Introduction - Music, Politics, Society: The Role of Analysis

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Analitica dedicates a significant part of its tenth volume (2017) to the investigation of music theory and analysis as practices grounded in political and pragmatic choices and deeply informed by ideological and social contexts. Recent debates around the scope and purposes of musicology as a social practice have indeed led to a new awareness of the ideological and political implications related to music analysis [Broman-Engebretsen 2007; Buch-Donin-Feneyrou 2013], and to the historicization of the contrasting approaches introduced by New Musicology in the last two decades of the twentieth century [Agawu 2004, MacCutcheon 2014]. At the same time, the progressive convergence of the methodologies employed in different fields of music research – from art music to traditional music, from popular music to music in audiovisual communication, from the use of sound in new media to non-musical sound cultures – has revealed the close relationship between various practices of music analysis and their different epistemological foundations, the latter resting also on specific cultural policies [van den Toorn 1996; Scherzinger 2001; Schuijer 2008, Campos-Donin 2009; Guilbault 2014; Earle 2015].

As a result of such trends, music analysis has become increasingly aware both of its social role and of the political dimension that orients its action. The limits of the approaches based on organicism and graphocentrism, as witnessed by the history of music analysis since the rise of *Musikwissenschaft* in Europe and by the subsequent implementation of European analytical methods in the United States, have become more and more evident. This is not to deny the value of the theoretical assumptions inherent in these methodologies, but rather to provide an opportunity to reflect on their epistemological position. These reflections have led to the introduction of analytical concepts that are not merely concentrated on musical "objects" themselves but take account of the musical experience as a whole and its inevitable construction as a social and political act.

Via a preliminary call for papers, *Analitica* solicited the selected contributors to this volume to explore two main research areas. The articles authored by William O'Hara, Stefanie Kiwi Menrath and Mélodie Michel focus on the epistemological dimension of analytical methodologies and on their social, ideological, and political implications. **O'Hara** analyses the online circulation of an implicit epistemology informing "music theory" as an object of public discourse. Music theory is often presented as an esoteric knowledge placed underneath the phenomenal realm and opening up a deep understanding hidden to non-initiate people – an idea shared by some major twentieth-century theorists. Thus, it can be uncritically used to justify some outdated ideological stances (such as the myth of musicology as a science or the alleged "supremacy" of Western music theory). Reduced to a mere instrument beyond any rational control, music theory becomes influenced by political and pragmatic goals. As an antidote, O'Hara encourages a greater awareness of the epistemological dimension of music theory and analysis, not fixed once and for all but as indeed historical, processual and provisional.

Menrath tackles another aspect related to the epistemology of music theory. By drawing on the methodological considerations issued from the late twentieth-century ethnographical research, her article interprets theory and analysis as a result of the social activity of the researcher, who is placed in a specific scholarly community and cultural discourse. By considering cases of parafiction in musical research (e.g. the invention and construction of Ursula Bogner's biography

and musical works), the article understands the musicological discourse as a collaborative performance, in which users have an active role. In some cases, parafiction has a critical role since it highlights the fallacies of scholarly revision and acceptation systems (in fact, articles on non-existent musicians have been published in distinguished dictionaries and encyclopaedias). More broadly, parafiction brings to the fore the performativity of texts and their role and contribution to the construction of the "reality" of their objects. Ultimately, the article makes a plea for a performative turn in musicology towards a more radical concept of research, conceived as a performative act connected to the politics and processes of knowledge production.

Michel investigates the emergence, institutionalisation and crisis of the Historically Informed Performance (HIP) practice during the late twentieth century and early twentieth-first century. Her main aim is not to provide a complete historical overview of HIP movement, but to understand its epistemological context and theoretical challenges. Michel describes the HIP as a critique of the strict logocentrism characterising the study and performance of Western art music. As a deconstructive performative practice that also opened up new forms of analytical investigation, the HIP movement shifted the attention – Michel argues – from "the written score as object of study" to "a possible sound that precedes it". The author, a historical bassoon player, points out the current crisis of this ambiguous quest for authenticity and introduces specific theoretical approaches to recover the oppositional and defiant character of the HIP.

Also the book review that David K. Blake dedicated to Dario Martinelli's *Give Peace a Chant: Popular Music, Politics, and Social Protest* can be seen as a further epistemological reflection on the scope of music analysis. **Blake** situates Martinelli's work within the broader context of studies on popular culture and argues that the main aim of his book is to understand how popular music can come to assume and express a political meaning, even without being explicitly political.

The articles by Jonathan Thomas, Jeremy Grall and Marica Bottaro speak to a different and complementary research area. These essays examine the role of music analysis in achieving a greater understanding of cultural objects, conceived as manifestations of the relationship between the environment and the artistic community that produces them. **Thomas** uses music analysis as a practical tool for understanding *past* cultural objects, such as records. In particular, he surveys the political and educational dimensions of French folk song records released in the late 1930s by *Le Chant du Monde*, a record company founded under the influence of French Communist Party during the Popular Front era. Through an in-depth historical reconstruction of the origins and aims of *Le Chant du Monde*, Thomas analyses three songs and their specific arrangements – that were often realised by some famous contemporary composers and music theorists, such as Charles Koechlin.

Grall explores the critical reception of *Impressions* by John Coltrane, focusing also on the rhetorical structures of the composition (characterised by repetitive techniques as well as by the use of borrowed melodies from Maurice Ravel, Morton Gould, and Bert Shefter). In doing so, Grall illustrates the influence of African American oral tradition on popular styles. By taking into account the social context in which Coltrane's music was created, the analysis underlines the long-lasting prejudice of critics, who often praised the traits of jazz music associated with European classical tradition to the detriment of those of distinct African influence.

Bottaro discusses the influence of folk music on French classical music during the Third Republic, focusing on symphonic and chamber music – two genres that flourished after the foundation of the Société Nationale de Musique (1871) and the Schola Cantorum (1894). The analysis of some compositions by Déodat de Séverac (1872-1921) and Paul Ladmirault (1877-1944) suggests that many musicians used folk melodies in an age characterized by the rise of nationalist and regionalist movements. Even if these composers were active in a strongly centralised state like France, the melodies they used tended to represent more effectively their own regional identity than the national one.

Carlo Bianchi's essay is devoted to the political history of music analysis and constitutes a complement to the two research areas examined above. From a historical perspective, **Bianchi** peruses the influence of Soviet political culture on music theory – a field of study generally perceived as unrelated to pragmatic questions. In the 1930s, in fact, the emergence of Stalinism had an impact on the success of Asafyev's theory, based on the concept of "intonation". This success marginalised Yavorsky, the forerunner who inspired Asafyev. However, Asafyev developed Yavorsky's theses and concepts, paving the way for their use within the aesthetics of socialist realism.

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