

Shadows on the Wall

Memory and Premonition in Berio's *Cronaca del Luogo*

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Unless otherwise acknowledged in the text, this thesis represents the original research of the author. All sources used have been acknowledged.

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Berio's musical action *Cronaca del Luogo* ("Chronicle of the Place") was commissioned for the Salzburg festival, and premiered at the *Felsenreitschule* on 24 July 1999. The libretto was compiled from a wide variety of sources by Berio's wife, Talia Pecker Berio. The premiere attracted many differing reviews: *The Economist* labelled it "challenging" and "baffling",¹ Andrew Clark found the music so seductive that "the multiple layers of 'action' seem superfluous or even disruptive to the aural experience" and Charles Michener expressed a "frustrated longing for something resembling a genuinely dramatic situation".² *Opera* magazine reported that: "perverse as it may seem, you don't have to understand what's going on to appreciate that *Cronaca del Luogo* is a deep and highly original work of art".³ There have been no further productions, nor is it likely that there ever will be. Continuing the words of *Opera*: "The odds are that, like his other non-narrative stage works, *Cronaca del Luogo* will end up a neglected curiosity, hamstrung by its mix of creative ambition and experimental form".⁴

Luciano Berio (1925-2003) believed that the purpose of music was to create "modes of conditioning" in the willing listener.⁵ In other words, his music sought to alter the thought of his audience in a non-totalitarian manner. Unlike many of his contemporaries, his music is unbounded by rigid structures or theories; instead it revels in its own uncertainty. Thus, analyses of his works will always be problematic, as their meanings are impossible to express fully within the confines of written texts. The same might be said of all music – nevertheless,

1 The Economist. "What to Wear for Salzburg", *The Economist* (4 September 1999)

2 Andrew Clark. "Winning Ways with the Unconventional", *The Financial Times* (13 August 1999) 12.
Michener, Charles. "At Glamorous Salzburg Festival, Talent and Production Clash", *New York Observer* (23 August 1999).

3 Andrew Clark. "Salzburg at the Crossroads", *Opera* 50/11 (1999) 1265-1272.

4 Ibid., 1269.

5 Bruce Quaglia. "Transformation and Becoming Other in the Music and Poetics of Luciano Berio", in *Sounding the Virtual: Gilles Deleuze and the Theory and Philosophy of Music*, ed. Brian Hulse and Nick Nesbitt (Farnham, Surrey, England; Burlington VT: Ashgate, 2010) 240.

the complexity of Berio's musical processes present enormous, yet rewarding, challenges.

Cronaca del Luogo, Berio's fifth and final 'opera', represents the culmination of his work in music theater.⁶ The scare quotes reflect the ambivalent attitude with which Berio regarded the term. A Berio opera still has "an action that is narrated with words and music, takes place on stage, has singers in costume, an orchestra, scenery, etc.", yet it does not display the "Aristotelean" type of narrative, which tends to take priority over musical development".⁷ Berio ironically stated that "I don't believe you can produce operas nowadays . . . I've never written any" but went on to say "I certainly don't ignore the opera-house: it's the only technologically viable space [for my works]."⁸ For Berio, the opera house was not an ideal vehicle for his musical thought. Even so, it remained the best available.

In this thesis, I will examine the techniques that Berio used to synthesize his poetics in this form, and then give consideration to the various ways that listeners may interpret them. I will begin by examining four aspects of his compositional language that I believe represent the twin ideas of memory and premonition, which I will argue are the unifying features of *Cronaca del Luogo*. Through a historical overview of Berio's writings, and other scholars' approaches to his works, I will create a methodology for an analysis of three sections of the work, and in doing so I will reveal how the work creates *concrete syntheses* of the twin ideas of memory and premonition. I will draw on Gilles Deleuze's theories of time, Umberto Eco's theories of the open work, and Berio's own writings in order to construct a methodology for my analysis. Berio's poetics will be revealed as delighting in individual unrestrained thought, allowing his listeners to become willing participants in guided musical processes. I will also formulate an approach to analysis in sympathy with these ideas that will be based on observation and personal interpretation. Brian Hulse's application of Deleuze's writings on

6 The capitalisation of *Luogo* is deliberate.

7 Luciano Berio and Umberto Eco. "Eco in Ascolto: Luciano Berio Interviewed by Umberto Eco", *Contemporary Music Review* 5/1 (1989) 1-8.

8 Ibid., 2.

the virtual to music are particularly relevant to *Cronaca del Luogo*, in the way they describe the complex network of relationships between the work's elements through time; and I will use these to provide a way of considering a listener's experience. I argue that these concrete syntheses of elements represent aspects of the virtual in a single instant. In other words, at any one moment the music has elements of past and future bleeding onto the present and the sense of linearity progression is subverted. Berio's *Cronaca del Luogo* will be revealed as an ethical challenge for its audience: it invites us to consider the way we interact with other people, and encourages us to consider the lessons of history.

Berio's Musical Processes

The techniques by which Berio achieves syntheses of past and present will be referred to as techniques of memory and premonition. These are not unique to *Cronaca del Luogo*: they manifest themselves in various ways throughout all of Berio's compositions. Berio's musical processes are not teleological, or if they are this is not the most interesting thing about them. Rather than taking the audience on a journey through a work, Berio's goal was for the individual audience members to take an almost self-directed stroll through a labyrinth.

Each of the four processes discussed is clearly related to memory and premonition. By segmenting text into its various phonemes, Berio was able to summon the memory of particular words, while creating the expectation for the word to be completed. In a similar manner, the exposition of harmonic fields creates pitch spaces that are recognized or predicted by the listener in the same way as a visual image. Finally, the sophisticated use of commentary techniques blurs the line between past and future, allowing memory to *become* premonition and vice-versa. These two human ways of dealing with times other than the present will be revealed as an integrated process clearly articulated by Berio's musical language.

Text Setting

Berio always delighted in “the pleasures of rhetorical surprise and vocal agility.”⁹ The dramatic text-driven madrigals of Monteverdi were an important early influence.¹⁰ Like many other Italian specialists in voice Berio was able to use the extended techniques of the twentieth-century whilst still remaining true to the lyrical spirit of the Italian tradition.¹¹

Two other important early influences were his first wife Cathy Berberian, whose vocal virtuosity inspired many of Berio’s works, and Umberto Eco, with whom he developed an understanding of linguistics and semiotics. At the *Studio di Fonologica*, Eco, Berberian and Berio produced *Thema (Omaggio a Joyce)* (1958), a tape work that explored the possibilities of phonetic segmentation using a text from the musical *Sirens* chapter of James Joyce’s *Ulysses*.¹² This structuralist approach to the source text allowed “sound as the bearer of linguistic sense to dissolve into sound as the bearer of musical meaning.”¹³

Berio took the idea of segmentation further in the *Sequenza III* for solo voice (1965-6). In this work, pitch, meter and text are of secondary importance compared to the extended exploration of the possibilities of Berberian’s voice. Markus Kutter provided a modular text which Berio treated “as a quarry for phonetic materials, out of which from time to time a coherent phrase is allowed to emerge.”¹⁴ A more directed approach was taken in *O King* (1967), which was later adapted into the second movement of the *Sinfonia* (1968-9). In this highly organized work, which is structured in the manner of a isorhythmic motet, the phonemes of the phrase

9 David Osmond-Smith. “Berio, Luciano”, *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, ed. by Stanley Sadie (2nd ed. rev.; London: Macmillan; New York: Grove’s Dictionaries, 2001) vol.3, 352.

10 David Osmond-Smith. *Berio* (Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 1991) 90.

11 For example Luigi Nono, Luigi Dallapiccola and Sylvano Bussotti.

12 The Studio di Fonologica was established by RAI in 1955 and led by Bruno Maderna and Berio, who resigned in 1961. There is some confusion about the genesis of the organisation. According to Osmond-Smith it opened in August 1955 with Maderna and Berio as co-directors (Osmond-Smith, *Berio*, 12). In a liner note, Dietmar Polaczek claims that the studio was founded in 1953 with Franco Evangelisti and Berio, with Maderna joining them in 1956. Dietmar Polaczek. Liner notes for *Maderna: Quadrivium, Aura, Biogramma* (Deutsche Grammophon DG423 246-2, 1980).

13 Osmond-Smith, *Berio*, 62.

14 Ibid., 65.

“O Martin Luther King” are gradually introduced according to their classification in the International Phonetic Alphabet until a moment of climax where the isorhythmic sequences break down and the text is presented complete.

As David Osmond-Smith noted in his article for the New Grove, “Berio could only allow musical priorities to take possession of verbally formed ideas and structures by dismembering them”.¹⁵ Berio’s first dramatic work to loosely confirm to operatic standards, *La vera storia* (1977-81, premiered 1982), was a collaboration with Italo Calvino.¹⁶ The author’s source text became so ‘dismembered’ that it is hard to distinguish his contribution at all. It is perhaps to avoid upsetting a librettist that Berio decided on a patchwork of preexisting texts for *Cronaca del Luogo*. In this work, Berio emphasized words that contain a multitude of ideas, and which then can be broken down into syllables and phonemes while still maintaining a sense of semiotic meaning. The use of simple linguistic elements, from phonemes to phrases, opens the scope of interpretation for the listener. The listener will automatically attach references from their own memories to even the most commonplace words.

Harmonic Fields

From the late 1950s, Berio’s core musical process tended to be based on fixed register harmonic fields.¹⁷ One of the common features of much post-tonal music, including early serialism was the principle of octave equivalency expressed through the concept of pitch-class. Composers often explicitly used structures in which a particular pitch class was deliberately thrown into different registers. This in turn led to the concept of interval class, in which an interval and its inversion were considered members of the same set. In other words, much post-tonal music was only concerned with intervallic measures and transformations

15 Osmond-Smith, “Berio, Luciano”, 353.

16 Berio’s previous stage works did not conform to any sort of operatic standards. All his stage works after *La vera storia* are referred to as *azione musicale*.

17 In this thesis, pitch will be used to refer to a pitch in a specific register while pitch-class refers to the set of pitches equivalent at the transposition at the octave, or an element of this set.

between structures.¹⁸

Perhaps Berio found these techniques too reductive, as he soon developed a much freer form of pitch development based on the theories of Henri Pousseur about fixed register pitch fields.¹⁹ Pousseur discusses a process of Webern's, in which material was initially derived from a collection of pitches in fixed registers dominated by the presence of a particular interval, as well as the pitches chromatically adjacent to them.²⁰ Berio's freer use of this process is best described using Paul Nauert's definition of a harmonic field: "an [fixed] unordered collection of *pitches*".²¹ Berio's first use of the process was in the series of *Quaderni* (1959-1961), later integrated into *Epifanie* (1965). The pitch material of the opening bars of *Epifanie A* is mostly derived from a single field (ex. 1).

Example 1: Bars 1-3 of *Epifanie A* (*Quaderni I/1*)

18 As described in a variety of atonal 'methods', including Allen Forte, *The Structure of Atonal Music* and Joseph N. Straus, *An Introduction to Post-Tonal theory*. The transformations are usually those of transposition, inversion and complementation.

19 Henri Pousseur. "Outline of a Method", *Die Reihe: Musical Craftsmanship*, ed. by K. Stockhausen and H. Eimert, translated by Leo Black. English edition. (Pennsylvania: Theodore Presser Co, 1959).

20 The history of pitch fields, or more specifically fixed register formations based on intervallic cycles, is described in Paul Nauert. "Field Notes: A Study of Fixed-Pitch Formations", *Perspectives of New Music* 41/1 (2003) 180-239.

21 *Ibid.*, 181.

Osmond-Smith provides a graph of the field (ex. 2).²² To paraphrase his explanation, diamond note heads indicate the field and black note heads are used for brief *tutti* chords and pitches extraneous to the chord. Lines indicate chromatic saturation:²³



Example 2: Pitch field from *Epifanie A*, bars 1-3.

Often, as in the *Sequenza VII* for oboe (1969), the harmonic field is interrupted by the intrusion of pitches from the field appearing in the wrong octaves, which serve to collectively fill a subsection of the entire chromatic gamut. The field can also be deployed through the use of a pitch series as in the second and fourth movements of *Sinfonia*. A pitch series is simply an ordered collection of pitches of unfixed length that may contain repetition. In general, the field is usually deployed strategically throughout a piece, often subtly accompanied by pitches extraneous to it as a form of commentary.

Berio continued to explore harmonic space in this manner for the remainder of his career. Frequently he deployed an entire chromatic aggregate over the course of a section or even an entire work, but segmented this structure into smaller sections which resemble harmonic fields.²⁴ By creating the perception of a sound-object that is not explicitly sounded but instead only ever revealed partially, Berio was able to create expectations for the listener based on experience that is intuitive and passive, as opposed to the clear expectation of events in more rigorous serialization of rhythm and pitch.

22 There are a few pitches (such as $f\sharp^1$) which are not present in Osmond-Smith's explanation. However, the vast majority do seem to be explained by his diagrams. Osmond-Smith, *Berio*, 25.

23 So the line from f^3 to $c\sharp^3$ indicates that all the pitches between these two belong to the field, that is $c\sharp^3$, d^3 , $e\flat^3$, e^3 and f^3 .

24 In this thesis, chromatic completion will always be meant in terms of pitch, not pitch-class. That is, register is considered significant.

Chromatic saturation

A core concern of many post-tonal composers is the saturation of chromatic space. Familiar techniques of aggregate completion include twelve-tone serialism and interval cycles.²⁵

Catherine Losada and David Osmond-Smith have spoken about the concepts of chromatic completion and gap-fill in relation to Berio's *Sinfonia*, with Losada drawing on the writings of Leonard Meyer and Joseph Straus.²⁶

In his writing about the music of Ruth Crawford Seeger, Straus described the tendency of her melodic lines to "fill whatever musical space is made available to them", specifically "occupying a single chromatic zone . . . in pitch space".²⁷ These techniques are also used at phrase level to "create a sense of connection across sectional boundaries". For example, a gap may be formed at the end of a phrase which is completed by the first tone of a subsequent phrase.²⁸ In *Emotion and Meaning in Music*, Meyer discussed the ability of listeners familiar with the processes of a particular repertoire to perceive gaps in systems, and expect their completion.²⁹

If Straus and Meyer described a melodic approach to chromatic saturation, then Osmond-Smith explored a harmonic approach in his study of the third movement of the *Sinfonia*. He argues that the huge chromatic clusters are used to alternatively obscure and clarify the perception of tonal motion in the underlying third movement from Mahler's Second Symphony. Clearly when one considers pitch-class, there is nothing particularly interesting

25 A thorough discussion of such cycles in the music of Bartók is found in Edward Gollin. "Multi-Aggregate Cycles and Multi-Aggregate Serial Techniques in the Music of Béla Bartók", *Music Theory Spectrum* 29/2 (2007) 143-176.

26 Catherine Losada. "Between Modernism and Post-Modernism: Strands of Continuity in Collage Compositions by Rochberg, Berio and Zimmermann", *Music Theory Spectrum* 31/1 (2009) 61-64. David Osmond-Smith. *Playing on Words: A Guide to Luciano Berio's Sinfonia* (London: Royal Music Association, 1985) 50-53.

27 Joseph N. Straus. *The Music of Ruth Crawford Seeger* (Cambridge [England]; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1995) 8.

28 Ibid., 9.

29 "The mind, for example, expects structural gaps to be filled; but what constitutes such a gap depends on what constitutes completeness within a particular musical style system." Leonard B. Meyer. *Emotion and Meaning in Music* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1956) 44.

about a gigantic cluster, which is why Osmond-Smith sought internal logic in the choice and motion of boundaries and gaps within the clusters. In the opening of the third movement of the *Sinfonia* there is a staged disagreement about which Mahler will be played. The flutes, sleigh-bells and violins quote the opening of his Fourth Symphony, while the vocal soloists simultaneously exclaim “quatrième symphonie” and “deuxième symphonie”. The cluster in the violins C and violas fills in the fifth B-F# played by the flutes. Eventually at figure A the clarinets begin the familiar ostinato of the third movement of the second symphony, and the string cluster gradually slides to land on the fifth C-G – the tonic and dominant of this correct movement.

A **Tempo dello Scherzo (III mov.) della II Sinfonia di G. Mahler** ♩ = ca 84

Example 3: Selected reduction of bars 4-A11 of *Sinfonia*, III

Conversely at the Trio II, when the Mahler undergoes its first major tonal shift from C to D major, the motion is almost completely obscured by a far reaching cluster. Thus, Berio uses clusters to simultaneously muddy the perception of the Mahler excerpts while also commenting on the tonal progress that they portray.

Losada takes these ideas further by positing that the movement displays a large scale progression toward completion, which she demonstrates through the use of graphs displaying

structural levels of chromatic saturation.³⁰ This technique plays with the listener's concepts of past and future. The pitch of the present owes its coherence and perceived correctness to the pitches that the audience has heard previously, and by their expectation that gaps that have been created will be filled.

Commentary Techniques

Inter-textual relations form a large component of Berio's compositional techniques. The most obvious manifestation of these relations is in his arrangements and transcriptions, of which the *Chemins* (1964-96) are notable examples. The *Sequenza II* for harp (1963) was intended as a study for the composition of a harp concerto. The eventual *Chemins I* (1964, the title literally means 'paths') consisted of the *Sequenza* as a core text, around which he spun "an extraordinarily dense web of accretions" in the form of other instrumental lines which refer to the harmonic content of the central line.³¹ The series continued with *Chemins II* (1967), in which the source text of the *Sequenza VI* for viola (1967) is almost completely obscured by a densely scored nine piece chamber ensemble which "displaces the areas of harmonic and textural density" in the original work, and reconfigures the piece's structure.³²

However, he never liked to think of this process as strictly additive. Indeed, one of his compositional maxims was that "a comprehensive totality must first be partially perceived so that something new may then be 'extracted' from it."³³ Thus, he is inviting us to hear the *Chemins* as the core work, from which the *Sequenza* is extracted, rather than considering the subtractive difference between them as a later addition. Osmond-Smith argued that Berio's commentary techniques realize the harmonic potential of a particular line rather than merely surrounding it.³⁴ This means that various melodic elements of the line may become

30 There are copious diagrams contained in Losada, "Beyond Modernism and Post-Modernism", 72-73.

31 Osmond-Smith, "Berio, Luciano", 354.

32 Osmond-Smith, *Berio*, 48.

33 Quoted in Quaglia, *Transformation and Becoming Other*, 243.

34 For an example of his use of the term, see David Osmond-Smith. "Nella festa tutto? Structure and

verticalized, yielding harmony. The work is not only line and accompaniment, but a fully integrated structure. Indeed, Berio fully realized this potential by removing the solo line altogether in *Chemins IIb* (1969-70), “dissolving it into a large, wind-dominated ensemble”.³⁵

Berio theorized his process of arranging of his own work as well as others as a kind of translation. For him, translation is not an isomorphic transformation; rather it is a layer of interpretation.³⁶ Thus for Berio open ended works such as Joyce’s *Finnegans Wake* or Debussy’s *Jeux* do not respond well to translation, as it limits their multiplicity³⁷ rather than increasing it as is normally the case.³⁸ Commentary must be a process that is performed with care and sensitivity for the source material. Berio’s different and careful approaches to translation are revealed in the vast differences in approach between *Chemins I* and *Chemins II*. The former takes the form of a concerto, in which the harp and orchestra perform according to a “cause-and-effect kind of relation”³⁹ whereas the latter displays a far more homogenous approach, with the central viola line bleeding in to all other parts, part of a global process rather than a soloist in a concerto texture.

A completely subtractive approach was taken with the third movement of the *Sinfonia*, in which the source text is obscured to different degrees by quotations from well-known works of Western Art Music, as well as by dense aggregates that obscure major tonal motions. Discussions of the meaning of these quotations have yielded various interpretations, from their similarity to motives in the Mahler to their ability to shrewdly fill chromatic space.⁴⁰

dramaturgy in Berio’s *La vera storia*”, *Cambridge Opera Journal* 9/3 (November 1997) 283.

35 Osmond-Smith, *Berio*, 53.

36 In a mathematical sense an isomorphism is a transformation that is one-to-one and onto, in other words predictably reversible.

37 The term multiplicity, like many concepts in 20th century continental philosophy, is far easier to use than to define. Its usual definition is “a large number” (American Oxford Dictionary), but in this context it means the ability of a philosophical term to have an unbounded number of connections with other terms, or in other words an undefined number of meanings.

38 Luciano Berio. *Remembering the Future* (Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 2006) 38.

39 *Ibid.*, 42.

40 These approaches were taken by Osmond-Smith, *Playing on Words* and Losada, “Beyond Modernism and Post-Modernism” respectively.

Traditionally, processes of quotation and collage in Berio have been referred to as post-modern.⁴¹ Without wishing to enter the debate on the existence and boundaries of modernism and post-modernism, I maintain that this is an over-simplification. Berio used quotation to reflect a musical object from the past through the present into the potential of the future.⁴² The purpose was not to destroy the object's semiotic content or to merely express a single connection.⁴³ Rather, the individual elements maintained their connotations and instead resembled shadows cast forward and backwards in our consciousnesses. The quoted elements are not the same objects as those from the source, but are afterimages, memories, or premonitions, distorting any linear experience of the musical work. Berio often used these quotations to "cast new trajectories in different and more open terms than those framed by the signifying features of the original."⁴⁴

In *Cronaca del Luogo* it will be shown that Berio's commentary techniques are an integral part of the entire opera, with most lines cast in deliberate support or opposition to a simultaneously occurring process. However, given his rejection of additive methods, it is sometimes hard to distinguish the text from commentary, and indeed such a quest may be misguided. A metaphor may be the mixing of paint, with each process representing a particular color. It is impossible to separate the perceived result into its constituent elements.

Berio's Concepts of Music and Musical Drama

Now that I have explained pertinent aspects of Berio's musical language, I will now discuss his approach to the reception of musical forms, or more specifically: why he decided to present his ideas as *azione musicale*. Berio's writings on music are philosophical and general rather than analytic and specific. He rarely produced detailed exegeses of his works, and left

41 For example: Jann Pasler. "Postmodernism", *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, ed. by Stanley Sadie (2nd ed. rev.; London: Macmillan; New York: Grove's Dictionaries, 2001) vol.20, 214.

42 This potential will be discussed in the description of the virtual.

43 For example, the use of jazz in *Laborintus II* (1965) as a symbol of capitalist gluttony.

44 Quaglia, "Transformation and Becoming Other", 242.

descriptions of his processes to scholars.⁴⁵ The posthumously published *Remembering the Future*, derived from his six Norton lectures, remains the only book listing Berio as sole author.⁴⁶ However, there remain a number of articles⁴⁷ and transcriptions of *Two Interviews* with Rossana Dalmonte and Bálint András Varga.⁴⁸

In her interview, Rossana Dalmonte suggested to Berio that he has always defined the art form through the ears of the ‘receiver’ – an idealized listener. Berio tentatively agreed before expressing doubts about the validity of separating those who produce music from those who receive it. Instead he argues for a combined producer/receiver who actively participates in the musical process. Indeed, he saw himself as this person when he stated: “I am a composer, but I’m also a listener – indeed, as far as I’m concerned, I’m the best audience I know. I’m the incarnation of an ideal audience.”⁴⁹ So Berio is not a composer who wrote in a cocoon separated from the experience of his music. *Cronaca del Luogo* is not an ideal edifice behind which he may hide. Instead he combined the processes of composition, performance and listening in this work, and he actively encouraged his audiences to do the same.

In the opening chapter of *Remembering the Future*, whose title explicitly refers to memory, Berio explored the way in which music produces its effects. He talks about patterns, layers, colors and techniques which are not separated, but instead “cultivate an inner, implicit dialogue . . . a polyphony made of varying degrees of interaction which . . . can explode and absorb everything in a dazzling, synthetic gesture”.⁵⁰ Perhaps then the best approach to Berio’s music is one that takes the separate processes manifested on the score, and seeks to

45 Osmond-Smith acknowledges Berio’s assistance in the introductions to his two monographs on the composer, and it seems likely that many of his discussions of the composer’s compositional processes were directly guided by Berio. In her review of *Berio*, Rhian Samuel stated that “privileged access of author to composer can be a mixed blessing. It demands constant clarification of the source of commentary – alas not forthcoming in this study.” Rhian Samuel. “Berio” (Review) *Music and Letters* 73/3 (Aug 1992) 483.

46 Published posthumously in 2006 with the assistance of Talia Pecker Berio.

47 According to the New Grove only three articles were published in English: “Meditation on a twelve-tone horse”, “Eco in ascolto” and “Of Sounds and Images”.

48 The interviews were translated and combined into a single volume by David Osmond-Smith.

49 Ibid., 24.

50 Berio, *Remembering the Future*, 13.

unravel the possibilities of their entanglement; because it is certain that even an ideal listener could not separate them in the act of listening. Berio also claims that there are degrees of understanding; a continuum from analytical to global listening which greatly increases the possibilities of interpretation.

In his interview with Eco, Berio discussed his unique approach to music drama.⁵¹ His early stage works clearly displayed the desire of the 1950s avant-garde to “frustrate the genre-based expectations of a philistine, bourgeois public.”⁵² In *Passaggio* (1961-62), which scandalized the opening night audience at La Scala, a solitary female singer moves about an empty stage in a pastiche of the Stations of the Cross while five choral groups heckle her from the stalls of the opera house. Berio explained his motivation to move from provocative and indescribable stage works toward works that almost fit the confines of the traditional operatic model.⁵³ At the centre of this desire was a need to “get a working knowledge of all the materials of music, past and present” and present this knowledge in “concrete *commentaries* and syntheses” (my emphasis).⁵⁴ Thus, Berio’s operas represent a synthesis of many thought-processes.

Berio made the distinction between a ‘musical action’ (*azione musicale*, his designation for *Un re in ascolto* (1979-84), *Outis* (1995-6) and *Cronaca del Luogo*) and opera. He saw opera as having a hierarchical division between musical, dramatical and moral processes which degenerated into what he saw as the crass exhibitionism of the *bel canto* period.⁵⁵ In a musical action the drama is mediated using the techniques describes above. The drama is not merely reflected in the music; it is also critiqued and sometimes rejected.

According to Berio, the audience is more willing to accept these transformations of traditional operatic discourse if the work still takes place in the familiar space of the opera house.⁵⁶

51 Berio and Eco, “Eco in ascolto”.

52 Ibid., 5.

53 A definition was provided for this problematic term at the beginning of this thesis.

54 Ibid., 1.

55 Ibid., 2.

56 Ibid., 3.

However, it was not his goal for the mechanics of these spaces to remain static. Ten years after this interview, he achieved his goal of freeing the orchestra from the pit, “which tends to immobilize the acoustic relations between the musical protagonists in an incongruous and archaic way.”⁵⁷ In other words, with free sound-organization there is a greater potential for commentary and synthesis, as opposed to just a binary opposition between stage and pit.

Berio discussed the peculiarities of modernity in music, especially its “ability to modify perspectives.”⁵⁸ Music is able to change the way that people perceive the world in a non-totalitarian way. Modern music is also not singular in the same way that films, books or paintings are: “A musical work is never really *there*”.⁵⁹ The act of interpretation is not limited to the performers, but also includes the audience, who participates in a kind of composition and link the various elements together through linking the various sounds entering their ears in a search for cohesion.

57 Ibid., 3.

58 Berio, *Remembering the Future*, 22.

59 Ibid., 80.

Methodology

I will now examine approaches to non-linear and non-narrative works of art in order to formulate a scaffolding for my discussion of *Cronaca del Luogo*.

Open Works

Berio's musical actions belong to a relatively loose canon of non-narrative or open works.⁶⁰ A concept of such works was described and theorized by Eco in *The Open Work*. Eco claimed that traditional works of art are assembled from a well-ordered, linear series of propositions which lead to correct and predetermined conclusions regarding the work's interpretation while creating the illusion that the receiver of the work achieves this solution independently.⁶¹ In contrast, open works reject a singular message and instead revel in their multiplicity of interpretations.⁶²

In the early Modernist period, authors such as Joyce and Kafka attempted to create a realistic approximation of the chaos of the entire world. As the critic Edmund Wilson said: "Joyce's world is always changing as it is perceived by different observers and by them at different times."⁶³ So instead of writing inside an already extant space, the artists sought to escape from any notion of constraint through techniques that appear almost arbitrary to the receiver. For Eco these works are the antecedents of his ideal open works, "which are organically complete, yet are open to a continuous generation of internal relations which the receiver must uncover

60 As in works of art: novels, plays, operas, musical pieces, etc. It should be noted that Berio took issue with Eco's inclusion of the *Sequenza I* for flute (1958) as an example of an open work. This is an obvious misreading on Eco's part, with the highly specific proportional notation of the work reducing the possible openness of the work rather than increasing it. However, with reference to the aleatoric works of the fifties and sixties, Berio claims that they, while open in terms of performance practice, ceased to be works of any kind for the audience. The various processes and elements of the works "could not undergo any transformation because they simply did not exist anymore; they had disappeared" (Berio, *Remembering the Future*, 84)

61 Peter E. Bondabella. *Umberto Eco and the Open Text: Semiotics, Fiction, Popular Culture* (Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1997) 29-30.

62 Eco, *The Open Work*, 2.

63 Edmund Wilson, *Axel's Castle* (London: Collins, Fontana Library, 1961), 178. Quoted in Eco, *The Open Work*, 10.

and select in his capacity of perceiving the totality of incoming stimuli.”⁶⁴

By this definition, truly open works do have internal structure and are not mere arbitrary collections of material. There is an overlying order and logic connecting the various propositions contained in the work; however, the receiver is completely free to explore the various possibilities and potentials individually.

Berio hinted at but does not explicitly mention the division between closed and open works when he wrote about a standard “system of expectations” at work in the traditional repertory.⁶⁵ By this he meant a comprehensive theory of form which constrains the interpretive potential of a work by reducing it into a sequential series of predetermined propositions. Instead, his goal was for the listener – or “theatrical consumer” as he refers to them – to formulate their own individualized system of expectations. Likewise, Berio had to “control developments and relationships between the various musical characters, their conflicts, and the polyphonic density of the whole.”⁶⁶

As in all of Berio’s other works, *Cronaca del Luogo* aims for indeterminacy. It presents so much information to the listener at once that they cannot rank material by importance efficiently. The listener is forced to engage with images in a far less analytical manner, and must transform them as the work progresses. As Eco stated, “all works are now works in process”.⁶⁷

Theory, Analysis and Composition

Over the last thirty years, there has been an abundance of writings on the place of analysis in musicology.⁶⁸ After the challenges of the 1980s, there has been a growing pressure to provide

64 Umberto Eco. *The Open Work*, trans. Anna Cancogni (Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 1989) 21.

65 Berio and Eco, “Eco in ascolto”, 2.

66 Berio and Eco, “Eco in ascolto”, 4.

67 Ibid., 22.

68 A good contemporary account is given by the multitude of essays in Nicholas Cook and Mark Everist, eds. *Rethinking Music* (Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 1999).

adequate justification for the existence of analysis itself. The consideration of music on its own terms, separate from human experience, should now be viewed as irrelevant. By human experience I mean both the cultural context in which the work is an inseparable element and also the concept of the listener's experience of the work. Many new approaches to analysis are interdisciplinary, and can grow from fields including psychology, linguistics, anthropology and philosophy. An interesting new direction has been the application of the writings of Deleuze and his collaborator Felix Guattari to music.⁶⁹ In the present section, I will be guided by one such article, "Thinking musical difference: Music theory as Minor Science" by Hulse,⁷⁰ as well as by Berio's own writings.

Hulse begins his article by problematizing standard approaches to analysis and explaining the challenges to it raised by Deleuze. He and Guattari claim that some forms of Western philosophy sought to mediate the concept of difference (the means by which philosophical terms are distinguished) by putting it in opposition to logical identity.⁷¹ An example discussed at length by Deleuze and Guattari is Freud's analysis of a dream, in which many diverse and problematic symbols are reduced to single elements through analysis.⁷² For Freud, difference can only be described through the operations of identity (object X is equivalent to object X) and negation (object X is not object Y). All elements then become equally different and difference becomes identity. For Deleuze, true difference is the ability to think about difference uniquely in each case, and to reveal the unique qualities of a particular comparison. To quote: "Deleuze invites us to consider multiplicities in all their differences without

69 The relevant source works are *Difference and Repetition* (without Guattari) and the *Capitalism and Schizophrenia* project, consisting of *Anti-Oedipus* and *One Thousand Plateaus*. At least four books attempt to apply these works to music, including Redner, *Deleuze and film music*; Hulse and Nesbitt (eds), *Sounding the virtual*; Buchanan and Swiboda, *Deleuze and music*; and Bogue, *Deleuze on music, painting and the arts*.

70 Brian Hulse. "Thinking Musical Difference: Music Theory as Minor Science", in *Sounding the Virtual: Gilles Deleuze and the Theory and Philosophy of Music*, ed. Brian Hulse and Nick Nesbitt (Farnham, Surrey, England; Burlington VT: Ashgate, 2010) 23-50.

71 Identity is meant in the sense of congruence or equivalence.

72 "1914: One or Several Wolves" in Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari. *A Thousand Plateaus*, trans. Brian Massumi (Minneapolis: University of Minneapolis Press, 1987) 25-43.

attempting to reduce them away in order to postulate unities, identities, coherence.”⁷³

Standard approaches to musical analysis⁷⁴ work in discrete space. These methods measure difference using a standard unit: a beat, a semitone or a motif for example. Thus the actual instance of music under analysis is mediated and subjugated by a static and closed theory. The theory is prescriptive rather than descriptive, and works that do not fit the pattern of theory require the services of a new theory, which necessarily becomes even more prescriptive than the previous. Deleuze and Guattari often wrote about these striated theories that exist to reduce the range of a “problem element” and transform it into a “theorem element”. I am not suggesting that analysts perform analysis in such a way as to assert the similarity or even identity of musical works. Rather, I claim that traditional means of analysis assume a dominating theory that mediates the experience of a work. Even in compositions in which such a theory may be assumed (fugues, sonata-form movements, and serial compositions) the examination of the relationship between the manifested work and this theory does not necessarily uncover the possible effects of the music on the willing listener. The relationship between work and analysis is backwards – the work is justified by the analysis rather than the other way round. Berio was aware of this backwards approach, stating: “the analyst who applies to the work a previously elaborated theory – compatible above all with itself – becomes a parody of the composer who has the sacrosanct need to be able to construct a sound architecture compatible with the structural criteria of the composition itself.”⁷⁵

Berio’s article “Meditation on a twelve-tone horse” describes these formalist composer/analysts.⁷⁶ He claims that the then fashionable Serialist school reduced live

73 Hulse, “Thinking Musical Difference”, 24.

74 Representative examples are described in the first four chapters of Nicholas Cook. *A Guide to Musical Analysis* (Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 1987).

75 Berio, *Remembering the Future*, 128-9.

76 Luciano Berio. “Meditation on a Twelve-Tone Horse”, *Christian Science Monitor* (July 15 1968). Reprinted in *Classic Essays on Twentieth-Century Music: A Continuing Symposium*, ed. Richard Kostelanetz et al. (New York: Schirmer Books; London: Prentice Hall International, 1996) 167-171.

processes to immobile objects, and dealt in theories rather than in connectivity.⁷⁷ Berio claimed that techniques of creating musical “modes of conditioning” constituted “poetics”, which are a reflection of the structure of society.⁷⁸ Thus, it would not be hyperbole to suggest that Berio considered serial systems as fascist; symptomatic of the political climate of the post-war period. For Berio this music represented a “rather fascinating and uncomfortable musical space – we like to think about it but we don’t have to listen to it.”⁷⁹

Despite not belonging to the school of predeterminism many writers on Berio have attempted to describe his music as consisting of self-sufficient processes. The standard analytical approach to Berio’s music in the English-speaking world was described by David Osmond-Smith in *Berio* and *Playing on words*. However, commentators have noted his inability to consider the music separate from the creative process, perhaps stemming from his close connection to Berio as a colleague and friend. In her review of *Berio*, Rhian Samuel states “Since the author does not assert that the process is the piece, discussion of the compositional process cannot pass for analysis . . . analysis of the music ‘on its own terms’ is rare.”⁸⁰ Thus Osmond-Smith’s superior knowledge of the compositional process tempted him to present a theory for each piece which describes and provides justification for its structure. Distance from the creative process is empowering; it allows the analyst to consider what the music means for the ordinary listener, rather than a listener with superior knowledge that could cloud their experience of the work.

Osmond-Smith also displayed the tendency to problematize the works in a constraining manner. The analyst’s desire to develop or discover a clear process to explain pitch material in

77 While it may not be correct to speak of Serial Tyranny, at least in America according to Joseph N. Straus “The Myth of Serial ‘Tyranny’ in the 1950s and 1960s”, *The Musical Quarterly* 83/3 (Autumn 1999) 301-343., it is certain that many of the leading figures connected with the Darmstadt school espoused the style as an appropriate and progressive technique. See discussion in Richard Taruskin. *The Oxford History of Western Music: Volume 5 – The Late Twentieth Century* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005) 22.

78 Quaglia, “Transformation and Becoming Other”, 240.

79 Berio, *Remembering the Future*, 12.

80 Samuel, “*Berio*” (Review), 484.

a work is severely tested by many of Berio's compositions. The approach was critiqued by Samuel thus: "What are we to make of the remark that such works as *Sequenza II* or *Sincronie* seem to owe their cohesion almost entirely to the sustained inventiveness of individual gestures (p.40) except to perceive an author in frantic search of a work's integrity?"⁸¹ There are a few moments in Osmond-Smith's writings where he seems truly puzzled and almost upset by Berio's compositions: for example his statement that "the . . . lower portions of each chord are a good deal more idiosyncratic and only occasionally present themselves as parts of a coherent process" in relation to the aggregates in the third movement of *Sinfonia*.⁸²

Like Eco, Berio acknowledged in his writings that the modern era lacks the certainty of meaning afforded to art works in earlier ages. The composer/analyst's goal should be to relate seemingly disparate elements in a work so as to produce and explain the particular intensities of a musical percept. These musical objects are never only related to the others in a particular work, but instead reach out to the sum of human thought. Thus Berio's compositional process sought, much like the early modernists described by Eco, to truly reflect and comment on humanity as a whole.

These commentaries often used subtractive processes: "A comprehensive totality must first be partially perceived so that something new may then be 'extracted' from it."⁸³ Therefore Berio's music can be likened to a sculpture that is almost completely obscured by a cloth, save for what is visible through a small hole. The viewer is aware of the totality of the work, without perceiving this totality directly or completely. An obvious example of this subtractive process is the third movement of *Sinfonia*, in which Berio exposes the totality of the Mahler movement to the audience, but subtracts material through deletion or obscuration. Quaglia goes one step further, claiming that it is the "constant and unpredictable dialogue" between

81 Ibid., 484.

82 Osmond-Smith, *Playing on Words*, 50.

83 Quaglia, "Transformation and Becoming Other", 243.

addition and subtraction that provides the excitement of Berio's "multilinear systems".⁸⁴ The term is borrowed from Deleuze and Guattari, who describe such systems as follows:

"everything happens at once: the line breaks free of the point of origin; the diagonal breaks free of the vertical and horizontal as coordinates; and the transversal breaks free of the diagonal as a localizable connection between two points".⁸⁵ The compositional language is not static. The musical work is not an edifice that can be considered and judged in an instant. Instead, it is a machine that constantly transforms the sensations of its objects.

For Berio the ideal analysis is not indiscriminately reductive, and should instead be analogous to the compositional process.⁸⁶ The analyst should not view the music as a closed system from the outside, but instead must become involved in the flow and production of the work's objects. Indeed composition and analysis may be said to be facets of the same process. Thus musical works are not passive structures that are unbreakable wholes, but are instead vast networks of interacting objects.

This has wide implications for the act of experiencing Berio's music. His compositional aims were often only achievable through a great amount of complexity – the composition does not exist to expose a single idea in a coherent manner. Many commentators have interpreted the music in this way, including Richard Causton who stated: "the extreme and carefully calculated tension between the great accuracy of semantic specificity and the total lack of semantic specificity forces the mind of the listener into creative activity".⁸⁷ Osmond-Smith wrote about how "Berio's theatre superimposed layers of verbal material in order to oblige listeners to find their own path through the aural jungle, and to embrace that singular mixture of aesthetic alertness and receptiveness that springs from the half understood."⁸⁸ Indeed in his

84 Ibid., 243.

85 Deleuze and Guattari, "A Thousand Plateaus", 297.

86 Hulse, "Transformation and Becoming Other", 231-232.

87 Richard Causton. "Berio's Visage and the Theatre of Electroacoustic Music", *Tempo* 194 (Oct 1995) 20.

88 Osmond-Smith, *Berio*, 94.

lecture on ‘Seeing Music’, Berio described his “hope that the musical theatre can continue to be . . . a terrace overlooking the world.” He then went on to say “the ‘expectations’ of ‘theatrical consumers’ may no longer be worthy of interest. If we wish to engage in a dialogue with them, we must frustrate them and, above all, we must attempt to educate them to separate and analyze the different elements of the work.”⁸⁹ This resembles the aim of Eco’s open works, in which a willing receiver is guided to form their own conclusions about the material presented to them rather than guided to form the intended conclusion of the creator.

These effects were clearly achieved through new musical and instrumental techniques. For example, Berio described his *Sequenza III* by what it is not: a marriage between traditional linguistic and musical autonomy.⁹⁰ The act of ‘forgetting the past’ history of the relationship between text and music is “an invitation to listen afresh and to witness that miraculous spectacle of sound becoming sense.”⁹¹ Berio clearly shared the ideals of the Modernist school in his desire to free artistic structures from past formalizations through the opaqueness of his processes. The difficult nature of the works is liberating. This may seem to contradict the previous assertion that musical works are always a part of history. However, it is only through knowledge of musical history that subversion and liberation can happen. We do not ignore the past; rather we acknowledge and forget it. Berio’s approach to the past is far more complex and refined than Boulez’s famous exhortation to “blow up the opera houses”.⁹²

From these propositions I argue for an ethical, even political, interpretation of Berio’s works.⁹³ His works belong to the world and are entangled with its history, unlike the perfect and fully autonomous music practiced by some of his contemporaries.⁹⁴ Quaglia links together

89 Berio, *Remembering the Future*, 113.

90 Ibid., 70.

91 Ibid., 70.

92 Jan Buzga. “Interview mit Pierre Boulez in Prag,” *Melos* XXXIV (1967): 162.

93 Oddly, this political element seems to have been excised from the traditional accounts of Berio’s working life. Quaglia notes that political discussions from the two interviews are excised by Osmond-Smith in the English translation, possibly to make Berio’s opinions more palatable to American audiences. Quaglia, “Transformation and Becoming Other”, 239.

94 Any perusal of *Die Reihe* would support this description of many of the Darmstadt generation, such as

two Berio quotes to illustrate this ability: music may not be able to “stop the wars” or “lower the price of bread”, but it is able to alter the perception of a willing listener: “Music is a social assemblage of desire.”⁹⁵

In this discussion on the role of analysis, I am not suggesting that we throw away concepts of theory or even identity. After all, without any theories there would be no basis for analysis. Without identity of any sort, music would not have any relations between its elements, and would cease to exist as music. Rather, I propose that we try to postulate theories that celebrate diversity in music, and do not destroy information on a purely ideological basis. In the following arguments, I posit a theory for my discussion of *Cronaca del Luogo*.

A Question of Time

A musical work does not exist in a score. It has been pointed out that if it did, then the work could be completely destroyed through the destruction of the score itself.⁹⁶ However, most analysis stems from the score. Musical scores are tangible, finite objects that tempt the analyst into believing that the work is unproblematic.⁹⁷ Analysts create diagrams, graphs and charts that are derived from the score, often behaving as if it were a perfect graph of pitch and time. Perhaps the most dangerous aspect of this method of thinking is the temptation to view the score complete in an instant the way that one views a photograph or painting. Any aspect of the score can be viewed at one’s will instantaneously but it may only be heard with some sense of temporality. However, this temporality is not linear. Musical events with durations longer than a single instant can only exist in the past, as the present is only an instant. As has been discussed, events cast connections or shadows over the past and future, creating a sophisticated network of relations. The presence of the memory of an event acts as a sort of

Boulez and Stockhausen.

95 Berio, “Meditation on a Twelve-Tone Horse” 168. Quaglia, “Transformation and Becoming Other”, 247.

96 Lydia Goehr. *The Imaginary Museum of Musical Works: An Essay in the Philosophy of Music* (Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 2007) 3.

97 As in they can be completely described in a finite number of words, unlike a sound.

wormhole, transporting the listener back through the linear score without touching any of the material in between. Essentially, the approach is diachronic rather than synchronic.

An important aspect of the theories of Deleuze is the concept of the *virtual*. This complicated aspect is perhaps best described as the quality of being perceived as actual without necessarily being real. The concept is perhaps best described by examples. Consider the virtual image produced by a mirror.⁹⁸ The light rays reflected off the mirror are no different to those reflected off opaque objects, and thus the image formed is perceived as actual, while the perceived object obviously does not exist behind the mirror.

Hulse extends the virtual to temporal dimensions by linking Deleuze with the time theories of Christopher Hasty expounded in *Meter as Rhythm*.⁹⁹ Deleuze identified three *syntheses* of time to summarize the application of the virtual to time.¹⁰⁰ The first is the present proper, which is the idealized instant dividing past and future. The second is the combination of two halves: the constantly shifting memory of the past affecting the present, and the capacity of humans to reflect the past into the future about the present. This is really just a sophisticated way of describing our ability to expect events based on events that have already occurred. The third synthesis, which I will argue is manifest in *Cronaca del Luogo* occurs when “the virtual of the second synthesis is restored to the actual, and is used productively”. In other words, rather than passively reflecting the past onto the future, we revel and delight in the multiplicity afforded by the non-linear processes of the virtual. I will argue that Berio created central processes that are rich with allusions to past and present, which he then realizes through commentary processes as a sort of concrete virtual. The completed composition may be thought of as a record of one particular experienced virtual, where fragments of past and

98 Here virtual has a specific scientific meaning: “an optical image formed from the apparent divergence of light rays from a point, as opposed to an image formed from their actual divergence.” (American Oxford Dictionary).

99 Christopher Hasty. *Meter as Rhythm* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997).

100 As described in Hulse, “Thinking Musical Difference”, 38-39.

future interfere with the present not only in our minds, but physically in sound as well.

Deleuze's approach to difference can be applied to the concept of repetition in music. A large quantity of western art music contains much literal repetition on the page of the score. It is clear that two segments of a composition that are literally the same on the score will not sound the same to a listener, at least by the simple fact that they occur at different times. The repetition is heard completely differently, because the virtual (the experience of the past and future in the present) is different. For a familiar piece, the listener may experience a sense of premonition in the first time through a section and a sense of memory in the second. The sections still display identity, but the repetition highlights their difference in time rather than this identity in structure.

Berio's sense of repetition is always specifically designed to cause difference from the first experience of a particular musical object. In works such as *Recital I (for Cathy)* (1972) and *Sinfonia*, which contain a great deal of extra and intra-Berio references, the objects are often concealed through instrumentation, fragmentation or other musical means as to render their semantic meaning altered but not destroyed. Instead of thinking about the origin or *Ur-form* of these terms, we are instead forced to consider their own particular meaning in this work. Thus, the use of quotations in the *Sinfonia* does not imply a commentary or reference to the original work; rather it multiplies the possibilities of meaning inherent in each.

A Sound Approach

To summarize this discussion of Berio, Eco and Deleuze, I will now outline my methodology for the analysis. A useful guide to new ways of thinking about analysis comes from popular music studies. In his article "Popular Music Analysis: Ten Apothegms and Four Instances", Robert Walser listed new ways of approaching music while dismissing older, positivistic models. Several of the apothegms seem relevant for the following thesis. As has been

discussed above, the open nature of Berio's theater creates different effects for each listener, so it is important to remember in the analysis that "Musical judgments can never be dismissed as subjective; neither can they ever be celebrated as objective."¹⁰¹ The following is my own analysis, written to explain the way that I experience the music, with the goal of opening the possibilities for other people experiencing the work. Perhaps most importantly, "The split between musicology and music theory has never been useful because its constitutive dichotomy – culture/structure – has never been defensible."¹⁰² As Walser stated, "people make music". It is a human action, and thus any discussion of its structure without describing this human element is pointless, as this analysis could only exist outside the space in which the music inhabits. I will traverse three movements from *Cronaca del Luogo*, and attempt to explain the peculiar way in which they produce their effects on myself. This is essentially an exercise in phenomenology, in which the objects will be discussed in terms of the perceiver rather than on their own terms. I will not attempt to provide a single theory that will unite the disparate elements of the work, nor will I try to prove overarching coherency in the movements. "Analysis is inevitably reductive, which is precisely why it's useful."¹⁰³ Reduction should not destroy information. Rather, by backgrounding some elements and foregrounding others we can attempt to uncover relationships between disparate musical terms.

Perhaps the term analysis is misleading. The following discussion is more of an exegetic framework for those who wish to uncover the potential of *Cronaca del Luogo*, in consideration of the theories presented so far, and indeed in relation to the work itself. I will begin by describing the work, and then present a discussion of three movements in the context of the themes of memory and premonition.

101 Robert Walser. "Popular Music Analysis: Ten apothegms and four instances", in *Analysing Popular Music*, ed. Allan F. Moore (Cambridge, England; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2003) 23.

102 Ibid., 25.

103 Ibid., 25.

Three Representative Scenes

Description of the Work

Luogo may be loosely translated as ‘place’ or ‘site’, which in this is the massive *Felsenreitschule* in Salzburg, an outdoor stage carved out of a rock face. The site dates to 1693, but it was first used as an opera venue in 1948 for a production of Gluck’s *Orfeo ed Euridice*.¹⁰⁴ At the back of the stage is a large, three-tiered wall with lodges (small, individual spaces like opera boxes) carved into the rock. For *Cronaca*, Berio split the musical performers between these lodges and the stage. The wind-heavy orchestra and a chorus (designated Chorus A) are positioned in these lodges.

Each lodge has a separate microphone, which allows the dynamic balance to be precisely controlled. In the facsimile score Berio notates the sound effects applied to each instrumental grouping.¹⁰⁵ On the stage itself are the soloists, a second smaller chorus (Chorus B), as well as various extra instrumentalists. The soloists at the premiere included the dramatic soprano Hildegard Behrens as R, the mezzo-soprano Monica Bacelli as Orvid, baritone David Moss as Nino, and trombonist Christian Lindberg as Abulafia. Berio was certainly writing with these specific performers in mind, as well as the accomplished Klangforum Wien and the Arnold Schoenberg Chor.

It is my belief that this work was not created just to satisfy Berio’s artistic desire. It was never intended find its way in the operatic canon. Rather it was specifically written for performance at this time in this space with these performers. It represents the intersection of many of the twentieth-century’s leading exponents of new music, who each bring their own personal

¹⁰⁴ Salzburger Festspiele. “Spielstätten: Felsenreitschule”.

<<http://www.salzburgerfestspiele.at/institution/spielstaetten/felsenreitschule>>e (accessed 10 August 2011).

¹⁰⁵ These are listed as sound location, reverb, delay, harmonizer, sampling, amplitude modulation and filters. Luciano Berio, *Cronaca del Luogo: Azione musicale*. (Milano: Ricordi 1999).

memory and history into the work.

Berio frequently employs intricate and highly individual arrangements for his performers. The layout employed in *Cronaca* is closely related to that of *Coro* (1975-6, rev. 1977) in which forty singers are each partnered by an instrumentalist in a unique stage arrangement. These voice and instrument pairs are often notated on the same stave in the full score. Rather than being a constraining feature these layouts allow Berio to free sound so that traditional models of listening may be subverted. The nature of these subversions will be discussed further on. The layout also has the effect of emphasizing his highly individual approach to orchestration which differs significantly from work to work, and in which there is almost no literal doubling of parts.

Berio noted at a press conference that for *Cronaca del Luogo* “The place of [the work’s] execution – The *Felsenreitschule* – is the scenery.”¹⁰⁶ Previous productions at the *Felsenreitschule* used the wall as a background to other staging, which had a tendency to obscure the historical character of the space. Berio’s aim was for the chorus and orchestra to be part of the action, not separated from it by means of a pit. The wall is cast in opposition to the piazza, providing a “harmonic wall” upon which the soloists are placed.¹⁰⁷

Synopsis

While there is no coherent narrative to the work as a whole, the various scenes indirectly refer to specific historical events with an emphasis on the history of the Jewish people. The textual sources include the Old Testament as well as the poetry of Paul Celan, Marina Zetajewa, Ida Fink, Yjizchak Katzenelson and to a lesser extent, T.S. Eliot.¹⁰⁸

106 “il luogo dell’esecuzione – la Felsenreitschule – è la scenografia” - All translations are my own unless otherwise indicated. Luciano Berio in response to a question at a press conference with Gerard Mortier and Talia Pecker Berio at the Forum Austriaco di Cultura in Rome, referenced in Ute Brüdermann. *Das Musiktheater von Luciano Berio* (Frankfurt am Main: Lang, 2007) 195.

107 “muro armonico”, this term originates in Brüdermann, *Das Musiktheater*, 198.

108 Ibid., 199.

The opera begins with a prologue in which the central character R sings of night, memory and dreams. The character's name is derived from the biblical harlot Rahab.¹⁰⁹ Blinding light announces the first scene, which is entitled *L'Assedio* (The Siege). Here the wall represents part of the ramparts of Jericho. Male singers from Chorus A sing of love from the wall whilst R sounds a warning to the people to flee. A General converses with the angel Phanuel¹¹⁰, before an invasion is stylistically represented through the movement of the crowd. After the crowd disperses R sings a lament for the destruction of the city.

The second scene is entitled *Il Campo* (The Field). R enters and sings of her dreams about stones and white light before being joined by Orvid, a poetic amalgamation of Orpheus and the biblical David. A man without age enters pursued by children, and he forecasts rain. This premonition is refuted by the chorus, who softly sing of blood on the stones. Clear biblical imagery returns in the third scene, *La torre* (The tower). Nino enters and speaks polyglottally as construction workers enter and commence construction of a tower. A woman gives birth but the surrounding crowd is oblivious to her cries of warning. At the climax of the movement, the crowd splits into two opposing groups (both led by Nino) and general chaos ensues. The mayhem gradually abates with the quiet intoning of the word "Shibboleth" by the chorus closing the movement.

The fourth scene, *La casa* (The house) presents the wall as a repository of general everyday communication. Six pre-recorded voices present fragments of conversation which subtly refer to other scenes in the opera. Various figures from the preceding scenes walk past the wall silently. The opera concludes with *La piazza* (the square), which presents a typical operatic street scene.¹¹¹ Hawkers, vendors and shoppers walk along, accompanied by street musicians. As R sings an aria predicting destruction, two workers arrive to measure the wall. As her

109 Ibid., 202. The story is related in Joshua 2 and Joshua 6.

110 The name is derived from the angel that Jacob wrestled with in Genesis 32:22-32.

111 The street scenes in *Louise* and *La bohème* could be considered appropriate antecedents.

singing becomes more frantic, a mayoral figure arrives with ‘visitors’ who begin subtly to take over the square, measuring and processing the ordinary people. Chorus A descends from the wall and joins the other singers on stage in a static formation. The conductor becomes visible, and all forces join to sing a setting of Paul Celan’s poem *Shibboleth*.

Several of the scenes, especially *L’Assedio* and *La torre*, specifically refer to biblical events. *L’Assedio* refers to the siege of Jericho, in which the forces of Joshua enlisted the help of Rahab in order to invade the city.¹¹² Because of her service to Israel, Rahab and her family were spared. *La torre* is a retelling of the story of the Tower of Babel, a story with deep connotations of the breakdown of understanding between different peoples.¹¹³ The final scene, *La piazza*, elliptically refers to the Holocaust through the presence of the visitors, who wear white coats and measure the populace before sending them away. The Paul Celan poem that concludes the work explicitly refers to the enormity of the Holocaust and its impact on the survivors. The parallel between the Holocaust and the massacre of the Canaanites is drawn through the common premonitions of R in both scenes. The remaining scenes are less direct in their references, although there is an emphasis in both on the conflict between the experiences of the individual and those of a community. The titles of these three movements refer to traditional spaces for individuals and communities to meet: a field, a square and a house.

Talia Pecker Berio’s scenario seems to represent the terrible things that happen when two groups of people no longer appear to understand one another, or fail to empathize with each other leading to famine, conflict or even genocide. An ethical element has always been present in Berio’s works, from the criticism of obscene wealth in *Laborintus II* to the cry of oppressed peoples in *Coro*. The indeterminacy in setting and absence of clear action is explained by Pecker Berio:

¹¹² Joshua 2-6.

¹¹³ Genesis 11:1-9.

Cronaca del Luogo is not only a record of events and sites from Jewish history, rather it visits mental places and situations, that take form before our eyes and in our ears, in a room with the stark and imposing presence of the wall; the voices and music of the memories contained within become concrete.¹¹⁴

In the following analyses I look at three movements¹¹⁵ from the opera. I have chosen these movements because they best illustrate my argument: namely that the work's textual themes of memory and premonition are related to the experience of its musical processes, and that this is achieved through Berio's non-linear approach to time. The first movement to be considered is the choral introduction from the Prologue, which depicts an awakening. Likewise, the final movement depicts a summation of elements of the opera. The duet between R and Orvid in the second scene presents the strategic development of no less than four processes, whose relationships represent best the ideas of memory and premonition. These movements are also fairly constrained in their harmonic and textual processes (in comparison to the sprawling third and fourth scenes), and do not rely heavily on the live-electronics for their musical effects, a discussion of which is outside the boundaries of the present thesis.

Prologue

The textual sources for the opera are linked by the twin themes of premonition and memory. Specific events are occasionally depicted in the work, but always through a mist and haze of personal recollection. It is often implied that this person is R, who serves as both the recorder and forecaster of events. The common element to these two human ways of dealing with past

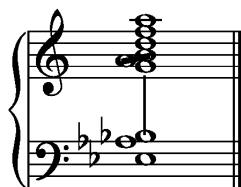
114 "*Cronaca del Luogo* ist nicht nur eine Chronik von Ereignissen und Plätzen aus der jüdischen Geschichte, sondern vielmehr ein Besuch mentaler Orte und Situationen, die vor unseren Augen und in unseren Ohren Gestalt annehmen, in einem Raum, der von der starken und imposanten Präsenz der Mauer, der Erinnerungen, die sie enthält, ihren Stimmen und ihrer Musik bestimmt wird." Pecker Berio, Talia. Program notes for *Cronaca del Luogo*, August 1999 (Salzburg: Salzburger Festspiele, 1999) 32.

115 To clarify, *Cronaca del Luogo* is divided into five self-contained scenes and a prologue. Each scene is further clearly divided into 'movements' by the required forces and stage action. Thus the prologue consists of a choral introduction, followed by an aria; the first scene consists of a duet, an aria, another duet and then a choral scene with action; etc.

The prologue begins with a series of flutter-tongued chords in the flutes. In the same way as a trill, this effect emphasizes time through constant repetition while also denying a sense of progress through the constant freshness of the gesture, as we are constantly hearing the beginning rather than the middle of a flute tone. The flutes perform an elaborate seven chord series many times with only minor modification until rehearsal mark A:

Example 3: flute reduction of bars 1-12 of the Prologue

33



Example 4: Referential pitch field of the Prologue

The field is notable for the large number of thirds in its upper register, which allows Berio to arpeggiate triad-like figures in many of the melodic lines. The chord series itself maintains its order, even through rapid passage work. This motion through a fixed field in block harmonies suggests an entirely harmonic approach to the section – the harmony at any particular moment is not a result of particular melodic processes but is rather a cross-section of the master field. The process is one of subtraction: we perceive the total field over time, without it ever being fully sounded. Thus, there is no linear progression – the entire section is based on the exposition of a single object. The interest comes from the many vantage points to which the listeners are transported: we hear the same object from many angles. The repetition is always different.

Example 5: Chorus reduction of bars A1-A8 of the Prologue

Throughout the choral introduction, a trumpet, clarinet and soprano saxophone occasionally break through the dense, yet quiet texture, sounding the ascending third d^2 - f^2 . This dyad is prominently explored through most lines as the ceiling of the harmonic field, until the field is expanded to encompass a^2 at the climax.

The chorus enters on the phoneme /o/, taken from the opening words “la notte”, repeating the opening pitches of the work. It is a fairly common device for Berio to borrow phonemes from past and future words as a way of staining the present with these two other time periods – an example of a concrete synthesis of the virtual. Unlike the winds, which move in blocks throughout the field, the ambitus of the chorus moves in contrary motion (ex. 5), consistently returning to unison around e^1 and expanding out to large structures which increasingly approach the final statement of the reference field at figure B.

B

Sop A
Alt A
Ten A
Bass A

Sop B
Alt B
Ten B
Bass B

a - - scol - - - - -

a - - scol - - - - -

a - - scol - - - - -

a - - scol - - - - -

Example 6: Chorus reduction of Bars B1-B2 of the Prologue

At figure B, chorus B sings the defining structural notes of the field – four black notes in the lower register and a series of thirds on white notes in the upper register (ex. 6). Chorus A

moves through both well-defined and approximate runs on the phonemes /o/ and /a/, taken from the then sounding words “ascolta il tempo”. This dramatic moment in which every instrumentalist and chorister participates ‘awakens’ R, who enters to sing her first aria.

The retraction and expansion is a representation of the process of awakening. The event at figure B represents the field at its most exposed, in which the sopranos reach the highest point of the field, and the basses the lowest. It is no accident that the key word is “ascolta” (“listen”) soon to be answered by R’s “tacete” (“be silent”). There is a direct request in this choral prologue for the night, the time for dreams, to be called up and the memories aroused.¹¹⁶

In her aria which follows, R speaks generally as she asks for the memories to be opened. In her analysis of the work, Ute Brüdermann refers to an *Erinnerungsraum* which is opened by R in this scene.¹¹⁷ This memory room belongs to R: she opens the room at the beginning, and through the unique staging and musical processes allows the audience to be taken into the realm of dreams and memory, where time does not progress in a linear fashion, but jumps from point to point through memory and premonition.¹¹⁸

R’s opening aria positions her in a similar role to other figures who recorded history: Matthew and Virgil who are explicitly mentioned. Night is usually a time of rest, but in this work it is the time for dreams and remembrance, in which we are bidden to be silent and to pay attention. Memory acts as a kind of afterimage that exists in a non-temporal space. It interacts with the present in a non-linear fashion, and blurs our normal expectations of duration: of beginnings and endings. Some events seem to start before they begin and end before they finish. A good example of this process occurs with the “selective resonance” of the chorus

116 Brüdermann, *Das Musiktheater*, 203.

117 Ibid., 203. Di Luzio refers to the space as “Rs mentalem Raum” in Claudia di Luzio. *Vielstimmigkeit und Bedeutungsvielfalt im Musiktheater von Luciano Berio* (Mainz; New York: Schott, 2010) 402.

118 Ibid., 402.

against R, in which various elements of her aria are echoed or predicted by the wall (ex. 7).¹¹⁹

The process takes us inside R's mind, in which memories and premonitions mix and bleed over each other.

Example 7: Vocal parts from bars D1-D8 of the Prologue

The purpose of the opening of this work is to move the listener's mental space from the physical space of the theater and the circumstances that brought them there to a created world. The prologue serves to expose to the audience the main themes of memory and premonition and to set up the opposition between the wall and the square.

Duet between R and Orvid

The duet between R and Orvid occurs at the beginning of the second scene, *Il campo*, of *Cronaca del Luogo*. In his program notes for the work's premiere, Paul Griffiths describes the scene as an "expanse of expectation."¹²⁰ The atmosphere is one of dreams, indeed R's first words are "ho sognato" - I dreamt. The text is taken from the Paul Celan poem *Die hellen Steine*. Among the various images conjured by the poetry are the concepts of loss, of nature and of voices. The Orpheus myth is referenced in R's opening text "I heard a voice that enchants the shadows of those whom had lost the light" - perhaps a subtle reminder that the

119 This terminology is taken from David Osmond-Smith, who used it extensively in his study of *O King* in *Playing on Words*.

120 Griffiths, Paul. Programme Notes to *Cronaca del Luogo*. Electronic document, pers. comms. 3.

first opera performed in the *Felsenreitschule* was Gluck's *Orfeo*. Reference is also made to the lament of David over the death of Saul and Jonathan in the conflict with the Philistines in Orvid's phrase "father and son have fallen on the mountains". However, these elliptical references are not fully explicated to the audience, who are more likely to pick up the previously mentioned themes of dark, light and loss. These themes are viewed through the prism of dreams, memory and premonition.

Before the entrance of the singers, there is a short introduction played by the orchestra. This incredibly static and almost atemporal section has two purposes: to establish the centrality of the note f¹ (which is a rough axis of symmetry for the whole movement) and to establish the peculiar sound-world of the movement, characterized by winds and high strings as well as an electronically altered bassoon line.¹²¹ The scene begins with R, who is clad in black in opposition to Orvid's white. The comparatively simple staging is accompanied by four simple musical processes: the melody of R and the first flute, the melody of Orvid and the alto flute, a pitch series in the horns, saxophones, bassoon, violas and violins, and a series of isolated pitches in the very high registers of glockenspiel and piccolo and the very low registers of bassoon, contrabass and cello.¹²² Overall, the orchestration is noteworthy for the absence of brass, and the emphasis on the treble register. These processes enter staggered, with the central orchestral line beginning the scene, followed by R, Orvid, and finally the commentary. I will consider significant aspects of each of these processes before integrating them and revealing them as a layered network.

121 The implications of the live-electronics will not be discussed in great detail, for the simple reason that the published score provides insufficient information on the exact set-up of the system. The effects used include sound location, reverb, delay, filter and harmoniser. Most of the effects are subtly employed, with the notable exception of the brief use of the harmoniser in the second scene and the extensive use of sound delay in the third.

122 These processes shall be named R, Orvid, Central and Commentary for the sake of brevity. R and Orvid's processes were extracted into the work *Altra Voce* (1999) for soprano, mezzo-soprano, flute, alto flute and live electronics about which Berio said he had developed their autonomy and harmonic conditions. Brüdermann, *Das Musiktheater*, 211.

R's line

All the lines in this movement follow the chromatic gap-fill procedures described above. R's first statement ascends to a_b^1 from f^1 before descending to fill the gap between a_b^1 and g_b^1 , and then creates a new gap between the f^1 and e_b^1 which is not filled until the next phrase (ex. 8).

The next statement of her opening words, "ho sognato", fills the space to b_b^1 . The second phrase begins on the highest pitch heard so far, creating a gap from e_b^2 to b_b^1 .¹²³ This gap is almost filled (d^2 is missing) in an almost optimal number of pitches. R then ascends to the e^2 , a moment that is accompanied by a referential set: c^2 - $c^\sharp^2$ - e^2 .

A

Flute

R

Central

Ho so - gna - to ho so - gna - to

le chia - re pie - - - tre cam - mi - na - no nell' - a -

ri - ale bian - de lu - cen - ti lu - ce por - tan - ti

Example 8: Bars A1-A10 of Il campo. Flute, R and central line shown.

R's opening series of pitches is duplicated exactly by her flute companion. The constituent events of the two simultaneous statements of the series occupy roughly the same period of

¹²³ Without wishing to begin a long discussion on segmentation, for the purposes of this piece phrases are defined by significant rests.

time, without necessarily coinciding. The flute part provides direct commentary on R's line, releasing harmonic potential within it as the intervals in the series are heard both harmonically and melodically. One can think of the entire movement as being governed by *degrees of simultaneity*, in which the relative disjunction between the two parts is a method of commentary on the musical progress.

In bar A5, there is a moment of non-simultaneity where the flute sounds $d\flat^2$ against the c^2 of R's line. These pitches only sound together briefly, but the clash is clearly heard as the preceding phrase has explained the process to the listener. R's line at this bar is duplicating pitches from bars A1-3 of the central line. The c^2 almost fills the space up to $e\flat^2$, marking the as yet unheard d^2 as a future goal. The opposition also refers to the oscillation between the two pitches (c^2 and $d\flat^2$) which will be explored throughout the movement; predominately in the alto flute. The $d\flat^2$ is not necessarily the 'correct' note, as this would presuppose an overarching theory of duplication of pitch series in this particular process. As Osmond-Smith often comments, Berio often puts in motion a simple process such as the current duplicated pitch series, but never adheres to the confines of his initial propositions. To summarize, this subversion of the initial parameters allows Berio to fill chromatic space as well as calling attention to the c^2 - $d\flat^2$ dyad.

R begins her second section (bars A11 to A17) by sounding a similar series of pitches as the first section, before skipping a small section to ascend to the climatic c^2 - $c\sharp^2$ - e^2 . The third section (ex. 13) is more similar to the first, but still undergoes a series of changes and substitutions. From B5, the material is more related to Orvid's opening line, with the prominent fifth and a similar contour. The line extends to include $f\sharp^2$ and g^2 , but d^2 is still left unheard. The line briefly descends beneath Orvid's as R sings "Ho sentito una voce" - "I heard a voice" (B13) while Orvid sings of the sound of flutes, the sea and wind. This is where the opposition between R and Orvid is made explicit. Orvid has been described by the

librettist as R's "poetic alter-ego."¹²⁴ The ability for his line to fluidly transform and reflect other processes reflects this poeticism, as opposed to the more rigidly individual process of R's line.

Example 9: Bars C1-C11 of *Il campo*, R and flute lines only.

R sings a new line of text from bar C1, in which she breaks free of the $f^{\sharp 2}$ ceiling, ascending directly to b^2 immediately creating another gap to be filled (ex. 9). The climatic a^2 of the next phrase (bar C10) almost completes the saturation, leaving only g^2 as the new gap, eventually filled in at the end of the following phrase (bar C18). From bar D1, R's line begins to be obscured by the two other flutes, which verticalize segments of her series, almost putting them into stasis as she repeats "ho sognato" while Orvid sings "padre e figlio sono caduti" on a repeated open fifth at the bottom of her range. R ascends to her highest pitch (b^2) in this movement before gradually falling in register to end on $d^{\sharp 1}$. Thus, both major figures extend to the bottom and top of their range at the moment that tangible figures are referenced in the text (ex. 12).

124 Quoted in Griffiths, Programme Notes to *Cronaca del Luogo*.

Central

The central line displays a similar approach to realization of the series' potential. Unlike R's process, there is no *Ur-Central* instrument that others comment on. Rather, Berio creates a sense of a blurred series of pitches that has no identifiable beginning or end throughout the constituent instruments. The line begins at f^1 and sounds a wave-shaped motion as far down as $f^{\#0}$ and as far up as e^2 . Various sequences of pitches are repeated throughout the process, but not systematically (ex. 10).



Example 10: Comparison of pitch series of central line from bar A1 and from bar B14 in Il campo.

Example 11: Contributions to the central line from bars B1-B7 of Il campo.

The asynchronous approach to the orchestration of a fixed series of pitches subverts the usual view of temporal organization in music. Notes no longer have clear beginnings and endings, and could be said to emerge gradually (compare the commentary line in ex. 12 with its realization in ex. 11). It is impossible to consider this movement as existing in a striated space containing events which are experienced as durationless instants, heard only in the actuality of the present. Instead, Berio is inviting us to examine the virtual of this line – the ability of the past to reflect onto the future – through the subtly staggered entrance and exit of pitch events.

A single, unaccompanied line contains this potential, which is realized through the process of *degrees of simultaneity*. This is the same idea inherent in the *Chemins* project, which sought to throw the *already existing* virtual of a *Sequenza* into relief. To reflect this, the central line will be represented by black note heads in the musical examples.

Orvid

Orvid's line is the least independent, as well as the least internally integrated. The alto flute frequently follows individual paths as well as frequently borrowing from the surrounding processes. The alto flute begins before Orvid, borrowing pitch material from the central line before integrating the high c^2 - $c\sharp^2$ - e^2 collection from R's line, which is also referenced in the central line briefly. The marking of this moment by similar material in all three processes, as well as an emphasis on the highest pitch heard so far denotes a climatic point, which releases tension before the recapitulation of material at Orvid's entrance.

From Orvid's entrance at bar B1, the alto flute begins to combine material from the three established processes. Berio uses the effect of the tremolo to emphasize dyads within the line, particularly those that form a fifth.¹²⁵ This process continues until the pause at bar B7, when the alto flute ascends to $f\sharp^2$, independent of all other voices (ex. 13).

¹²⁵ This technique is the basis of the 'fire' section of the first movement of the *Sinfonia* and the entirety of *Points on the Curve to Find...* (1974)

Flutes

Soprano

Alto Flute

Mezzo-soprano

nel - l'a - ria le bian - che lu - cen - ti lu - ce por - tan - ti

pian - - - - - ge /e/

6

Ho so - gna - - to Ho - - so - gna - to

Pa - dre e fi - glio so - no ca - du -

10

Ho so - gna - to le chia - re pie - tre cam - mi - na - no nel - l'a - ria le bian - che lu - cen - ti lu - ce por

- ti sui mon ti, sui mon - - ti sen - to un' - al - tra vo -

15

tan - ti lu - ce, lu - - ce por - tan - ti

- ce vie - ni vie - - ni vie - - - - - ni /e/

D

D

E

E

Example 12: Bars C17-E3 of *Il campo*, only R, Orvid, flutes and alto flute shown.

Flute

R

Alto Flute

Orvid

Commentary

Central

Ho vi - sto un re

So - le e lu - na non è gior -

un re un vec - - chio pa - - - dre

- no le not - - - te /c/

Example 13: R, Orvid and central process in bars B1-B7 of Il campo.

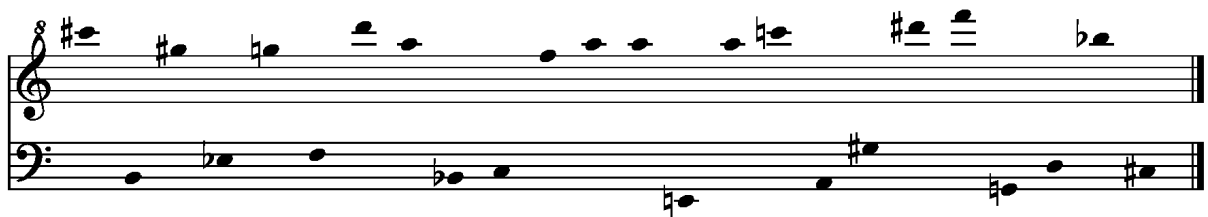
Excluding the commentary process, this is the highest pitch heard so far in any voice. The new limits of the vocal lines are clearly delineated by the immediate return to e^1 – these two pitches being the limits of all the vocal pitches heard so far. Once again, before a climatic and clearly calculated moment is the presence of the $c^\sharp^2$ - e^2 dyad, derived from the referential collection c^2 - $c^\sharp^2$ - e^2 . The gap created between e^2 and $f^\sharp^2$ is not filled until Orvid's solo moment in bar 55, thus establishing R's ascent to G as being separated from the other chromatically

integrated processes. The alto flute ascends to $f\sharp^2$ again in bar D1, once again independently from all other processes. However, by now R has already ascended to $a\flat^2$, and this arrival is less of a major goal, and R enters on the $f\sharp^2$ within the same bar. Thus the power of the $f\sharp^2$ is denied when it occurs later, a further example of a repetition viewed as difference.

A similar gap has been created in R's line, and is observed by the other processes until bar C3 where Orvid finally provides d^2 . This tone is heard as Orvid begins a new line of text "Vieni, apri gli occhi" - "Come, open your eyes". This imperative is directed at R (as the d^2 was a gap created by R), but R is already exploring the upper limits of her register, almost ignoring the climatic moment in Orvid's line (ex. 12)

Commentary

The commentary line occupies the space from G-F# in the upper register and E-G# in the lower. The isolated events that make up this process form a frame for the three other processes. The lower end of the commentary line only just overlaps the central process and



Example 14: Summary of the pitch order of the commentary line.
the upper end is a full sixth above R's line.

Commentary between processes

There is extensive commentary between the processes, including the already discussed line of Orvid's. R's first phrase shares two common pitches with the first of the central process, around which the two processes are roughly symmetrical. Her second phrase sounds the same series of pitch-classes as the first phrase of the central process. There is also a tendency for the beginning of phrases to coincide in pitch-class (for example in bars A1, A10 and B1). As

previously mentioned, at the second major statement by R of the $c^2-c\sharp^2-e^2$ collection in bar A15 is reflected by similar ascents in other processes.

Several lines could be said to be an afterimage, or a memory of the preceding material.

However, given the many varied manifestations of each process, it is impossible to distinguish past from future. But do we really need to know the present? After all, the present is instantaneous and impossible to grasp. Berio's concept of non-linear temporal process allows us to constantly experience the virtual – the potential for the past and future to intertwine.

This intertwining is only achievable through the use of musical objects that have the ability to be vaguely separated as well as combined. Though on the page the four processes might seem quite separate they are only ever received in combination. This layered approach is also responsible for the diverse relationships between the characters. Through the various analyses I have explored the individual processes, which operate on the simple principal of chromatic saturation as well as exploring how this movement deploys these aggregates strategically in relation to the text and other processes.

The process of chromatic saturation itself can be explained using the language of memory and premonition. It is clear that after a gap is created, the expectation is that it will be filled at a later point – often a point marked as significant through other means. Thus there is a connection, an immediate link, between the two points that bypasses the material in between; the space between is collapsed as the completion is heard. I have shown how a similar event (the $f\sharp^2$ in the alto flute) can have drastically different meanings at different times, because the first time it is a noteworthy completion of an aggregate, and the second it is only a memory of this previous event. Instead of treating these brief motifs as manifestations of the same ideal, we should view them as separate objects with separate meanings, which merely reflect on each other through the virtual of our perception.

There are no clear statements or ideas in the movement. Mysteries are not presented to be solved, just as the musical processes are not designed to be explained coherently. Instead, the text and the music revel in the multitude of relationships enabled by their layering. However, there is a hierarchy to the objects. Orvid often uses the imperative, inviting either R or the audience to listen or open her/their eyes. As has been discussed, R also asserts dominance at times through the individuality of her line, compared with the kleptomaniac line of Orvid's. The end of the movement acts as an elaborate "cross-fade", in which tones from various processes are sustained, clouding the progress, until the processes can no longer be heard, and the new processes from the next movement of the scene have taken over.

Final Chorus

In the final movement of the opera's final movement, *La piazza*, Berio attempts to provide a large scale sense of closure by massing his two choruses in one formation on the stage to sing a largely self-contained setting of Paul Celan's poem, *Shibboleth*. This final movement takes the theme of the displacement of people (which has been literally represented through the electronically assisted siting of various sounds) to its extreme – genocide and loss of country. Celan's poem is an attempt to poetically convey the immense sense of emptiness (rather than sadness or horror) that the Holocaust caused to him and other European Jews. The opened memory space of the work becomes "a burning question".¹²⁶ This space cannot be closed again, and instead the metaphorical flag must be kept at half-mast "for today and always".¹²⁷ The deliberate avoidance of artifice invites the audience to consider the work as an ethical challenge rather than as a distraction. Berio refers to the Holocaust as "an open wound for us all", into which in his later work he "often places his finger".¹²⁸ Thus, the audience is forced to situate themselves in the situation and consider the implications of connecting the separate

126 "Einer brennenden Frage". Brüdermann, *Das Musiktheater*, 204.

127 "per oggi e per sempre"

128 "eine offene Wunde für uns alle" Interview between Luciano Berio and Derek Weber, "Blättern in der Chronik Gottes", *Salzburger Nachrichten*, 24 July 1999, referenced in Brüdermann, *Das Musiktheater*, 204.

events from history. The symmetry provided by the massacre of the Canaanites in the first scene and the Holocaust in the final scene encourages the audience to consider how such events happen thousands of years apart.

Berio's setting of the text is sometimes literal, such as the train effects in the percussion with their connotations of emigration and transport of people to concentration camps, or in the depiction of the fire in the woodwinds at DD3 (ex. 20)

The harmony is mostly determined by a collection harmonic fields or chord areas. I use the term chord areas to refer to formations which are not necessarily united in interval content or pitch similarity, but display similar registral spacing. Berio often explores these homophonic sonorities by semitonal motion (ex. 15).

not - te del - la not - te

not - te del del - la not - te

not - te del - la not - te

not - te del - la not - te

Example 15: Chorus reduction of bars AA5-AA10 of La piazza.

The choral movement begins as the fifth scene did, with a long exploration of the pitch e^1 (ex. 16). The referential harmonic field develops out of this single tone, expanding in tessitura throughout the movement. It reaches its point of maximal displacement in the final few bars, before being reduced to the single note g^1 . It is interesting to note that this movement is bookended by two tones a minor third apart – the same interval that opened the opera.

Example 16: Chorus reduction of opening of choral movement of *La piazza*. Bars Z1-AA4

By referencing the opening of the scene, this tone casts the audience back through the preceding scene, in which the events of everyday life in the square (vendors, shoppers, musicians) are swept away by unnamed ‘visitori’ in white coats. The repetition of the tone acts as a marker, segmenting the chorus from the earlier scenes. It will continue to be heard in the same register almost continuously throughout the movement.¹²⁹

In this movement the choir forms a line about which the instruments comment. It is almost a *Sequenza* for choir around which Berio has placed his commentary. The central line begins by developing a simple pitch field of c^1 - e^1 - a^1 - b^1 - d^2 with the fifth e^1 - b^1 sung prominently on the words “flauto”, a reference to Orvid’s line in the second scene. The alto flute (another Orvid

¹²⁹ An interesting parallel may be drawn with Act III Scene ii of Alban Berg’s *Wozzeck* during which the tone b is always heard. An important difference is that Berg’s movement is on a pitch-class, whereas Berio’s is on a pitch.

reference) explores this fifth with semitonal adjacencies. Above the developing field is an ascending saxophone phrase, which clears the previous field to introduce the new tone of $f\sharp^2$. After the sounding of a train effect on snare drums, the choir is completely silent for the first time in the movement, before entering again simultaneously on the words “della notte”. This new tone also introduces the pitch d^0 (first heard in the contrabass), which remains sounding with e^1 as a sort of scaffolding for the other elements.

Throughout the movement, Berio often sets phonemes for the choir to sing, which are drawn from adjacent syllables in the text. Thus, the sopranos run of /o/ - /e/ - /a/ has the /o/ from *flauto*, and the /e/ and /a/ from *della*. As discussed earlier, this effect here has the connotations of memory and premonition, and serves to soften the perceptual boundaries we attach to certain events (such as attack or duration).

An extra layer of memory/premonition is present in the individual spacing of the text in the four vocal parts, another instance of degrees of simultaneity. This effect is clearly evident in the setting of “della notte”, in which the four vocal parts sing the syllable ‘del-’ simultaneously, but sing the ‘-la’ at different times, while also clouding it with the intrusion of the /a/ phoneme in the sopranos (ex. 16). The chorus then repeats the word, this time in complete homophony, before breaking apart on the final syllable of “notte”. The third and final attempt displays a greater degree of simultaneity, but is still separated on the “-la”.

These degrees can be thought of as a snapshot of a particular virtual. Whenever a text is heard, phonemes, morphemes, words, and phrases are all reflected from the past into our expectations for the future. Sung text is never experienced as a linear or even two-dimensional flow of text along Saussurean models.¹³⁰ Instead the various elements escape the line and move diagonally across our consciousness. Just as the melodic commentary in the second

¹³⁰ The two dimensions being the linear stream of syntax and the vertical stream of connotation of the particular terms. Holdcroft, David. *Saussure: Signs, System and Arbitrariness*. (Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1991) 97.

scene provided a realization or possible solution of the virtual of a given line, the textual setting here represents a conceivable imagining of the memories and premonitions attached to the hearing of a linear text.

The next section sets the text “accendi la domanda della notte” with staggered entries from the high voices down to low. In the bar before figure BB at the second statement of the text, the e^1 - d^0 dyad is inverted to e^0 - d^1 , so that the ninth now becomes a seventh (ex. 17).

The musical score for 'La piazza' is presented in three systems. The first system (bars 1-8) shows vocal staves for Soprano, Alto, Tenor, and Bass. The lyrics are 'Ac - cen - di la do - man - da'. The second system (bars 9-11) continues the vocal entries. The third system (bars 12-14) includes the piano accompaniment with lyrics 'cen - di la do - man - da nel - la not - te nel - la'. Markers BB and CC are placed at the end of the first and third systems respectively.

Example 17: Chorus reduction and pedal tones from bars BB5-CC3 of *La piazza*.

This is the first time e^1 has not been sounded in this movement, perhaps reflecting a temporary change in direction. By the third statement, in which the textual phrase is finally completed, the field has righted itself, with e^1 - d^0 played homogeneously in the strings. In this third statement of this text before CC, the space between d^0 and g^2 has almost entirely been

filled in by the chorus parts, with the notable exception of e^0 and e^2 . These two Es have clearly not been sounded to avoid any octave doubling of e^1 , which would confuse the symmetrical expansion from this tone.¹³¹ The third statement sees the chorus splitting into eleven parts that take a meandering quasi-chromatic descent before arriving on the following chord, accompanied by the train motif and another prominent solo for the alto flute:

Example 18: Reduction of bar CC6 of *La piazza*

Once again, the chromatic aggregate between G and D is almost filled except for e^2 and d^2 and two clusters in the bass. Sounding e^2 and d^2 would confuse the registral placing of e^1 and d^0 in the strings, and two clusters in the bass are not played in order to expose the low D, which becomes the only instrumental sound in the bars before figure DD, in order to contrast greatly with the massive aggregate that follows.

A major goal of the chorus is total simultaneity. At various points throughout the movement, the chorus sings with a high degree of separation, only to later correct it with total simultaneity. For instance, at the first statement of “nessuno risponde nel vento della notte” the first syllable enters at seven distinct points within the space of a second, before being repeated in rhythmic unison (ex. 19). This striving for simultaneity is in obvious opposition to

¹³¹ Avoidance of octave doublings in post-tonal music has been standard since the early works of Schoenberg, see Perle, *Serialism and Atonality*, 29-30.

the theme of the poem, which talks of the loss of community and people caused by the Holocaust. The text setting affords the movement an ethical outlook: the preceding movements have dealt with the terrible consequences of the separation of peoples and this movement sets out the ideal of total community.

The aspect of chromatic filling, a major process and criterion for tension and resolution in the work is subverted in this line of text as well. Each vocal section splits into as many as eight parts, each expanding in pitch in order to almost completely fill the chromatic space between b_b^{-1} and $c^\sharp^2$.

The image displays a musical score for a vocal ensemble and orchestra. The vocal parts are Soprano, Alto, Tenor, and Bass, each with a staff. The lyrics are written below the vocal staves. The orchestra part is shown at the bottom with a grand staff (treble and bass clefs). The score includes triplets (indicated by a '3' over a bracket) and glissandos (indicated by a wavy line). A box labeled 'DD' is placed above the vocal staves in the second system. The lyrics are: 'ne/ nes - su - no ri - spon - de' and 'nel ven - to del - la not - te'.

Soprano
ne/ nes - su - no ri - spon - de

Alto
ne/ nes - su - no ri - spon - de

Tenor
ne/ nes - su - no ri - spon - de

Bass
ne/ nes - su - no ri - spon - de

Orchestra

DD

nel ven - to del - la not - te

nel ven - to del - la not - te

nel ven - to del - la not - te

nel ven - to del - la not - te

Example 19: Complete reduction of bars CC7-DD3 of La piazza.

However, since glissando in the voices is employed, the complete *continuous* space between these pitches is filled within this short section. Accompanied by a similarly almost-completely filled cluster in the majority other instruments (excluding percussion, contrabass, piccolos and one piccolo clarinet) the all encompassing silence and blackness of the night is evoked. The

continuous nature of this aggregate is a metaphorical black hole, into which all structures disappear.

Example 20: Winds at bars DD4-DD6 of La piazza.

The only reference to the violence of the implied events comes in the lines “poi viene il fuoco” (“then comes the fire”), accompanied by suitably flickering figures in the flutes, piccolos and clarinets (ex. 20). This event quickly subsides into memory, as the chorus sings and the instruments play at the cusp of audibility, moving in gradual contrary motion towards e^1 . This could be viewed as the closing of the space, and there is even a long silence before the final section begins. For Berio, it is not enough to end the piece how it began (on e^1), instead there must be some sort of progress or growth, or knowledge gained by the experience. It is for this reason that he settled on this order of the movements, which was initially planned to be open.¹³² The opening prologue opens the memory box of the Jewish people through the central observer, R. Through her memories, we see the ways in which human individuality is shaped by the events of history, and we are presented with a challenge to interpret the experiences ourselves, and to hopefully gain knowledge as individuals.

The final section of the movement begins with a new focus: the d^1 pedal has now moved to d^2 . The chorus is completely homophonic with every syllable coinciding exactly until the opera’s

¹³² Brüdermann, *Das Musiktheater*, 203.

final moments. The harmonic process becomes far more hazy, perhaps in contrast to the clarity of the chorus setting or perhaps a reference to the memory receding. The clearly presented harmony in the chorus is clouded by fleeting gestures in the majority of the instruments, presenting small short motives that together produce the haze. The motion of the chorus creates chromatic space, which is partially filled in by the other instruments. The space left behind is not completed, and the instruments retreat to the pitches of the choir on the word “memoria”. There is a sense of completion here, as the harmonic field has become more stable and clear. To clarify, the chorus presents a harmonic field which is reinforced and added to by the other instruments. At the word “memoria” the instruments are left playing only the pitches from the choir’s field. These resonances are often complete, and represented in homophony by complete groups of instruments (for example the flutes, the trumpets and the saxophones all mirror the choir, but each with their own individual rhythm).

The combination of the different rhythmic settings of the static harmonies in these instrumental groups does not create a rhythmic opposition, but instead removes the sense of rhythm altogether (ex. 21). The ear is presented with far too many events at a very soft dynamic, and just perceives the motion as a gentle ebbing, giving resonance to the choral line (which due to the spatial separation, is perceived as priority). Above and around the field, various extraneous pitches are presented, with the total effect of recalling the harmonic field that opened the prologue. Both fields are saturated with thirds and fifths, increasing the tonal allusions. The whole effect is anchored by the d^3 pedal in the piccolos which remains above the texture throughout the passage. Material from the prologue is not explicitly restated in any manner resembling a recapitulation, but rather it is recalled through its intervallic quality. What is important here is how it has been changed. The chorus is no longer an organic, versatile group responding fleetingly to events in a central process (the deployment of the field) through the use of phonetic resonance, but rather it is the central process, declaiming the

text in a straightforward homogenous manner. That the field should be recalled most strongly on the word “memoria” is representative of Berio’s ethical challenge. The audience is cast back into the beginning of the performance, where the *Erinnerungsraum* was opened, and now can understand why. Berio’s claim is that the act of memory is the path to a greater understanding about the future. The force of the eternal nature of memory is reinforced by the monolithic setting of “per oggi e per sempre”, with four simultaneous events in the text, chorus, strings and bass drum. Simultaneous events are quite rare in this work, much less four successive ones, highlighting this as the challenge of memory.

The musical score is divided into three systems. The first system includes parts for Flutes, Clarinets, Saxophones, Trumpets, Women, and Men. The second system includes parts for Tpt. (Trumpets), Women, and Men. The third system includes parts for Tpt. (Trumpets), Women, and Men. The lyrics are: 'me - mo - ria me - ria me - mo - ria per og - gi e per sem - pre per og -'.

Example 21: Relevant wind and brass choirs, and choir from bars FF8-GG3 of La piazza.

Out of this field, the two pitches $f\sharp^1$ and a^1 oscillate in the flutes and clarinets while the final words seem to disintegrate in the chorus, as the final chord disappears. There is a general motion inwards to the final pitch g^1 , which was marked by its neighbors $f\sharp^1$ and a^1 . This dissipation is interrupted in the piece's final moments, in which every instrument (percussion

and synthesizer included) sounds a large sonority, containing the highest and lowest pitches of the movement as a whole (ex. 22). Whether this is a challenge to the direct message of the movement, or merely a puff of air as the memory box is closed is unknown, but it serves to reveal the totality of the space that Berio was working in, and serves as a cadential sonority.



Example 22: Reduction of final chord, bar GG12 of La piazza

Conclusion

In his interview with Eco, Berio stated that the centre of his motivation for writing *azione musicale* was the need to “get a working knowledge of all the materials of music, past and present” and present this knowledge in concrete syntheses. I have shown how a Deleuzian approach to time is applicable to Berio’s compositional process and how the themes of memory and premonition manifest themselves on dramatic and musical levels. According to Eco, one of the supposed goals of modernism was to represent the multiplicity of the entire world in a single work.¹³³ Since the work is bounded temporally and physically to a particular location and time (at least in its most obvious manifestation, that is the performance or the physical object), the creator must resort to non-traditional means of suggestion, as outlined by Eco in *The Open Work*. Berio’s method is to present a surfeit of audial and often visual information to the listener around a central, simple process. For example, in the final movement, the large orchestra echoes and predicts elements of the central choral line. The intended effect is to blur the edges, allowing apparently discrete elements to bleed into each

¹³³ The works resemble “a tiny universe that can be viewed from different perspectives: the last residue of Aristotelian categories has now disappeared.” Eco, *The Open Work*, 10.

other. Long scale processes such as chromatic and textual completion also reflect this compositional philosophy, playing with the listeners' expectations to create a non-linear experience of time. Deleuze argues that time is never experienced linearly, but most analysis is written as if it were. Indeed, one could argue that most listeners exist entirely in the present, clearly striating the past and future around this fixed point. Berio's work uses Deleuze's third synthesis of time in creating a realization or concrete synthesis of what the virtual might be like for a listener. Much in the same way that a continuo player frees the potential of a single line to produce harmony, Berio the composer releases the potential of his compositional objects to interact across and beyond standard concepts of temporal space. A good example is Osmond-Smith's concept of selective resonance, a simple technique in which a single line is lazily presented by many instruments, creating vertical sonorities that can only be imagined through hearing the line singly.

Cronaca del Luogo represents a culmination of Berio's musical thought. The work contains elements of almost all his compositional preoccupations throughout his six decade career. As the work was only performed once, and will most likely never be performed again, it has itself slipped into the realm of memory, like much of its subject matter.¹³⁴ Like the aural and visual images it has presented, it remains now a shadow on the wall.

¹³⁴ And I would argue that since Hildegard Behrens and the composer are now deceased, any revival would be an entirely different work.

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