that used to compose the interlude *Lamentu*. Minimal fragments of sense are incorporated in three basic sequences, each of which is repeated several times. In between the three sequences, some seconds of pause are called for.

Figure 29: the soprano part in the prologue section of *Separate Place*

The same procedure is applied to fragments in the instrumental part. The result is a quick recapitulation of the facts, with an immediate evocation of some of the most important events, within a disordered interaction of the three instruments.

The central part, as noted above, is a song called *Separate Place* after the general title of the work, and is the setting of the fifth stanza of Whale's poem. More reasons can be provided, at this point, for its exclusion from the first piece and its utilisation for a new piece: while the first four stanzas narrate a sequence of situations which is tragic for both the real protagonist and the allegorical oppressed community, the fifth stanza deals with an event, namely, the final separation, that is certainly terrible for the protagonist, but is most probably desirable for the oppressed community. Consequently, while the narration and its allegorical codification proceed in the same direction in *Circling round my flesh*, they clash in *Separate Place*: the clash is obtained by means of a use of musical devices, mainly borrowed from tonal/impressionistic procedures, that evoke a joyous and hopeful mood, in contrast with the miserable condition of the protagonist. The result is a sense of distortion and estrangement, which in turn suggests the instable state of mind of the protagonist. The tonal and impressionistic musical devices that facilitate this form of representation are trills, ornamental figures, ascending melodies, and so forth – a good example is the figure at bar 16 (piano – right hand), whose sudden and ephemeral ascension might produce a joyous and almost hilarious effect – similar figures appear in the piano and bass clarinet parts throughout the song, and are often juxtaposed with gloomy lyrics.

Whereas these quasi-ornamental figures are used in contrast with the words, in bars 38-41 the soprano line is associated to a melody rich in broad ascending intervals: this procedure is meant to deliberately alter the connotation of the lyrics ("I lift my head towards the stars") – what originally could be seen as the description of the desolate gesture of an abandoned individual becomes the hopeful movement of a liberated community looking forward and upwards to its future.

In the piece, the central song *Separate Place* is followed by the interlude *Lamentu*: in this new context, the interlude does not just function as an interpretive key to decode the allegorical construction of the piece, but also as an essential part of the narration featured in the piece, in that it fulfils a major narrative switch, from a moment characterised, as shown above, by the estrangement caused by the contrast of feelings between the two entities embodied by the singer/protagonist (i.e., the abandoned woman and the oppressed community), to a completely different moment, characterised by a substantial uniformity in mood, and in which the singer/protagonist only embodies the oppressed community. In other words, the passage

from the central song *Separate Place* to the interlude *Lamentu* represents the passage from a moment of estranged desolation to a moment of positive resolution.

The image shows a musical score for the piece 'Separate Place', measures 14-18. It features three staves: a vocal line at the top, a piano part in the middle, and a bass clarinet part at the bottom. The key signature is one flat (B-flat) and the time signature is 3/4. The vocal line starts with the word 'where' at measure 14 and continues with 'where I can on - ly' at measure 17. Dynamic markings include *p* (piano), *f* (forte), *mf* (mezzo-forte), and *f* (forte). Two specific musical figures are circled: one in the piano part at measure 15, and another in the bass clarinet part at measure 14. Arrows point from these circled figures towards the vocal line, suggesting a connection between the instrumental accompaniment and the vocal melody.

Figure 30: *Separate Place* - bb. 14-18. Figures in the piano and bass clarinet parts, that may suggest a joyous and hilarious mood

The essence of this semantic passage is not altered by the final epilogue that closes the piece: in this section, the only articulated words uttered by the soprano are in the second and last fragments, which is repeated four times. The uttered phrase, namely “out of this”, has the obvious function of closing the piece – incidentally, however, it also connects this piece with the song *Not peace, but other things*, as it will be shown in the next chapter.

4.2 *Not peace, but other things*

Soon after the end of the RMA conference at which *Separate Place* was premiered, I was contacted by the Hull Sinfonietta, with the proposal of writing a new piece for the same three performers, for an event supported by the Larkin Society in partnership with the University of Hull. The commission involved writing a new song by setting poetry by Philip Larkin.

I had to take some time before accepting the offer, since the prospect of engaging with Larkin’s work posed some important reservations related to my integrity as a politically engaged composer: although I enjoy, respect and admire Larkin’s work, some of his political

views, as shown in some of his poetry and some of his published correspondence, do not fit with my personal beliefs.

In particular, Larkin published, in his collection of poem *High Windows* (1974), a poem titled *Homage to a Government*, which expresses a considerable dissent towards a government's decision to withdraw its troops from an overseas territory they were occupying and patrolling. Some scholars argue that this is referred to the British withdrawal from Aden (Goodby, 1969).

Another important circumstance that made me hesitate about engaging with Larkin's work is the posthumous publication of his correspondence, edited by Anthony Thwaite (Larkin, 1992): some of the letters contained in this publication show an openly racist attitude towards black people (cf. Larkin, 1992:584,755).

I soon decided that declining my participation in the project would not have been the best thing to do: on the contrary, I become increasingly interested in the possibility of using Larkin's own words to express dissent towards his more problematic views. I also decided that the critique should only be aimed at the views expressed in *Homage to a Government*, deliberately avoiding any confrontation with the posthumous correspondence, which represents personal material not written for publication, and that was disseminated without the direct consensus of the author.⁶⁴

As anticipated in the previous chapter, I had already thought about engaging with Larkin's work when composing *Separate Place*: my original idea was to present the piece as a reaction to *Homage to a Government*, by outlining in the programme note, the contrast between the self-determination advocated in the interlude *Lamentu* and the militaristic ideology transmitted by Larkin's poem. This idea was not included in the programme note, but I had the opportunity to talk about it during the public workshop that preceded the concert.

I thus decided to accept the commission for a new setting of Larkin's poetry, on the condition that I could use more than one poem in my song and that I could negotiate a different order of the lines, in order to obtain a text that could express dissent towards Larkin's political views, while still sympathising with the existential moods generally expressed in his poems. I decided

⁶⁴ An interesting precedent in this sense, tightly entwined with the cultural references of this portfolio, is Nono's setting of Cesare Pavese's poems: some of Pavese's personal correspondence, posthumously published, revealed openly racist attitudes towards Southern Italians, and Sicilians in particular – cf. Pavese and Chiuminatto (2007:100-111). It is not clear whether Nono was aware of Pavese's views on these issues; in any case, the moral integrity of Nono's works on Pavese's poems – e.g., *La fabbrica illuminata* (1964) or *Sarà dolce tacere* (1960) – is by no means diminished by this fact.

to use *Homage to a Government* alongside with the well-known *This Be the Verse* and *Vers de Société*, all the three poems belonging to *High Windows*.

By recombining the lines from these three poem, I obtained the following text:

Man hands on misery to man.

It deepens like a coastal shelf.

The soldiers there only made trouble happen:

Not peace, but other things.

Get out as early as you can,

Next year we shall be easier in our minds.

Table 6 shows the original position of each of these lines within Larkin's poems.

As can be easily noted, the text possesses a strong anti-war connotation, in open contrast to the opinions expressed by Larkin in *Homage to a Government*. In the text, after an introduction that can be interpreted as a statement about the universality of the problem of warfare in human history⁶⁵ (lines 1-2), clear references to the so-called peacekeeping operations that have characterised the recent foreign military policies of many countries associated with the NATO can be identified (NATO, 2013; UN, 2013), and a negative judgement on these missions is also clearly recognisable (lines 3-4); finally, an appeal is made for the troops to leave the invaded territory as soon as possible, with the expectation of a better and calmer future in their absence (lines 5-6).

⁶⁵ It is important to highlight the fact that I had to compromise with Larkin's use of the word "man" as synonym of "humankind", which may sound politically incorrect in this day and age. To a limited extent, however, this use of the word can be interpreted as a statement about the prevalently patriarchal nature of warfare, in line with the reflections exposed in the previous chapter.

Table 6: the original location, within Larkin's work, of each of the lines of the song *Not peace, but other things*

Line	Original position
Man hands on misery to man.	<i>This Be The Verse</i> - 1st line of the 3rd stanza
It deepens like a coastal shelf.	<i>This Be The Verse</i> - 2nd line of the 3rd stanza
The soldiers there only made trouble happen:	<i>Homage to a Government</i> - 5th line of the 2nd stanza
Not peace, but other things.	<i>Vers de Société</i> - 3rd line of the 6th stanza
Get out as early as you can,	<i>This Be The Verse</i> - 3rd line of the 3rd stanza
Next year we shall be easier in our minds.	<i>Homage to a Government</i> - 6th line of the 2nd stanza

The lyrics propose a clear and unequivocal anti-war message, which does not leave room for alternative interpretations, posing in turn several problems, in relation, on one hand, to my own poetic principles, based on polysemicity and on the respect of different and contrasting interpretations, and, on the other hand, in relation to the semantic richness of Larkin's poetry, arguably impoverished by my re-organisation of the lyrics. As mentioned above, this particular commission made me hesitate a lot, due to the difficulties in conciliating Larkin's views with my positions, while at the same time maintaining my personal and artistic integrity: this difficult task required some sort of compromise on my side, and I soon realised that I had to give in some of my poetic principles in order to maintain my integrity – in other words, I could not allow myself to associate to my music a polysemic and potentially ambiguous message about war. As far as Larkin's poetry is concerned, my intentions over the setting of his texts have undergone the review of the Hull Sinfonietta and of the publisher Faber & Faber, who authorised my project; I have also tried to pay the maximum respect to Larkin and his work, avoiding to assume a confrontational attitude and only trying to politely disagree with his view. Overall, I can claim that my work on such a difficult commission was successful, in that I managed to deliver a piece consistent with the general purpose of my artistic production.

The role of Sicilian land in the context of peacekeeping operations is fundamental: for example, a few months before presenting *Separate Place*, I had witnessed the launch of Canadian military aircrafts from Trapani Airport, a civilian airport in Sicily: the aircrafts were directed towards Libya, as part of the NATO Operation Unified Protector (NATO, 2012).⁶⁶ During the whole course of the military campaign in Libya, Sicily's territory was hugely exploited for war operations, and the NATO Base Sigonella, near Catania, was also used to host the Operation Unified Protector (NATO, 2011). The use of Sicilian territory for warfare has never been accepted by the local population, and several protest movements had expressed their dissent towards the hosting of the Operation Unified Protector (FNS, 2011; Sicilia Libertaria, 2011; Officina 667, 2011).

Following the end of the military intervention in Libya, another important issue related to the military deployment of the Sicilian territory became critical, namely the construction of the MUOS (Mobile User Objective System), an enormous radar system owned by the US Department of Defense, near the town of Niscemi, in central Sicily. The population has constantly protested against the building of the MUOS, on account of the foreseeable long-term health risks posed by the military installation. The protests induced the newly elected Governor of Sicily, Rosario Crocetta, to revoke the permission granted to the US Government, after having commissioned a scientific report that confirmed the health risks posed by the MUOS (Zucchetti and Coraddu, 2011): this, in turn, has produced a situation of high tension between the Italian Government, that is in favour of the MUOS, and the Sicilian Regional Government, which has led to court litigation, with the former suing the latter over the claim of economic damages caused by the revocation of the permission (Romano, 2013). In the meanwhile, hundreds of local activists have been constantly besieging the MUOS site, trying to stop US military from accessing it and continue the works: this, in turn, has led to several clashes between the Italian police and the local protesters (ANSA, 2013a; ANSA, 2013b; Mocciano and Fiasconaro, 2013).

At the moment of writing, a final resolution on the MUOS still seems a long way away. *Not peace, but other things* was premiered at Beverley Minster, in Hull, on 27 June 2013 by the Portumnus Ensemble (Sarah Leonard – soprano; Jonathan Gooing – piano; Colin Blamey – clarinet), as part of the 20th Century British Poets in Music Festival. The temporal coincidence with the events outlined above certainly contributes in making this piece an artistic statement against the military deployment of Sicily, and, in particular, against the MUOS.

⁶⁶ The military intervention in Libya was also called Operation Mobile in Canada (Canadian Department of National Defence, 2013), Operation Odyssey Dawn in the US (US Department of Defense, 2011) and in Italy, and Operation Ellamy in the UK (Royal Air Force, 2013).

The piece is characterised by the returning presence of sequences of very still piano chords, whose function is to delimit and separate the different sections of the piece, generally identifiable with the lines of the used text. The material used in the various chord sequences is very limited, in that a small number of chords is used, which is presented in different combinations in each sequence.

Table 7: the structure of *Not peace, but other things*

Bar No.	1 – 6	7 – 11	12 – 14	14 - 17
	Chord sequence I	Section 1	Chord sequence II	Section 2
		1. "Man hands on misery to man"		2. "It deepens like a coastal shelf"
Bar No.	18 - 20	20 -26	27 -44	45 - 50
	Chord sequence III	Section 3	Intermezzo	Chord sequence IV
		3. "The soldiers there only made trouble happen" 4. "Not peace, but other things"		
Bar No.	50 - 54	54 -59	60 – 65	66 -68
	Section 4	Chord sequence V	Section 5	Chord sequence VI
	5. "Get out as early as you can"		6. "Next year we shall be easier in our minds"	

By temporally separating the various lines, the chord sequences make the relations between them less obvious, reducing the immediate impact of the propositions embedded in the text, and allowing for a 'relaxed' understanding of the song, conceivable only as a general homage to Larkin's poetry in the form of a selection of non-related lines from some of his most significant poems. While separating the lines temporally, however, the chord sequences ligate them semantically by juxtaposing each of them against the same type of material, thus allowing for a more comprehensive interpretation of the song, based on the establishment of semantic connections between the various lines, which in turn involves the attachment of anti-war connotations to the work. In this sense, the fact that lines 3 and 4 are not separated by any sequence of chords is meant to furnish an interpretive key to the listener of the work, in

that the juxtaposition of the two lines immediately suggests the direct assessment of a particular situation, which can be applied to the rest of the textual material.

Bars 50-54 constitute the dramatic centre of the song, characterised by the multiple repetition of the invocation that constitutes line 5 and by a markedly melodic (quasi-tonal) soprano line, which clashes especially with the clarinet part. As anticipated in the previous chapter, here it is also possible to identify a semantic linkage with my previous piece, namely the resemblance between this line (“Get out as early as you can”) and the phrase “out of this” that functions as a closure for *Separate Place*: as mentioned above, *Separate Place* had also been conceived as a response to *Homage to a Government*, and these two lines both express a solicitation for military occupiers to leave the invaded land.



Figure 31: No MUOS activist Turi Vaccaro Cordaro playing the Sicilian *friscalettu* while symbolically blocking a police car. [Source: Giuseppe Fiasconaro. This photo is included here thanks to the kind permission of its author]

After bars 60-65, which contain line 6, the piece finishes with a last short chord sequence in bars 66-68: the piece closes in the same way it started, suggesting a cyclical and atemporal dimension, which presents the act of resisting military invasions as an eternal universal condition, not exclusively attached to a particular place or historical moment. Moreover, the stillness of the chord sequences also suggest an important ritual element, which reconnects the piece to the non-violent nature of the local resistance to the MUOS, often characterised by various rituals performed by the activists during the blockades and the clashes with the police, such as playing the traditional Sicilian recorder (*friscalettu*) or playing cards (Mocciaro and Fiasconaro, 2013): these manifestations can be assimilated, to some extent, to the Naples graffiti and the disfiguration of the Garibaldi monument mentioned earlier, as subaltern

responses to impositions exerted by the ruling politico-economic regime or by the dominant social groups.

5. Conclusions

The previous image of a peaceful protester, playing the *friscalettu* in front of the police while trying to impede the US army from accessing the MUOS site, combined with the previous image depicting the insertion of the Garibaldi monument in a toilet, can perhaps embody the most appropriate portrait of my music and of its collocation within the extra-musical context illustrated in this work: I do not renounce to produce and disseminate instances of openly confrontational, yet inoffensive, artistic expression, confident that they might prove useful in the context of a collective and organic oppositional culture.

In contrast to the last image, which presents musical practice on a traditional instrument as a clear statement of resistance, the pieces in this portfolio do not engage directly with any musical cultural indicator (e.g. traditional melodies, rhythms, instruments etc.) aimed at evoking the traditions of the territory examined as a case-study: this possibility was avoided with the purpose of eluding the risk of easily mystifying the past as a golden age to which one might aspire. The last statement requires further clarification: clear markers of identity are not dismissed at all in this portfolio, as it is attested by my abundant use of the Sicilian language in my titles;⁶⁷ nor is dismissed the past, as is attested in my extensive references to history, used as a means to assess and understand the social, political and economic forces driving the present world; eventually, the very use of musical elements from the tradition, such as melodies, rhythms and, especially, instruments, does not necessarily imply the idolisation of tradition and the past, and can assume a myriad of interesting functions – not even necessarily connected to the practice of recontextualisation – which are not excluded from my musical practice outside this portfolio. The reason why the use of markers of tradition is avoided in this portfolio is, instead, the use of allegorical coding, which might urge some listeners to assess and decodify the use of traditional elements as an integral part of the allegorical construction, with the predictable result of misunderstanding them as emotional references to the past.

As demonstrated throughout this commentary, and in line with the aforementioned insights on non-coercive poetics offered by Boal (1979), the oppositional thought presented in this commentary and embedded in my portfolio is not concerned with imposing a specific view on the listener, who is free to make their own sense of the pieces, be it a variation/refutation of

⁶⁷ The words in Sicilian, a vivid language which is widely spoken and written (although with no unified spelling system), are spelled in a specific way in the titles of the pieces: these particular spellings derive mainly from my work on Sicilian orthography (Messina, 2006), but also from earlier works by Piccitto (1947) and Leone (1977; 1992).

my point of view (even to the point of instigating a debate, or walking away from the concert venue) or a totally detached enjoyment/rejection of their artistic qualities. The only usage of my music I intend to avoid is its deliberate misuse, aimed at assimilating it to its own antithesis by commodifying it and offering it as a token of celebration of the ruling politico-economic system: this risk is also inherent in my quotidian endeavours, inevitably aimed at having a successful artistic and academic career, but I trust that my piece *I supikkjarii* represents a proof of the fact that I am prepared to face and challenge this threat.

The choice of articulating this portfolio in two parts, clearly distinguishable at least in terms of instrumentation of the pieces, perhaps deserves further comments: much as the instrumental pieces relate to a need to observe and analyse processes (though from an ever-partisan point of view) by means of abstract structures, the vocal scores, in contrast, are characterised by a “shameless”⁶⁸ use of clear and intelligible text, deliberately used to make claims. Each of the two strategies employed in the respective parts of this portfolio is necessary in order to fully understand and justify the other part: without a preliminary analysis of the issues, in fact, any claim could appear partial and gratuitous; at the same time, analysing the facts without clearly stating a position would contradict my purpose of creating symbolic traces characterised by a distinct oppositional stance.

The integration of clear and intelligible text into the musical medium has proven extremely powerful in terms of opening expressive possibilities. The use of text will be explored further in my future research, alongside with the incorporation of other media: at the moment I am working at various projects for the development of projectable real-time vocal scores, with the aim of investigating new possibilities for the manipulation of text, while at the same time offering additional interpretive material through the visual medium. On the other hand, however, I will also continue to compose instrumental pieces concerned with the abstract analysis of social, historical and economic processes.

⁶⁸ The use of this term partly refers to Stockhausen’s well-known analysis of Nono’s *Il canto sospeso* (Stockhausen, 1964). Stockhausen argues that in Nono’s piece the reduction of intelligible words to sounds is meant to cover the meaning of certain parts of the text “about which one should be particularly ashamed that they had to be written” (ibidem:49). Nono’s response on the incorrectness of Stockhausen’s analysis is mentioned in a footnote in the English translation of the article (ibidem:49), and Nono also provided a full response elsewhere (Nono, 2007:86-87).

6. Bibliography

- AGCOM (Autorità per le Garanzie nelle Comunicazioni). (2012). *Delibera N. 422/12/CONS: Disposizioni di attuazione della disciplina in materia di comunicazione politica e di parità di accesso ai mezzi di informazione relative alla campagna per le elezioni del presidente e dell'assemblea della Regione Siciliana*. AGCOM. Retrieved from <http://www.agcom.it/default.aspx?DocID=9424>
- Alianello, C. (1972). *La conquista del Sud*. Milan: Rusconi.
- Altimari, P. (2011). No fly, no party. *Officina667.net*, 12, pp. 3-7.
- ANSA. (2013a). Muos, scontri tra polizia e manifestanti: Forze dell'ordine rimuovono blocco, convoglio raggiunge base Usa. Retrieved from http://www.ansa.it/web/notizie/rubriche/cronaca/2013/04/26/Muos-scontri-polizia-manifestanti_8615093.html
- ANSA. (2013b). Muos: Scontri manifestanti-polizia. Due fermi e tre agenti contusi. Retrieved from http://www.ansa.it/web/notizie/regioni/sicilia/2013/05/08/Muos-scontri-manifestanti-polizia_8670122.html
- Appiah, K. A. (1997). Cosmopolitan Patriots. *Critical Inquiry*, 23(3), 617-639.
- Aprile, P. (2010). *Terroni: Tutto quello che è stato fatto perchè gli italiani del sud diventassero meridionali*. Milan: Piemme.
- Attali, J. (1985). *Noise: The Political Economy of Music*. Minneapolis: The University of Minnesota Press.
- Bakhtin, M. (1984). *Problems of Dostoevsky's poetics*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
- Balistreri, R., & Buttita, I. (1978). La Sicilia havi un patruni [Recorded by R. Balistreri]. On *Vinni a cantari all'ariu scuvertu*. Cetra.
- Bandiera, O. (2003). Land Reform, the Market for Protection, and the Origins of the Sicilian Mafia: Theory and Evidence. *The Journal of Law, Economics, & Organization*, 19(1), 218-244.
- Baudrillard, J. (1983). *In the Shadow of the Silent Majorities, or the End of the Social, and Other Essays*. New York: Semiotext(e).
- Baudrillard, J. (1994). *Simulacra and Simulation*. Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press.
- Beckett, S. (Writer), & Schneider, A. (Director). (1965). *Film* [Motion Picture].
- Bennato, E. (2010). *Brigante se more: Viaggio nella musica del Sud*. Rome: Coniglio.

- Bey, H. (2003). *T.A.Z.: The Temporary Autonomous Zone, Ontological Anarchy, Poetic Terrorism*. New York: Autonomedia.
- Boal, A. (1979). *Theatre of the Oppressed*. London: Pluto Press.
- Borsellino, P. (2002, July 19). Contro la mafia uno Stato degno di fiducia. *L'Unità*, p. 31.
- Borsellino, R. (2010, July 19). Omertà di Stato. *L'Unità*, pp. 2,5.
- Bourdieu, P. (1986). The Forms of Capital. In J. E. Richardson (Ed.), *Handbook of Theory of Research for the Sociology of Education* (pp. 46-58). Westport: Greenwood Press.
- Braudel, F. (1983). *Civilization and capitalism: 15th-18th century* (Vol. III: The perspective of the world). London: Collins.
- Britwistle, H., & Nyman, M. (2009, March 8). *Down by the Greenwood Side*. (J. Fulljames, Director, London Sinfonietta conducted by George Benjamin, Performer) Howard Assembly Room, Leeds.
- Callinicos, A. (1989). *Against Postmodernism: A Marxist Critique*. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Callinicos, A. (2002). The Actuality of Imperialism. *Millennium - Journal of International Studies*, 31, 319-326.
- Canadian Department of Defence. (2013, 1 28). *Operation MOBILE*. Retrieved from <http://www.cjoc-coic.forces.gc.ca/exp/mobile/index-eng.asp>
- Carello, A. N. (1989). *The Northern Question: Italy's Participation in the European Economic Community and the Mezzogiorno's Underdevelopment*. Newark: University of Delaware Press.
- Carlo, A., & Capecehatro, E. M. (1974). Against the "Southern Question". *International Journal of Sociology*, 4(2/3), 31-84.
- Caruso, A. (2010). *Milano ordina: Uccidete Borsellino. L'estate che cambiò la nostra vita*. Milan: Longanesi.
- Casale, E. (1998, September 9). *Composizione per voce*. (B. Guerrera, Performer) Mappe, Pescheria, Catania.
- Casale, E. (2006). *A Victor Hugo Daza*. (Orchestra Sinfonica Siciliana, Performer) Politeama Garibaldi, Palermo.
- Casale, E. (2010, October 6-7). *Conversazioni con Chomsky*. (F. Micheli, Director, C. Zavalloni, E. Ribatto, Icarus Ensemble, & MDI Ensemble, Performers) Teatro Cavallerizza, Reggio Emilia. Retrieved from <http://vimeo.com/26193696>
- Chilcote, R. H. (2002). Globalization or Imperialism? *Latin American Perspectives*, 29(6), 80-84.
- Ciano, A. (1996). *I Savoia e il massacro del Sud*. Rome: Grandmelò.

- Condorelli, A. (2012, August 30). Musumeci: "Liste pulite e autonomia da Roma". *Live Sicilia*. Retrieved from http://livesicilia.it/2012/08/30/musumeci-liste-pulite-e-autonomia-da-roma_180786/
- Conelli, C. (2013). Mezzogiorno postcoloniale. *Terza giornata di studi su Nicola Zitara*. Nola.
- Coppola, I. (2012, October 15). Contro l'Autonomia siciliana Merli e Ascari. *LinkSicilia*. Retrieved from <http://www.linksicilia.it/2012/10/contro-lautonomia-siciliana-merli-e-ascari/>
- Corriere della Sera. (2012, October 29). Risultati Regione: Sicilia. *Corriere della Sera*. Retrieved from http://www.corriere.it/Speciali/Politica/2012/elezioni12/SEAS/amministrative/regionali/regione_SICILIA.shtml
- Costa, M. (2009). *Lo statuto speciale della Regione Siciliana: Un'autonomia tradita?* Palermo: Herbita.
- Crisantino, A. (1994). *Capire la mafia*. Palermo: La Luna.
- Dandekar, V. M. (1980). Unequal Exchange: Imperialism of Trade. *Economic and Political Weekly*, 15(1), 27-29,31-36.
- D'Angelo, B. (2009, October 26). Messina un mese dopo: "Niente risposte nè solidarietà". *Corriere della Sera*. Retrieved from http://www.corriere.it/cronache/09_ottobre_26/messina-alluvione-un-mese-dopo_9e5d5344-c233-11de-b592-00144f02aabc.shtml
- De Seta, C. (2010, January 8). L'Aquila abbandonata. *L'Espresso*. Retrieved from <http://espresso.repubblica.it/dettaglio/laquila-abbandonata/2119043>
- Delzio, F. (2010). *La scossa: Sei proposte shock per la rinascita del Sud*. Soveria Mannelli: Rubbettino.
- Di Fiore, G. (2010). *Controstoria dell'Unità d'Italia: Fatti e misfatti del Risorgimento*. Milan: Rizzoli.
- Dickie, J. (1992). A Word at War: The Italian Army and Brigandage 1860–1870. *History Workshop*, 33(1), 1-24.
- Dickie, J. (1994). The South as Other: From Liberal Italy to the Lega Nord. *The Italianist*, 14(Special Issue - Culture and society in southern Italy: past and present), 124-140.
- Dickie, J. (1997). Stereotypes of the Italian South, 1860-1900. In R. Lumley, & J. Morris (Eds.), *The New History of the Italian South: The Mezzogiorno Revisited* (pp. 114-147). Exeter: University of Exeter Press.
- Dimico, A., Isopi, A., & Olsson, O. (2012). *Origins of the Sicilian Mafia: The Market for Lemons*. CREDIT Research Paper 12/1.
- Dinan, D. (2004). *Europe Recast: A History of the European Union*. Boulder: Lynne Rienner.

- Dines, N. (2013). Bad news from an aberrant city: A critical analysis of the British press's portrayal of organised crime and the refuse crisis in Naples. *Modern Italy*.
- Emmanuel, A. (1972). *Unequal Exchange: A Study of the Imperialism of Trade*. London: NLB.
- Esposito, M. (2013). *Separiamoci*. Milan: Magenes.
- Finocchiaro Aprile, A. (1966). *Il Movimento Indipendentista Siciliano*. Palermo: Libri Siciliani.
- FNS (Frunti Nazziunali Sicilianu). (2011, April 17). Kummunikatu FNS. Retrieved from https://fbcdn-sphotos-h-a.akamaihd.net/hphotos-ak-prn2/225117_1531597068967_4772326_n.jpg
- Gazzetta Jonica. (2010, November 15). Danni alluvionali, due pesi e due misure (interviene Francilia). *Gazzetta Jonica*. Retrieved from <http://www.gazzettajonica.it/news/2010/11/15/danni-alluvionali-due-pesi-e-due-misure-interviene-francilia/4583/>
- Giallombardo, G. (2012, November 3). Leghista shock su Facebook: Forza Etna, Vesuvio e Marsili. *Sicilia Informazioni*. Retrieved from <http://www.siciliainformazioni.com/sicilia-informazioni/25353/leghista-shock-su-facebook-forza-etna-vesuvio-e-marsili>
- Giannola, A., Petraglia, C., & Scalera, D. (2011). *Residui fiscali regionali e riforma federalista: Quanto residuerà delle politiche regionali e redistributive?* MPRA Paper No. 30895. Retrieved from http://mpra.ub.uni-muenchen.de/30895/1/MPRA_paper_30895.pdf
- Giarelli, G. (1998). L'ultima mattanza? *La Ricerca Folklorika*, 38, 131-133.
- Giupponi, I. (2012, February 18). Fiorella Mannoia presenta l'album Sud: "La politica di sinistra ha fallito". *Il Fatto Quotidiano (Edizione di Bologna)*. Retrieved from <http://www.ilfattoquotidiano.it/2012/02/18/mannoia/192363/>
- Gliozzo, T. (1988). *Antonio Canepa e l'esercito per l'indipendenza della Sicilia: l'Evis a Cesarò e l'eccidio di Randazzo: 1944-1945*. Catania: Boemi.
- Goebel, W., & Bresin, R. (2001). Are computer-controlled pianos a reliable tool in music performance research? Recording and reproduction precision of a Yamaha Disklavier grand piano. *MOSART workshop*. Barcelona.
- Goodby, J. (1989). 'The importance of being elsewhere', or 'No man is an Ireland': self, selves and social consensus in the poetry of Philip Larkin. *Critical Survey*, 1(2), 131-138.
- Gramsci, A. (1966). *La Questione Meridionale*. (F. De Felice, & V. Parlato, Eds.) Rome: Editori Riuniti.
- Gramsci, A. (1971). *Selections from the Prison Notebooks*. (Q. Hoare, & G. Nowell Smith, Eds.) London: Lawrence and Wishart.
- Gribaudo, G. (1997). Images of the South: The Mezzogiorno as seen by Insiders and Outsiders. In R. Lumley, & J. Morris (Eds.), *The New History of the Italian South: The Mezzogiorno Revisited* (pp. 83-113). Exeter: University of Exeter Press.

- Gruber, I. (2009). *Italia settentrionale e meridionale nella coscienza degli italiani residenti a Vienna: Inchiesta sulle rappresentazioni del divario socioeconomico e culturale*. Universität Wien.
- Guerri, G. B. (2010). *Il sangue del Sud: Antistoria del Risorgimento e del brigantaggio*. Milan: Mondadori.
- Hariman, R. (2012). Allegory and Democratic Public Culture in the Postmodern Era. *Philosophy and Rhetoric*, 35(4), 267-296.
- Hinrichs, E. (1999). *Alle origini dell'età moderna*. Bari: Laterza.
- Hunter, L. (2010). Allegory Happens: Allegory and the Arts Post-1960. In R. Copeland, & P. T. Struck (Eds.), *The Cambridge Companion to Allegory* (pp. 266-280). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Huysse, M. (2006). *Modernity and Secession: The Social Sciences and the Political Discourse of the Lega Nord in Italy*. New York; Oxford: Berghahn Books.
- IBRD (International Bank for Reconstruction and Development). (1955). *Cassa per il Mezzogiorno and the Economic Development of Southern Italy*. IBRD (Department of Operations - Europe, Africa and Australasia).
- Il Quotidiano della Calabria. (2013, April 29). La 'ndrangheta non c'entra "nonostante" sia calabrese: Gaffe a La7 su Preiti. E Mentana si scusa su twitter. *Il Quotidiano della Calabria*. Retrieved from <http://www.ilquotidianocalabria.it/news/cronache/712586/La--ndrangheta-non-c-entra.html>
- Indini, A. (2012, July 18). Aboliamo le Regioni a statuto speciale. *Il Giornale*. Retrieved from <http://www.ilgiornale.it/news/interni/aboliamo-regioni-statuto-speciale.html>
- Ingroia, A. (2007). Dal terrore delle stragi all'angoscia del silenzio. In G. C. Marino (Ed.), *La Sicilia delle stragi* (pp. 428-438). Rome: Newton Compton.
- ISTAT (Istituto nazionale di statistica). (2012). *Italia in cifre 2012*. Rome: ISTAT.
- ISTAT (Istituto nazionale di statistica). (2013). *Il reddito disponibile delle famiglie nelle regioni italiane*. Rome: ISTAT.
- Izzo, F. (1999). *I lager dei Savoia: Storia infame del Risorgimento nei campi di concentramento per meridionali*. Naples: Controcorrente.
- Jameson, F. (1984). Postmodernism, or the Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism. *New Left Review*, 1(146), 53-92.
- Jameson, F. (1991). *Postmodernism, or the Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism*. Durham: Duke University Press.
- Jedlicki, C. (2007). *Unequal Exchange*. Issue Brief. The Jus Semper Global Alliance.

- Kapur, A., Eigenfeldt, A., Bahn, C., & Schloss, W. A. (2009). Collaborative Composition For Musical Robots. *CITAR Journal of Science and Technology of the Arts*, 1(1), 48-52.
- Klein, N. (2000). *No Logo: Taking Aim at the Brand Bullies*. London: Flamingo.
- Lafranca, D., Calandra, F., Crescimanno, G., Giambalvo, M., Maisano Grassi, P., Lucido, S., & Lafranca, F. (2012, October 10). Perché è diventato indifendibile lo Statuto Speciale siciliano. *La Repubblica (edizione di Palermo)*, p. 12. Retrieved from <http://ricerca.gelocal.it/repubblica/archivio/repubblica/2012/10/10/perche-diventato-indifendibile-lo-statuto-speciale-siciliano.html>
- Larkin, P. (1974). *High Windows*. London: Faber & Faber.
- Larkin, P. (1992). *Selected Letters of Philip Larkin. 1940-1985*. (A. Thwaite, Ed.) London; Boston: Faber & Faber.
- Leone, A. (1977). Alcune considerazioni ortografiche. "*Bollettino" del Centro di studi filologici e linguistici siciliani*, 13, 444-458.
- Leone, A. (1992). Tornando sulla grafia del siciliano. "*Bollettino" del centro di studi filologici e linguistici siciliani, Supplemento numero 12*, 283-303.
- Lepore, A. (2011). *Italy and development policies from the golden age to the current crisis: The role of the "nuovo meridionalismo"*. MPRA Paper No.36646. Retrieved from <http://mpra.ub.uni-muenchen.de/36646/>
- Lepore, A. (2012). L'andamento della spesa per l'intervento straordinario nel Mezzogiorno d'Italia, dalla golden age alla fine del XX secolo. *Revista Española de Historia de la Contabilidad*, 16, 76-119.
- Lizza, G. (2011). L'industria italiana della difesa nei 150 anni dell'Unità d'Italia. *Studi e Ricerche Socio-territoriali*, 1, 83-98.
- Lodato, S. (2002, July 2002). Borsellino, dieci anni dopo: E la mafia tratta. *L'Unità*, p. 9.
- Lombroso, C. (1896). Il cervello del brigante Tiburzi. *Nuova Antologia*, CL, 591-600.
- Lombroso, C. (1900). L'ultimo brigante: Giuseppe Musolino. *Nuova Antologia*, CLXXXI, 508-516.
- Loyd, S. (1914). *Cyclopedia of Puzzles*. New York: The Lamb Publishing Company.
- Lucas, C. (2011). *There was an Englishman, an Irishman and a Scotsman*. Alec Clegg Studio, Stage@Leeds, University of Leeds, Part of the New Stages Festival 2011. Retrieved from <http://vimeo.com/24347941>
- Lynn, R. (2010). In Italy, North-South Differences in IQ Predict Differences in Income, Education, Infant Mortality, Stature, and Literacy. *Intelligence*, 38, 93-100.
- Maduli, G. (2012, July 18). L'inaudito attacco all Statuto della Regione Siciliana. *Sicilia Informazioni*. Retrieved from <http://www.siciliainformazioni.com/sicilia-informazioni/16602/linaudito-attacco-allo-statuto-della-regione-siciliana>

- Mannoia, F. (2012). Sud. Sony Music/Oyà.
- Marino, C. G. (2007). Del perché e del per come la Sicilia è terra di stragi. In C. G. Marino (Ed.), *La Sicilia delle stragi* (pp. 15-70). Rome: Newton Compton.
- Marra, M. L., Zullo, F., De Felice, B., Nappi, L., Guida, M., Trifuoggi, M., . . . Guida, M. (2012). Environmental Pollution Effects on Reproductive Health – Clinical-Epidemiological Study in Southern Italy. *Translational Medicine @ UniSa*, 4(5), 39-56.
- Martin, S. (2012). Sport Italia: 150 Years of Disunited Italy? *Bulletin of Italian Politics*, 4(1), 49-62.
- Massari, M. (2004). Ecomafias and Waste Entrepreneurs in the Italian Market. *6th Cross-border Crime Colloquium*. Berlin.
- Mazza, M. (2011). Il travagliato Risorgimento nel Mezzogiorno. *La Capitanata*, 26, 103-131.
- Messina, M. (2006). *Dell'ortografia siciliana: Problemi e proposte*. Thesis, Università di Catania.
- Messina, M. (2008). *Muscular Catabolism of Anthropomorphic Potatoes*. Unpublished.
- Messina, M. (2011a). Unified by Separatism: Claims for Political Independence in Protest Songs from Sicily, Corsica and Scotland. *Sound Thought*. Glasgow.
- Messina, M. (2011b). The Risorgimento Rec(h)anted: Historical Revisionism of the Italian Unification in Songs from Southern Italy. *Postgraduate Study Day*. School of Music, University of Leeds.
- Messina, M. (2012). *I supikkjarri*. York: University of York Music Press.
- Messina, M. (2013). *A bannerà*. Milan: Musicisti Associati Produzioni.
- Messina, M. (2013). *A manikula*. Milan: Musicisti Associati Produzioni.
- Messina, M. (2013). *A ttinghitè*. Milan: Musicisti Associati Produzioni.
- Messina, M. (2013). *U mpastu*. Milan: Musicisti Associati Produzioni.
- Mignemi, G. (1980). *La questione siciliana: Alla luce delle violazioni al Trattato di Pace con l'Italia, alla Costituzione Italiana, allo Statuto della Regione Siciliana*. Catania: Unione Siciliana.
- Moane, G. (2011). *Gender and Colonialism: A Psychological Analysis of Oppression and Liberation*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Mocciaro, I., & Fiasconaro, G. (2013, April 29). No Muos, nuovi scontri a Nisce mi: La polizia solleva di peso i pacifisti. *La Repubblica*. Retrieved from http://palermo.repubblica.it/cronaca/2013/04/29/foto/no_muos_nuovi_scontri_a_nisce_mi_la_polizia_solleva_di_peso_i_pacifisti-57740555/1/
- Modugno, D. (1954). Lu pisce spada. On *La donna riccia/Lu pisce spada*. RCA Italiana.

- Monelle, R. (1992). *Linguistics and Semiotics in Music*. Chur: Harwood.
- Monelle, R. (2000). *The Sense of Music: Semiotic Essays*. Princeton; Oxford: Princeton University Press.
- Muratori, C., & Arriva, F. (2008, December 2). *I fatti di Avola*. Teatro Odeon, Avola. Retrieved from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tsPhRpzGVCU>
- Naso, D. (2013, April 29). Sparatoria Palazzo Chigi: Io, calabrese, contro i cliché dei media. *Il Fatto Quotidiano*. Retrieved from <http://www.ilfattoquotidiano.it/2013/04/29/io-calabrese-contro-cliche-dei-media/578200/>
- NATO. (2011). *NATO and Libya: Sigonella Air Force base hosting Unified Protector*. Retrieved from http://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_embedded&v=ci7gd7ElwTY
- NATO. (2012, March 28). *NATO and Libya*. Retrieved from http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/topics_71652.htm
- NATO. (2013, February 21). *NATO operations and missions*. Retrieved from http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/topics_52060.htm
- Nicastro, F. (2007). Gli Alleati crudeli: Le stragi americane. In G. C. Marino (Ed.), *La Sicilia delle Stragi* (pp. 141-158). Rome: Newton Compton.
- Niceforo, A. (1898). *L' Italia barbara contemporanea: Studi e appunti*. Milan; Palermo: R. Sandron.
- Nitti, F. S. (1900). *Nord e Sud: Prime linee di una inchiesta sulla ripartizione territoriale delle entrate e delle spese dello Stato in Italia*. Turin: Roux e Viarengo.
- Nono, L. (1956). *Il canto sospeso*. (Kölner Rundfunk-Sinfonie-Orchester, Performer) Großen Sendesaal, Köln.
- Nono, L. (1960). *Sarà dolce tacere*. Ars Viva Verlag: Mainz.
- Nono, L. (1964). *La fabbrica illuminata*. (C. Henius, Performer) Teatro La Fenice, Venice.
- Nono, L. (2002). Musica e massa popolare. In G. Cresta (Ed.), *L'ascolto del pensiero* (pp. 147-155). Milan: Rugginenti.
- Nono, L. (2007). *La nostalgia del futuro: Scritti scelti*. (A. I. De Benedictis, & V. Rizzardi, Eds.) Milan: Il Saggiatore.
- Oliva, R. H. (2010, October 25). L'Aquila dimenticata, terza parte. *Corriere della Sera*. Retrieved from http://www.corriere.it/cronache/10_ottobre_25/aquila_dimentica_ruben-iliva_d24d84fc-e00b-11df-a41e-00144f02aabc.shtml
- Palidda, S. (2011). The Italian Crime Deal. In S. Palidda (Ed.), *Racial Criminalization of Migrants in the 21st Century* (pp. 213-234). Farnham; Burlington: Ashgate.
- Palloni, A. (1979). Internal Colonialism or Clientelistic Politics? The Case of Southern Italy. *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 2, 360-377.

- Palombarini, G. (2011). Crisi della coesione territoriale e razzismo. *Questione Giustizia*, 5.
- Paternostro, D. (2010, September 19). La rivolta del "Sette e Mezzo". *La Sicilia*, p. 39.
- Patruno, L. (2011). *Fuoco del Sud: La ribollente galassia dei Movimenti meridionali*. Soveria Mannelli: Rubbettino.
- Pedrazzini, M. (2011). Icarus Ensemble at hcmf//: Interview with Marco Pedrazzini. (M. Messina, Interviewer) Huddersfield Contemporary Music Festival. Retrieved from <http://www.hcmf.co.uk/Icarus-Ensemble-at-hcmf-Interview-with-Marco-Pedrazzini>
- Petras, J., & Veltmeyer, H. (2000). Globalisation or Imperialism? *Cambridge Review of International Affairs*, 14(1), 32-48.
- Pezzopane, S. (2013, April 3). L'Aquila quattro anni dopo, dal lutto alla protesta. *Europa Quotidiano*. Retrieved from <http://www.europaquotidiano.it/2013/04/03/laquila-quattro-anni-dopo-dal-lutto-alla-protesta/>
- Piccitto, G. (1947). *Elementi di ortografia siciliana*. Catania: Crisafulli.
- Politi, M. (2013, March 30). *U cuntu "No MUOS"*. No MUOS Day, Niscemi. Retrieved from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zFQlwjU6NV4>
- Pracanica, G., & Bolignani, G. (2006). *Sicilia 1945-46: Come nasce lo Statuto*. Messina: EDAS.
- Pugliese, J. (2008). Whiteness and the blackening of Italy: La guerra cafona, extracomunitari and provisional street justice. *PORTAL Journal of Multidisciplinary International Studies*, 5(2).
- Putnam, R. D. (1993). *Making Democracy Work: Civic Traditions in Modern Italy*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- QdS (Quotidiano di Sicilia). (2011, November 9). Alluvione 2009, accusa di Tranchida: "Sui fondi due pesi e due misure". *Quotidiano di Sicilia*. Retrieved from <http://www.qds.it/8625-alluvione-2009-accusa-di-tranchida-sui-fondi-due-pesi-e-due-misure.htm>
- Quilligan, M. (1979). *The Language of Allegory : Defining the Genre*. Ithaca ; London: Cornell University Press.
- Ramazzotti, M. (2011). Il dubbio, la lotta, la speranza: Nono legge Cacciari secondo Gramsci. In A. I. De Benedictis, & L. Zattra (Eds.), *Presenza storica di Luigi Nono* (pp. 165-204). Lucca: Libreria Musicale Italiana.
- Rebhahn, M. (2012). I Hereby Resign from New Music: On the Problem of Involuntary Labelling Including a Taxonomy of the Species "Composer". *46th International Summer Course for New Music*. Darmstadt. Retrieved from http://www.internationales-musikinstitut.de/images/stories/PDF-Dateien/NEWS_27.8.12_Rebhahn_-_I_hereby_resign_from_New_Music.pdf

- Regione Siciliana. (1946). *Statute of the Sicilian Regional Government*. Retrieved from http://pti.regione.sicilia.it/portal/page/portal/PIR_PORTALE/PIR_Statutoregionale/Statute%20of%20the%20Sicilian%20Regional%20Government.pdf
- Reuben, F. (2012). *On Violence*. (R. Nakamura, Performer) Goldsmiths, University of London, Part of the Interactive Keyboard Symposium 2012. Retrieved from <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=G05FqpbgB0Q>
- Rezza, A., & Mastrella, F. (Writers). (1991). *Suppietij* [Motion Picture].
- Risset, J.-C., & Van Duyne, S. (1996). Real-Time Performance Interaction with a Computer-Controlled Acoustic Piano. *Computer Music Journal*, 20(1), 62-75.
- Romano, A. (2013, April 25). Muos, la Difesa fa ricorso al Tar: 'Lo stop causa danni diplomatici'. *La Repubblica*. Retrieved from <http://ricerca.repubblica.it/repubblica/archivio/repubblica/2013/04/25/muos-la-difesa-fa-ricorso-al-tar.html>
- Romitelli, F. (2011, November 24). *Trash TV Trance*. (G. Baldelli, Performer) Bates Mill, Huddersfield Contemporary Music Festival. Retrieved from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HJzR5WFCaDg>
- Royal Air Force. (2013). *Libya - Operation Ellamy*. Retrieved from <http://www.raf.mod.uk/news/Libya-OpELLAMY.cfm>
- Salem, S. (2011, April). Appello dalla Libia. *Sicilia Libertaria*, XXXV(305), p. 1.
- Salvemini, G. (1963). *Movimento socialista e questione meridionale*. (G. Arfè, Ed.) Milan: Feltrinelli.
- Samuelson, P. A. (1983). Thünen at Two Hundred. *Journal of Economic Literature*, 21(4), 1468-1488.
- Sandoval, C. (2000). *Methodology of the Oppressed*. Minneapolis; London: University of Minnesota Press.
- Sani, N., & Ripa di Meana, F. (2007, October 11). *Il tempo sospeso del volo*. (Icarus Ensemble conducted by Yoichi Sugiyama; Coro femminile Claudio Merulo di Reggio Emilia conducted by Alfonso Caiani, Performer) Teatro Cavallerizza, Reggio Emilia.
- Sardo, A. (2012, August 11). Regionali. Si vota il 28 ottobre. Crocetta si presenta: "No a ideologismi alla Di Pietro ma alleanze aperte a programmi". *Radio CL1*. Retrieved from <http://notizie.radiocl1.it/it/2012/08/11/regionali-si-vota-il-28-ottobre-crocetta-si-presenta-no-a-ideologismi-alla-di-pietro-ma-alleanze-aperte-a-programmi/>
- Saussure, F. d. (1973). *Cours de linguistique générale*. (T. De Mauro, Ed.) Paris: Payot.
- Saviano, R. (2008). *Gomorra*. Milan: Mondadori.
- Sebaste, B. (2010, July 9). Spazzatour. *Il Venerdì di Repubblica*, pp. 32-38.

- Sicilia Libertaria. (2011, May). Tempi di guerra: A Sud. Libia, basi Nato, Ponte sullo Stretto, colonialismo... *Sicilia Libertaria*, XXXV(306), p. 1.
- Sirago, M. (2012). The Shipbuilding Industry and Trade Exchanges between the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies and the Countries of the Baltic and the Black Sea (1734-1861). *Mediterranean Review*, 5(2), 81-107.
- Slemon, S. (1988). Post-Colonial Allegory and the Transformation of History . *The Journal of Commonwealth Literature*, 23, 157-168.
- Stockhausen, K. (1964). Music and Speech. *Die Reihe*, 6, 40-64.
- Stockhausen, K. (1978). *Harlekin*. Kürten: Stockhausen-Verlag.
- Stoianova, I. (1987). Testo-musica-senso. 'Il canto sospeso'. In E. Restagno (Ed.), *Nono* (pp. 126-141). Turin: EDT.
- Stubb, A. C.-G. (1996). A Categorization of Differentiated Integration. *Journal of Common Market Studies*, 34(2), 283-295.
- Sturiale, A. (2013). *Official Website*. Retrieved from <http://angelosturialeoffline.blogspot.co.uk/>
- SVIMEZ (Associazione per lo sviluppo dell'industria nel Mezzogiorno). (2012). *Rapporto SVIMEZ 2012 sull'economia del Mezzogiorno*. Rome: SVIMEZ.
- TAZ laboratorio di comunicazione libertaria. (2011, April). L'emergenza pianificata: Immigrati e guerra. Sicilia terra di sperimentazioni. *Sicilia Libertaria*, XXXV(305), p. 2.
- Tessitore, G. (1997). *Il nome e la cosa: Quando la mafia non si chiamava mafia*. Milan: Franco Angeli.
- Thünen, J. H. (1966). *Von Thünen's "Isolated State": an English Edition of Der Isolierte Staat*. (P. Hall, Ed.) Oxford: Pergamon.
- Tranfaglia, N. (1991). *La mafia come metodo nell'Italia contemporanea*. Bari: Laterza.
- Treaty of Peace with Italy. (1947). Paris Peace Treaty. Retrieved from <http://www.triestfreeport.org/wp-content/uploads/2010/09/Treaty-of-Peace-with-Italy-original.pdf>
- Tremedia. (2009, October 27). Previti: "Nessuna solidarietà per Messina". *Tremedia*. Retrieved from <http://www.tremedia.it/1195-previti-nessuna-solidariet-per-messina-.htm>
- UN. (2013). *List of Peacekeeping Operations 1948-2013*. Retrieved from <http://www.un.org/en/peacekeeping/documents/operationslist.pdf>
- US Department of Defense. (2013, March 19). *Operation Odyssey Dawn*. Retrieved from http://www.defense.gov/home/features/2011/0311_libya2/
- Valisano, C., & Catalano, S. (2012, September 18). Elezioni, tafferugli prima del dibattito in TV: Forconi e grillini esclusi, scontri e polemiche. *Ctzen*. Retrieved from

<http://ctzen.it/2012/09/18/elezioni-tafferugli-prima-del-dibattito-in-tvforconi-e-grillini-esclusi-scontri-e-polemiche/>

Viesti, G. (2013). *"Il Sud vive sulle spalle dell'Italia che produce" (Falso!)*. Bari: Laterza.

Williamson, J. (1986). Woman is an island: Femininity and colonization. In T. Modleski (Ed.), *Studies in entertainment: Critical approaches to mass culture* (pp. 99-118.). Bloomington: Indiana University Press.

Zitara, N. (1971). *L'Unità d'Italia: Nascita di una colonia*. Milan: Jaca Book.

Zitara, N. (1973). *Il proletariato esterno: Mezzogiorno d'Italia e le sue classi*. Milan: Jaca Book.

Žižek, S. (2008). *Violence: Six Sideways Reflections*. London: Profile Books.

Žižek, S. (2009). *First as Tragedy, then as Farce*. London; New York: Verso.

Zucchetti, M., & Coraddu, M. (2011). *Mobile User Objective System (MUOS) presso il Naval Radio Transmitter Facility (NRTF) di Niscemi: Analisi dei rischi*. Politecnico di Torino.

Appendix 1. Interviews

Interview 1. Emanuele Casale (May 2010)

Let's begin with *A Victor Hugo Daza*, a piece clearly engaged with social issues, which seems to imply a clear political stance. What is the importance of declaring a political viewpoint in your music? Does this engagement with social issues appear elsewhere in your music?

Yes, it is possible to identify it elsewhere in my music, but not everywhere. At the moment, for example, I'm working at a so-called "talk-opera", commissioned by the REC festival in Reggio Emilia. It is basically a sort of operatic debate and operatic interview based on Noam Chomsky's thought. The main topics of the performance will be the influence of mass-media on contemporary society and neoliberalism. There will obviously be a director, three actors, a singer (Cristina Zavalloni) and some videos. The delivery will be comprehensible for everyone... we are working on clarity and transparency... no incomprehensible abstract atmosphere, which are not part of the present world.

I listened to *A Victor Hugo Daza* for the first time in a BBC radio programme: on that occasion your piece was broadcast together with pieces by Nono, Sciarrino and Gervasoni. When presenting your work, the radio speaker labelled *A Victor Hugo Daza* as a piece characterised by an extremely conventional language, almost as film music, and argued that you were trying to find new aesthetic spaces, in order to make your music different from Nono's and Sciarrino's. I have listened to other pieces from your catalogue, and I think this description of your work is rather superficial. What do you think?

It was indeed a very superficial description. Mozart wrote only "conventional" music, i.e. music based on the typical technical, harmonic and stylistic convention of his epoch. He would often start from these "conventions", formulating them using his creativity. Like Mozart, the 99.9% of composers has always worked in this way. Many people, often many musician too (sic!), can't really understand the difference between, say, a fragment from Mozart's music and another one from the music by one of Mozart's coeval composers. In order to really grasp the difference one shouldn't stick to the surface, but go a bit deeper. Superficiality, in other words, is never a good thing.

Had I written a piece full of blows, noises and sighs, the radio speaker could have still said that my music was conventional, in that based on the typical "conventions" of some avant-garde

music (i.e. the experimentations with timbre, the avoidance of any codified “harmony”, the escape from aesthetic explicitness, etc.), with which the academic world is literary obsessed. I remember the introduction to Samuel Adler’s book on orchestration. In a nutshell, it basically said this: “in 1979 I thought the future composers’ orchestra would become a special effects laboratory, with noises, scratches, blows, etc. Instead, in the latest years I realised that the younger composers look more and more at traditional orchestration.

Almost all composers refer to a particular “sound world” when they write music. I personally tend to evaluate music on the basis of the energy that it emanates... That’s already enough to judge a work of art.

When composing *A Victor Hugo Daza* I wanted to write a piece for the people... One day I said to myself: why don’t you use orchestration in a more “traditional” way this time, maybe taking inspiration from old symphonic music? I like challenging myself all the time, I don’t want to crystallise myself in a monolithic way of conceiving music, e.g. only based on post-futuristic experimentation on timbre. I’m not interested in those composers who write always the same pieces for forty years... I often wonder whether they ever have the curiosity to discover new things... I need to be able to do many different things. I want to be totally free. I like working on elements of the avant-garde, but I’m also interested in rediscovering the past in my own way, and I like experimental rock and electronica. I don’t want to have any sort of constraint.

A Victor Hugo Daza is dedicated to a working-class boy! I didn't want to make him roll over in his grave by writing a piece full of “non-conventional” blows, noises and sighs, which he certainly would not appreciate if he was still alive! Nono, for example, dedicated a piece to some workers... The work was booed by them... Well, to be honest I didn't want to repeat the same fiasco with Victor Hugo's parents and siblings.

This argument about Nono is very interesting. Do you think his approach proved to be a failure?

The study of Nono's music could certainly be useful in the context of academia. On the contrary, his idea of presenting cultivated music to the factory workers proved to be a failure... although it was a very respectable and noble idea.

How important is, in your opinion, the influence of Nono’s work for politically engaged composers today? Do we have to necessarily consider him and his work? Or can we just ignore his model?

It is possible to ignore his model. I respect Nono's figure, but I consider myself very distant from his example

To what extent does this mirror the failure, as it were, of a part of the Italian left wing?

I believe the reasons of the failure of our left wing are to be found elsewhere. Left means also socialism, and socialism means sharing, equal and fair distribution. But history proves that in times of crises, as the one we're living in, fear brings about suspect and selfishness, which means people are no longer willing to share. Obviously, there is also the problem of our left-wing politicians, who proved to be incapable of communicating with the people, and this takes us back to the need for clarity and transparency. Above all, however, the hegemony of Berlusconi thought has practically wiped out the left wing.

Is this necessity of communicating connected, in your opinion, with the necessity of urging the people to rebel? In other words, do we need a "revolution"?

In fact, the necessity of communication and the urge for rebellion are strictly related. Also, I believe that we need a strong, steady, large-scale revolution. Italy is a country, which is "militarily" occupied by beggars. The actual beggars are those who ask for some change in the street, whereas these ones, our beggars, ask for much more money (I am following a thought I found in a writing by Osho).

Is this necessity any stronger for the artists/intellectuals who come from our particular regions?

In the South this necessity of communication is certainly stronger, at least for an intellectual.

Is this in any way related to your admirable choice of remaining in Catania?

Initially I thought I could really make a difference, and change things, but now I'm maybe starting to be a bit sceptical. For any artist who remains here it is very difficult to disseminate their music to the rest of the world. Luckily there's internet and similar things that allow me to communicate with the rest of the world, but obviously it is not the same as living in a big city, where there are many more opportunities at one's disposal.

Interview 2. Angelo Sturiale (June 2013)

Why did you choose to run for the local elections in Catania?

Maybe because I felt the necessity of rediscovering the emotional and cultural ties that connect me with my hometown, after many years in which I've been living far away from Catania due to artistic residencies in other countries. Moreover, I decided to run for the elections to give an example to those who, influenced by a general atmosphere of disillusion and exasperation with politics, think that being involved in it is something discreditable and pointless, and thus feel that something so "trivial" is not worth their time. I have a totally different attitude: I believe that being involved in politics is indeed an honourable thing, also due to the fact that nowadays, on account of the difficult situation in Italy, we need more and more intellectuals in the corridors of power.

Did the particular situation of Sicily, of Catania and of the whole Mezzogiorno influence at all your choice to run for the elections?

My choice to run for the local elections in Catania is connected to my return to Italy in 2010. Eventually, had decided to come back because of several concurrent circumstances, and also as a consequence of personal reflections: I needed to take some time for myself, in order to express myself, and, above all, in order to rediscover my Italianness among other Italians, in a moment when, after my "escape/exile" - which had coincided with the Berlusconi era - , I finally could foresee the ideal conditions for my physical return, in a country rich of values and traditions (albeit in crisis) and with an extremely recognisable identity, which is unique among all the world's cultures and nationalities. My decision to enter politics represents, perhaps, a concrete way of dealing with the territory where I was born, and where I have now decided to live; it also represents a way of coming to terms with my very Italianness, and - why not? - with the desire (or maybe the delusion?) of changing and improving the reality which does not fully satisfy me, with the hope of leaving a trace for when I will no longer be here... Moreover, I believe that the presence of artists and intellectuals in the corridors of power is necessary, in these days more than ever, and hopefully it can really prove to be useful. We can't continue to perpetrate the Manichean dichotomy that depicts artists as victims, "pure beings", detached in their ivory towers, while the politicians are the villains, all cruel and corrupted. The truth is always more complex than the way we represent it... I decided to run for the elections on the wave of the enthusiasm and admiration I feel for a man which I believe will make a positive and radical change in Sicily: Rosario Crocetta. In the past I had never felt represented by any of

the existing political parties, but the work of Crocetta, who's the current Governor of Sicily, has impressed me since the beginning of his term, and this is why I've decided, with extreme pleasure, to run for the elections as a candidate of his party.

What can a composer offer to politics? And what are the main differences between your role as an artist and this new political role?

As a composer I have the desire to understand how the mechanisms of politics function. I'm no longer happy to be "passively exposed" to the software settings prepared by the politicians for me. On the contrary, the idea of entering the hardware, understanding and programming the intellectual structures of politics, is far more interesting and engaging. It's a bit like composing music, as opposed to passively listening to it. I think a composer can give a lot to politics, but above all they can provide a creative mindset. Creativity, from a technical or rational viewpoint can mean lack of precision and unreliability... On the contrary I think creativity implies a different way of looking at things and of devising original solutions. Moreover, artists are used to a very accurate discipline that urges them to be self-critical, and sometimes the "technicians" of politics lack this same discipline.

Appendix 2. Programme Notes

Programme Note 1. *A manìkula* (23 April 2010)

"I can't see the wall without thinking about the trowel and the mortar. Maybe it's just that people born at certain meridians have a particular, unique relationship with certain substances... Cement. Southern Italy's crude oil. Cement gives birth to everything. Every economic empire that arises in the south passes through the construction business: bids, contracts, quarries, cement, components, bricks, scaffolding, workers... Cement's the simplest way to make money as soon as possible, to earn trust, hire people in time for an election, pay out salaries, accumulate investment capital, and stamp your face on the facades of the buildings you put up... I know how much of the blood of others is in every pillar. I know and I can prove it." Roberto Saviano, *Gomorra*.

A manìkula ("the trowel" in Sicilian) exists as a consequence of an ancient, irreducible rage. It is part of a larger cycle of pieces, all centred around cement and its role as an emblem of the oppression exerted by the mafias on Sicily and Southern Italy, and all dedicated to the 31 dead in the mudslide of 2 October 2009 in Giampilieri, Scaletta Zanclea, Altolia and Molino, around the area of Messina.

Programme Note 2. *U mpastu* (12 June 2010)

"I didn't know that the Piedmontese troops did in the South of Italy what the German Nazis did in Marzabotto. But not just once, many times, for many years.

And they wiped out many towns, during 'anti-terrorism' campaigns, as the Marines did in Iraq. I didn't know that, in reprisals, they gave themselves the freedom to rape Southern women, as in the Balkans, during the ethnic conflict [...]

I didn't want to believe that the first European concentration and extermination camps were instituted by Italians from the North, to torture and kill Italians from the South, thousands of them, maybe tens of thousands (we don't know exactly how many, because they used to dissolve them in the quicklime), as in Stalin's USSR". Pino Aprile, *Terroni*.

U mpastu ("the cement mortar" in Sicilian) is the musical depiction of a state of chaos which ends up in stagnation, the only possible development a system apparently based on such mirages (i.e., frauds) as "freedom" and "progress", but indeed founded on exploitation and oppression.

What today is called "Italy" is a small-scale reproduction of what's happening in the world: one half of the country (the North) exploits the other half (the South, Sicily and Sardinia) and at the

same time blames it for being underdeveloped and not able to support itself. Instruments of colonial oppression called “mafias” are in charge of the South and Sicily, where the only role of the official institutions is that of providing additional colonial oppression whilst collaborating with the mafias. The blame for the existence of the mafias is, obviously, all put on the supposed cultural - when not genetic - inferiority of Southern Italians and Sicilians. At the same time, a political force whose founding principle is the supremacy of a fanciful Northern race is becoming stronger and stronger, having been in the parliament majority and in the government for almost all the last decade, and is now legislating against Southern people and foreign immigrants.

My people (i.e., Sicilians, Southerners) have been forced to forget the atrocities that have been done to them by Northern organisms of power, in order to unify the country and keep it artificially united. It is nowadays hard to find a single aspect of official Italian culture that doesn't imply the inferiority of Southerners. This piece, as all the rest of my musical production, represents an endeavour to stand firmly against this outrageous infamy. I demand freedom for my lands and peoples. I want to live to see the end of the oppression.

Programme Note 3. *A banner* (18 March 2011)

Between 20 and 25 October 2010, people in Terzigno and Boscoreale, near Naples, started burning Italian flags to protest against the Government decision of building new dumps in their villages.

On 30 October 2010, thousands of Sicilians demonstrated in the streets of Palermo, waving Sicilian flags, in favour of a more accurate application of the Sicilian Autonomy Statute.

Since the beginning of 2011, in many stadiums in Southern Italy and Sicily, football fans have been booing and hissing at the Italian national anthem.

In the year that marks the 150th anniversary of the Italian unification – the actual recurrence falls on 17 March 2011, the day before this concert – more and more inhabitants of the Southern part of the country (Islands included) are realising that Unified Italy has been a one-and-a-half-century-long fraud at their expenses, bringing in turn genocides, deportations, mass emigration, the Fascist regime, the hegemony of criminal organisations, all sorts of diseases caused by toxic waste coming from Northern factories, and an irreducible anti-Southern hatred scattered in all the social strata of the rest of the country.

Whilst whole battalions of pseudo-historians, demagogues and buffoons keep babbling on about how proud we should be of having been invaded, conquered and ruthlessly exploited by our Northern brothers back in the 1860s, the Parliament is gradually passing a series of decrees, strongly demanded by the xenophobic Northern League party, that will turn Italy into

a federalist country, with the immediate result of the state cutting funding to the South and the Islands without giving up any control and exploitation on them.

This piece (whose title means “the flag” in Sicilian) represents my defiance of the Italian flag and of all the empty rhetoric associated to it, especially in this period of hypocritical celebrations for a unity that has never existed and for a unification/annexation that should have never happened. It is also my way of symbolically raising and waving the Sicilian triskelion, the only national flag that represents me and my people.

N.B. It needs to be said that in the last twenty years the public denigration of the Italian flag, performed as a xenophobic demonstration of hatred towards non-Northerners, has been a prerogative of the Northern League militants. Therefore, to avoid any misunderstanding, I want to clarify that the Naples flag-burnings and my personal defiance of the Italian tricolour are to be intended as expressions of dissent towards constructs of power, be them imposed from above or rooted in society, and are not at all meant to attack or discriminate any community or ethnic group

Programme Note 4. *Circling round my flesh* (23 May 2011)

In composing this cycle of pieces, I chose to emphasise the topic of the oppression exerted by the man on his spouse, which is one of the most important features of John Whale's poem. The cycle, titled *Circling Round My Flesh*, contains an interlude for solo voice, *Lamentu*, which can be described as a semi-independent piece and is meant to function as an interpretive key for the whole cycle, insofar as it transposes the tragedy of oppression from the individual plan of the protagonist's pain to the collective plan of a land and its people, colonised and controlled by a distant state. In the interlude, I attained this shift in meaning by recombining Whale's words to form a different discourse, which, while originally inspired by the present condition of Sicily, can be seen as a universal lamentation in favour of freedom for all oppressed communities and lands.

Programme Note 5. *I supikkjarì* (23 November 2011)

This piece is inspired by the contrasting concepts of pluralism of information versus indirect silencing by obstruction/saturation of the sources of information. The alternation between moments of construction and moments of destruction, facilitated by the simultaneous presence of electric and acoustic instruments, is meant to reproduce the process of transformation of instances created from below into corrupted simulacra of themselves, emptied of their revolutionary potential and ready to become commerciable social commodities. Such a process is particularly vivid in some Western democracies, where it represents a powerful and subtle instrument of control from above.

Programme Note 6. *Separate Place* (6 January 2012)

Separate Place comes from the fifth stanza of John Whale's poem *Lament*, and functions as a coda to the song cycle I had previously composed on the first four stanzas of the poem. The main feature of my work with Whale's poetry is the transposition of the character's tragedy from the individual subjective plan to the collective plan, transforming the narrative of the woman seduced and then abandoned into that of a land conquered, oppressed and impoverished by an ever-distant state. This is made especially clear in the interlude for solo voice, *Lamentu*, where the lyrics were obtained by recombining Whale's words to form a different discourse, which, while originally inspired by the present condition of Sicily, can be seen as a universal lamentation in favour of freedom for all oppressed communities and lands.

Programme Note 7. *Imballakkeri* (9 November 2012)

This piece has been conceived thinking about the recent disgraceful attacks perpetrated by the Italian press against the Sicilian Autonomy Statute, and has been composed during the campaigns leading to the Island's recent Regional elections, which were dominated by the usual few mainland parties and characterised by any sort of attempt to suppress the voice of local protest movements.

Programme Note 8. *Not peace, but other things* (27 June 2013)

This song is above all a tribute to one of Larkin's most beautiful collections of poems, *High Windows*. It contains a selection of lines from three of the most famous poems in this collection – namely, *This Be The Verse*, *Homage to a Government* and *Vers de Société*. The order in which the lines are presented in the song may vaguely suggest a sort of anti-war claim: although Larkin was not exactly a pacifist, he surely was a rebel, never afraid of expressing radical and potentially subversive views. Had he lived to see the new millennium, it would have not be impossible to imagine him using his poetry to express dissent towards some of the exceptionally aggressive decisions that characterised the foreign policies of several Western powers in the last dozen of years: thus this song can be also seen as an attempt to recontextualise Larkin's work in order to better understand and evaluate the present.

Appendix 3. Lists of Activities

List 1. Public Performances

(Rows in grey indicate pieces that belong to this portfolio)

DATE	PIECE	PERFORMER(S)	EVENT	VENUE
02/12/2009	<i>Manku l'okki ppi kkjanciri (a)</i>	Lauren Redhead (voice) Kat Bouch (bassoon)	FOCAM Semester 1 Concert	Clothworkers Centenary Concert Hall, University of Leeds
02/12/2009	<i>They are not doing anything wrong</i>	projectisle	FOCAM Semester 1 Concert	Music Foyer, University of Leeds
21/04/2010	<i>U kriwu</i>	Mikroblech 2	University of Leeds Contemporary Music Festival	Clothworkers Centenary Concert Hall, University of Leeds
23/04/2010	<i>A manikula</i>	Ensemble LSTwo	University of Leeds Contemporary Music Festival	Clothworkers Centenary Concert Hall, University of Leeds
12/05/2010	<i>Via Maqueda</i>	[fixed-media piece]	FOCAM: A night of the unexpected	Clothworkers Centenary Concert Hall, University of Leeds
12/06/2010	<i>U mpastu</i>	LUUMS Symphony Orchestra	LUUMS Symphony Orchestra Summer Concert 2010	Great Hall, University of Leeds
14/01/2011	<i>Melior de cinere surgo</i>	Trio Atem	RMA Research Students' Conference 2011	Cosmo Rodewald Concert Hall, University of Manchester
18/03/2011	<i>A bannera</i>	Ensemble LSTwo	University of Leeds International Concert Series	Clothworkers Centenary Concert Hall, University of Leeds
23/05/2011	<i>Circling round my flesh</i>	Clare McCaldin (mezzosoprano) & Ian Shaw (piano)	As in waking dream	Howard Assembly Room, Grand Theatre, Leeds
23/11/2011	<i>I supikkjarii</i>	Icarus Ensemble	Huddersfield Contemporary Music Festival	Bates Mill, Huddersfield
29/11/2011	<i>Sumnjiv Smisao Slobode</i>	Scuz Brophy (el. Guitar) & Sophie-Anne Keegan (voice)	Music and Transcendence Conference	Library, Cambridge Union Society
12/12/2011	<i>Antudo</i>	Red Note Ensemble	Noisy Night #16	Traverse Theatre, Edinburgh
06/01/2012	<i>Separate Place</i>	Portumnus Ensemble [Hull Sinfonietta]	RMA Research Students' Conference 2012	Middleton Hall, University of Hull

DATE	PIECE	PERFORMER(S)	EVENT	VENUE
09/02/2012	<i>Manku l'okki ppi kkjanciri [b]</i>	Lauren Redhead (voice) & Sarah Parkes Bowen (alto flute)	The Little Leeds Fringe Festival	The Terrace Pub, Leeds University Union
11/02/2012	<i>Murazzu Ruttu</i>	[fixed-media video art]	The Little Leeds Fringe Festival	Alec Clegg Studio, Stage@Leeds
02/03/2012	<i>I patruna</i>	Markee Rambo-Hood (mezzosoprano), Peter Nicholson (cello) & Marcello Messina (sampler)	Sound Thought 2012	The Arches, Glasgow
28/05/2012	<i>Nzikitanza</i>	Red Note Ensemble	Noisy Night in 4/4	Traverse Theatre, Edinburgh
23/06/2012	<i>I supikkjarri</i>	Icarus Ensemble	ECPDC Concert 2	Spazio Icarus, Reggio Emilia (Italy)
09/11/2012	<i>I mballakkeri</i>	Marcello Messina (Disklavier & electronics)	Interactive Keyboard Symposium	Great Hall, Goldsmiths, University of London
23/11/2012	<i>A ttinghitè</i>	Giacomo Baldelli (el. guitar)	University of Leeds International Concert Series	Clothworkers Centenary Concert Hall, University of Leeds
12/12/2012	<i>Strakanakki</i>	Marcello Messina (electronics and effect pedals)	12-12-12 Humanity	Islington Wharf, Manchester
15/12/2012	<i>They're doing their best to help us</i>	thingNY	Spam v. 3.0	Flushing Town Hall, New York (US)
09/01/2013	<i>A ughhja</i>	Vivace Trio	3 rd International Meeting for Chamber Music	Concert Hall, University of Évora (Portugal)
07/03/2013	<i>They are committed to our professional development</i>	Acid Police Noise Ensemble	Acid Police Noise Ensemble UK Tour 2013	School of Music, University of Leeds
21-24/03/2013	[9]	[fixed-media piece]	Salford Sonic Fusion Festival	The Egg Suite, University of Salford
24/03/2013	<i>A ttinghitè</i>	Giacomo Baldelli (el. guitar)	Spectrum concert series	Spectrum, New York (US)
12/05/2013	[9]	[fixed-media piece]	York Spring Festival of New Music	Rymer Auditorium, University of York
05/06/2013	<i>A mattanza</i>	notes inégales	University of Leeds International Concert Series	Clothworkers Centenary Concert Hall, University of Leeds
27/06/2013	<i>Not peace, but other things</i>	Portumnus Ensemble [Hull Sinfonietta]	20 th Century British Poets in Music Festival	Beverley Minster
03/08/2013	<i>Manku l'okki ppi kkjanciri [c]</i>	Lauren Redhead (voice & tape operator)	A Whispered Shout	Matthews Yard, Croydon

DATE	PIECE	PERFORMER(S)	EVENT	VENUE
30/09/2013	<i>Allegriu</i>	Red Note Ensemble	Noisy Night #24	Traverse Theatre, Edinburgh
04/10/2013	<i>Manku l'okki ppi kkjanciri [c]</i>	Lauren Redhead (voice & tape operator)	Leeds Light Night	Clothworkers Centenary Concert Hall, University of Leeds
02-03/11/2013	[9]	[fixed-media piece]	Sounds Sonic	Firstsite, Colchester
01/12/2013	<i>Senza cialoma</i>	Gnu ensemble	Festival Internacional Compositores de Hoje	Centro Cultural Justiça Federal

List 2. Conference Papers

DATE	TITLE	EVENT	VENUE	PROCEEDINGS
03/02/2011	<i>Unified by Separatism: Claims for Political Independence in Protest Songs from Sicily, Corsica and Scotland</i>	Sound Thought 2011	The Arches, Glasgow	No
13/05/2011	<i>James Dillon's Crossing Over: An Attempt to Conduct a Morphemic Analysis on a Musical Score</i>	Music Theory and Analysis: The 9 th International Conference	Department of Music Theory, Faculty of Music, University of Arts in Belgrade, Serbia	Yes [published]
09/12/2011	<i>The Risorgimento rec(h)anted: Historical Revisionism of the Italian Unification in Songs from Southern Italy</i>	Postgraduate Study Day	School of Music, University of Leeds	No
09/01/2013	<i>A ughja: Introductory Notes and Analysis</i>	3rd International Meeting for Chamber Music	Music Department, University of Évora, Portugal	Yes [published]
25/01/2013	<i>Bachtin's Carnavalesque and Parody in Contemporary Music: Evidence from my Piece l mballakkeri</i>	7 th International Conference <i>Srpski jezik, književnost, umetnost</i>	Library, University of Kragujevac, Serbia	Yes [forthcoming]

List 3. Published Scores

YEAR	TITLE	PUBLISHER
2012	<i>l supikkjarì</i>	University of York Music Press
2013	<i>A manikula</i>	Musicisti Associati Produzioni
2013	<i>U mpastu</i>	Musicisti Associati Produzioni
2013	<i>A bannerà</i>	Musicisti Associati Produzioni
2013	<i>A ttinghitè</i>	Musicisti Associati Produzioni
2013	<i>A truscìa</i>	Musicisti Associati Produzioni